



WISFUL THINKING

Actor Bidita Bag believes the world will be a beautiful place if men and women start supporting each other more

LEISURE P2



CUTTACK IIFL HEIST CRACKED

The Commissionerate Police claimed it has cracked the daylight heist from IIFL's Nayasarak branch in Cuttack

DOWNTOWN P4



CHINA'S 'SPACE DREAM'

China successfully launched its unmanned spacecraft mission to the Moon to bring lunar rocks

INTERNATIONAL P10

No vax in sight, PM issues SOP

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 24: Even though no vaccine has made an official entry in the markets, least in India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi kind of laid out an SOP for future vaccination in the country. In a meeting with chief ministers and other representatives from states and Union Territories, Modi asked states to put in place adequate infrastructure like cold storage facilities for future vaccine distribution plans, saying it is a national commitment that everyone gets inoculated.

Noting that alertness has given way to "widespread" negligence about COVID-19 among people, Modi said a few states have seen a surge in the infection in the same way as many countries witnessed after an earlier decline and asked chief ministers to focus on bringing down positivity and fatality rates by curbing the virus transmission.

India has come out of the "deep sea" of this crisis after the world had thought that it will find it difficult to deal with the pandemic and the country is now moving towards the shores, he said, while using a famous verse to call for avoiding a situation where "our ship capsizes where the water is shallow" (hamari kashti wahan doobi, jahaan paani kam tha).



STAY ALERT

- The priority in the vaccination drive will be to ensure that it reaches everyone
- Safety will be as much a priority as the speed of the vaccination programme
- High caseloads in Haryana, Delhi, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Maha, Raj, Gujarat, WB

Just like the focus in the COVID-19 fight has been on saving each and every life, the priority in the vaccination drive will be to ensure that it reaches everyone, he asserted.

He, though, avoided giving a timeline about the vaccine, saying the government is keeping a close watch as some vaccine candidates have reached the final stage of the trial. He asserted

\$20 SPUTNIK SHOT IN INDIA BY JAN

NEW DELHI: Russian Sputnik V vaccine will cost less than \$10 (around Rs 700) for single dose, said Krill Dmitriev, head of the Russian Direct Investment Fund, Tuesday. Sputnik V is a two-dose vaccine. This means the two-shot course will cost around Rs 1,400. This means the price at the launch will be two or more times cheaper than mRNA vaccines with similar efficacy levels, claimed Dmitriev. However, Sputnik V will be given free of charge for Russian citizens. RDIF and partners have launched production of the lyophilized (dry) form of the vaccine, which is stored at a temperature of +2 to +8 degrees Celsius. Such a regime enables the distribution of the vaccine in international markets, as well as expanding its use in hard-to-reach regions, including areas with tropical climates. The current agreements between RDIF and leading foreign pharmaceutical companies allow the Sputnik V vaccine to be produced abroad for 500 million people per year, starting from 2021. RDIF is currently considering additional applications from a number of countries and companies to further increase production capacity. The first international deliveries of the Russian Sputnik V vaccine will be made to customers in January 2021 based on the existing partnerships with foreign manufacturers. Those customers, who have recently submitted their requests, will be able to receive the first batches of the vaccine starting from March 2021. Meanwhile, the second interim analysis of clinical trial data showed a 91.4% efficacy for the Sputnik V vaccine on day 28 after the first dose.



that the safety of citizens will be as much a priority for the government as the speed of the vaccination programme. While experts and scientists work on developing the vaccine, the central and state governments have to focus on containing the virus spread, he said, cautioning against any laxity and negligence which, he added, have been seen in the "fourth stage" of the

fight against the pandemic. India has so far limited the harm due to the pandemic at the minimum and is in a much better state than many other countries in terms of recovery and fatality rates, he said. In the meeting, which had a special emphasis on eight states that have seen an upward trend in the corona cases, Modi asked all chief ministers to work to bring

down the positivity rate to near five per cent and the fatality rate to below one per cent. He called for a higher share of RT-PCR tests. These eight states with high caseloads are Haryana, Delhi, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Gujarat and West Bengal. The cumulative national COVID-19 positivity rate stands at 6.87 per cent as on date, while the daily positivity rate is 3.45 per cent, as per the health ministry data. Some states, however, have higher positive rates than the national average. The national fatality rate stands at 1.46 per cent, but it is higher in Delhi and a few other states. Modi said the first phase of the disease was marked by fear with reports of a few people even taking their own lives in panic, while the second phase saw a sense of apprehension creeping in as people avoided others and hid their infection in fear of getting socially ostracized.

