



ALL PRAISE

Actor Yami Gautam describes co-actor Jacqueline Fernandez as one of the nicest actors she has ever worked with

LEISURE P2



GOOD NEWS

The first batch of Russia's Sputnik V vaccine is likely to reach Kanpur by next week

TWO STATES P7



TRADITION BACK

President-elect Joe Biden is set to restore the White House tradition by bringing in dogs

INTERNATIONAL P10

INDIA OUT OF WORLD'S BIGGEST TRADE BLOC

INDIA PULLED OUT OF RCEP TALKS IN NOVEMBER LAST YEAR, BUT ASEAN LEADERS SAID THE DOOR REMAINED OPEN FOR IT TO JOIN

REUTERS

Hanoi, Nov 15: Fifteen Asia-Pacific economies formed the world's largest free trade bloc Sunday, a China-backed deal that excludes the United States, which had left a rival Asia-Pacific grouping under President Donald Trump.

Even India has been left out of the world's biggest trade pact as it had left the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) talks in November last year soon after the US left a rival Asia-Pacific group.

India under Prime Minister Narendra Modi backed the Trump administration with the expectation that its association with the US would help it to be a major economy in the region. However, now India seems to be in a spot with the ASEAN, which comprises Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines, Vietnam, Brunei, Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos, leaving it out of the trade pact and Trump being voted out of power.

The combined GDP of the 10-nation ASEAN is \$2.8 trillion, compared to the world GDP of \$142 trillion. RCEP will account for 30% of the global economy, 30% of the global population and reach 2.2 billion consumers.

The signing of the RCEP at a regional summit in Hanoi is a further



Signing Ceremony of Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement during the 37th ASEAN Summit in Hanoi, Vietnam, Sunday

blow to the group pushed by former US president Barack Obama, which his successor Trump exited in 2017.

Amid questions over Washington's engagement in Asia, RCEP may cement China's position more firmly as an economic partner with Southeast Asia, Japan and Korea, putting the world's second-biggest economy in a better position to shape the region's trade rules.

The United States is absent from both RCEP and the successor to the Obama-led Trans-Pacific Partnership

(TPP), leaving the world's biggest economy out of two trade groups that span the fastest-growing region on earth.

By contrast, RCEP could help Beijing cut its dependence on overseas markets and technology, a shift accelerated by a deepening rift with Washington, said Iris Pang, ING chief economist for Greater China.

RCEP groups the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), China, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand. It aims in coming years to progressively lower

CHINA'S DOMINANCE

The signing of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) at a regional summit in Hanoi is a further blow to the group pushed by former US president Barack Obama

Amid questions over Washington's engagement in Asia, RCEP may cement China's position more firmly as an economic partner with Southeast Asia

RCEP could help Beijing cut its dependence on overseas markets and technology, a shift accelerated by a deepening rift with Washington

of the agreement, which they then showed triumphantly to the cameras.

"RCEP will soon be ratified by signatory countries and take effect, contributing to the post-Covid pandemic economic recovery," said Nguyen Xuan Phuc, prime minister of Vietnam, which hosted the ceremony as ASEAN chair.

Despite being outside RCEP and having been in the administration that propelled the TPP, President-elect Joe Biden - Obama's Vice President - is unlikely to rejoin the TPP anytime soon, analysts said, as his government will have to prioritise handling the Covid-19 outbreak at home.

"I'm not sure that there will be much focus on trade generally, including efforts to rejoin" the TPP successor grouping, "for the first year or so because there will be such a focus on Covid relief," Charles Freeman, senior vice president for Asia at the US Chamber of Commerce said this month.

RCEP "will help reduce or remove tariffs on industrial and agricultural products and set out rules for data transmission," said Luong Hoang Thai, head of the Multilateral Trade Policy Department at Vietnam's Ministry of Industry and Trade. The pact will take effect once enough participating countries ratify the agreement domestically within the next two years.

tariffs across many areas.

The deal was signed on the sidelines of an online ASEAN summit held as Asian leaders address tensions in the South China Sea and tackle plans for a post-pandemic economic recovery in a region where U.S.-China rivalry has been rising.

In an unusual ceremony, held virtually because of the coronavirus pandemic, leaders of RCEP countries took turns standing behind their trade ministers who, one by one, signed copies

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Malkangiri Collector booked for PA's 'murder'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Nov 15: Malkangiri police Sunday registered a murder case against the district Collector of Malkangiri and three others over the death of his personal assistant Debnarayan Panda.

The case was registered under Sections 302, 506, 204, 120(B) and 34 of Indian Penal Code (IPC).

The case was registered following a directive issued by the sub-divisional judicial magistrate (SDJM) court.

The cases were registered against the district Collector Manish Agarwal and three others under different Sections of the IPC in connection with the death of Panda, the personal assistant to the Collector, in December last year.

Reports said that Panda went missing December 27 last year. When Panda's family members launched a search for him, his body was recovered from the Satiguda reservoir, the following day. Police initially suspected that Panda might have committed suicide and registered a case of unnatural death.

However, things took a turn when his wife Banaja

The case was registered under Sections 302, 506, 201, 204, 120(B) and 34 of Indian Penal Code (IPC)

Panda alleged that police failed to conduct a proper investigation into the case and knocked the doors of the court praying for justice. She even filed a murder complaint at the police station, but the police allegedly did not register a case.

Panda's family had also moved the Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) seeking its directive to the state police to probe the death case afresh. The commission directed the Director General of Police (DGP) to conduct a proper probe into the matter.

Meanwhile, Panda's family members requested the court for directing the police to register a murder case against the Collector and three others.

Subsequently, DIG Safin Ahmed K (south-western range) conducted a probe into the incident and recorded the statements of over 20 persons

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Well, I don't have bad habits like bursting crackers and polluting atmosphere. I only play cards and gamble.

KENDRAPARA COVID CARE HOSPITAL

65% of funds spent on medicos' food

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 15: It may seem incredible, but the fact is that healthcare personnel at the Kendrapara Covid Care Hospital consumed 65 per cent of the total money allocated to the facility on food and accommodation instead of spending the money on patients.

The irregularity came to the fore when an RTI activist from the region, Prakash Chandra Das, filed an application demanding to know the amount allocated to the centre and the expenditure by the hospital authorities under different heads.

Das claimed that the authorities in charge of running the Covid Care hospital in the district have spent a whopping ₹98 lakh from the total amount they received from the district Collector of Kendrapara from April to October, 2020.

Das had filed the RTI application August 7, but the district authorities took more than three months to provide the information sought by him. Das succeeded in getting the information only after lodging a first appeal with the higher authorities over the inordinate delay.

The information provided by the District Public Health Officer of Kendrapara revealed that the office of Chief Medical Officer had



received a sum of ₹1,50,64,111 from the Collector for the management of Covid Care Centre during the above-mentioned period.

The RTI reply revealed that the CDMO office received ₹77,51,380 towards food expenses of the doctors, and paramedical staff. Similarly, around ₹15.21 lakh was spent on the accommodation and food charges for doctors from a private medical college and hospital in Bhubaneswar who are working at the hospital on temporary basis.

Meanwhile, the administration spent another ₹5 lakh as working lunch cost of the call center staff. Altogether, the district health officials spent ₹98,52,530 on food-related expenses, which is about 65 per cent of the total expenditure.

Nitish to take oath as Bihar CM today

AGENCIES

Patna, Nov 15: The leaders of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) Sunday participated in a joint meeting, where Nitish Kumar was elected as the alliance's leader in Bihar. Nitish Kumar will take oath as the Chief Minister of Bihar for a fourth consecutive term Monday.

The meeting started at 12:30 pm and was attended by a host of NDA leaders. The meeting of the NDA leaders was held at Nitish Kumar's official residence in Patna.



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, who was present at the meeting, announced that Kumar has been elected as the leader of the NDA in Bihar.

Before the outcome of the NDA meeting, the Janata Dal (United) had also elected Nitish Kumar as the legislative party leader in a separate meeting. Soon after the meeting, Kumar approached the Governor to stake claim to form the next Bihar government.

Earlier Friday, the four NDA partners in Bihar — BJP, JD(U), HAM and VIP — met at Nitish Kumar's residence for an informal meeting to discuss the future course.

THE NEW NORMAL



A person dressed as a Santa Claus interacting with children while sitting in a "Santa Claus bubble" in Aalborg, Denmark

After Gujarat, will Orissa HC go public?

The Supreme Court had favoured live streaming of its case hearings and formed a special committee to study its feasibility

MANISH KUMAR, OP

Bhubaneswar, Nov 15: Several law students and petitioners in Gujarat had a heave a sigh of relief when the Gujarat High Court recently started live streaming their court proceedings for the world to see.

However, most of the high courts in India, including the Orissa High Court, are shy to 'open courts' and telecasting its proceedings. During the pandemic-related lockdown, the Orissa High Court moved to video conferencing for hearing of cases — a paradigm shift from the physical courts.

According to lawyers practicing at the Orissa HC, the proceedings at the HC progressed faster and also were better during the online hear-

ing of cases. However, still there are several bottlenecks that create hurdles in court proceedings and also irk the judges and lawyers.

"The proceedings at the HC have progressed during the online hearing and it must be appreciated. The court sends a link to about 10 parties, which becomes dysfunctional once the hearings are over. This helps in avoiding overcrowding at the courts and has made the video conferencing easier," a lawyer told **ORISSA POST** requesting anonymity.

He, however, added, "On several occasions, many parties and their lawyers disrupt the proceedings when their voice/video suddenly pops up during the hearing. While such things are unintentional on



their parts, it often irks the judges as well as the lawyers."

Lack of awareness regarding online hearings and use of the technique has also added to the woes. The lawyers, however, appreciate the fact that the alternative arrangement during pandemic helped many parties as well as lawyers to join the hearings from across the state, reducing their cost of travel and also avoiding exposure to others dur-

ing the pandemic.

"Another advantage of holding online hearings in the HC was that the petitioner was able to sit with his/her lawyers during their case and see the case proceedings. In physical courts, petitioners often find it tough to analyse their case minutely owing to overcrowding and chaos," another lawyer said.

However, till now, the Orissa HC has not allowed the lawyers or anyone else to record its proceedings or share them anywhere. On the contrary, the proceedings at Gujarat HC are telecast live and are also available on Youtube.

In fact, the Supreme Court too had favoured live streaming of its case hearings for the public. A special committee was formed to study its

feasibility and the committee is now ready to submit its report to the apex court. If the feasibility report of the panel is approved, it is likely that proceedings in the HC and lower courts may be streamed live.

On the other side, lawyers had to face the brunt of making any part of the video conferencing exercise public during the pandemic. Recently, a contempt of court case was filed against a lawyer in Calcutta High Court for sharing the screen shots of an online court hearing.

The Orissa High Court has been using Jitsi Meet application for online hearings and has issued a detailed guideline for joining such online hearings, including a ban on recording and telecasting its proceedings.

Trump finally admits Biden has won

AGENCIES

Washington, Nov 13: President Donald Trump acknowledged that Joe Biden won the US presidential election for the time on Sunday, but claimed attempts to "steal votes" meant the contest was rigged.

The President stopped short of conceding defeat and his legal team is still focused on challenging the electoral process in the courts despite no evidence having been provided that there was widespread fraud.

His comments come after several thousand Trump supporters gathered in Washington DC to protest against the election results on Saturday, with clashes erupting and at least 20 arrests made.



In a late night string of tweets, the President claimed "radical Left ANTIFA SCUM" had been to blame for the violence and urged the police to "do your job and don't hold back!!!"

On Saturday, Trump — who still refuses to concede defeat despite Joe Biden having secured a decisive Electoral College victory — spent another day playing golf.

The President insisted there was "tremendous evidence of wide spread voter fraud" but failed to offer proof that there had been tampering on a scale large enough.

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	32.5°C	33.5°C
MIN	20.8°C	19.2°C
Humidity	58%	62%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

Forecast: Dry weather likely

leisure

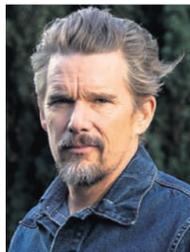


STALLONE JOINS THE SUICIDE SQUAD, CONFIRMS DIRECTOR JAMES GUNN

Action icon Sylvester Stallone has joined the cast of *The Suicide Squad* confirmed filmmaker James Gunn. Gunn posted a picture on Instagram, where he is posing with Stallone. The two are looking at the camera and smiling.

ETHAN HAWKE FINDS UPSIDE IN GROWING OLD

Hollywood star Ethan Hawke says the upside of growing old is watching your kids become adults. Hawke has four children -- Maya and Levon with former wife, actress Uma Thurman, and Clementine and Indiana with current spouse Ryan.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
You are very sensitive, and some people will disturb your peace of mind today. However, getting irritated will only make matters worse. Reflect in isolation what may be at the root of the problem. Ganesh says it is closer to you than you think.

TAURUS
People around you will be surprised to witness the considerate and compassionate side of you today, says Ganesh. Problems may come knocking but you, along with support from your loved ones, will handle them with brilliant tact.

GEMINI
You will be in an extremely emotional and romantic mood today. You may be worried about your personal relations, health, diet, career etc. You need to guard against giving into excessive stress and worry and look after your health, says Ganesh.

CANCER
The day is very favourable, says Ganesh. You will feel a sense of joy and happiness with your valuable possessions. You may fall into love or have a strong romantic ties with someone. A great time for lovers.

LEO
You need to keep your temper in check and guard against being aggressive today. You need to channelise your energies towards some productive pursuits, otherwise you may make someone the target of your anger.

VIRGO
Leadership is your forte and you shall receive kudos for the manner in which you handle your team. Much awaited promotions will materialise and so will some extra cash in your wallet. Wisely enough, you didn't get all this by not effectively balancing home and work, says Ganesh.

LIBRA
Ganesh says today you will get the opportunity to lay bare your thoughts and feelings and exchange ideas with others. Your mind will be at ease and more relieved when you have opened up. Your business acumen will be praiseworthy today.

SCORPIO
Your rung in the social ladder just went higher today. But be wary of green-eyed monsters and ill words. Fight tooth and nail – if necessary – to protect our reputation, says Ganesh. But also learn to find your enemies' Achilles' heel and target it ferociously.

SAGITTARIUS
Brace yourselves; the day has a lot of uncertainties today. First being financial. You may have to shell out money for unexpected expenses. But, this may also teach you to be economically independent. Always look at the brighter side, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN
If you are an engineer, you will consider about investing your money in your dream project or a business venture. For sports person, today will be a favourable day for health and wealth, foresees Ganesh.

AQUARIUS
You are a strong-willed person, and during the toughest of times you remain focused. A constant smile on your face and positive attitude will help you win the hearts and minds of people at work as well as at home.

PISCES
You will bump into an old friend or a distant relative today. This rendezvous may be with a person who you were close to long ago and it will warm your heart with nostalgia. You might contemplate taking a break from your daily grind to spend some time to rekindle your childhood memories or visit your hometown.

Feluda Forever!

ACTOR SOUMITRA CHATTERJEE RECEIVED INDIAN CINEMA'S HIGHEST HONOUR DADASAHEB PHALKE AWARD, PADMA BHUSHAN AND WAS ALSO HONOURED WITH THE LEGION D'HONNEUR IN FRANCE FOR HIS CONTRIBUTION TO WORLD CINEMA

AGENCIES

He was one of the best known faces of Indian cinema, the affable *Bhadralok* icon who crafted a towering stature ironically banking on down-to-earth, believable characters that represented middle-class Bengal. The brand of stardom was in stark contrast to the other shining luminary of contemporary cinema in the state – Uttam Kumar – whose position as *Mahanayak* in the Bengali psyche was primarily cemented in idol worship and mass hysteria.

His stardom was sensational, and yet born out of realism. He was the mascot of the peerless Satyajit Ray's oeuvre, having worked with the maestro in 14 films, and yet he scored with the same assuredness in works of contemporary commercial powerhouses as Ajoy Kar and Tarun Mazumdar. He is the Dadasaheb Phalke Award (2012) and Padma Bhushan (2004) recipient who was also honoured with the Legion d'Honneur (2018) in France for his contribution to



January 19, 1935 – November 15, 2020

JEWELS IN SOUMITRA'S CROWN

- Apur Sansar
- Devi
- Saat Pake Bandha
- Charulata
- Parineeta
- Aranyer Dinratri
- Sonar Kella
- Jay Baba Felunath
- Ghare Baire
- Ashani Sanket

graph. Soumitra made his debut with *Apur Sansar* (1959) and, over the next three decades, would work in Ray projects as *Devi* (1960), *Teen Kanya* (1961), *Abhijati* (1962), *Charulata* (1964), *Kapurush O Mahapurush* (1965), *Aranyer Din Ratri* (1969), *Ashani Sanket* (1973), *Sonar Kella* (1974), *Joy Baba Felunath* (1978), *Hirak Rajar Deshe* (1980), *Ghare Baire* (1984), *Ganashatru* (1989) and *Shakha Proshakha* (1990).

It was a filmography that Ray, one of the world's greatest filmmakers ever, shared with his chosen on-screen emissary. But if Ray worked with Soumitra 14 times, almost every major filmmaker the actor collaborated with also tended to repeat him. While Soumitra's close personal and professional association with Ray is definitely comparable to the Akira Kurosawa-Toshiro Mifune and Ingmar Bergman-Max Von Sydow partnerships, his career continued to flourish even after Ray's death in 1992. Soumitra Chatterjee did not just act in films, he remained a powerful presence in group theatre including unforgettable performances in many productions of a *King Lear* adaptation on stages. He straddled the theatre, acted on stage, directed and wrote plays, essays, poetry. He recited and painted.

With Soumitra's demise, Bengal has perhaps lost its last Renaissance Man after Rabindra Nath Tagore and Satyajit Ray.



Soumitra is seen with his mentor legendary director Satyajit Ray

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- Dadasaheb Phalke Award - 2012
- Commandeur de l' Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by France - 1999
- Padma Bhushan - 2004
- Sangeet Natak Akademi Tagore Ratna - 2012
- Chevalier of Legion d'Honneur[2][3] by France - 2018

Soumitra had also three National Awards, seven Filmfare Awards and eight Bengal Film Journalists' Association Awards to his credit in a career spanning over six decades



Ayushmann's new post impresses fans

Mumbai: Actor Ayushmann Khurrana's one-liner about the day after Diwali touched a thread in many a Twitterati's heart. "Tum Diwali ke agle din ka khaalipan ho," his tweet about the deserted and quiet look of the day, his thoughts with his trademark one-liner got the reaction he usually does. Ayushmann's tweet has received hilarious reactions from the social media users. "You are the poisonous air followed by Diwali," a user commented.