In the third phase, Modi noted, there was a sense of acceptance about the disease with those infected even announcing it publicly and asking others to take care while people generally become more alert. As the recovery rate grew, people began thinking that the virus is not harmful and has weakened, he said of the fourth phase. Many thought even if they are infected, they will be cured, he added.

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Srimandir likely to reopen in Dec

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 24: The Srimandir at Puri is likely to open its door to devotees by the third week of December, a senior official of the SJTA said Tuesday. The 12th century shrine is closed since March due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This was informed by Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) chief administrator Krishan Kumar barely an hour after opposition BJP and Congress MLAs in the Assembly demanded the opening of the Puri temple for public as devotees are denied a glimpse of the Trinity since March.

The SJTA chief administrator said a special Standard Operating Procedure is being formulated for allowing the devotees to enter the temple. He said the SOP will deal with the conduct of smooth darshan of devotees adhering to the COVID-19 guidelines.

Replying to a question on Nagarjuna Besha to be held Friday, Kumar said a 3-layer security arrangement will be made at the temple during the event. Nobody other than the servitors will be allowed to enter the temple premises. Action will be taken against any kind of violation. This apart, the servitors will not be allowed to carry phones with them.

Meanwhile, the temple reopening issue was raised in the Assembly by BJP



NO ONLINE VIEWING OF NAGARJUNA BESHA

PURI: Srimandir authorities Tuesday rejected a proposal to allow online Darshan of Nagarjuna Besha of Lord Jagannath which is being organised after a gap of 25 years. The authorities made it clear that "Patitapabana" at the Lions' Gate would not be decorated with the warrior attire November 27. "Srimandir tradition does not permit online Darshan of Nagarjuna Besha. Similarly, the temple Record of Rights has no provision for decorating Patitapabana with the Nagarjuna Besha," said Srimandir chief administrator Krishan Kumar.

chief whip Mohan Majhi who demanded the immediate opening of the shrine as devotees are denied 'darshan' of their deities since March. "When the government of Maharashtra could open temples and places of worship amid the prevailing COVID-19 pandemic, why is the Odisha government reluctant in opening Shree Jagannath Temple in Puri," Majhi asked. Congress Chief Whip Taraprasad Bahinipati with folded hands urged Speaker to give a ruling on opening all the temples including Srimandir.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



You must see all those ads my govt is releasing, you will realise how much I've changed your life!

43 more apps banned

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 24: The Indian government banned 43 mobile apps Tuesday under section 69A of the IT Act. The action has been taken against mobile applications which were involved in activities prejudicial to India's sovereignty, integrity, defence, security and public order.

"Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology today issued an order under section 69A of the IT Act blocking access to 43 mobile apps. This action was taken based on the inputs regarding these apps for engaging in activities which are prejudicial to sovereignty and integrity of India, defence of India, the security of the state, and public order."

"Ministry of Electronics and IT has issued the order for blocking the access of these apps by users in India based on the comprehensive reports received from Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Center, Ministry of Home Affairs," a government press release stated. Recalling, that the government June 29 and September 2 had also banned several apps to protest the sovereignty and integrity of India.

On June 29, 2020 the Centre had blocked access to 59 mobile apps and September 2, 2020 118 more apps were banned under section 69A of the IT Act.



THE LIST OF APPS

- AllSuppliers Mobile App
- Alibaba Workbench
- AllExpress - Smarter Shopping, Better Living
- Allpay Cashier
- Lalamove India - Delivery App
- Drive with Lalamove India
- Snack Video
- CamCard - Business Card Reader
- CamCard - BCR (Western)
- Soul - Follow the soul to find you
- Chinese Social - Free Online Dating Video App & Chat
- Date in Asia - Dating & Chat For Asian Singles
- WeDate-Dating App
- Free dating app-Singol, start your date!
- Adore App
- TrulyChinese - Chinese Dating App
- TrulyAsian - Asian Dating App
- ChinaLove: dating app for Chinese singles
- DateMyAge: Chat, Meet, Date Mature Singles Online
- AsianDate: find Asian singles
- FlirtWish: chat with singles
- Guys Only Dating: Gay Chat
- Tubit: Live Streams
- WeWorkChina
- First Love Live- super hot live beauties live online
- Rela - Lesbian Social Network
- Cashier Wallet
- MangoTV
- MGTV-HunanTV official TV APP
- WeTV - TV version
- WeTV - Cdrama, Kdrama&More
- WeTV Lite
- Lucky Live-Live Video Streaming App
- Taobao Live
- DingTalk
- Identity V
- Island 2: Ashes of Time
- BoxStar (Early Access)
- Heroes Evolved
- Happy Fish
- Jellipop Match-Decorate your dream island!
- Munchkin Match: magic home building
- Conquista Online II