"Visit Delhi...people burst crackers here post Diwali, too. You won't realise emptiness here," another one quipped. Several other Twitter users praised Ayushmann for his shayaris. "Poet Ayushmann is back!! I was just missing these tweets so much," a netizen tweeted. Ayushmann is busy shooting for Abhishek Kapoor's *Chandigarh Kare Aashiqui* in Chandigarh, and has checked into a hotel to stay away from his family as a safety measure amid the pandemic. IANS

Yami bonding well with Jacqueline

Dharamshala: It seems Yami Gautam is bonding well with Bhoot Police co-stars, especially Jacqueline Fernandez. On Diwali, the two actresses paid a visit to the Kunal Pathri Devi temple in Dharamshala. Yami took to Instagram and shared a few pictures. In one of the images, Yami and Jacqueline can be seen looking at the scenic view from the temple. "Blissful evening with one of the nicest actors I have ever worked," Yami captioned the post. The two were spotted wearing heavy jackets and coats. For the unversed, Yami and Jacqueline will be seen sharing screen space together in *Bhoot Police*, also featuring Saif Ali Khan and Arjun Kapoor. The whole team is currently shooting in Dharamshala. IANS



FUN post

PEANUTS



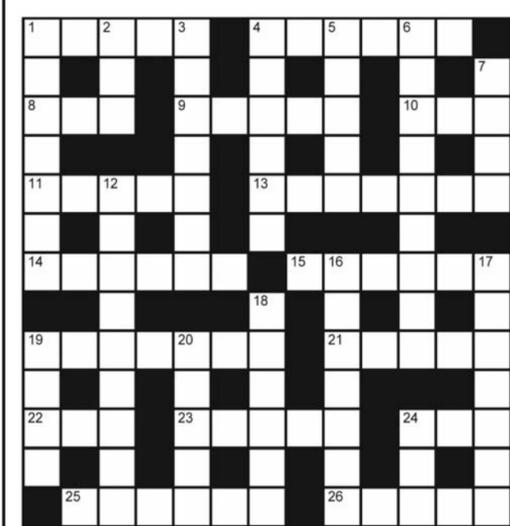
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



CROSSWORD



- Across**
- No drumsticks needed
 - Mischief-maker
 - Auction offering
 - ___ firma
 - Moving option
 - Eskimo hut
 - Hush up!
 - Peeved
 - Mauve, e.g.
 - Suitcase
 - Office stations
 - Grassland
 - Tropical fruit
 - Life story, in brief
 - Idolises
 - Spa handout
 - Loud and tacky
 - Free-for-all
 - Edison and the like
 - Pants part
 - Pool attendant
 - Seasoned sailor (3,4)
 - Attar (4,3)
 - Rots
 - Humdinger
 - Wrath
 - Fiddle stick
- Down**
- Ghent locale
 - Fishing equipment
 - Result

SUDOKU

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

C		1		9	3	E		5	
	E	4			8			A	
	A	5	6	4		1	9	B	
					5			C	
3	2	9	C		E	D	B		
		0		4			2		
					3	A	C	D	
9			6	B	5			7	0
	7	8	4	2			B	D	9
	1	3	9		7	0		5	
4	0				3	2	6	9	A
1	4	7	8		D			6	E
B			E	A				9	3
		1	5		E	4		0	
	C	6		B	D	4		1	

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

C	R	E	G	A	G	C
N	E	R	R	H	T	H
M	E	O	G	P	A	
D	A	M	R	O	U	T
I	D	G	S	A	H	
I	N	S	P	I	D	A
N	A	P	A			
P	O	M	E	S	P	U
T	S	T	R	E	I	
N	T	H	O	G	S	A
E	S	R	U	E	P	
A	R	C	H	E	S	E
S	Y	O	S	O	R	

SUDOKU

B	A	D	5	2	3	E	1	9	4	7	6	C	0	8
1	8	7	B	4	D	6	5	C	A	0	3	E	2	9
E	9	3	1	6	0	8	A	4	2	B	C	D	7	5
C	5	6	A	7	9	B	2	0	E	8	D	3	4	1
2	4	0	C	E	8	3	D	7	9	1	5	6	B	A
0	C	8	4	9	1	2	E	6	5	3	A	B	D	7
9	7	B	3	0	A	C	8	D	6	2	4	5	1	E
D	1	2	6	C	B	9	4	5	7	E	8	0	A	3
A	3	E	8	5	2	1	7	B	D	C	0	9	6	4
4	8	7	D	0	3	A	1	9	8	6	B	C	2	5
3	0	9	0	1	5	4	8	E	A	2	7	8	6	1
8	8	4	9	3	6	A	C	1	0	5	7	2	E	D
6	E	1	0	8	7	5	0	2	B	4	9	A	3	C
5	2	A	E	B	C	7	6	3	8	1	4	9	0	5
7	0	C	2	A	4	D	9	8	3	6	E	1	5	B

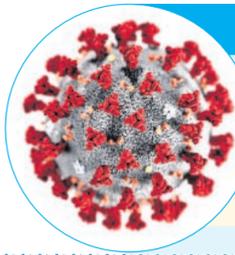
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



HOMAGE TO VINOBA

People from various walks of life pay tribute to Acharya Vinoba Bhave on his death anniversary at Sarvodaya Nagar in Puri, Sunday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	5,45,44,313	3,80,24,216	13,21,546
India	87,28,585	81,13,814	1,28,709
Odisha	3,08,659	2,97,862	1,527

Startup count rises to 774

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 15: The number of startups in state has grown up to 774 with employment opportunities for more than 6,000 youths, an official said Sunday.

"The state Startup Council recognised the first startup in June 14, 2017. Since then, because of the overwhelming support, the number of recognised startups has increased to 774, including 250 women-led units, by November this year," Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Secretary Satyabrata Sahu said attending the state Startup Council meeting here Sunday.

Sahu said that more than ₹15-crore financial assistance has been provided to 196 startups and incubators sponsored through 13 nodal agencies. Chairing the state Startup Council meeting, Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy directed to scale up the startup ecosystem in state through strategic partnership and facilitating policy intervention. He emphasised on a strong relationship of support, facilitation and handholding between the incubators and startup entrepreneurs.

Tripathy ordered to put in place an advanced startup hub in the state with state-of-the-art common facilities. It was decided to complete setting up the hub by March 2021. It

STARTUP COUNCIL MEETING

In-principle approval was accorded for providing financial assistance to five startups and four incubators

MORE THAN ₹15-CRORE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE HAS BEEN PROVIDED TO 196 STARTUPS AND INCUBATORS

The first startup was recognised in June 14, 2017. Since then, the number of recognised startups has increased to 774, including 250 women-led units

SATYABRATA SAHU | MSME SECRETARY

will be a centre of excellence with co-working spaces, fab-lab and common services under one roof. The Chief Secretary ordered to expedite the process for the launching of the fund-of-funds for startups.

Development Commissioner Suresh Chandra Mohapatra participated in the discussions and advised making the startup ecosystem more vibrant with constant follow-up and outcome assessment.

The meeting accorded in-principle approval for providing financial assistance to five startups and four incubators.

The startups considered for as-

sistance included Awalk Innovation Pvt. Ltd, Subhalaxmi Future Solution (OPC) Pvt Ltd, Sanlop Health Care Solutions Pvt Ltd, Batti Ghar Sustainable Solution Pvt Ltd and Xioty Solutions Pvt Ltd.

The incubators considered for assistance included Incovations Foundation, Berhampur; Sri Sri University Innovation Pvt Ltd, Bhubaneswar; Foundation for Technology and Business Incubation, NIT Rourkela, and KIIT Technology Business Incubator, Bhubaneswar. The overall assistance considered for these units is nearly ₹2.88 crore.

Delivery executive, customer accused of stealing orders

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 15: Accusing a delivery boy and customer of cheating a prominent e-commerce company, an employee has lodged a complaint with Mancheswar Police in this regard.

According to sources, the accused customer at GGP Colony here used to order costly products like Apple phones, laptops from the e-commerce company and later cancel the same. He, with the help of the delivery boy of the area, took away the product inside the pack and later returned the same by putting some fruits, stones and other waste material in the parcel. Police have started investigations into the matter after registering a case in this regard.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



STATE SEES DROP IN TEMPERATURE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 15: Cold wave conditions prevailed in most parts of Odisha Sunday, with Daringbadi in Kandhamal district recording the lowest temperature in the state at 13 degrees Celsius, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

On the other hand, several parts

of Odisha witnessed a dip in mercury with three places in the state recording less than 14 degree Celsius.

The IMD has forecast that similar conditions will prevail across the state for the next two to three days.

Apart from Daringbadi, the areas where temperatures dipped below 14 degrees Celsius are Angul, Sonepur and Phulbani.

Meanwhile Cuttack and Bhubaneswar reported 22 degree Celsius and 19.5 degree Celsius respectively. The trough in easterlies from South Andaman Sea to Eastcentral Bay of Bengal moved southwards and dry weather most likely to prevail over the districts of Odisha, the MeT office predicted. Bhubaneswar Meteorological

Centre scientist Umasankar Das said, "The hilly areas in the state witnessed a plummet in the temperature. Daringbadi reported lowest 13 degree Celsius while Koraput recorded 14 degree Celsius." The night temperature has slumped significantly in south coastal region and one or two places in the interior part of the state, Das added.

ACTOR'S WIFE FALLS INTO MAHANADI; RESCUED BY POLICE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Nov 15: The wife of Odia film actor Amlan Das was rescued from Mahanadi river near the Madhusudan Setu Sunday.

Police and family sources claimed that Amlan's wife Bhoomika fell off the Madhusudan bridge while disposing of puja materials.

"Around 1.40 pm, we were informed that Amlan's wife Bhoomika fell into Mahanadi river. A PCR team rushed to the spot. ASIs Trailokyanath Parida and Parsuram Jali rescued Bhoomika with the help of some local youths," said an official of CDA Phase-2 police station.

Bhoomika was immediately taken to a hospital for health check up, police said. "We have questioned Bhoomika and her husband Amlan," said CDA Phase-2 police in-charge Bijayini Singh.

Singh, however, rejected the suicide attempt angle into the incident.

'Mo School' completes 4 years

APPROXIMATELY 18 LAKH ALUMNI HELPED THEIR 13,448 SCHOOLS MONETARILY UNDER MO SCHOOL SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN 2017

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 15: To reach out to Odias in India and abroad and leverage emotional connect of alumni to their alma matters, the state government launched the 'Mo school' initiative November 14, 2017.

The project which aims to provide a philanthropic platform for alumni to contribute and catalyze a healthy, inclusive and creative environment to groom a new generation of dreamers, has completed four years.

The school and mass Education department, on the occasion, organised a virtual webinar headed by Minister Samir Ranjan Dash Sunday.

Several alumni of state schools also participate in the webinar. Namrata Pattanayak of California said that Mo School project inspired many Odias in America to do something for their alma matters. Many of them helped in preparing smart classrooms and study facility in



their old schools.

Bibhu Prasad Acharya, a senior administrator from Telangana, said, "Mo school project reaches out to Odias in India and abroad, and leverage emotional connect of alumni to their alma matters, inspire community action, facilitate stakeholder participation, it also address needs of school-going children of varying ability, caste, gender, religion, linguistic-origin and ethnicity."

The project enables schools to

provide appropriate creative, technological, physiological and psycho-social support right from the early formative years to help children blossom and achieve their full potential as they grow.

Acharya said that he had taken up development work worth ₹40 lakh in his childhood school Unit-IX Govt high school.

At present 13,448 schools are included under Mo project and approximately 18 lakh alumni had joined and helped under this project. The government aims to reach 25,000 schools by March 2021.

School and Mass education minister Samir Ranjan Dash said, "We aim to reach all schools in 30 districts of Odisha. We have asked all district officials to work towards its success."

Susmita Bagchi, chairperson, Mo School, said, "We want the alumni to not only help and support monetarily but also to provide time and labour for the school."

WINTER SESSION

Speaker convenes all-party meeting

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 15: Speaker Surjya Narayan Patro has convened an all-party meeting November 18 ahead of the winter session of the state Legislative Assembly.

The all-party meeting has been called to discuss the agenda and functioning of the winter session of the Assembly amidst Covid-19 pandemic, Patro told the media Sunday.

Opinion will be sought from the members on discussion of starred questions in the House. The newly elected MLAs Bijay Shankar Das and Swarup Das will also be sworn-in on the first day of the winter session, he said.

The Speaker made clarified that like the previous session, the notice of an adjournment motion on a particular issue cannot be given for discussion for two days in the House.

The winter session of the Odisha Legislative Assembly will commence from November 20 and con-

tinue till December 3. As per the schedule, the Supplementary Budget for financial year 2020-21 will be presented on the first day of the session.

Meanwhile, All MLAs of Odisha will undergo Covid-19 test before commencement of the winter session of the Legislative Assembly. Aside from the MLAs, private secretaries of the legislators, Assembly employees and journalists covering the winter session will also undergo the test. Only those who test negative



for the virus will be allowed to enter the House and Assembly premises, Patro said.

The test will be carried out November 17, 18, and 19. The second phase test will be done during the Assembly session, dates of which will be decided later. The Health Department of the state government and the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) will conduct the tests, said Patro.

Naveen condoles Soumitra's demise

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Nov 15: Governor Ganeshi Lal and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Sunday mourned the death of iconic Bengali actor Soumitra Chatterjee and said that he will always be remembered for his stellar roles.

Chatterjee, 85, died at a hospital in Kolkata after an over-a-month-long battle with multiple ailments.

Expressing deep grief, Ganeshi Lal said the veteran actor will always be remembered for his roles and association with director Satyajit Ray.

The chief minister said that

Chatterjee leaves behind a great legacy.

Chatterjee has been immortalised by his on-screen portrayal of Feluda and timeless collaborations with Ray, Patnaik said.

Union Petroleum and Steel Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said the world of art has lost an il-

lustrious thespian.

"The cultural world is poorer today by this loss," he said.

BJP national vice-president Bajajayant Panda also mourned the death of Chatterjee.

"With his passing ends an extraordinary phase of Bengali Cinema," he tweeted.

Padayatra for coastal highway

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, Nov 15: Members of joint action committee Sunday took out a Padayatra from the Holy City here to Bhubaneswar to press for the early execution of a coastal highway project in Odisha under the Bharatmala scheme of the Union government.

The committee claimed that the coastal highway project is yet to be executed in Odisha even though an announcement in this regard was made six years ago.

"We will submit a memorandum in this regard to the Prime Minister through the Governor of Odisha and the Chief Minister November 16 (Monday). A Satyagraha (dharna) would be organised at the regional office of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change at Chandrasekharpur in Bhubaneswar November 17 and 18," said Tuna Swain, convener of the joint action committee.

Swain claimed that the proposed coastal highway will boost transport, tourism and business sec-



The Padayatra by the members of the joint action committee, Sunday. PHOTO

tors in the coastal districts of Odisha. This apart, the coastal highway will help the district administrations to manage calamities like cyclones, Swain said. "The state government has given its approval for the Digha-Satapada stretch of the proposed coastal highway. However, the Ministry of Environment and Forest is yet to give its nod to the project. We

urge the Prime Minister to intervene into the issue at the earliest," Swain added.

Members of the joint action committee including Bimbardhar Baral, Babuli Ransingh, Gagan Pradhan, Dhaneswar Pradhan, Umarani Dalei, Panchanan Palei, Sukanta Biswal, Sarojini Swain and Sandhyarani Sahu participated in the Padayatra.

After Balasore & Tirtol, focus shifts to Pipli

THOUGH THE ELECTION COMMISSION IS YET TO ISSUE A FORMAL NOTIFICATION FOR BY-ELECTION TO PIPLI CONSTITUENCY, ANALYSTS ARE SPECULATING ON POSSIBLE POLITICAL SCENARIOS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, Nov 15: With the completion of by-elections to Balasore Sadar and Tirtol Assembly constituencies, now the focus is slowly moving towards Pipli Assembly seat which is lying vacant due to the death of BJD MLA Pradeep Maharathy.

Though the Election Commission is yet to issue a formal notification for by-election to Pipli constituency, analysts have started speculating on the possible political scenarios in the high profile seat.

"The ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD) has successfully retained Tirtol Assembly segment and snatched away Balasore Sadar from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Now, it would be interesting to see whether the regional party will retain Pipli seat or not," said a political observer.

According to political observers, the BJD had maintained its dominance over Pipli segment for last



many years. So, the regional party will try its best to retain the seat in the by-election. The BJP which had secured the second position in Pipli segment in the 2019 Assembly election may go all out to snatch the seat from BJD, they said.

Congress candidates had represented Pipli seat in the Odisha Assembly from 1951 to 1977. Pradeep Maharathy as a candidate of erstwhile Janata Dal had won the segment in 1985 and 1990 elections.

Congress candidate Yudhishir Samantaray had defeated Maharathy in the 1995 Assembly

2019 Assembly election result

PARTY	CANDIDATE	VOTES
BJD	Pradeep Maharathy	88,518
BJP	Ashrit Patnaik	72,731
Cong	Ajit Mangaraj	9,830

election. However, Maharathy had been elected from the segment for five times consecutively as a BJD candidate from 2000 to 2019.

In 2019 Assembly election, Maharathy had trounced BJP candidate Ashrit Patnaik. Maharathy had secured altogether 88,518 votes while Patnaik managed to get 72,731 votes. Congress candidate Ajit Mangaraj had put up a dismal performance by getting only 9,830 votes.

"Pipli was well-known for the political tussle between Pradeep Maharathy and Congress leader Yudhishir Samantaray. The Congress party used to secure second position

from Pipli seat by giving party ticket to Samantaray. In the last Assembly election, Ajit Mangaraj fought from Congress and the grand old party came down to third position," said locals.

Political observers are of the opinion that the BJD may field someone from Maharathy's family to encash on the sympathy factor. Speculations are rife that the ruling party may field Maharathy's widow Pratibha Maharathy or his son Rudrapratap in the by-election.

"The BJD had successfully retained Tirtol seat by fielding deceased MLA Bishnu Das' son Bijaya Shankar Das. The party may opt for the same formula in Pipli by nominating someone from Maharathy's family," said a political analyst.

It is worth mentioning here that Pradeep Maharathy had passed away October 4 this year. As per the constitutional provision, the by-election to Pipli seat would be conducted within April 3, 2021.

17 more succumb to virus

ODISHA'S CORONAVIRUS CASELOAD MOUNTS TO 3,08,659 AS 753 MORE PERSONS TEST POSITIVE FOR THE INFECTION IN 24 HOURS

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Nov 15: State's Covid-19 tally Sunday mounted to 3,08,659 with 753 more people testing positive for infection, while 17 fresh fatalities pushed Odisha's toll to 1,527, an official of Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said.

Of the 753 cases, 434 were reported from quarantine centres, and the remaining detected during contact tracing. All 30 districts in the coastal state reported less than 100 cases each, the official said.

Sundargarh recorded the maximum number of cases at 75, followed by Khurda at 74 and Nuapada at 65. Taking to Twitter, the H&FW department said, "Regret to inform the demise of seventeen #COVID19 positive patients while under treatment in hospitals."

Four deaths each were recorded in Khurda, including a 102-year-old female, and Sundargarh districts, followed by three each in Bargarh and Sambalpur. One each succumbed to the infection in Boudh, Dhenkanal and Kalahandi,



No brake to nCoV deaths

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Four deaths each were recorded in Khurda and Sundargarh districts, followed by three each in Bargarh and Sambalpur. One each succumbed to the infection in Boudh, Dhenkanal and Kalahandi

Over 52.59 lakh sample tests have been conducted in the state, including 40,661 Saturday

The positivity rate in Odisha stands at 5.87

the official pointed out.

As many as 53 other Covid-19 patients have died due to comorbidities. The positivity rate in the state stands at 5.87.

Over 52.59 lakh sample tests have been conducted in the state, including 40,661 Saturday.

City records 57 fresh cases

The Capital city registered 57 fresh cases of Covid-19 in the past 24 hours, taking the total cases to 30,127, a Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) official said, Sunday.

As many as 57 persons who had

earlier tested positive for the viral infection have recovered in the last 24 hours, the BMC tweeted. With this, the total recovered cases in Bhubaneswar stand at 29,220.

The Temple City has so far witnessed 690 Covid-19 deaths, the civic body said.

YOUTH DIES IN ROAD MISHAP



POST NEWS NETWORK

Janla, Nov 15: A 22-year-old motorcyclist died after being knocked down by a speeding truck near the fuel station here Sunday morning, a senior Janla police official said.

According to the official, the mishap took place around 10 in the morning when the victim—Arun Dakua—a resident of Maitama in Nayagarh, was on way to Bhubaneswar on his motorcycle (OR 25 C 6397).

"A speeding truck (CG 10 AD 7005) rammed Dakua's two-wheeler from the rear, leaving him critically injured. A profusely bleeding Dakua was rushed to All India Institute of Medical Sciences where he was declared 'dead on arrival'," the police official said.

The official further said that Dakua's body has been handed over to his family after an autopsy. "While the erring truck has been taken into custody, its driver is on the run ever since the mishap," added the official.

CUTTACK YOUTH DROWNS IN PURI

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, Nov 15: A Cuttack youth met a watery grave while enjoying a bath in the sea here Sunday.

The deceased has been identified as Vijendra Barik of Jagatpur area in Cuttack district.

Barik along with some of his friends had come to Puri. They were enjoying their bath in the sea near Digabareni square. All of a sudden, Barik was caught in a current of wave and got dragged into the sea.

His friends immediately raised an alarm and hearing them, life guards present at the beach came to their rescue. They managed to rescue Barik and rushed him to Puri district headquarters hospi-

tal (DHH) where the doctors declared him dead.

A tourist from Jharkhand also drowned at the Blue Flag Beach in Puri while he and his family members were bathing in the sea October 27.

Notably, the 870-metre long Golden Beach from Digabareni Square to Mayfair Hotel here was accorded Blue Flag Beach status October 11. A whopping Rs 11,00,00,000 was spent to equip the beach with eco-friendly and tourist-friendly amenities including safe bathing zone, watchtowers, toilets, pedestrian tracks etc.

A certain amount is being collected from tourists who wish to spend some hours at the Golden Beach.

Theatre outfit stages protest

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 15: Several theatre artistes of the state and members of Odisha Natya Sangha sat in silent protest at the gates of Rabindra Mandap Sunday demanding reopening of theatres for resumption of cultural events in the state.

Due to the Covid pandemic, theatres like Rabindra Mandap, Bhanja Kala Mandap and others were shut down. Several artistes of the state attempted online performances but without any specific set of audience it did not work out.

Haren Sahoo, president, Odisha Natya Sangha, said, "Many other states have reopened halls and auditoriums gradually for cultural events. The state government should realise that almost all theatre workers in the state are jobless. We can open theatres in a phased manner



Children participate in a drawing competition organised by the Satyanagar Ladies' Forum in Bhubaneswar to create awareness on novel coronavirus, Sunday

FAKE SPICE MAKING UNIT BUSTED

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Nov 15: Yet another fake spice manufacturing unit was busted in Jagatpur industrial area here Sunday.

Acting on a tip-off, the Commissionerate Police conducted a raid at Jagannath Industries in the new industrial area of Jagatpur. During the raid, the police seized a huge quantity of adulterated turmeric and chili powder worth lakhs of rupees.

Chemical items, machinery and other items used for packaging were also seized from the site. The packets of turmeric and chili powder bearing names of branded companies were being supplied to markets.

In this connection, the police have detained two persons identified as Bapi Prusty and his brother Tiki Prusty.

Notably, Jagatpur police had busted an adulterated-sauce manufacturing unit near the IB Road September 26. The unit had been manufacturing adulterated tomato and chili sauce and selling them in the names of reputed brands.

Earlier, Choudhary police in Cuttack district had busted a fake cow ghee and sauce manufacturing unit near the Girls' High School in Ward No-9 September 14.

A day earlier, their counterparts in Cuttack city had busted a fake 'puja Items' manufacturing unit in Chamada Godown Lane near Canal Road of Ranihaat under Malgodwn Police Station in the city.

ECoR to receive award for overall performance

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 15: The East Coast Railway (ECoR) will receive the prestigious 'Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant Best Zonal Railway Shield-2020' for all around performance among the zones in the Indian Railways, an official said.

ECoR will receive the 'shield' for the third time. Earlier, ECoR had bagged the 'shield' for all round performance in 2008-09 and 2015-16, the official said.

Named after freedom fighter and former Union Minister Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, the prestigious award is given every year to the zonal railway whose performance is adjudged to be the 'best' amongst all zones in Indian Railways. Railway Minister Piyush Goyal will hand over the shield to ECoR in the upcoming Railway National Award Function.

The criteria of selection for the award is based on several parameters including revenue and earn-

ings, goods traffic, punctuality of trains, passenger traffic, coach performance, energy consumption, utilisation of motive power and railway stock, operating ratio, economy in manpower and stock utilisation.

This apart, ECoR will also receive Traffic Transportation Shield, Accounts and Financial Management Shield and Sales Management Shield during the Railway National Award Ceremony, said the official.

No roster duty for S&ME staff in Nov

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 15: Officials and staff of the School and Mass Education Department will not do any roster arrangement for the month of November as the department has withdrawn its earlier order in this regard. A notification has been issued by the department in this regard. All the staff will attend the office

on all working days and any staff having Covid-19 symptoms can remain in home isolation.

"All officers and Staff of School and Mass Education Department shall attend the office as usual on all working days. Officers and staff suffering from or developing Covid-19 symptoms may remain in home isolation with the prior permission of competent authority", the notification read.

MOTHER WORSHIP



A priest offers puja to Goddess Kali at a pandal near the railway station in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

OP PHOTO

Schools, outfits observe Children's Day

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 15: Several schools of the city and organisations like PECUC and Swabhiman observed Children's Day with fervour recently.

The 31st edition of PECUC 'Sisumela' was inaugurated on the occasion of Children's Day in Bhubaneswar. The inaugural ceremony was held in virtual platform due to COVID-19 situation and keeping in mind children's safety.

Ranjan Kumar Das, IAS, Director of Culture Department inaugurated the ceremony in presence of eminent actress and PECUC's Goodwill Ambassador for promotion of child rights Bhoomika Dash among others.

Pradosh Kumar Pattnaik, Senior Journalist and President of PECUC Sisumela committee presided over the inaugural function and said PECUC is working since last 30 years to bring smile in the face of every children. Minakhi Panda, chairperson, PECUC, said, "Children



should be patient and remain safe during this crisis period."

Actress Bhoomika Dash discussed about the different challenges that the children are facing due to this COVID-19 situation and encouraged the children to engage themselves in various creative work.

On similar lines, DAV Public School, Kalinga Nagar celebrated children's day amidst and pomp

and fervor in its premises observing all cannons of COVID-19. The occasion started with a floral tribute to the country's first Prime Minister Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru on his auspicious birth anniversary.

In the formal meeting organised to mark this occasion, Principal of the school Bipin Kumar Sahoo highlighted the importance of the day and urged the students to prepare

themselves as per the need of the hour and stand up to the expectations that Pandit Nehru dreamt about the nation.

It was followed by a beautiful chorus and colourful cultural programme on the virtual platform by the teachers aimed at boosting the morale and confidence of the students during this trying time of pandemic.

The 19th edition of Anjali international children festival 2020 has begun on the digital platform. Hundreds attended the event via zoom app and witnessed the Anjali inauguration programme.

The programme took off the air with the welcome address of Dr. Sruti Mohapatra, the founder and chief executive of Swabhiman and chief coordinator of the Anjali festival.

Expressing her happiness to see the Anjali programme finally going off the air, in these difficult times of Covid, she welcomed the dignitaries and made the announcement of the nth number of programs that Anjali is going to present.

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Labour contractors on prowl as migrants face job crunch

POST NEWS NETWORK

Lathore/Kantabanji, Nov 15: As the menace of Covid pandemic is yet to subside, thousands of migrant workers who had returned to their native places in Bolangir district after losing livelihood are being lured back to other states.

Middlemen and labour contractors are actively working in parts of the district and transporting the labourers in private vehicles with scant regard to social distancing and other safety norms. Such cases are common in Khaprakhol and Kantabanji areas while the labour department is allegedly looking the other way.

Most parts of Western Odisha are prone to migration of labour but migration during the pandemic has posed threat to their lives. Over 20 people or more are taken in each vehicle for hundreds of kilometers. Locals alleged that though labour trafficking has been on, the labour department has failed to act.

Khaprakhol is a tribal-dominated area where most of the families are marginal farmers and even landless. They eke out their living for six months on farming while they look for work in other states for the remaining six months.

Thousands of migrants have returned home after lockdown in March. Owing to restrictions, they are unable to get work sufficiently. For lack of alternative livelihood back home, they have to suffer.

The central and the state governments had announced assistance for the returnee migrants and promised creation of jobs for them. But all were not lucky enough to get jobs.

According to reports, things did not turn out to be favourable for them with the economy already battered due to lockdowns and shut-



FILE PHOTO

BANE OF MIGRATION

Trafficking of labourers to other states by middlemen are common in Khaprakhol and Kantabanji areas while the labour department is allegedly looking the other way

Thousands of migrants have returned home after lockdown in March but owing to restrictions, they are unable to get work sufficiently

The rescued labourers claimed as they had no work due to the pandemic this year, they had no other choice but to leave for Visakhapatnam for work

downs. Amid relaxation of restrictions, migrant workers from various parts of Bolangir, seemingly upset over job crunch, are in a hurry to look for work. They are easily falling into the traps of middlemen and heading towards other states. Earlier, they used to get advances from labour contractors, but now in many cases they are being taken without advances.

Labour contractors were earlier taking labourers in trains. At present, they have engaged rented private vehicles to carry them to other states. Labour contractors are visiting villages and taking advantage of the needy workers in rural pockets.

In the last two weeks, Khaprakhol and Lathore police have rescued over 50 labourers, but the labour department is in slumber.

Our correspondent contacted labour inspector Dibyashankar Dharua but he did not respond to phone call.

Various quarters have demanded

that the district administration take action to check labour migration.

A report from Kantabanji said 56 bonded labourers, including 23 women and eight children, were about to be transported to Hyderabad from Kantabanji railway station a couple of days ago.

Acting on a tip-off, Kantabanji police conducted a raid at the railway station and rescued the labourers. The labourers belonged to Barpali in Bargarh district, Muribahal in Bolangir, Boden and Sinapali in Nuapada district.

A middleman was taking them to Vishakhapatnam to engage them at a brick kiln. They were to board the Korba-Vishakhapatnam Link Express. The middleman, however, managed to escape, taking advantage of darkness.

According to the rescued labourers, as they had no work due to the pandemic this year, they had no other choice but to leave for Visakhapatnam to look for work.

Patnagarh massacre: 5 held in Nabarangpur

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jhariaon, Nov 15: Nabarangpur police arrested five persons Sunday from Jhariaon area in connection with the murder of six members of a family at Sanrapada village under Patnagarh police limits in Bolangir district. The accused were handed over to Patnagarh police Sunday.

This was stated by Patnagarh IIC Priyanka Routray. She added that Bolangir SP Madkar Sandeep Sampat visited the crime spot and intensified efforts to nab other culprits.

One of the arrested belonged to Singasari while four others belonged to Jhariaon area.

Jhariaon IIC Umesh Kumar Sahu said that the five were handed over to his Patnagarh counterpart.



FILE PHOTO

The slain couple and their children had migrated from neighbouring Jharkhand and had been residing in Sanrapada for last 10 years

Notably, the six family members were hacked to death in Sanrapada under Patnagarh police limits November 11. The deceased were Bulu Jani (50), his wife Jyoti (48), their two daughters Sarita (14) and Shreya (3), and two sons Bhisma (5) and Sanjeev (2).

The couple and their children had migrated from neighbouring Jharkhand and had been residing in Sanrapada for last 10 years.

REMINISCING THE LEGEND



Locals celebrate 145th birth anniversary of legendary freedom fighter Birsa Munda in Sambalpur Sunday

Housing gift for 1,700 tribal families

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Nov 15: Primitive Bonda and Didai tribals received 1,700 pucca houses built under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) and the Biju Pucca Ghar Yojana (BPGY) from the district administration on the occasion of Diwali, Saturday.

The district rural development agency (DRDA) plans to construct 4,557 houses under the schemes out of which 1,700 houses were handed over to the tribals, said Balmukund Bhuyan, project director of DRDA.

The primitive tribals in the cut-off area (now termed Swabhimana Anchal) of Balimela reservoir live a life of misery and hardship as there are no transport facilities. Boats are the lone mode of transport on which villagers had to depend.



It was more difficult for the district administration to reach out to the beneficiaries to provide them the benefits of various welfare schemes. Moreover, it was also difficult to ferry the construction materials to the villages for house construction. As a result, the tribals continued to live in shanties.

However, things brightened with the construction of the Gurupriya

bridge following which the district administration managed to construct houses for the tribals living at the foothills. The DRDA, which was overseeing the implementation of the schemes, ferried the construction materials on horse backs and slings and managed to complete the houses for the tribals. The remaining houses will be completed soon, the PD said.

Balasore govt homoeopathy hospital cries for attention

POST NEWS NETWORK

Khaira, Nov 15: Once a source of hope, the government homeopathic hospital at Gadapokhari under Khaira block in Balasore district has turned into a haunted house.

While the hospital has been devoid of doctors for the last nine months, the peon appears once in a blue moon only to sign the attendance register, the villagers have alleged.

Established in 1975, the hospital is equidistant from villages in Balasore, Bhandrak, Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar districts. This is the reason why the hospital used to have hundreds of patients from these districts on a daily basis.

Dr Brajendra Nayak continued here for a period of more than 10 years. Till his retirement in February 2019, he had been attending to over 100 patients daily.

The situation changed for the worse since the retirement of Dr Nayak. Patients had stopped visiting the hospital as there was no doctor.



In a bid to make the situation better, Dr Subhranshu Sekhar Sethy from Bahanaga was deputed at the hospital for two days a week. This arrangement somehow helped the hospital get its patients but not as many as it used to receive earlier.

But the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic proved to be the final nail in the coffin. As the pandemic necessitated involvement of more doctors, Dr Sethy was deputed to a different place, leaving the hospital to its own fate.

"We have stopped visiting the hospital since the transfer of Dr

Sethy. Once there used to be hustle and bustle at the hospital and now it wears a deserted look," rued Madan Panda, Bipad Das, banshidhar Panda and Tapan Dalei.

When contacted, Dr Sethy said he has been in charge of COVID-19 at Gopalpur since March. "I have not visited the hospital at Gadapokhari since then," he added.

Meanwhile, Gadapokhari panchayat samiti member Sanjushree Barik has warned that she along with the villagers will stage a sit-in protest if the doctor is not reinstated.

Villagers lose sleep over jumbo menace

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kesinga/Naktideula, Nov 15: Elephant menace has left farmers on the edge in parts of Kalahandi and Sambalpur districts.

A report from Kesinga said people of Sripur village under Gigena panchayat in Narla block of Kalahandi district have lost their sleep after two elephants from Nilagiri went on a rampage and destroyed crops in the wee hours of Sunday.

The pachyderms have damaged green gram and pigeon peas crops that were cultivated by tribals in the



area. The farmers said that due to the COVID-19 pandemic they had suffered from a serious loss and when they are trying to earn something the elephants are damaging

their crops.

As the wild animals have been damaging crops, farmers here are spending sleepless nights trying to drive them away. The farmers fear that if the elephant menace was not checked they will have to give up farming.

The farmers have demanded compensation for the damage caused by the elephants. The frequent visits of the pachyderms to farmlands have robbed the farmers of their sleep. This situation has led to panic among the villagers.

However, the forest officials have assured the farmers of chasing

away the elephants from the village. Reports from Naktideula said elephants have been on a rampage in areas under Naktideula forest range of Sambalpur district for the last few days.

Farmers alleged that the animals are damaging ripe paddy in the fields.

The elephants damaged crops at Kadebahal and Lusura.

"After sunset, the elephants come out of the forest, trample the crop and eat paddy. A herd of seven elephants is causing mayhem," the farmers lamented, demanding immediate compensation for the losses.

Former PLFI cadre shot dead in Sundargarh



POST NEWS NETWORK

Sundargarh, Nov 15: A former cadre of the People's Liberation Front of India (PLFI) was allegedly shot dead by PLFI members at a place here bordering Odisha and Jharkhand Saturday evening.

He was identified as Madan Majhi.

A similar attempt was also made on his life earlier as he was branded a police informer.

It had been five years since Madan left the PLFI as an active member and was living a common man's life at Purunapani in Nuagaon area.

A cock-fighting event was underway near Jamatei forest under Gerada police outpost. Madan, who organised the event, was also at the spot. At a time when all were lost in the cock-fight, some persons, alleged to be PLFI cadres, reached the spot, came up to Madan and fired at him from point blank range.

He was immediately rushed to the Ispat General Hospital, Rourkela but it was too late. The doctors there declared him received dead. An investigation is underway.

Walkathon on diabetes awareness organised

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh, Nov 15: A walkathon for a diabetes-free India was organised here on the occasion of World Diabetes Day, Saturday.

The walk was held to promote awareness on diabetes and its prevention said, Biswajit Panda, state chief coordinator of United World against Diabetes (UWAD), the organiser of the event.

The walk was inaugurated by Bapuji Biswal, state youth coordinator of UWAD where health educators, healthcare professionals and denizens participated. Free masks and anti-diabetes medicines were distributed on the occasion.

A webinar preceded the start of the walkathon in which participants were sensitised on the disease and its control.

Dr Lalit Kumar Upadhyay, UWAD president, said over 85 million people in the country are suffering from the disease and urged people with diabetes to have regular exercise and a balanced diet of low-calories. He said people can prevent the disease if they adopt a right lifestyle and keep blood sugar, lipid level and blood pressure under control.

3 dead as truck hits auto-rickshaw

Bargarh: In a tragic road mishap, three youths were killed as the auto-rickshaw they were travelling in was hit by a speeding truck near Sarasara village on the outskirts of Bargarh town late Saturday night. The identities of the deceased have not been ascertained as yet. The trio was going from Bargarh town towards Barpali in an auto-rickshaw. One of them was learnt to be driving the three-wheeler. As they were nearing Sarasara village, a speeding truck hit the auto-rickshaw, killing the three occupants on the spot. The truck fled the spot after the accident.

SAVING THE GIRL CHILD



A girl child and her mother are being feted at 'Mo Gelha Jhia' programme at Bhusandha under Digaphandi block in Ganjam

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No.CAD-737- The Executive Engineer, Lift Irrigation Division, Bhubaneswar on behalf of ODISHA LIFT IRRIGATION CORPORATION LIMITED, BHUBANESWAR invites Percentage Rate bids in online mode for installation of Medium Deep Tube Wells including supply of materials in complete shape from reputed Contractors/firms with valid licence within the State issued by P.W.D./R.W.S./P.H.E.D./Irrigation/M.I. Dept, having their Mud Rotary/Combination Rig and in the profession of Ground Water Exploration, Drilling and Installation of Medium Deep Tube Wells (Approximate upto 100 Mtr Depth). The proof of registration & experience from the appropriate authority shall be enclosed along with the bid.

Details of works:

Pkg No.	Name of the Dist.	Name of work	Estimated cost (in Rs.)	EMD to be deposited (in Rs.)	Cost of tender paper (in Rs.)	Class of contractor	Completion period
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Khordha & Puri	Drilling and installation of 13 Nos of 200 mm dia Medium Deep Tube Well at different locations	4893589	48935	6000+5% GST on reverse charge basis Vide Challan No. 21AAACOS5986G12F of OLIC	Civil B&A licence	90 days

1. Date & time of publishing: 18.11.2020 at 10.00 A.M. 2. Date of seeking clarification: Upto 27.11.2020 (10 A.M. to 5 P.M.)
3. Closing date and time: 02.12.2020 at 5.00 P.M. 4. Opening date & time: 03.12.2020 at 11.00 A.M.
The details of tender are available in the Government tender website i.e. www.tendersorissa.gov.in and other related documents are available in the DTCN for bidding. Any addendum/corrigendum/cancellation of tender will be available in the said website.
OIPR32155/11/0018/2021

Sd./- Executive Engineer, L.I. Division, Bhubaneswar

Do not belong to the past dawns, but to the noons of future.

SRI AUROBINDO



Fourth time lucky

Nitish Kumar is all set to return as chief minister of Bihar for a consecutive fourth term, albeit with diminished clout, after a bitterly fought election in which the NDA-led coalition emerged victorious by securing 125 seats in the 243-member state Assembly.