TURBULENT TIME



A man walks along a shore before the landfall of Cyclone Nivar at Marina Beach in Chennai, Tuesday

SELF-IMMOLATION BID ROCKS ASSEMBLY

SPEAKER ORDERS MOS HOME TO MAKE A STATEMENT ON THE ISSUE IN THE HOUSE WEDNESDAY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 24: A couple from Nayagarh district attempted self-immolation outside the Assembly here Tuesday, alleging that they have been denied justice in the alleged abduction and killing of their five-year-old daughter. The incident resonated in the Assembly where opposition BJP and Congress came down heavily on the BJD government.

The incident took place during noon when the House was discussing law and order situation in the state. The victim girl's father has alleged that the main accused in the case is

a key aide of a minister from Nayagarh, and the police were "bowing down to political pressure".

The couple, identified as Ashok Sahu and his wife Soudamini from Jadupur village in Nayagarh district, was however rescued by the security personnel. Though the couple had poured kerosene oil on their bodies, they were prevented from lighting the matchstick by the security personnel.

Ashok alleged that his five-year-old daughter "Pari" was kidnapped while she was playing near home July 10. Her body was later found in the backyard of the house with



eyes gouged out and kidneys removed.

"We lodged a complaint at Nayagarh Sadar police station, but no action was taken. We found her body dumped in our backyard two weeks later," the distraught father said. "We had even named the accused at the grievance cell of the

Superintendent of Police and the Collector, but no action has been taken," Ashok stated.

He also alleged that the accused and his associates attacked them October 26, as they refused to withdraw the complaint in connection with the case. "Although the police arrested 10 people for attacking us, it spared the main accused," he claimed. Bhubaneswar DCP Umashanakar Das said the couple was first taken to Capital hospital for medical examination and later sent to Nayagarh. The Nayagarh SP also talked to the couple over phone and assured them all help.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	44523.02 ↑ 445.87
NIFTY	13055.20 ↑ 128.70
DOLLAR	74.46 ↓ ₹0.05
EURO	87.73 ↓ ₹1.18
GOLD	₹48,653 ↓ ₹827
SILVER	₹59,395 ↓ ₹1130

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	27.7°C	27.5°C
TEMP MIN	16.0°C	14.5°C
Humidity	84%	74%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Partly cloudy sky	

Biden names team after Trump clears way for transition

AGENCIES

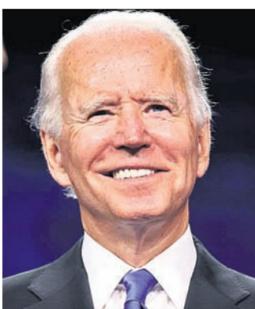
Wilmington, Nov 24: US President-elect Joe Biden Tuesday began a new phase in his transition to the White House after the Trump administration gave the Democrat access to critical resources that will enable him to take the reins of power in January.

The General Services Administration's announcement Monday that it would formally recognize Biden's transition came after weeks of the president falsely claiming that the November 3 election had been marred by widespread voter fraud. Trump, in a post on Twitter, offered support for the move. Critics have said the president's

refusal to accept the results undermined US democracy and undercut the next administration's ability to fight the novel coronavirus.

While Trump stopped short of conceding, it was the closest he has come to acknowledging that it is time to hand over power to Biden, who will take office January 20. The GSA announcement will allow the president-elect to access millions of dollars in funds and focus on putting together a leadership team.

It also paves the way for Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris to receive regular national security briefings that Trump also gets. On Tuesday, Biden and Harris for-



mally introduced their appointments to critical national security and foreign policy positions in Wilmington, Delaware.

TOP BIDEN PICKS

- Antony Blinken : Secretary of State
- John Kerry : Spl climate envoy
- Jake Sullivan : Natl security adviser
- Linda Thomas : Ambassador to UN
- Janet Yellen : Treasury secretary

Two Trump administration officials said the Biden agency review teams could begin interacting with Trump agency officials as soon as Tuesday. The Biden transition team said meetings would begin with federal officials on Washington's response to the coronavirus pandemic, along with dis-

cussions of national security issues.

Biden Monday tapped trusted aide Antony Blinken to head the State Department and John Kerry, a former US senator, secretary of state and 2004 Democratic presidential nominee to serve as his special climate envoy.