The BJP emerged as big brother in the NDA coalition after it won 74 seats against JD(U)'s abysmal 43 seats although both parties contested equal number of seats. Though Nitish was declared CM candidate before the election, a section within the BJP maintained that it should not be considered a given in view of the JD(U)'s performance. However, BJP top brass decided to stick to its pre-poll deal and the JD(U) veteran is all set to return to lead the state for next five years. This insistence for Nitish by the BJP's top brass, especially Prime Minister Modi, is an indication that the leadership sees an opportunity to reset its image that has been dented lately.

The exit of almost all NDA partners within the span of barely one year indicated the difficulty the BJP leadership was creating for its associates. Gone are the days of Atal Behari Vajpayee who could bring various elements under his tolerant umbrella. Modi's ascent to power saw not only the Telugu Desam Party of Chandrababu Naidu splitting from the alliance pre 2019 general elections but the other Hindutva party, Shiv Sena of Maharashtra also broke away and has become an arch foe. The Farm Bills and the Essential Commodities Bill destroyed the long standing friendship between the Akali Dal (Badal) and the BJP. Even the AIADMK which had tried to cosy up to Modi and the BJP after the death of J Jayalithaa, was eventually forced to break up the unofficial understanding for reasons known to all. With these issues at the back of the mind, it may be safely assumed that PM Modi must be keen to do a makeover of his image and therefore this insistence on a diminished Nitish as Chief Minister. It was essential at a national level but more so because of the threat of another 'dynast' in Bihar: Tejashwi Yadav is not only a 31 year old youngster with a very long inning in politics ahead of him but he is also Laloo Prasad's son. This dynast, by offering a huge number of seats to the Congress, proved that he is keen on alliances. Although the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leadership knew all along that the Congress could pull them back yet Tejashwi went ahead with the seat sharing strategy. This proved a point to his detractors that he is a person to stand by his words. In comparison, the BJP instigating late Ram Vilas Paswan's son Chirag to field candidates only against Nitish's candidates created bad blood. The result today is that Chirag Paswan has been used and discarded. He has lost relevance in main stage Bihar politics.

Tejashwi's rise has been noticed by all those interested in Indian politics. His call that 'Social Justice' is now replaced by 'Economic Justice' reverberated throughout the country. A rich Dalit is never questioned about his caste or where his children marry. Ram Vilas Paswan was a glaring example while the political struggle of Mayawati may not be ignored. There are numerous such examples that go to prove that economic prosperity alone can destroy the vice like grip of the Indian caste system that is one of the major impediments holding back the growth of this nation.

Instead, this country is frittering away its energies and resources fighting issues that may not be relevant to India's prosperity now. No one complains when a doctor's child becomes a doctor and opens a huge hospital. None raises an eyebrow when late Dhirubhai's son Mukesh Ambani becomes the richest man of India. GD Birla's grand and great grandchildren own mines, industries and everything we can dream of. Jamsetji Tata's family line holds billions of dollars worth of natural resources of this country. Have never heard a single soul complain why Prithviraj Kapoor's son Raj, Shammii and Sashi and their children and grandchildren succeed in movies. Nor does anyone complain when Pandit Ravi Shankar's daughter Anoushka plays superb sitar and is internationally acclaimed as a top musician. Yet our leadership is mostly talking about dynasties. There is a harsh truth that is globally accepted. The Queen of England decides whether UK PM Boris Johnson should congratulate US President-elect Joe Biden or not. Thai protesters appeal to the King to change the government. Two brothers lead neighboring Sri Lanka as President and Prime Minister. Late Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's daughter Sheikh Hasina is Prime Minister of Bangladesh today while nations like Pakistan and Afghanistan that could never boast of any dynasties and were always ruled by commoners are in tatters as countries and societies today.

It is time we stop talking against dynasts and start focussing on ways and means to develop the nation economically.

Piate

Tathagata Satpathy



Shivaji Sarkar

IT WOULD HAVE BEEN A WELCOME PACKAGE IN A NO-COVID LOCKDOWN SITUATION. THOUGH IT'S NOT UNWELCOME NOW EITHER, THIS FORM OF 'HOMOEOPATHIC' DOSE WOULD SHOW TIME TO REFLECT ON ECONOMIC GROWTH

Post Bihar election, a new stimulus package was being awaited. Its impact would be felt in the next three years though it may gradually give a boost to the housing sector and some others that have been linked to production-linked incentive.

The raucous Bihar poll discussion on economy, jobs and serious financial problems of the poor has forced the government to announce yet another package of ₹2.65 lakh crore aimed at creating jobs, boost demand, augment infrastructure and ensuring growth back on track. However, it needs to be understood that not much money actually would flow in from official coffers. The ₹1.2 lakh crore guarantees to the sectors would be given only to loans that had an outstanding limit ranging from ₹50 crore to ₹400 crore as on 29 February 2020.

The additional budgetary burden would remain limited to ₹1.2 lakh crore with which Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman wants to achieve all that she is aiming at. It would have been a welcome package in a no-Covid lockdown situation. Though it's not unwelcome now either, this form of 'homoeopathic' dose would show time to reflect on the economic growth. The country needs some immediate steps and some of the euphoria being shown on the rise of purchasing manager index (PMI) and GST realisation is a bit too premature. The rises look great in the face of virtually no activity till two months ago.

The government needs to pay more attention on easing its rules on GST penalty, issuing reckless number of high value unnecessary traffic challans, irregular power metering in many states, rent seeking and similar other ha-

FOCUS STIMULUS PACKAGE

EASE TAXES, PRICES INSTEAD



The raucous Bihar poll discussion on jobs and serious financial problems of the poor has forced the government to announce yet another package of ₹2.65 lakh crore... However, it needs to be understood that not much money actually would flow in from government coffers

arrassment of people, the brunt of which is borne by businesses also.

Another issue that has hit the common man is the sharp rise in prices of vegetables, food grains and other commodities. Prices have gone at a six-and-a-half-year high. Food inflation at 7.66 per cent has emerged as major policy concern. For 13 months in a row, it is above the RBI's 4 per cent inflation target and breaches the 6 per cent tolerance level for successive seven months, the Care Ratings says.

Sitharaman quotes Moody's Investor Service's projection of revised contraction (not growth) of 8.9 per cent from the earlier 9.6 per cent. It may elate the officials but it would cause little improvement at the base level. She says that together with RBI the total package announced is of ₹29.8 lakh crore. It looks big but actual budgetary costs would not be that high. Most of the brunt is to be taken by the banking sector as most outgo

would be on credit account.

This lowers the gains of PMI as actual purchasing power is reduced by the inflation numbers. Though it may reflect in figures, the gains to producers would be far less.

The loan guarantees are given for 26 stressed sectors, including power, construction, iron and steel, roads, real estate, consumer durables, aviation, wholesale trading, logistics, hotels, tourism and mining identified by the KV Kamath-headed committee and healthcare sector. Earlier, the guarantee was limited to small businesses. Now it has been extended to all stressed sectors irrespective of turnover till March 31, 2021. New loans availed during the lockdown would not be covered by it. According to SBI Chief Economist SK Ghosh, it might help 40,000 units but if the overall cost is around ₹3 lakh crore it could be a constraining factor.

Strangely enough, the Kamath

committee has not said that the banking sector is stressed. In reality, India's finances are critical as deposits are receding with policies of taxing deposits, interest accruals (not earning) and levying of charges even on realisation of money through cheques and creating other disincentives, including lower interest rates.

Keeping deposits is like a sitting duck to be preyed on continuously by the income tax and GST. The government needs to consider banking being kept away from GST as well as tax-deduction at source. It is the most stressed industry and the waivers given to companies like DHFL hits the balance sheet more.

As inflation is likely to remain elevated, hopes for a rate cut by RBI is unlikely. In reality, the rates are below the threshold. To match with the rising prices, interest rates should be raised to keep the economic direction on right path. Low rates are further detrimental to banking health and should be a key concern.

While it is nice to see that the government is keen on giving relief to road and construction sectors, it also needs to consider relief for the users. High tolls and many other levies are making road travels expensive further retarding growth. In fact, the road sector cess and charges are the highest in the world. It appears that in pursuit of revenue realisation and profits, the government overlooks the fact that how unrealistic the charges are. The continuous increase of levies causes economic retardation as it adds to inflation.

Once again the government must sit with all to decide on a policy for course correction that can ensure sustained growth for the next three years.

SPECTRUM WELFARE

Time for a new economic model

The Covid pandemic is the result of imbalance between the unlimited needs of consumption of humankind and the limited resources of nature. The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services says that opening up ecosystems where the fauna was never before in touch with humans so closely such as by expanding agricultural, mining and hydropower frontiers into previously unfragmented forests, swamps and rivers has led to the virus 'jumping' into humans.

Further, it says, the global economy has expanded manifold based on intensive use of ever more distant natural resources. The cliché of 'global value chains' hides within itself the rampant human use of distant resources. This forces viruses that were so far 'hidden' in their isolated habitats to seek greener pastures in humans.

An article on Forbes.com says that nitrogen dioxide is emitted in large quantities by burning fuels in power stations. It has been linked to both inflammation and viral infection. Healthy individuals exposed to nitrogen dioxide experience an inflammatory response in their lungs. Disease-fighting white blood cells become less efficient in killing viruses when exposed to nitrogen dioxide. Furthermore, the social inequality espoused by the present development model deprives large numbers of poor of nutritious food and proper healthcare leading to increase in infections. These poor, in turn, infect the richer sections. For example, a housemaid can infect a number of flats at one go in a housing society.

The underlying principle behind these imbalances is 'maximisation of utility' which is the rock bed of modern economics. The principle holds that more consumption spontaneously leads to more welfare or happiness of the society. For example, the target of Indian economy reaching US\$ 5 trillion is assumed to lead to a proportionate increase in the welfare of our citizens. A student of economics is taught that if the first banana eaten gives a utility of 10 units, the second may give a utility of 8 units, and the third 5 units. It is taught that every person must maximise his consumption until the additional consumption of banana brings forth a utility of zero. Nevertheless, a huge amount of consumption has to take place before a person reaches a point of zero utility. Such bounds of consumption are not easily attained in other items. A person may continue to obtain positive utility by buying the third car and the hundredth dress. We have opened up ecosystems, are using distant natural resources, weakening our lungs due to nitrogen dioxide, and created social inequality to produce more and to consume more with the assumption that such consumption will lead to higher welfare. In the process we have unsuspectingly invited Covid-19.

A number of observers say that adopting healthy lifestyles and using clean energy would prevent these ill-effects of ever-increasing production and consumption. I am not convinced. The state of California provided huge incentives to people to transit to fuel-efficient hybrid and electric cars. It did not lead to an observable re-

duction in pollution because people drove longer distances leading to the same quantity of emissions.

There is a need to revisit the principle of utility not only because of Covid but because it does not lead to welfare anyways. Amartya Sen has pointed out that a monk has higher welfare at lower level of consumption. On the other hand, we see richer people living in lavish villas suffering from multiple diseases and having a low level of welfare. Therefore, high welfare goes with low consumption and low welfare goes with high consumption. However, economic theory continues to be driven by maximisation of production and consumption—leading to Covid and ill-fare as explained above.

In distinction to the economic theory of utility, psychologist Carl Jung has said that happiness comes from syncing of one's conscious mind with one's own unconscious psyche or unconscious desires. To consider the above example, the monk is happy in less consumption because his unconscious desire is of walking freely in nature or of singing songs in the praise of the Lord. Putting him in an air-conditioned penthouse causes him ill-fare. 'Consumption' of closed though 'comfortable' spaces is pain for him. The need, therefore, is that economists must discard the theory that consumption begets welfare. They need to make a new definition that welfare is attained by pursuing only such consumption and in such quantities that is in sync with the unconscious desires. If the unconscious desire of a monk is to walk in the nature, then his welfare will be increased not by cutting

of forests for coal mining. On the contrary, his welfare will be enhanced by preserving forests. The welfare of Bismillah Khan would be increased by allowing the Ganga in Varanasi to flow uninterrupted and clean even though that will lead to higher price of electricity and higher cost of production for industries that will have to install pollution treatment plants.

Indeed, the welfare of a number of persons will be increased by cheap electricity made available by hydropower projects on the rivers, and by the availability of cheap paper produced by allowing factories to pollute them. Personally, I think there are only a few people who would prefer cheap electricity and paper above clean rivers. But granted that there are some persons whose welfare will be so enhanced; it is the solemn responsibility of the government to assess the change in welfare of the total population. I daresay the welfare of the people of our country will be reduced if we reach a GDP of US\$ five trillion!

It is simultaneously necessary to make psychology a compulsory subject in our schools. Every student must be exposed to the idea that his/her welfare is dependent not on the level of consumption but on the direction of the same. This teaching will reduce the wanton pursuit of consumption, reduce the destruction of environment, reduce the level of diseases and increase the capacity of humankind to live with viruses like Covid. The task of building a humane society has to start with new economic theory.

The writer is a former Professor of Economics at IIM Bangalore.

WISDOM CORNER

- High expectations are the key to everything. **SAM WALTON**
- Price is what you pay. Value is what you get. **WARREN BUFFETT**
- The best way to predict the future is to create it. **PETER DRUCKER**

WORDSWORTH

Vape

Vape was Word of the Year 2014 of the Oxford Dictionaries. This odd little word, with its compounds, has risen from almost total obscurity to high fashion in less than half a decade. It's now widely known that if you vape, you inhale and exhale the vapour produced by electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes or e-cigs). These contain a solution of water and glycerin plus nicotine and flavourings. This mixture is passed over a hot filament to deliver it as a vapour. Using an e-cigarette makes you a vaper. The action is vaping, and a single inhalation and exhalation is a vape. The e-cigarette is also sometimes itself called a vape. The apparent rise has been rapid. The first e-cigarettes were put on sale by a Chinese company in 2003. They were initially marketed as ways for smokers to cut down their tobacco consumption or kick the habit altogether. Instead, they came to be widely used by smokers and non-smokers alike because they seemed to be a cleaner and more healthy alternative to traditional cigarettes. This is denied by many health experts and their advertising and use are being restricted in some jurisdictions. It seemed inappropriate to describe using them as smoking and so these new terms were created, obviously enough from vapour or vaporiser. One reason for the increasing popularity of vaper is that e-cigarette smokers are banding together, using it as a self-identifying term, to campaign against proposed EU rules banning many e-cigarettes because their nicotine levels are too high. A good marker for the success of something new is the rise of a specialised vocabulary.

LOL

Taxi driver in Heaven

A priest and a taxi driver both died and went to heaven. St. Peter was at the Pearly gates waiting for them. "Come with me," said St. Peter to the taxi driver. The taxi driver did as he was told and followed St. Peter to a mansion. It had anything you could imagine from a bowling alley to an olympic size pool. "Wow, thank you," said the taxi driver. Next, St. Peter led



the priest to a rugged old shack with a bunk bed and a little old television set. "Wait, I think you are a little mixed up," said the priest. "Shouldn't I be the one who gets the mansion? After all I was a priest, went to church every day, and preached God's word." "Yes, that's true. But during your sermons people slept. When the taxi driver drove, everyone prayed."



Bharat Jhunjhunwala

THERE IS A NEED TO REVISIT THE PRINCIPLE OF UTILITY NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF COVID BUT BECAUSE IT DOES NOT LEAD TO WELFARE ANYWAYS

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST

B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Priceless treasure

Sir, Penned by eminent poet Kantakabi Laxmikanta Mohapatra 'Vande Utkala Janani' demonstrates the richness and vivacity of our state. It is assertion of Odia pride and celebration of our cultural heritage. 'Vande Utkala Janani' has been given the official status of our State Anthem. Now, the state government has decided to incorporate it in schools. It is a mature decision. The State Anthem invokes patriotism and love for our motherland. The immortal 'Vande Utkala Janani' is a supreme delineation of the ethos and vitality of our culture. During pre-independence period this powerful song fuelled the spirit of dedication and selfless service in the hearts of freedom fighters. It was an impetus for satyagrahis and martyrs. It aroused national consciousness among the countless freedom fighters who sacrificed their lives for the sake of our motherland. Now, it will be incorporated in schools and glorify our priceless cultural heritage among school children. Our State Anthem is a priceless treasure for our posterity.

Prabhudutt Dash, BHUBANESWAR

Transforming Myanmar

Sir, Myanmar has been awaiting new transition to take place through the current election. There has been wide talk about Myanmar election in the media circle. But the actual roadmap for peace and prosperity in the region must be supported and accelerated by all stakeholders. Sadly, Myanmar and its areas have been in the grip of many unresolved internal issues and external factors over and over again. Possessing beautiful geographical structure and natural resources, this Asian nation had been part of our school syllabus up till now. Many interesting tidbits about Myanmar like its natural resources and its rice production had all beautified our school-days in Korkai, Tuticorin, Tirunelveli, Tiruchendur and Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu in the early 1990s. However, great technological advances have not yet reached Myanmar calling for the attention of world leaders and philanthropists. This country and its people have long been in ruins/disintegration due to various conflicts, both ethnic and outside. It is time for Myanmar to turn the corner in terms of education, economy, democracy, employment and wealth. This is not the time to rig the election result but to create a ray of hope in the region and among the people.

P. Senthil Saravana Durai, MUMBAI

Sputnik V vaccine may reach Kanpur next week for trials

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kanpur, Nov 15: The first batch of Russia's Sputnik V vaccine for COVID-19 is likely to reach Kanpur's Ganesh Shankar Vidarthi Medical College by next week wherein the vaccine's Phase 2 and Phase 3 human clinical trials will be conducted.

The decision to conduct the human clinical trials of the vaccine was taken after Dr Reddy's Laboratories got approval from the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) in this regard, an official said.

Speaking to PTI, college principal R B Kamal said the human clinical trials of the vaccine will start from next week.

"As many as 180 volunteers have registered for the trials. Head of the research Saurabh Agarwal will determine the dosage of the vaccine to be administered. One dose will be administered and the condition of volunteers will be monitored to determine whether they need further doses or not," he said.

Kamal said the volunteers' vitals and condition will be checked periodically and the data will be analysed to determine whether the vaccine is a success or not.

He said the effect of the vaccine on the volunteers will be studied for seven months after the same is administered once, twice or thrice within an interval of 21 days.

After observing the effects of the vaccine for a month, authorities will be apprised of the results of the trial and they will



250 REGISTER FOR VACCINE TRIAL AT AMU

Aligarh (Uttar Pradesh): More than 250 applications have been received for the trial of Covid-19 vaccine 'Covaxin' at the Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College Hospital of the Aligarh Muslim University. According to Prof Mohd Shameem, principal investigator, all applications will be screened as per the protocol and procedure laid down by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) before inclusion in the study/trial. The resource persons from Bharat Biotech will visit AMU in the coming days for training of staff for the vaccine trials. Shameem informed that the registration is moving satisfactory but there is an exclusion, as well as inclusion criteria, and other detailed procedural/protocol formalities for the COVAXIN trial. He said that written consent and other related formalities will be completed in due course of time.

then make a decision accordingly.

The Ethics Committee of the college has also given permission for the trials, he said. The vaccine has to be kept at a temperature of -20 to -70 degrees Celsius.

In September, Dr Reddy's and the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF), Russia's sovereign wealth fund, entered into a partnership to conduct clinical trials of Sputnik V vaccine and its dis-

tribution in India.

As part of the partnership, RDIF shall supply 100 million doses of the vaccine to Dr Reddy's upon regulatory approval in India.

On August 11, the Sputnik V vaccine was registered by the Ministry of Health of Russia and became the world's first registered vaccine against COVID-19 based on the human adenoviral vector platform.

Army pays tributes to bravehearts

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, Nov 15: The Army Sunday paid tributes to its bravehearts martyred in the line of duty during Pakistani firing at the LoC in north Kashmir, officials said.

In a solemn ceremony held at BB Cantt, Lt General BS Raju, Chinar Corps Commander, and all ranks paid homage to Havildar Hardhan Chandra Roy, Naik Satai Bhushan Ramesh Rao, Gunner Subodh Ghosh, and Sepoy Jondhale Rushikesh Ramchandra on behalf of the proud and grateful nation.

The gallant soldiers had made the supreme sacrifice November 13 when the Pakistan Army indulged in unprovoked ceasefire violations in multiple Sectors of Kashmir.

Havildar Hardhan Chandra Roy and Gunner Subodh Ghosh of the Artillery Regiment were deployed in the Uri Sector while Naik Satai Bhushan Ramesh Rao and Sepoy Jondhale Rushikesh Ramchandra of the Maratha Light Infantry were deployed in the Gurez Sector.



In the unprovoked artillery shelling by Pakistan army, these bravehearts received multiple splinter injuries.

They were provided immediate medical aid and evacuated to nearest military medical facilities, but succumbed to their injuries.

Late Havildar Hardhan Chandra

Roy, 38, belonged to Mhedhipara village in Futkibari Tehsil in Dhubri district, Assam. He had joined the Army in 2001 and is survived by his wife and son.

Late Naik Satai Bhushan Ramesh Rao hailed from Kotal village in Nagpur district, Maharashtra. The 28-year-old had joined the Army in 2011 and is sur-

vived by his parents.

Late Gunner Subodh Ghosh had joined the Army in 2017. The 22-year-old belonged to Raghunathpur village in Tehatta Tehsil in Nadia district, West Bengal, and is survived by his wife and parents.

Late Sepoy Jondhale Rushikesh Ramchandra hailed from Bahirewadi village in of jara Tehsil in Kolhapur district, Maharashtra. The 20-year-old had joined the Army in 2019 and is survived by his parents.

"The Chinar Corps also acknowledges the supreme sacrifice of Sub-Inspector Rakesh Doval of the Border Security Force during the ceasefire violation in Naugam Sector," the Army said.

The mortal remains of the bravehearts were taken to their native places, where they would be cremated with full military honours.

"In this hour of grief, the Army stands in solidarity with these bereaved families and remains committed to their dignity and well-being," the Army said.

No 'Bhai Dooj' for UP prisoners this year

Relatives of inmates can send 'tika' and gifts in sealed envelopes which will be delivered to the inmates

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, Nov 15: Inmates in Uttar Pradesh jails will not be able to meet their siblings and celebrate the festival of 'Bhai Dooj' Monday this year.

The state government has issued directives in this regard in view of the pandemic. The ban imposed in the wake of Covid-19 will be applicable in all the 71 prisons of the state.

The directives issued by Director-General (Prisons) Anand Kumar



said that the gift items received from the relative of the prisoners should be kept in an envelope. The

name of the prisoner, father's name and relative's detail should be mentioned. Helpdesks have also been set up outside the jails.

All the items should be properly checked and sanitized before being handed over to the prisoners Monday. The official has also directed for the arrangement of special food for the prisoners on the occasion. So far, over 1,500 prisoners have tested Covid-19 positive in overcrowded prisons of the state. However, the majority of them have recovered from the in-

fection. Besides providing special food to the prisoners, we will be organising kirtan in the jail premises. Their favourite songs will also be played on jail radio. Every year, on 'Bhai Dooj' and 'Raksha Bandhan', siblings of jail inmates come in large numbers to greet their brothers or sisters on the festival. Earlier, during Raksha Bandhan too, the state government had not allowed interaction and the 'Rakhis' left at help desk were delivered to the prisoners by officials.

Pak used heavy artillery during Friday's shelling in J&K, says BSF officer

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Nov 15: Pakistani troops used heavy artillery during Friday's unprovoked ceasefire violations along the Line of Control (LoC) in several sectors of Jammu and Kashmir, causing loss of lives and a huge damage to property on the Indian side, a top BSF officer said here Sunday.

Those killed in the Pakistani aggression include four army men, a Border Security Force (BSF) jawan and six civilians.

"Pakistan fired heavy artillery without any provocation, but the Army and the BSF fought with bravery, gave a befitting response to them and many defences (installations) of Pakistan were destroyed," Inspector General of BSF, Kashmir Rajesh Mishra said. He was speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the wreath-laying cer-

emony of BSF Sub-Inspector Rakesh Doval, who was killed in the Pakistani firing.

Mishra said the Pakistani firing caused loss of lives and a huge destruction of civilian property on the Indian side of the fence.

He said the slain BSF man deserves the highest tributes as he fought despite getting injured in the shelling.

Mishra said about 250-300 militants were ready at launchpads across the LoC to sneak into the Indian side.

"Security forces, including the BSF, have been successful in foiling their designs and will continue to do that," he said.

The BSF officer also said human rights organisations should take note of the killings of civilians and the damage caused to civilian properties in the intense shelling by Pakistan.

PAGD says no rift among parties

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Nov 15: After initial hiccups, the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) Sunday reached a consensus over the seat-sharing arrangement for the second phase of the upcoming DDC polls in Jammu and Kashmir and said there is no rift among the alliance partners.

PAGD members Saturday had failed to finalise the seat-sharing formula for the District Development Council (DDC) polls despite holding a marathon meeting, the third in two days, on the issue.

The alliance partners continued the consultations Sunday as well at the residence of National Conference (NC) president Farooq Abdullah, who is the chairman of the PAGD. The PAGD is an alliance of several political parties seeking the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's special status abrogated by the Centre in August last year.

Consensus has been reached over seat-sharing for the second phase of the polls in the meeting - which was the fourth such exercise in the last three days, a PAGD leader said.

He said the meeting, chaired by Abdullah, was attended by PDP president Mehbooba Mufti, Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) president G A Mir, Peoples Conference chairman Sajad Lone, CPI(M) leader M Y Tarigami, Awami National Conference senior vice-president Muzaffar Shah and Peoples Movement president Javaid Mustafa

J&K DDC POLLS



Members of Peoples Alliance for Gupkar Declaration Farooq Abdullah, Mehbooba Mufti, Sajad Lone and others address a press conference after their meeting, at Bathindi in Jammu.

Mir, among others. He said consultations over seat-sharing arrangements for the rest of the phases of the eight-phased election will continue. "We are focusing on one phase at a time. The consultations between the parties are being held in detailed manner and in cordial atmosphere. Such exercises take time, but there is a consensus on how to go about it," the leader, who did not wish to be identified, said.

He said the seat-sharing list was likely to be shared by the alliance with the media in a day or two.

Meanwhile, speaking to reporters outside Abdullah's residence after

the meeting, JKPCC president G A Mir said there was no rift among the alliance partners as everyone understands that this is part of a larger fight for the rights of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

"There is nothing like that (rift). Even if you give 100 per cent share to a political party, there still will be some lacunae," Mir said.

He said the parties were contesting the polls as a composition and the Sunday's meeting was held to fine-tune the seat-sharing arrangement.

"Everyone has seen this maturely that there is a bigger fight ahead and

even if some candidate is not accommodated or some party has lesser seats, it does not matter," the JKPCC president said.

He said when the elections to the DDC were announced, the like-minded parties decided to contest the polls unitedly. So discussions took place over the last few days between the second rung leadership of the parties on seat-sharing, he added.

"Today, Farooq (Abdullah) sahab called a meeting to give final touches to the seat-sharing arrangement," Mir said.

He said the discussions have been by and large "satisfactory" and the seat-sharing arrangement is being prepared in a cordial atmosphere.

"The parties have come together in an alliance and will appeal to the people to defeat those who have forcibly implemented laws in the state and whose policies have not been in the interests of the people of J-K. This is a right opportunity for the people to protest in a democratic manner by expressing their anger by way of voting for the right candidate or combination," Mir said.

Asked whether the Congress was in the alliance only for the polls or would continue to be a part of it, he said, "Those things will come later." "First is first. This is practical that election is the basis of politics. We are going to polls together with an agenda and, I think, we should focus on that first," he added.

Awami National Conference leader Muzaffar Shah said the alliance will defeat the BJP.

RAIN ENDS PROLONGED DRY SPELL IN JAMMU

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, Nov 15: Rains lashed most parts of Jammu on Sunday, ending over two-month-long dry spell but engulfing the region in cold as the day temperature plummeted seven degrees below normal during this part of the season, officials said.

There were also reports of snowfall from the high-altitude areas including the Peer Ki Gali along the Mughal Road, an alternative road link between Kashmir and the rest of the country, which remained closed for the second day Sunday, they said.

After heavy cloud cover since morning, it started raining in most parts of the Jammu region late afternoon, the officials said, adding the rainfall ended a prolonged dry spell.

A traffic department official said the Mughal road, connecting the twin districts of Poonch and Rajouri in the Jammu region

with south Kashmir's Shopian district, remained closed for vehicular traffic for the second day due to accumulation of the snow on the road at several places, especially the high-altitude Peer Ki Gali area.

"At present, Mughal road is blocked due to snow accumulation.

Subject to fair weather and road clearance, only vehicles carrying fresh fruits will be allowed from Shopian from 11 am to 4 pm towards Poonch tomorrow (Monday). No other vehicle, nor pedestrians will be allowed on either side," the official said.

Jammu city recorded a high of 19.7 degrees Celsius, which is 7.6 degrees below normal during this part of the season, while the night temperature appreciated due to cloud cover and settled at 14.7 degrees Celsius - 1.3 degrees above normal, a spokesman of the MeT department said. He said the weather is expected to improve gradually from November 17 onwards.



PTI FILE PHOTO

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Agra, Nov 15: The famous Soor Sarovar lake, also called Keetham, on the Agra-Delhi highway (NH-2), has been declared a 'Ramsar site' on the list of wetlands of international importance.

This is the eighth wetland in Uttar Pradesh to be declared as a Ramsar site in India.

A Ramsar site is a wetland site, designated to be of international importance under the Ramsar Convention, through an inter-governmental environmental treaty established in 1971 by UNESCO, which came into force in 1975. The entire lake, pentagonal in shape, is formed in a catchment area of 7.13 sqkm.

It was declared a national bird sanctuary in 1991 by the state Forest Department. With artificially created islands for shelter and breeding grounds to the migratory birds, the lake is home to more than 106



Flamingoes flock at Agra's Soor Sarovar lake

PTI FILE PHOTO

species of migratory and resident birds. The site is important for bird species which migrate on the Central Asian flyway, with over 30,000 water birds known to visit

the reservoir annually. Besides supporting numerous resident and migratory birds, the sanctuary has around 300 pythons and more than 60 species of fish.

RARE BIRD SPOTTED

An architect has spotted Greenish Warbler, a migratory bird that flies in from Europe to North India every year in August. The bird was spotted by architect Anupam Agarwal in Rapti Sagar, who clicked a picture of the rare bird. "The small bird that looks like a sparrow, is difficult to be spotted but easily heard," said the architect, also a member of the Heritage Foundation. "Since wildlife photography is my hobby, I take my camera and go for a walk every morning to a plot next to my house where I have planted a number of plants and trees. On Sunday morning, I was surprised to hear the shrill disyllabic 'chee-wee' cry of a Greenish Warbler.

Diwakar Srivastava, deputy conservator of forest, National Chambal Sanctuary project in Agra, expressed delight that the site will now be recognised internationally.

The Yogi Adityanath government is also making plans to develop the bird sanctuary as an ecotourism site. Uttar Pradesh Forest and Environment Minister Dera Singh Chauhan had made an announcement to this effect, earlier in February. Six other wetlands in the state which had been declared

Ramsar sites in the beginning of the year are Nawabganj in Unnao, Parvati Aranga in Gonda, Saman in Mainpuri, Samaspur in Rae Bareilly, Sandi in Hardoi and Sarsai Nawar in Etawah. However, the upper Ganga stretch from Brij Ghat to Narora was the state's first Ramsar site in 2005. Agra city now has four internationally recognized spots for tourists - three UNESCO world heritage sites, including the Taj Mahal and one wetland.

of the day quote

RORO services and ropeway transportation systems could soon reduce the dependency on handling of coal at Goa's only major port, the Mormugao Port Trust

PRAMOD SAWANT | GOA CM

Chief Minister K Palaniswami must suspend vice-chancellor of Anna University M K Surappa who is facing an enquiry over allegations of corruption

M K STALIN | DMK PRESIDENT

The places of religious worship across the state, which were shut since the COVID-19 lockdown in March, will reopen from Monday

UDDHAV THACKERAY | MAHARASHTRA CM

SHORT TAKES

Criminal killed

Thane: A 31-year-old history-sheeter was allegedly killed by a 30-year-old man in Ayre village near Dombivli in Thane district of Maharashtra over an extra-marital affair, police said Sunday, adding that the accused has been arrested. The accused, Deepak More (30), allegedly had an affair with the wife of the deceased, an official said. On the intervening night of Saturday and Sunday, More attacked the victim with a stone, killing him on the spot, he said. A case of murder has been registered.

Woman held

Mumbai: A 39-year-old woman has been arrested by Mumbai police for allegedly duping a city-based jeweller of gold worth Rs 43,000, an official said Sunday. Sana Sheikh, a housewife, went to the jeweller's shop in Byculla area of south Mumbai last month and managed to cleverly take away some gold ornaments, valued at Rs 43,000, without his knowledge, he said. Later, when the jeweller, Deepak Rathod, found some ornaments missing, he checked his shop's CCTV footage in which a burqa-clad woman was seen taking away the precious metal items, the police official said.

Man kills nephew

Mahoba: A man allegedly thrashed his nephew to death and injured his brother over a land dispute here Sunday, police said. Mahoba Additional Superintendent of Police Rajendra Kumar Gautam said the incident took place around 10.30 am between Karorhi, his brother Nirpat and nephew Narendra (22). Narendra died while Nirpat was referred to a Jhansi medical college for treatment, Kumar said. He added that the body has been sent for a post-mortem examination.

Youth shot dead

Gurugram: A 28-year-old youth was fatally shot in the head by his friend in Gandhi Nagar area in Gurugram, police said Sunday. Victim Gaurav, a native of Chhapra in Bihar, was residing with his family in a rented accommodation in the area. Both Gaurav and accused Golu were consuming liquor on the terrace of Gaurav's house on Saturday night when a fight broke out between them over some issue. The accused whipped out a pistol and shot the victim, the police said. The victim died on the spot even as the accused and his friend, who was also present there, fled. A police team along with forensic experts collected evidence from the spot and sent the body to a hospital for autopsy.

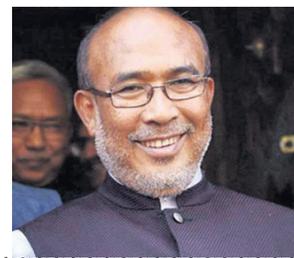


Known as the 'Land of Forests', Jharkhand is a treasure trove of minerals and the people of the state have contributed immensely to the growth of the nation

M VENKAIAH NAIDU | VICE PRESIDENT

MANIPUR CM COVID POSITIVE

Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh Sunday said that he has tested positive for Covid-19



Centre's plan to curb COVID in Delhi



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 15: To deal with the recent spike in coronavirus cases in Delhi, the Centre Sunday said it will soon make available 300 additional ICU beds and double the number of daily RT-PCR tests in the national capital.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah also said some of the hospitals under the municipal corporations of Delhi will be converted into dedicated COVID hospitals and doctors and paramedics of paramilitary forces will be deployed in the national capital to deal with the shortage of manpower.

Shah said to save more lives, the Centre will also provide oxygen, high flow nasal cannula and other health equipment to Delhi. The decisions were taken at a high level meeting chaired by Shah and attended by Delhi Lieutenant Governor Anil Bajjal, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan among others.

In a series of tweets in Hindi, Shah said daily RT-PCR tests in Delhi will be doubled, the capacity of the testing laboratories will be enhanced and mobile testing vans of the Union Health Ministry and the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) will be deployed in the areas where the COVID-19 threat is high.

He said the meeting resolved to enhance the capacity of Delhi's

Shah said to save more lives, the Centre will provide oxygen, high flow nasal cannula and other health equipment to Delhi

Delhi recorded 3,235 fresh COVID-19 cases, taking the infection tally to over 4.85 lakh on Sunday

hospitals and in this direction, 300 ICU beds will be made available at the DRDO COVID hospital (Dhaura Kuan) in addition to the existing 250 ICU beds.

The home minister said to increase the number of oxygen beds, the 10,000-bedded Chhatrapur COVID care centre will be strengthened and some of the hospitals of the municipal corporations of Delhi will be converted into dedicated COVID hospitals.

The home minister reviewed the situation arising due to the spike in COVID-19 cases in Delhi and discussed ways to deal with it, a home ministry official said. Delhi recorded 3,235 fresh COVID-19 cases, taking the infection tally to over 4.85 lakh on Sunday, while ninety-five more fatalities pushed the death toll to 7,614.

The meeting was convened to devise a strategy to contain the spread of the virus in Delhi, especially in view of the festive season and decreasing temperatures accompanied by rising pollution, the official said.

Assam gas well 'killed', fire doused

The worst industrial disaster of the Northeast took away the lives of three employees of the PSU major and injured several others

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati/Tinsukia, Nov 15: The damaged gas well at Baghjan in Assam was successfully 'killed' and the blaze was fully doused Sunday after over five months of a blowout, Oil India said.

The worst industrial disaster of the Northeast took away the lives of three employees of the PSU major and injured several others.



The process to control the well by joint efforts of multiple teams, including foreign experts, also faced a series of setbacks.

"The well has been killed with brine solution and under control now. Fire has been doused completely," Oil India Ltd (OIL) spokesperson Tridiv Hazarika said in a statement. There is no pressure in the well now and it will be

under observation over the next 24 hours to check if there is any amount of gas migration and pressure build-up, he added.

"Further operation to abandon the well is in progress," Hazarika said, adding that experts from Singaporean firm Alert Disaster Control were actively engaged in the final operation to control the well. The company's Director (Exploration and

Development) P Chandrasekaran, Director (Operations) PK Goswami and Resident Chief Executive DK Das visited the well site following the successful killing operation after 172 days of the blowout and held detailed discussions with the experts from Alert

The well no 5 at Baghjan in the Tinsukia district was spewing gas uncontrollably since May 27 and it caught fire on June 9, killing two of OIL's firefighters at the site. On September 9, a 25-year old electrical engineer of the OIL lost his life due to high voltage electric shock when he was working at the well site. On July 22, three foreign experts from the Alert Disaster Control, which was assisting OIL, and ONGC experts in putting out the inferno, received burn injuries while they were removing a spool from the wellhead.

CHILLING OUT



People gather at Kovalam Beach post Diwali in Chennai, Sunday

PTI PHOTO

Two women gangraped

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Karimganj, Nov 15: Two women from Tripura were allegedly raped by five people in Karimganj district of Assam when they were returning after meeting their ailing mother in a hospital, police said Sunday.

One person has been arrested in this connection and a manhunt has been launched to nab the others, Karimganj Superintendent of Police Mayank Kumar said.

"The two women from Tripura visited their mother at the Cachar Cancer Hospital and Research Centre in Sicha on Friday morning and hired a taxi while returning from the facility. After entering Karimganj, the driver took them to an under-construction building," he said.

Four more persons were waiting at the under-construction building in Baraigram area of Nilambazar and they took turns to rape the two women on Friday night, Kumar said. "After raping them, the culprits snatched their money, mobile phones and fled from the scene of crime. The police registered a case on Saturday and nabbed one person," he said. The women were sent for medical examination, the police officer said.

Maha acid victim succumbs

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Beed (Maharashtra), Nov 15: In a heart-wrenching Diwali tragedy, a 22-year-old victim of acid attack and petrol burning by her boyfriend lay abandoned in a roadside ditch for over 12 hours, and after a 16-hour fight for life, succumbed Sunday morning, an official said.

The incident happened sometime late on Friday night when the duo - Avinash R. Rajure, 25 and Savitri D. Ankulkar, 22, were riding on a motorcycle from Pune to their home in Shelgaon village, Nanded, district, for Diwali celebrations, said Neknur Police Station investigating officer Laxman Kendre. "En route on the 450-kms journey, around 2 a.m. on Saturday, the accused Rajure stopped his vehicle at a desolate spot on the Yellamb Ghat region and attacked the victim," Kendre said. The police official said that first, the accused attempted to strangle her but she fought back, then he removed a bottle of acid and threw it on her as she screamed for help at the dead of the night in that remote area.