Biden, who plans to undo many of Trump's "America First" policies, also named Jake Sullivan as his national security adviser and Linda Thomas-Greenfield as US ambassador to the United Nations - both with high-level government experience.

He is likely to tap former Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen to become the next Treasury secretary,

according to two Biden allies, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss a personnel decision that was not yet public.

Sue Gough, a spokeswoman for the Department of Defense had been contacted by the Biden-Harris team. "DoD is prepared to provide post-election services and support in a professional, orderly and efficient manner that is befitting of the public's expectation of the Department and our commitment to national security," Gough said.

While Trump Monday said he backed GSA Administrator Emily Murphy's decision, he and his advisers vowed to continue fighting the election results.

leisure



LIAM PAYNE'S SPOOKY REASON FOR LOSING SLEEP

Singer Liam Payne says he has moved into a haunted house, and that is why he is having trouble sleeping. The former *One Direction* singer was convinced there was a ghost in his old London home. Now, he thinks he has moved into another haunted house, reports *femalefirst.co.uk*.

POLICE BRUTALITY IS NOTHING NEW, SAYS JADA PINKETT

Actress Jada Pinkett Smith says police brutality is nothing new, and is glad that the atrocity is getting highlighted thanks to social media. "Police brutality is nothing new but it's more visible now because of cellphones and social media sharing images and video," *variety.com* quoted Pinkett Smith as saying.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
It is a sunny, sparkling day, and the stars spell success. If you're feeling creative, simply pick up a paintbrush or try a new recipe. However, care and caution should be the buzzwords if you are driving alone, suggest Ganesh.

TAURUS
Your romantic relationship will be working on an overdrive today, says Ganesh. You will discover answers to the finer aspects of your love life. Overall, you will have a refreshingly creative outlook all through the day. It is a favourable day for those who cherish unrequited love, says Ganesh.

GEMINI
Today, you are likely to remain transparent in all your dealings, forecasts Ganesh. You can be optimistic about your chances of success if you choose to propose to that special someone. The day will bring more pleasure than pain.

CANCER
You will spend your day reflecting on your past and thinking what went wrong, predicts Ganesh. But keep in mind that your mistakes won't lead to the end of the world, unless you are a nuclear scientist. So get your act together, and stop brooding over your mistakes.

LEO
You will not be in the mood to take up significant tasks today. You will want to throw your responsibilities to the wind and pursue leisurely activities. However you will still need to tackle some pressing issues. It is easier to swim with the tide, than against, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
You will be bubbling with ideas today. You may face a dilemma between your obligations and present duties, which could prove to be very perplexing. New contacts turn out to be very useful. Ganesh says blood is thicker than water, and family and friends will cement their relationship with you.

LIBRA
Ganesh says you will learn a lot from your past experiences for a shining future. You will be slightly possessive about some costly item that you own. There will be small concerns during the day about different matters, which will give you mental stress. On the whole the day will pass by nicely.

SCORPIO
No matter how rich and successful you become, it is very important to stay grounded. Never let your success go to your head, advises Ganesh. Rudeness and overconfidence may take away everything from you and may leave you empty handed.

SAGITTARIUS
You become your own judge today. Through introspection, you try to find the various causes that lead to troubles in your life. Though it may take time, eventually you achieve what you want and try to find reasonable solutions for the same.

CAPRICORN
Mounting pressure of work and responsibilities during the day may drain your energy, but not your enthusiasm, feels Ganesh. The second half of the day will be tiring, as you will be fighting a tough battle with your competitors. You'll come out triumphant from the fight as you perform smartly and get your acts right.

AQUARIUS
Today, you will iron out any trouble with ease. But you may choose to play martyr and shoulder a bit of blame. That's quite a lot to do for others, even if it is done out of compassion. You may think you are setting standards for others to follow, says Ganesh, but that may not be the case.

PISCES
Needless rigidity only serves to imprison you within outmoded walls of faulty reasoning. Inculcating some flexibility will give you some much-needed wriggle room to manoeuvre things your way for good, says Ganesh.