Not stopping at this, Rajure re-



moved petrol from his vehicle, poured it on her, set her ablaze and pushed her into a deep ditch beside the road as she burnt, before decamping from there.

"A shepherd tending to his flock heard her whimpering from the ditch around 2 p.m. (afternoon) on Saturday and immediately informed us. We reached the spot and found her in agony with serious acid and petrol burns, and rushed her to the Beed Civil Hospital. "She had sustained 50 per cent burn injuries due to the acid and the petrol fire and breathed her last this (Sunday) morning at the hospital after a 16-hour battle

for life," said a disturbed Kendre.

As per preliminary investigations, the accused and victim stayed together in Pune as live-in partners for a few weeks, though the motive behind the murderous attack is not clear, he added. The Neknur Police Station has registered a case of murder while the Beed Police have sounded a high alert for all district border police outposts from Pune to Nanded in an effort to nab the accused Rajure. The Diwali day tragedy has shaken the district police with top officials supervising the probe to ensure justice to the victim whose family reached Beed Sunday to claim her body.

TEMPLE FLOWERS TO TURN INTO INCENSE STICKS IN UP

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Corakhpur, Nov 15: In a unique initiative, the flowers offered at the famous Gorakhnath temple in Uttar Pradesh's Gorakhpur, will now be a source of employment to women.

The introduction of new technology will help homemakers and unemployed women to make incense sticks from the flowers. It will take the shape of a cottage industry and provide employment to women. Backed by the technical support from the Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (CIMAP), the incense sticks are being manufactured by the Mahayogi Gorakhnath Krishi Vigyan Kendra (MGKVK) and has been branded as 'Shree Gorakhnath Ashirwad'.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, who is also the head priest of the Gorakhnath temple, inaugurated the brand at the temple on Sunday



The production and distribution will remain in the hands of the Gorakhnath Temple Trust.

Speaking on the occasion, Yogi said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of converting waste into wealth was being realised by this effort to make incense sticks from the flowers offered at the temple. "Besides giving respect to faith, this is also a big step towards women empowerment. It is also a belief in our tradition that nothing is a waste on this earth and this is a testimony of this fact", he said adding that the women have already started earning Rs 4000-5000 per month through this project.

COVID dampens Himachal's 'rain of stones' spirit

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Shimla, Nov 15: There was no 'rain of stones' ritual Sunday in a century-old festival that falls a day after Diwali and observed in the former princely state of Dhamsi, some 33 km from state capital Shimla.

Owing to Covid restraints, this unique practice was done away with amid the pandemic. Old-timers say as far as their memory and knowledge goes this is for the first time that the ritual of pelting stones associated with the 'pattharon ka mela' (festival of stones) was cancelled.

"As per my memory and memory of my parents, this is for the first time the ritual of pelting one another with small stones was not exercised," said local resident S.R. Verma. The 50-year-old said that the local administration had also banned



other rituals relating to daylong festival like carrying out procession, gatherings in a local temple and holding an exhibition of artefacts and farm implements, the main attraction among the locals.

As a ritual, the pelting of stones is between two groups - one repre-

senting the royal family of the erstwhile princely state of Dhamsi and the others comprising the commoners - over a circular structure in the town, where a 'rani' or queen had committed 'sati' or the former practice of a widow throwing herself on to her husband's funeral pyre.

Residents say it was a bloody affair in the past. The pelting of stones was introduced centuries ago to shun the tradition of 'narbali' (human sacrifice) that was prevalent in Dhamsi too," octogenarian Ashok Verma recalled.

Earlier, there used to be a bloody affair. "For quite some time the stone pelting has become mere a ritual and the participation that now comprises the youth only is falling with every passing year," he said. A local committee, mainly comprising descendants of the erstwhile royal family, is the ritual organiser.

The 'battle' of stones commences after the chief deity of the Narsingh temple in over 250-year old Halog, the crumbling palace, arrives at the Kali temple also located in the town in a tastefully decorated palanquin amid the sounding of trumpets and drums.

The stone pelting exercise takes place between the residents of Halog, the erstwhile capital of Dhamsi estate, and neighbouring village Jamog. As per the belief, a devotee who gets injuries in stone-pelting is considered a devout of goddess Kali. The oozing blood is applied as a 'tilak' to appease the goddess.

This time only former ruler of Dhamsi, Jagdeep Singh, and a few members of the festival organising committee were allowed to perform worship at the Goddess Kali temple. On normal occasions, the locals buy farm implements on this day to ensure prosperity and protection from natural calamities. Also it generates income for the rural artisans and the potters. "On this auspicious occasion we missed an opportunity to buy the new implements," rued farmer Ram Parkash, adding "this happened for the first time; not a good sign".

205 fire calls made on Diwali

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 15: The Delhi Fire Service received as many as 205 fire calls as Diwali celebrations were going on, with one casualty reported in Outer Delhi in one such incident, a senior officer said Sunday.

During the peak hours from 6pm to 11.58 pm on Saturday, 129 fire calls were received.

One person was burnt to death and another received burn injuries in a major fire in a cooler godown on Saturday night in Outer Delhi's Mundka.

Twelve fire tenders were sent to the spot and the firefighting operation continued till Sunday morning.



People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) was formed solely to safeguard the identity of the people of Jammu and Kashmir and the alliance parties have a bigger cause to fight for than bicker over DDC elections
MEHBOOBA MUFTI | PDP PRESIDENT

GANGOTRI TEMPLE CLOSES

The portals of the Gangotri Temple were closed for winters on the occasion of Annakoot-Govardhan Puja Sunday. The temple gates were shut at 12:15 pm after a puja by priests in the presence of a large number of devotees



of the day quote

We all have to make Prime Minister Narendra Modi's dream come true. Due to corona, 'deep' (earthen lamps) and light jhaalar didn't come from China and everything was made by potters and at the gaushalas



YOGI ADITYANATH | UP CM

Adjustment will be done with smaller parties, but there will be no alliance with larger parties



AKHILESH YADAV | SAMAJWADI PARTY CHIEF

The Rajasthan government is making effective intervention to ensure that there is no incident of child labour or child marriage in the state



ASHOK GEHLOT | RAJASTHAN CM

SHORT TAKES

Girl dies

Malda (WB): A 7-year-old girl died of burn injuries that she sustained while bursting crackers at her home in West Bengal's Malda district, police sources said Sunday. The deceased, identified as Jayanti Rabidas, was a resident of Kadamtoli in Kaliachak police station area of the district, the sources said. She was bursting crackers along with other members of her family on Saturday, on the occasion of Kali puja, when her dress caught fire, the sources said.

Body found

Mungeli (C'garh): In a suspected suicide case, a 55-year-old woman district judge was found hanging at her official residence in Chhattisgarh's Mungeli district Sunday, police said. Mungeli District and Sessions Judge Kanta Martin was found hanging from the ceiling fan with a saree inside a room at her official residence in Karhi area here this morning, Mungeli Superintendent of Police Arvind Kujur said. As per the preliminary information, after having food early in the evening on Saturday, the judge asked her cook and other staff to leave the house, he said. "When the cook returned on Sunday morning, he found the door of her residence locked from inside. He saw from the window that the judge was hanging from the ceiling fan, following which, he alerted the police," Kujur said.

11 arrested

Chandigarh: Eleven people have been arrested in Chandigarh for violating the ban on sale and bursting of firecrackers on Diwali, police said Sunday. While ten persons were arrested for bursting firecrackers, another one was apprehended for selling the crackers, they said. "As per the directions of Chandigarh administration, sale and use of firecrackers was banned in the Union Territory. To apply these orders, sufficient force was deployed to maintain law and order in the city by Chandigarh police," Chandigarh police said in a statement here.

28 injured

Bhadoli (UP): As many as 28 people were injured when the bus they were travelling in collided with a stationary truck here, police said Sunday. Of the injured, 16 have been referred to Varanasi for treatment, out of which the condition of 10 people is stated to be serious. Gopiganj SHO Krishnand Rai said the accident took place on Sunday on national highway-2, when the bus belonging to Jhansi depot of Uttar Pradesh Roadways was going to Varanasi.

Delay in seat sharing led to failure: Tariq

IN AN INTERVIEW, ANWAR SAID THE BIHAR POLL RESULTS WERE 'DEFINITELY BELOW' THE CONGRESS' EXPECTATIONS AND IT WAS A SETBACK TO BAG ONLY 19 OUT OF THE 70 SEATS IT CONTESTED

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 15: Delay in finalising seat sharing for the Bihar election adversely impacted the Mahagathbandhan's poll performance, senior Congress leader Tariq Anwar said Sunday, asserting that the Congress must learn from it and complete alliance formalities well in advance for upcoming assembly polls.

Anwar, party's general secretary and a veteran leader from Bihar, acknowledged that there were shortcomings due to which the party performed worse than other 'Mahagathbandhan' constituents and asserted that the high command was serious about introspection as well as a thorough analysis of the results.

In an interview, Anwar said the Bihar poll results were "definitely below" the Congress' expectations and it was a setback to bag only 19 out of the 70 seats it contested. "There was an environment of change with enthusiasm among the common people for it, but we could not exploit that. We had the expectation that with the Congress



fighting on 70 seats, it would win at least 50 per cent of the seats," the former Union minister said.

"Our government was not formed and we (the Congress) also have a responsibility in that. Going forward, our efforts will be aimed at strengthening the Congress and the Mahagathbandhan and we will make a strategy for it," he said.

His remarks assume significance as several poll analysts have stated that the Congress dragged the Mahagathbandhan down as it fell short of the majority mark, with the NDA under Nitish Kumar's leadership emerging victorious in the

polls by a narrow margin. Anwar, who was a member of the party's poll management committee, said there should be introspection and "we have also demanded that it should happen".

He said the high command was ready for an introspection and stressed the top leadership had given all possible support during the polls with former party chief Rahul Gandhi also holding many public meetings in the state.

"But there have been shortcomings on our part otherwise we should have won 35-40 seats. So whether there were shortcomings in organisation or campaign, all of that will be discussed and analysed and it will be ascertained why the Congress' performance was not at par with other Mahagathbandhan partners," he said.

Anwar said the reasons for the below par showing cannot be ascertained immediately, but what was important was to identify the mistakes committed and ensure they are not repeated in the Assembly polls in four states and one Union Territory in the coming months.

"We want that discussions be held with those involved in this election, our candidates and District Congress Committees in Bihar and only then we can reach a conclusion," the 69-year-old leader, who has won Lok Sabha polls multiple times from Bihar's Katihar, said.

The high command is definitely concerned over the Bihar results, he said. Asked if delay in firming up the Mahagathbandhan alliance and the seat sharing arrangement hurt the poll performance of the Opposition coalition, Anwar said, "Yes, I remember that Rahul ji had said in July itself that we should finish the process of firming up of the alliance and other formalities."

"Whatever the reason, that did not happen and you are right there was a lot of delay in finalising the alliance and it was sealed when the election was very near," he said. If the formalities had been completed earlier, then maybe the Mahagathbandhan would have gotten the advantage in the election campaign, Anwar said. Alliance contradictions need some time to be ironed out and we did not get that time, he said.

ACTIVE CASELOAD CONTRACTS FURTHER

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 15: India has reported less than 50,000 new daily cases of COVID-19 for the eighth continuous day, a trend which assumes wider significance as many countries in Europe and America continue to see a surge in their daily numbers, the Union Health Ministry said on Sunday.

A total of 41,100 persons were found to be infected with COVID-19 in India in a span of 24 hours, while 42,156 people recuperated during the same period, leading to a further contraction of the active caseload. There are 4,79,216 active cases of coronavirus as on date which comprise merely 5.44 per cent of the total cases.

Last time the daily new cases crossed the 50K threshold was on November 7. "Apart from the successful dissemination of COVID-19 appropriate behaviour among the varied population groups, this trend assumes wider significance as many countries in Europe and America continue to see a surge in their daily numbers," the ministry said in a statement.

Fifteen states and UTs have



COVID-19 cases per million lower than India (6,387). New recoveries outnumbering new cases every 24-hour cycle has also improved the recovery rate to 93.09 per cent. The total recovered cases stand at 82,05,728 which exceed active cases by 77,26,512.

The ministry said that 79.91 per cent of the new recovered cases are contributed by ten states and UTs. With 7,117 people recovering from COVID-19, Delhi saw the most number of recoveries. Kerala registered 6,793 daily recoveries, while West Bengal reported 4,479 new recoveries.

Ten states and UTs have contributed 82.87 per cent of the new cases of coronavirus infection. Delhi reported 7,340 cases in the last 24 hours. Kerala recorded 6,357 new cases, while Maharashtra reported 4,237 new infections in a span of 24 hours, the ministry said.

Karnataka to set up development body for Marathas

The decision to set up the authority comes ahead of the by-election to Basavakalyan assembly segment in the state's northern border district Bidar where hundreds of Marathas live



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, Nov 15: Karnataka is setting up a Maratha Development Authority (MDA), with Rs 50-crore corpus for the welfare of the Marathas living in the state, especially in districts bordering Maharashtra, an official said Sunday.

"Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa has directed the state welfare department to set up the Authority for the financial, social, educational and development of the Marathas living in the state over the decades, especially in the northwest and northern regions," an official said here. The state's northwest region was part of the Bombay Province and northern region of the erstwhile Hyderabad-Karnataka region before they were merged with the southern region in the Madras Presidency to form Mysore on November 1, 1956 for the reorganisation of the states across the country.

According to Sakala Maratha Samaj president Keshavanathrao Jadav, the Marathas have been living in Karnataka over the cen-

turies as they took part in the Anglo-Mysore wars since the 17th century and settled in the southern state and became part of Kannadigas.

"Though our forefathers were from Maharashtra, we migrated to the erstwhile Mysore state to wage a war in favour of Kannadigas against the British," Jadav recalled. The community has been urging the state government to include Marathas under 2A list of backward classes to benefit from reservation in jobs and seats in educational colleges.

The decision to set up the authority comes ahead of the by-election to Basavakalyan assembly segment in the state's northern border district Bidar where hundreds of Marathas live. Though the Election Commission is yet to announce the poll date, the byelection has been caused due to the death of its Congress legislator B. Narayan Rao due to Covid-19 at a private hospital in Bengaluru on September 24.

The assembly constituency also has a substantial number of Maratha and Lingayat voters, to which Yediyurappa belongs to. Ahead of the November 3 byelection in the Sira assembly segment in Tumakuru district, the state government on September 29 had set up the Kadu Golla Development Board to woo the Telugu-speaking Golla community, which has a substantial number of voters.

The ruling BJP's candidate Raju Gowda wrested the seat from the Janata Dal-Secular (JD-S), whose sitting legislator B. Satyanarayana's death on August 4 in the city caused the by-elections.

tests were conducted. But only 35% were conducted through the RT-PCR tests. Despite repeated pleas by the Centre to states to ramp up RT-PCR testing, many states are dragging their feet and going for unreliable RAT and cheaper tests forcing citizens to undergo repeated agony. One of the reasons for not going through the RT-PCR tests is the price. While the ICMR has capped the RT-PCR test price at Rs 2,400, many states including Maharashtra, UP and Karnataka have shown the way by bringing it down to as much as Rs 600.

Why Murmu fell out of favour

GC Murmu was Prime Minister Modi's most favourite Gujarat cadre officer from the days when he was Chief Minister. He handled all sensitive matters when Modi was facing onslaught from the CBI

and other agencies during the UPA era. It was Murmu who used to coordinate with top legal guns in Delhi during those tumultuous years. Modi sent him to Srinagar as the first Lieutenant Governor of Jammu & Kashmir. Modi had great trust and faith in his abilities. But things went haywire somewhere and the PMO got worried. Perhaps, Murmu failed to deliver what Modi desired. Modi was unhappy that he did not travel extensively in the state. Finally, Modi decided to send a political heavyweight Manoj Sinha to stem the rot and take some bold decisions.

Dismal show

Adismal show by Congress not only in Bihar but also in most of the by-elections in states has once again put a question mark on the ability of Rahul-Priyanka team to deliver. Despite the

SOAKED IN DEVOTION



People perform rituals during Govardhan Puja festival in Gurugram, Sunday

PTI PHOTO

Missing MP cop found begging after 15 yrs

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Gwalior, Nov 15: Like any movie scene, two Madhya Pradesh policemen found their former colleague begging on the footpath, who had disappeared around 15 years ago. He was found to be mentally disturbed.

According to the information received here, Deputy Superintendent of Police Ratnesh Singh Tomar and his colleague Vijay Bhadoriya were on bypolls duty for the last few days. On the day of vote counting on November 10, when both of them were passing through Jhansi Road, they noticed a middle-aged beggar shivering in cold on the footpath.

Both the officers stopped their vehicles with the intent to help. Ratnesh gave his shoes to the beggar while Vijay offered him his jacket. They also held some conversations with the beggar. After the chat, things changed dramatically. While talking to the beggar, the officers realised that



he was their former colleague Manish Mishra.

Mishra was a police officer and a good shooter. He had joined the police service in 1999 and had also served as the station-in-charge in many parts of the state. During his service in 2005, Mishra lost his mental balance and suddenly disappeared.

Some people who know Mishra told that despite many efforts, he could not be traced. Moreover, his wife had also left him. As per the information received, Mishra was spending his life on the foot-

path for around 15 years, meeting his ends by begging.

Ratnesh and Vijay tried to remind Mishra of the old days and asked him to come along with them. But founding him reluctant to come with them, they handed over Mishra to a social welfare organisation, where he is being taken care of.

Many members of Mishra's family are in police service, including his sister. His wife is also an official in the judicial service. Mishra is currently undergoing treatment.

Six youths drown on Diwali

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, Nov 15: The Diwali festival turned gloomy for the kin of at least six youths who drowned in two incidents in Telangana, police said Sunday.

Four youths drowned in the Godavari river while swimming while two others met a watery grave in Nizamsagar project late on Saturday.

The four youths who drowned in the Godavari in Mulugu district hailed from Venkatapuram Mandal in the district.

Police said the bodies of two youths, identified as Tummu Tartik and Ramavarapu Prakash, were fished out by expert divers while a search was on for Anvish and Srikanth. In the second incident in Kamareddy district, a group of five youths from Kalleru Mandal had gone to the Nizamsagar project to bathe.

Ahmed Patel in ICU

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 15: Senior Congress leader Ahmed Patel, who tested positive for COVID-19 a few weeks ago, has now been admitted to the Intensive Care Unit of Medanta Hospital, Gurgaon for further treatment, his family said Sunday.

Patel, 71, had announced on Twitter on October 1 that he had contracted coronavirus. In a tweet on Sunday, Ahmed Patel's son Faisal said, "On behalf of his family, we would like to share that Shri Ahmed Patel had tested positive for Covid19 a few weeks ago. He has now been admitted to the Intensive Care Unit of Medanta Hospital, Gurgaon for further treatment."

"His condition is stable and he continues to be under medical observation... We request you to pray for his speedy recovery," he said. Several Congress leaders wished a speedy recovery to Patel.



Why RT-PCR testing is low

The RT-PCR test may be considered the "golden COVID test". But ICMR data, Union Health Ministry and official sources reveal that the majority of states are not conducting it. Instead they are going in for an unreliable Rapid Antigen Test (RAT). As on November 6, as many as 11.70 crores

of the day quote

The release of the Taliban's prisoners was done with the hope that they will end the war with the start of the talks or at least agree on a humanitarian ceasefire



ABDULLAH ABDULLAH | AFGHAN POLITICIAN

Appreciated bipartisan support for US relations with Taiwan and hope to continue close cooperation with the US in coming years



HSIAO BI-KHIM | TAIWAN'S REPRESENTATIVE IN WASHINGTON

COVID-19 is surging again, economies are continuing to deteriorate particularly in low- and middle-income countries, and there is another wave of lockdowns and shutdowns



DAVID BEASLEY | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME

SHORT TAKES

Iota strengthens into hurricane

St Petersburg: Iota became the thirteenth hurricane of the Atlantic season early Sunday, threatening to bring another dangerous system to Nicaragua and Honduras — countries recently clobbered by a Category 4 Hurricane Eta. Iota was already a record-breaking system, being the 30th named storm of this year's extraordinarily busy Atlantic hurricane season.

China renews blue alert

Beijing: China's national observatory Sunday renewed a blue alert for typhoon Vamco, which is expected to bring downpours and strong winds to parts of the country's coastal areas. The center of Vamco, the 22nd typhoon of the year, was at the central coastal waters of Vietnam at 5 a.m. Sunday morning, with winds of up to 126 kph near the eye, Xinhua news agency quoted the National Meteorological Center (NMC) as saying in its latest update.

Fire damages historic mosque

Istanbul: A historic wooden mosque in Istanbul was on fire Sunday and Turkish firefighters were trying to put out the blaze from both land and sea. The Vanikoy Mosque, built in the 17th century during the reign of Ottoman Sultan IV Mehmed, is located on the Asian side of Istanbul along the Bosphorus Strait.

5 Americans killed in helicopter crash

Washington: Five American soldiers killed in a helicopter crash this week while on a peacekeeping mission in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula included one who left behind a wife pregnant with their daughter. The soldiers were part of an international force that monitors the four-decade-old Israeli-Egyptian peace agreement.

Protests in Israel

Jerusalem: Several thousand protesters gathered outside Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's official residence in Jerusalem Saturday night in what has become a weekly demonstration calling for the Israeli leader to resign. The protesters have been demonstrating for some five months, saying Netanyahu is unfit to lead while he is on trial for corruption charges and because of his handling of the coronavirus crisis.

US, Israel tracked, killed al-Qaida No. 2



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, Nov 15: The United States and Israel worked together to track and kill a senior al-Qaida operative in Iran earlier this year, a bold intelligence operation by the two allied nations that came as the Trump administration was ramping up pressure on Tehran.

Four current and former US Officials said Abu Mohammed al-Masri, al-Qaida's No. 2, was killed by assassins in the Iranian capital in August.

The US Provided intelligence to the Israelis on where they could find al-Masri and the alias he was using at the time, while Israeli agents carried out the killing, according to two of the officials. The two other officials confirmed al-Masri's killing but could not provide specific details.

Al-Masri was gunned down in a Tehran alley August 7, the anniversary of the 1998 bombings of the US Embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Al-Masri was widely believed to have participated in the planning of those attacks and was wanted on terrorism charges by the FBI.

Al-Masri's death is a blow to al-Qaida, the terror network that orchestrated the September 11, 2001, attacks in the U.S. and comes amid rumors in the Middle East about the fate of the group's leader,

Ayman al-Zawahiri.

The officials could not confirm those reports but said the US Intelligence community was trying to determine their credibility.

Two of the officials — one within the intelligence community and with direct knowledge of the operation and another former CIA officer briefed on the matter — said al-Masri was killed by Kidon, a unit within the secretive Israeli spy organization Mossad allegedly responsible for the assassination of high-value targets.

In Hebrew, Kidon means bayonet or "tip of the spear." The official in the intelligence community said al-Masri's daughter, Maryam, was also a target of the operation.

The US Believed she was being groomed for a leadership role in al-Qaida and intelligence suggested she was involved in operational planning, according to the official, who like the others, spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive intelligence.

Al-Masri's daughter was the widow of Hamza bin Laden, the son of al-Qaida mastermind Osama bin Laden. He was killed last year in a US Counterterrorism operation in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region.

The news of al-Masri's death was first reported by The New York Times.

Both the CIA and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office, which oversees the Mossad intelligence agency, declined to comment.

Israel and Iran are bitter enemies, with the Iranian nuclear program Israel's top security concern. Israel has welcomed the Trump administration's withdrawal from the 2015 Iranian nuclear accord and the U.S. Pressure campaign on Tehran.

Joe Biden's 'first dogs' to make White House great again

AGENCIES

Washington, Nov 15: President Donald Trump's administration might be resisting handing over power to President-elect Joe Biden's team. But in one area there has been no resistance. Biden's two German Shepherds, Champ and Major, were able to take on the First Dogs of the USA titles, at least on social media, since there was no incumbent. Trump refused to keep a dog in the White House because he thought he would look silly walking one.

Trump presidency was the first in more than 100 years not to feature a "first dog". Neither President Donald Trump nor his wife Melania owned any pets.

Champ joined the Biden family in December 2008, weeks after the election that made Biden vice president-elect. Major joined the Biden clan almost eight years later. The Bidens fostered Major



from a Delaware Humane Association and made his adoption official in November 2018, CNN said in a report. On Monday, an Instagram account dedicated to both canines was launched under the name "first dogs USA". The account already has more than 55,000 followers and has posted 10 photos of the two dogs. A recent post of Champ and Major snuggled together on a rug is captioned: "We're so proud of our dad @JoeBiden, the first ever presidential candidate to receive 75 million votes. "But Major will be setting a record of his own as

he's the first ever rescue pupper to live in the WH. We're gonna play all day & receive countless treats! #DOTUS #FirstDogs #presidentelect [sic]." Major will be the first rescue dog to reside in the White House. He featured in numerous social media posts from Biden during the presidential campaign, including one video captioned: "No ruff days on the trail when I have some Major motivation." During the campaign, Biden urged American voters to "Put dogs back in the White House" through a series of social media posts.

Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly poll concludes amid tight security

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, Nov 15: Wearing face masks, the people of Gilgit-Baltistan in northern Pakistan voted Sunday in the third legislative assembly election amidst tight security. India has slammed Pakistan for its decision to hold election in Gilgit-Baltistan and said any action to alter the status of the militarily-occupied region has no legal basis.

The voting which commenced at 8.00 am (local time) ended peacefully without any break at 5.00 pm and no untoward incident was reported. The counting of votes has started and complete results are expected by tomorrow.

Earlier, the polling officials said that the voters present inside the polling stations would be allowed to cast ballots even after the end of polling time.

There are 24 seats for the contest but polling on one seat was postponed, leaving 23 seats up for grabs.

As many as 330 candidates, including four women, are in the contest, they said. India has opposed Pakistan's plan to hold election in Gilgit-Baltistan.

"Any action by Pakistan to alter the status of the militarily-occupied so-called 'Gilgit-Baltistan' has no legal basis whatsoever and is totally void ab-initio," Spokesperson in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) Anurag Srivastava said at a virtual media briefing in September.

"Our position has always been clear and consistent. The entire territories of the UTs of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh have been and are an integral part of India and would remain so," Srivastava had said. It is the third election for the current legislative assembly after political reform introduced in 2010.

Out of 1,141 polling stations, 577 have been declared sensitive and 297 highly sensitive. Over 15,000 security personnel from Gilgit-Baltistan,



REUTERS

Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh and Balochistan have been deployed at polling stations. However, army personnel have not been deployed.

A fierce triangular contest involving Pakistan Muslim League-



A Brexit deal was very difficult but very doable

SIMON COVENEY | IRISH FOREIGN MINISTER



LEBANON IMPOSES NATIONWIDE LOCKDOWN

Restaurants, bars, cafes, gyms and malls have closed their doors as Lebanon entered a two-week lockdown to restrict the spread of Covid-19



STRICT VIGIL



Russian peacekeepers patrol an area near the Davivank, as ethnic Armenians leave the separatist region of Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia

UAE extends 'golden' visa eligibility

The government in the past couple of years has made its visa policy more flexible, offering longer residencies for certain types of investors, students and professionals

AGENCIES

Dubai, Nov 15: The UAE on Sunday approved the issuance of a 10-year golden visa for more professionals, including PhD holders, physicians, engineers as well as graduates from certain universities, in a bid to keep the "talented people and great minds" in the Gulf country and help in nation-building.

Foreigners in the UAE usually have renewable visas valid for only a few years tied to employment. The government in the past couple of years has made its visa policy more flexible, offering longer residencies for certain types of investors, students and professionals. All holders of doctorate degrees, medical doctors and also computer,



AGENCIES

electronics, programming, electrical and biotechnology engineers are eligible, UAE Vice President and the ruler of Dubai Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum said in a statement.

Also eligible are those with specialised degrees in artificial intelligence, big data and epidemiology,

as well as high school students living in the UAE who rank top in the country and students from certain universities with a GPA of 3.8 or higher.

After first announcing a long-term visa plan in 2018, the UAE in 2019 started granting 5- and 10-year renewable visas to certain foreign investors, entrepreneurs, chief executives, scientists and outstanding students. The emirate of Dubai, a Middle East trade and tourism hub, in September said it would grant visas renewable every five years to wealthy foreign retirees. An oil and gas producer, the UAE's economy has been hit by the coronavirus pandemic and low oil prices, prompting many expatriates to leave.

Philippines typhoon death toll continues to climb

REUTERS

Manila, Nov 15: The death toll from the deadliest cyclone to hit the Philippines this year has climbed to 67, while many areas remained submerged in a northern region hit by the worst flooding in more than four decades, officials said Sunday.

President Rodrigo Duterte flew to Tuguegarao province to assess the situation in Cagayan Valley region, which was heavily flooded after Typhoon Vamco dumped rain over swathes of the main Luzon island, including the capital, metropolitan Manila. Twenty-two fatalities were recorded in Cagayan, 17 in southern Luzon, eight in Metro Manila, and 20 in two other regions, said Mark Timbal, the disaster management agency spokesman. Twelve people were still missing and nearly 26,000 houses were damaged by Vamco, he said. "This is the worst flooding that we had in the last 45 years," Cagayan Governor Manuel Mamba said during a briefing with Duterte. "We see that it is worsening every year."

The accumulated effects of



REUTERS

weather disturbances and huge volumes of water from a dam affected thousands of families in Cagayan, some of whom had fled to rooftops to escape two-storey high floods.

Six cyclones hit the Philippines in a span of just four weeks, including Vamco and Super Typhoon Goni, the world's most powerful this year.

But Mamba also lamented about denuded forests in Cagayan, prompting Duterte to order him to curb logging operations in the province.

Myanmar's ruling party NLD wins majority in polls

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Yangon, Nov 15: Myanmar's ruling National League for Democracy (NLD) party, headed by incumbent State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, has won 920 seats, which is an absolute majority in the November 8 general elections, according to the final result announced by the Union Election Commission (UEC) Sunday.

In the elections, 5,639 candidates vied for 1,117 parliamentary seats — 315 seats in the House of Representatives (Lower House), 161 seats in the House of Nationalities (Upper House), 612 seats in the Regional or State Parliaments and 29 ethnic minority seats in the Regional or State Parliaments, reports Xinhua news agency.

After the UEC's voting counts completed Sunday morning, 920 candidates out of 1,106 candidates fielded by the NLD party were elected to three levels of the parliament — 258 seats in the House of Representatives (Lower House) and 138 in the House of Nationalities (Upper Houses), 501 in the Regional or State Parliaments and 23 ethnic minority seats in the Regional or State Parliaments.

Pressure mounts on Peru's Prez

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lima (Peru), Nov 15: Pressure mounted on Peru's interim president to resign Sunday after a night of protests in which two people were killed and the country's political turmoil deepened.

At least nine of Manuel Merino's Cabinet members quit and the president of Congress scheduled an emergency session to discuss the leader's resignation.

The chaotic events came as thousands marched through the streets of Lima wearing masks and carrying signs that read, "Merino is not my president." Authorities said two men, ages 24 and 25, died from gunshot wounds during the demonstrations.

Merino, a little-known politician and rice farmer, rose to Peru's highest office Monday after the legislature voted to oust former President Martin Vizcarra. Lawmakers utilised a clause dating back to the 19th century to declare the president of "permanent moral incapacity" based on unproven allegations that he'd accepted bribes while serving as governor years ago.

Angry Peruvians have taken to the streets ever since in daily demonstrations accusing Congress of staging a parliamentary coup.

Merino, who until recently served as the head of Congress, did not immediately respond to the growing calls for his resignation after Saturday's protests.

Earlier Saturday the embattled leader denied the protests were against him, telling a local radio station that young people were demonstrating against unemployment and not being able to complete their studies amid the coronavirus pandemic.

PPP chief Bilawal Zardari announced to give the full status of the province if his party won, with seats for Gilgit-Baltistan in Parliament of Pakistan. Maryam also promised to grant the status of a province by saying that it was her party that set up a special committee in 2015 led by then advisor on foreign affairs Sartaj Aziz to propose reform for the region, including elevating its status to a province. Regardless of who wins the polls, it is expected that some changes in the status of the region would be announced after the new government was formed in the region.

However, a recent survey by the Gallup Pakistan group showed that the PTI was in a strong position to win the polls, followed by the PPP. The central issue is granting the status of a province to the region. Prime Minister Khan, during the height of the campaign, personally visited and announced interim provincial status.

PPP chief Bilawal Zardari announced to give the full status of the province if his party won, with seats for Gilgit-Baltistan in Parliament of Pakistan. Maryam also promised to grant the status of a province by saying that it was her party that set up a special committee in 2015 led by then advisor on foreign affairs Sartaj Aziz to propose reform for the region, including elevating its status to a province. Regardless of who wins the polls, it is expected that some changes in the status of the region would be announced after the new government was formed in the region.

Lately Tehreek-i-Nifaz-i-Fiqh-i-Jafria, another Shiite party, announced its support for the PPP in the elections but there were no seat arrangements. It has boosted the PPP's prospects.

The ruling PTI of Prime Minister Imran Khan was initially considered as a favourite, but PPP chief Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and PML-N leader Maryam Nawaz actively campaigned in the region with several well-attended rallies. Their extensive campaign has left the outcome as open-ended.



Without India, the RCEP agreement would not have much of a relevance because the aim of the pact was to consolidate a big market by including countries like India and China together

BISWAJIT DHAR | PROFESSOR OF ECONOMICS, JNU

DRUG FIRMS RECALL PRODUCTS

Indian drug firms like Marksans Pharma, Aurobindo Pharma, Zydus and Jubilant are recalling products in the US market, as per the latest enforcement report by the USFDA. While Marksans Pharma is recalling diabetes drug, Zydus Pharmaceuticals (USA) is recalling drug which is used to reduce stomach acid



of the day quote

Tablets have come back from the dead as they deliver the perfect balance of mobility and computing power at a wide range of price points during such a crucial time

VICTORIA LI | CANALYS ANALYST

I have a document showing that former CM Digambar Kamat gave permission to increase coal handling by 5 million tonnes at the Mormugao Port Trust March 2, 2012

PRAMOD SAWANT | CHIEF MINISTER, GOA

The premium homestay market in India is witnessing a steady growth as travellers are looking for more exclusive, unique, and immersive experiences. Amā Stays & Trails gives families and groups of friends an opportunity to bond together in these beautiful private bungalows and villas in off-beat locations

PRABHAT VERMA | EXEC. VP (OPERATIONS), IHCL

SHORT TAKES

OMCs continue to hold fuel prices

New Delhi: Oil marketing companies kept the retail prices of petrol and diesel unchanged across the country Sunday. Retail prices of the two fuels have been unchanged despite recent increase in crude oil prices. In the national capital, petrol price was unchanged at ₹81.06 per litre. In Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata, the fuel was sold at ₹87.74, ₹84.14 and ₹82.59 per litre respectively. Petrol prices have remained untouched across the four metros for over seven weeks now whereas diesel prices have not been revised for nearly one and a half months.

NCLT approves resolution plan

New Delhi: The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) has approved a ₹103-crore bid to acquire debt-ridden NIIL Infrastructures, which is developing a housing project in Agra, Uttar Pradesh. A two-member Principal bench of NCLT, headed by Acting President BSV Prakash Kumar, has approved the ₹103.18 crore resolution plan by a consortium of Rishabh Verma and Shilendra Khirwar along with N-Homes. In March 2018, NCLT Delhi had admitted the application seeking resolution for NIIL Infrastructures under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code and appointed Nisha Malpani as the Resolution Professional.

'Looking at four fold rise by 2022'

New Delhi: Softbank-backed e-grocery firm Grofers is expecting its gross merchandise value (GMV) to grow four times to around ₹30,000 crore by 2022 and focussing on private label products to drive overall sales growth, a top company official has said. The company is adding one-two new cities every month to sell groceries and expecting to expand its services to over 50 cities by June 2021 from 27 at present. "We have logged \$1 billion in GMV in FY 2020 and we are on the road to double it every year. Our aim is to hit ₹30,000 crore in GMV by 2022," Grofers founder Saurabh Kumar said.

Diwali sales at ₹72K cr, amid 'boycott' of Chinese goods

THE CAIT SAID THAT THE ROBUST SALES THAT HAPPENED IN COMMERCIAL MARKETS DURING DIWALI FESTIVE SEASON INDICATES GOOD BUSINESS PROSPECTS IN FUTURE

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 15: Traders recorded sales of around ₹72,000 crore this Diwali across major markets in the country, said the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT). According to the traders' body, the business was carried on during this year's Diwali with no Chinese goods on sale amid CAIT's call to boycott Chinese goods. "As per reports gathered from 20 different cities which are also considered to be the leading distribution centers of India, it is expected that Diwali festive sales generated a turnover of about ₹72,000 crores and gave China the expected loss of ₹40,000 crore," it said in a statement.



Twenty cities including Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Nagpur, Raipur, Bhubaneswar, Ranchi, Bhopal, Lucknow, Kanpur, Noida, Jammu, Ahmadabad, Surat, Cochin, Jaipur, Chandigarh are considered as "distribution cities" by the CAIT for the

purpose of its surveys. The CAIT said that the robust sales that happened in commercial markets during Diwali festive season indicates good business prospects in future and brought back some smile on the faces of traders. FMCG goods, consumer durables, toys, electrical appliances and goods, electronic appliances and white goods, kitchen articles and accessories, gift items, confectionary items, sweets, home furnishing, tapestry, utensils, gold and jewellery, footwear, watches, furniture, fixtures, garments, fashion apparels, cloth, home decoration goods were among the products most purchased on Diwali, it said.

Now, order Aadhaar PVC card online for ₹50

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 15: The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has launched a new "Order Aadhaar Card" service which facilitates the Aadhaar holder to get their Aadhaar details printed on a PVC card by paying nominal charges. Residents who do not have registered mobile number can also order using Non-Registered/Alternate Mobile Number.



"The facility of ordering Aadhaar PVC card is available online and it costs only ₹50, which includes all taxes and delivery (via Speed Post) fees," the UIDAI said in a tweet.

Aadhaar PVC Card is the latest form of Aadhaar introduced by UIDAI. Other than being easy to carry and durable, the PVC-based Aadhaar Card has a digitally signed secure QR code with photograph and demographic details with multiple security features.

It can be ordered online through uidai.gov.in or resident.uidai.gov.in using Aadhaar number, Virtual ID or Enrolment ID and paying a nominal charge of ₹50. Aadhaar PVC Card is delivered to the resident's address by speed post.

The resident can use their Aadhaar Number/Virtual Identification Number/EID to order Aadhaar card. The Aadhaar card comes with security features like digitally signed Secure QR code, hologram, ghost image, Guilloche pattern etc.

Gold imports improve in Oct, down 47% so far in FY21

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 15: Import of gold increased nearly 36% in October on a year-on-year basis to \$2.50 billion, showed the data released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. The overall imports of gold during the ongoing financial year, however, continued to be significantly lower than the last fiscal due to the pandemic.



India had imported gold worth \$1.84 billion in October last year. The rise in imports can be attributed to the anticipated demand for the yellow metal along with gold jewellery during the occasions of Dhanteras and Diwali, according to market experts.

India has imported gold worth a total of \$9.27 billion during the April-October period of FY21, 47.2 per cent lower than the corresponding period of FY20, which stood at \$17.64 billion.

BPCL PRIVATISATION

Bid closes today, all eyes on Reliance

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 15: Initial bids for privatisation of Bharat Petroleum Corp Ltd (BPCL) will close on Monday amid indications of supermajors UK's BP Plc, Total of France and Saudi Aramco unlikely to bid.

The government, which is selling its entire 52.98% stake in India's second largest oil refining and marketing company, had on four occasions extended the date of putting in the preliminary expression of interest (EOI). The current deadline is November 16.

Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) Secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey had last month said that there would be no further extension.

Industry sources said BP as well as Total are unlikely to bid for the stake and there are reports of even Russian energy giant Rosneft or its affiliates and Saudi Arabian Oil Company (Saudi Aramco) not very keen on bidding given the asking price of close to \$10 billion required to buy the firm at a time when the world is moving away from con-



ventional fuel.

Also, the pandemic has led to demand destruction of conventional fuels and may hasten transition towards cleaner fuels such as hydrogen and battery-operated EVs.

Given the uncertain demand scenario, the investors are weighing if BPCL acquisition makes sense, they said.

At Friday's closing price of ₹412.70 on the BSE, the government's 52.98 per cent stake in BPCL is worth ₹47,430 crore. Also, the acquirer would have to make an open offer for buying another 26 per cent stake from the public, which would cost ₹23,276 crore.

Sources said BPCL annually makes a profit of about ₹8,000 crore

and at this pace it would take 8-9 years for the investor to recover the bid amount of over ₹70,000 crore.

The acquisition makes sense for companies which can double the profit by growing the business as well as through operational efficiencies and synergies with existing business in half that timeframe.

Billionaire Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries Ltd, which operates the world's largest single location oil refining complex at Jamnagar in Gujarat and has fledgling ambitions to retail fuel, can be one such company.

Reliance has so far remained tight-lipped about its intentions for BPCL.

RIL acquires 96% stake in Urban Ladder for ₹182cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 15: Billionaire Mukesh Ambani-owned Reliance Industries' retail arm has picked up 96% stake in online furniture retailer Urban Ladder for over ₹182 crore.

"Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd (RRVL), a subsidiary of Reliance Industries (RIL), has acquired equity shares of Urban Ladder Home Decor Solutions Pvt Ltd for a cash consideration of ₹182.12 crore," RIL said in a statement Saturday.

The investment represents 96% holding in the equity share capital of Urban Ladder, it added.

"RRVL has a further option of acquiring the balance stake, taking its shareholding to 100% of the equity share capital of Urban Ladder," it said.

Besides, RRVL has proposed to make a further investment of up to ₹75 crore in Urban Ladder.

"The further investment is expected to be completed by December 2023," it said.

This acquisition will help RIL in bolstering its presence in the fast-growing e-commerce segment and widening the bouquet of consumer products provided by it as it looks to compete with e-commerce majors



as Amazon and Flipkart.

"The aforesaid investment will further enable the group's digital and new commerce initiatives and widen the bouquet of consumer products provided by the group, while enhancing user engagement and experience across its retail offerings," the statement said.

According to RIL, no governmental or regulatory approvals were required for the investment.

In August, RIL had acquired a majority stake in digital pharma marketplace Netmeds for around ₹620 crore.

RIL, which has been on a fund raising spree by selling stakes in RRVL, had earlier this month announced ₹9,555 crore investment from Public Investment Fund of Saudi Arabia, taking total fundraise in the last two months to ₹47,265 crore.

The investment had valued RRVL at a pre-money equity value of ₹4,587 lakh crore.

China aims for moderate export expansion: Thinktank

REUTERS

Beijing, Nov 15: China will no longer aim at achieving trade surpluses and solely expanding exports, but will pivot to moderately expanding imports for a balance between inbound and outbound shipments, a senior official from a state-affiliated think tank said Sunday.

"This will not only help China to take the initiative in the new round of economic and trade negotiations, but also help promote the internationalisation of yuan," said Huang Qifan, vice chairman of the China Center for International Economic Exchanges, during a financial forum.

China will import over \$22 trillion worth of goods over the next decade, and the country is accelerating its opening up in spite of the coronavirus pandemic, President



Xi Jinping said earlier this month.

Big exporting countries might "not be economically powerful", as their exported products could be labour-intensive or processed using imported raw materials, Huang said.

Instead, large importing economies are generally powerful, partly as their currencies are directly used in settlements of transactions, he said.

China's exports have stayed largely resilient amid the COVID-19 global pandemic, as strong demand for medical supplies and reduced manufacturing capacity elsewhere worked in its favour.

Fake invoice: DGGI arrests 25, new process being tightened

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 15: GST investigation arm DGGI has arrested 25 people over the last week for issuing fake invoices for goods like waste and scrap of non-ferrous metals, readymade garments, gold, silver and construction services, a source said.

The Directorate General of GST Intelligence (DGGI) has registered about 350 cases for issuing fake invoices against 1,180 entities, and search and investigation are on to apprehend other persons involved in the racket and also the beneficiaries who used the fake invoices to evade goods and services tax (GST), Income Tax, and do money laundering.

"Major goods involved in these



cases are MS/SS scrap, articles of iron & steel, copper rod/wire, waste & scrap of non-ferrous metals, plastic granules, PVC resin, readymade garments, gold and silver, construction services, works contract services, agro products, milk products, mobile, manpower supply services, advertisement and animation services, etc," a source said.

Considering the menace of fake invoices and hawala racket, and their damaging impact on the sta-

bility of the economy, the procedure for new GST registration is also being tightened.

Businesses, whose owners or promoters do not have commensurate income tax payment records, will require physical and financial verification before their companies can be given GST registration, the source added.

"It is also being examined whether apart from taking action against the beneficiaries under GST laws, Income Tax Act, and Prevention of Money Laundering Act, issuers of fake invoices as well as beneficiaries of such invoices can be detained under Conservation of Foreign Exchange and Prevention of Smuggling Activities (COFEPOSA) Act," the source said.

PRO-CYCLICALS EXPECTED TO DRIVE-UP MARKET RALLY

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, Nov 15: Pro-cyclical stocks along with faster recovery and the recently announced stimulus are expected to further drive-up the recent market rally. In financial parlance, pro-cyclical stocks from sectors such as banking, consumer durables, cement, real estate and metals.

However, market observers cautioned about an impending correction due to expensive propositions.

"Nifty has closed at all time high and has shown a lot of strength and resilience in the latest upmove," said Deepak Jasani- Head of Retail Research at HDFC Securities.

"Going by the momentum we can expect some more upmove although the short term technical indicators have turned extremely overbought

and hence could suggest a correction soon." Nonetheless, fund inflows, rising economic activity and progress towards a Covid-19 preventive vaccine are expected to arrest any major downfall.

As per estimates, till now the domestic equity market has attracted over ₹20,000 crore worth of foreign funds.

"Government has announced fiscal stimulus package 2.0 which is another incremental step toward the betterment of the rural sector and could boost consumption. This along with abundant liquidity should provide support to the market," said Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Retail Research, MOFSL.

"However, given fair valuations for Nifty, we would suggest investors to adopt buy on dips strategy and traders to keep booking profit in-



termittently."

According to Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services: "Market is currently in a stable state and is looking forward to next week's WPI data release."

Government has announced fiscal stimulus package 2.0 which is another incremental step toward the betterment of the rural sector and could boost consumption. This along with abundant liquidity should provide support to the market

SIDDHARTHA KHEMKA | HEAD - RETAIL RESEARCH, MOFSL

Already, the country's retail inflation has risen to 7.61 per cent in October from 7.27 per cent in September. This has mitigated chances of any further rate cuts in the calendar year 2020. The equity markets will now reconvene on Monday in the Hindu new year of Samvat 2077.

In Samvat 2076, the Sensex rose over 11 per cent, while Nifty50 gained around 10 per cent. A special "Muhurat" trading session was held

on Saturday to mark the start of the new year. Both the indices ushered in Samvat 2077 during the session with gains as signs of faster economic recovery along with healthy festive season demand and stimulus measures buoyed investors' sentiments.

Accordingly, the S&P BSE Sensex crossed the psychological 43,830.93 mark for the first time in the intrasession trade. The Nifty50 on the National Stock Exchange crossed the 12,828.70 mark.

"As a domestically oriented economy, we expect the coming year to be favourable for pro-cyclical sectors like banking, consumer durables and for companies tied to a robust pick-up in construction activity," said S. Hariharan, Head - Sales Trading, Emkay Global Financial Services.

TURKISH GP: HAMILTON CLINCHES RECORD 7TH F1 TITLE

THE 35-YEAR-OLD MERCEDES DRIVER MATCHED FERRARI GREAT MICHAEL SCHUMACHER'S SEVEN TITLES IN STYLE, LAPPING SOLE RIVAL AND TEAM MATE VALTTERI BOTTAS ON A NIGHTMARE AFTERNOON FOR THE SPINNING FINN

“Thank you so much guys...that's for all the kids out there who dream the impossible. You can do it too man, I believe in you guys

LEWIS HAMILTON | RACING DRIVER, MERCEDES



REUTERS

Istanbul, Nov 15: Britain's Lewis Hamilton took a record-equalling seventh world championship and became Formula One's most successful driver of all time after winning a wet and slippery Turkish Grand Prix Sunday.

the spinning Finn. Hamilton already had more race wins, pole positions and podium finishes than any other driver in the history of the sport. "Thank you so much guys...that's for all the kids out there who dream the impossible. You can do it too man, I believe in you guys," he whooped over the radio after taking the chequered flag.

spins and changes of lead. The victory was the 94th of Hamilton's career, three more than Schumacher managed, and came after he started in sixth place and then delivered a masterclass of skill and tyre management.



Bottas spins and drops

Istanbul: Lewis Hamilton's sole Formula One championship rival and Mercedes team mate Valtteri Bottas spun twice on the opening lap of what could be a title-deciding Turkish Grand Prix on Sunday and dropped to the back of the field. Bottas has to beat Hamilton by eight points to prevent the Briton from securing a record-equalling seventh world championship. The Finn had climbed back to 16th place -- but 43 seconds off the lead -- after four of 58 laps on a wet and slippery track, with Hamilton sixth.

Australians love to hate him: Tim Paine on Kohli

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sydney, Nov 15: Test captain Tim Paine says Australians have "polarising" opinions on India skipper Virat Kohli, one whom they love to hate as rivals but at the same time enjoy watching him bat as fans.

Australia and India are set to lock horns in a four-Test series with the opening Day-Night game in Adelaide starting December 17.

"I get asked a lot of questions about him, he's just another player to me it doesn't really bother me. There's not really a relationship there with him to be fair, I see him at the toss and play against him and that's about it," Paine told ABC Sport.

"With Virat it is a funny one, we love to hate him but we also love to watch him bat as cricket fans. He certainly is polarising in that type of scenario. We love watching him bat, but we don't like seeing him score too many runs."

The last time the two sides met tempers flared with both skippers having a go at each other at every given opportunity. The duo even had to be separated by the on-field umpires on a couple of occasions. "Australia and India, it's a heated



competition and he's obviously a competitive person and so am I, so yeah there were a few occasions when we had words but that wasn't because he was the captain and I was the captain, it could have been anyone," Paine said. Comparing his on-field battle with Kohli to the likes of Joe Root and Ben Stokes, the wicketkeeper-

batsman said it always a heated affair when the best players are out in the middle. "There is always a bit more tension when a player is as good as he is, it's the same when you play against England, its Joe Root or a Ben Stokes," Paine said. "It's often the best player is the one that your team goes up a little bit,

Australia and India are set to lock horns in a four-Test series starting December 17

The last time the two sides met tempers flared with both skippers having a go at each other at every given opportunity

Last year, India had stunned Australia 2-1 to win their maiden Test series Down Under

the intensity goes up when the best players in the world come out to the crease."

Last year, India had stunned Australia 2-1 to win their maiden Test series Down Under and Paine feels the rivalry between the two sides intensifies with every passing series.

"I'm looking forward to everything to be honest, it's a huge series. They beat us here last time obviously with a different team, and as I said the rivalry between the two countries building all the time..." Paine said.

"...I think any time you get to test yourself against the best is something that you look forward to as players and as a team, and we certainly are."

Can't wait to see pacers have a go at India: Langer



AGENCIES

The trio of Mitchell Starc, Josh Hazlewood and Pat Cummins is likely to be the first choice in the pace department this time as well

Melbourne, Nov 15: Australia head coach Justin Langer says his pacers have improved in the last two years since the Test series defeat to India and he can't wait to see them have a go at Virat Kohli and his men in the upcoming Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

India had stunned Australia 2-1 to win their maiden Test series Down Under in 2018-19.

The two teams are set to lock horns again on Australian soil in a four-Test series with the opening Day-Night game in Adelaide starting December 17.

"If I go back to that time (2018-19), we lost a toss at the MCG after winning the Perth Test match - lost the toss on possibly the flattest wicket I've seen in Test cricket... And they

guys are two years better and a lot of the Indians are the same, more experienced. I can't wait to see them go. Can't wait."

India had won the first and third Test at Adelaide and Melbourne respectively, while Australia claimed a victory in the second game at Perth with the final match ending in a draw.

The trio of Mitchell Starc, Josh Hazlewood and Pat Cummins is likely to be the first choice in the pace department this time too but the selectors also have a lot of options such as James Pattinson, Queenslanders Michael Neser and Sean Abbott to choose in the 17-member squad.

Pattinson, who had replaced an injured Hazlewood in the Melbourne and Sydney Tests against New Zealand last summer, is however short of red-ball form as he was busy in the recently-concluded IPL in UAE.

Neser is yet to make his Test debut despite being with the Test squad for more than a year, while NSW's Abbott has emerged as a potential Test all-rounder in last two years, displaying good form in the Marsh Sheffield Shield season.

"James Pattinson who has come back from that back injury, we saw how powerful that was during the last Ashes in England. Michael Neser keeps playing well over and over again," Langer said.

SHORT TAKES

Batra bags Capital Foundation Award

New Delhi: Indian Olympic Association President Narinder Batra was Sunday conferred with the Capital Foundation National Award for his contribution in sports. He was honoured with the award at the Capital Foundation Annual Lecture and Awards 2020 which was held online to commemorate the 106th birth anniversary of renowned jurist, Justice Krishna Iyer. Batra is also the president of International Hockey Federation and a member of the International Olympic Committee. Congratulating Batra, Hockey India President Gyanendra Ningombam said, "Given his role in professionalising sports administration and his dedication towards the upliftment of all sports, it is a much deserved recognition."

UEFA cancels Norway game

Nyon: UEFA said it cancelled a Nations League game because Norway could not travel to Romania after a COVID-19 case in the squad. Norway risks a 3-0 loss by forfeit for not fulfilling the match scheduled on Sunday in Bucharest. There are no clearly available dates in the international calendar to make up the game. UEFA said it sent the case to its disciplinary committee for a decision. The case could cost Norway dearly. The team is currently level with Austria at the top of their group in second-tier League B. They are due to meet in Vienna Tuesday in the final round. The group winner gets two rewards: Promotion to the top tier of the next Nations League and a potential place in World Cup qualifying playoffs scheduled in March 2022.

Eiki Takahashi smashes world best for 10,000m race walk



AGENCIES

Inzai (Japan), Nov 15: Japan's Eiki Takahashi won the 10,000m race walk event at the Juntendo University Long Distance meeting by completing in a record time

37:25.21. Takahashi managed to hold off a strong challenge from 2018 World Race Walking Team Championships 20km winner Koki Ikeda, who finished second in 37:25.90 Saturday, according to World Athletics.

Ikeda had clocked a Japanese 5,000m race walk record of 18:20.14 - the fastest time in the world for 12 years - just three weeks ago on the same track.

Yuta Koga, the World University Games bronze medalist, was at the third spot with timing of 37:35.00.

Earlier in 2014 and 2015, Takahashi had set Asian records for the 10,000m race but both were relatively short-lived, as was his 1:18:03 Japanese record for the 20km race walk in 2015.

NATIONS LEAGUE

France beat Portugal to reach last 4

REUTERS

Lisbon, Nov 15: France handed defending Nations League champions Portugal a rare defeat Saturday, winning 1-0 in Lisbon with N'Golo Kante's second-half strike to reach the competition's final four at the expense of the holders.

Anthony Martial missed three clear-cut first half chances for France before Kante scored only his second international goal in the 54th minute, and his first since 2016, to end Portugal's run of five successive clean sheets.

World champions France went top of Group A3 with 13 points from five games, three ahead of Portugal and with the better head-to-head record to give them an unassailable lead. It was only Portugal's second defeat since the



2018 World Cup.

"Given the quality of the opposition, it's of course one of our best performances of recent times," France coach Didier Deschamps said of Portugal, who are the European champions.

"We deserved the win and we've fulfilled our objective of finishing

top. I'm very proud of the players. They proved tonight that France are still a great team."

Antoine Griezmann set up Martial's first chance in the 12th minute with a slide-rule pass but Portugal's excellent goalkeeper Rui Patrício blocked it at point-blank range.

Johnson takes four-stroke lead at Augusta Masters

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Augusta, Nov 15: World number one Dustin Johnson will take a four-stroke lead going into the final round of the Augusta Masters and is poised to win the tournament he coveted in his childhood dreams.

Saturday, Johnson came out with a dominant performance as he pulled away with a bogey-free seven-under 65 to lead on 16 under after round three. Sungjae Im of South Korea, Abraham Ancer of Mexico and Australia's Cameron Smith are closest to him at 12 under.



The American golfer, who got off to a hot start with a 65 in the weather-interrupted first round, is the first player in Masters' history to shoot two scores of 65 or lower in the same tournament.

"I put myself in the situation a lot of times. I know what it takes," Johnson was quoted as saying by the tournament's official website.

"I know how I respond in this situation. I'm very comfortable with having the lead going into tomorrow. I've been in this situation a lot of times. I'm looking forward to the challenge. It's still going to be a tough day. I'm going to have to play well if I want to get it done tomorrow," he added.

The 36-year-old is trying to become the fourth player to win a Green Jacket as number one in the official world golf ranking, which debuted prior to the 1986 tournament. Ian Woosnam (1991), Fred Couples and Tiger Woods (2001, 2002, 2005) had earlier done so.

THIS DAY, THAT YEAR

When Sachin made international debut in 1989

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 15: It was November 15, 1989, when legendary cricketer Sachin Tendulkar made his debut in international cricket and went on to "inspire billions" across the globe with his batting skills.

Tendulkar, 16, made his international debut in a Test match between India and Pakistan that was played at the National Stadium in Karachi. Along with Tendulkar, Saliil Ankola also made his Test debut for India.

The right-handed batsman managed just 15 runs in his debut innings before he was castled by Waqar Younis, who was also making his international debut. Tendulkar, however, did not get to bat again in the



Test match which ended in a draw. Coincidentally, November 15, 2013,

Tendulkar went out to bat for the last time in international cricket dur-

	M	RUNS	HS	AVG	100	200	50
TEST	200	15,921	248	53.79	51	6	68
ODI	463	18,426	200	44.83	49	1	96
T20I	1	10	10	10.0	0	0	0
IPL	78	2,334	100	33.83	1	0	13

(with inputs from cricinfo)

ing a Test match against the West Indies at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai. In his last international innings, Tendulkar managed 74 runs before he became the priced scalp of Narsingh Deonarine. India, under MS Dhoni's leadership, went on to win the match by an innings and 126 runs.

"On This Day 1989 - Sachin Tendulkar made his debut in international cricket. 2013 - The legend walked out to bat for Team

India one final time. Thank you for inspiring billions across the globe," BCCI said in a tweet.

The 'Master Blaster' went on to play 200 Tests for India, scoring 100 centuries across Tests and ODIs. In 463 ODIs, Tendulkar scored 18,426 runs including 49 tons and in Tests, he has 15,921 runs to his name, including 51 centuries. He also played one T20I match against South Africa in 2006 in which he scored 10 runs.