Delhi Crime bags Int'l Emmy Award

WRITER-DIRECTOR RICHIE MEHTA'S SEVEN-EPIISODE SERIES WITH ACTRESS SHEFALI SHAH IN THE CENTRAL ROLE BECOMES THE FIRST INDIAN PROGRAMME TO WIN AN EMMY SINCE ITS CONSTITUTION IN 1973



New Delhi: The web series *Delhi Crime* has won the Best Drama Series award at the 48th International Emmy Awards, held virtually this year owing to the ongoing Covid pandemic. The show becomes the first Indian programme to win an International Emmy. The news was confirmed by the International Emmy Awards on its official page on Twitter. Writer-director Richie Mehta's seven-episode series has Shefali Shah in the central role of DCP Vartika Chaturvedi, and narrates the story of investigation in the aftermath of the heinous Delhi gang-rape of December 2012. As soon as the show is declared winner in the Drama Series category,

Shefali can be heard reacting with delirious joy. Although we don't see her in the video, she can be heard shrieking 'Oh my God!' several times. In his acceptance speech, writer-director Mehta thanked all the producers, the OTT platform Netflix that streams the show, the casting crew and the cast, with a special mention of Shefali Shah, his parents and wife, the Sundance Film Festival, and the Delhi police team headed by Neeraj Kumar and the amazing Chhaya Sharma that helped them bring the show alive. He paid a special tribute to the victim and her mother: "Finally the fearless and tireless hero of all mothers and her daughter. Not a day goes by when I don't think about you

both and what the world subjected you two to. And I hope none of us ever forget that," he said. The fictionalised crime drama series also features Rasika Dugal, Adil Hussain, Rajesh Tailang, Avijit Dutt, Gopal Dutt, Jaya Bhattacharya, Denzil Smith and Yashaswini Dayama in pivotal roles.

B-TOWN CONGRATULATES CAST AND CREW

Mumbai: Several celebrities congratulated the cast and crew of the web-series *Delhi Crime*, which has won the Best Drama Series award at the 48th International Emmy Awards. Filmmaker **Karan Johar** wrote: "This is just amazing! Congratulations to the entire team! Richly deserved." Filmmaker **Zoya Akhtar** congratulated the team as she said: "India just won its first Emmy." National Award-winning actor **Vicky Kaushal** simply wrote: "Congrats Team #DelhiCrime." Actress **Yami Gautam** said: "Proud and congratulations to the team #DelhiCrime." Actress **Aditi Rao Hydari** called the win "amazing". Actress **Sonali Bendre** said: "India's first International Emmy award. Congratulations to the entire team of #DelhiCrime." Actress **Dia Mirza** congratulated the team and said the win is "richly deserved". The news of the win was confirmed by the International Emmy Awards on its official page on Twitter. "The International Emmy for Drama Series goes to *Delhi Crime* produced by @GoldenKaravan / @skglobalent / @NetflixIndia," tweeted @iemmys, with the tags #India!, #iemmys and #iemmyWIN. IANS

'I understand men very well, call myself a manist'

Mumbai: Actress Bidita Bag calls herself a manist, and believes the world would be a beautiful place if men and women start understanding and supporting each other more. "I understand men very well. I call myself a manist. I believe men should be feminists and women should support men. Then automatically the world will become a better place! We don't have to do social awareness campaigns and protests for equality," she said. The actress not only calls herself a manist, she also likes to participate in the No Shave November movement, and her Instagram account bears testimony to the fact. "I also posted during No Shave November. I looked handsome with beard and moustache at times. This year I could not shoot in moustache and beard because of Covid, but every year I do it," informed the actress. Bidita will next be seen in the film *Fauji Calling*, which is expected to release soon on an OTT platform. IANS



Born to Perform features artistes with disabilities

The project focuses on some of the world's leading performing artistes including *Alienette Coldfire*, finalist, 'France Has Got Talent', India's classical dance troupe 'We Are One', Aussie crooner *Tony Dee - the voice of 'We're The Superhumans'*



shot in India and overseas. It features portraits of some of the world's finest and most inspiring performing artistes who happened to be physically challenged. "The project focuses on an aspect of disability that is largely ignored by media, policymakers, activists and even members of the Divyang community's right to cultural resources. When it comes to the issue of empowering the disabled, issues of education and livelihood rightfully occupy center stage. However, true inclusion can only happen when members of the community also enjoy equal access to all cultural resource," they said. This photo project highlights this aspect by focusing on some of the world's leading performing artistes. Featured artistes include *Alienette Coldfire* (finalist, France Has Got Talent), India's classical dance troupe *We Are One* and Australian crooner *Tony Dee - the voice of 'We're The Superhumans'* campaign for the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games. The photographer, *Vijay S. Jodha*, has worked extensively on disability issues in India and abroad. In 2018, he was invited to present one of his projects and address delegates from 195 countries at UNESCO headquarters in Paris. IANS

An online exhibition of photographs by Gurugram-based writer, filmmaker and a self-taught photographer *Vijay S Jodha*, titled *Born to Perform* featuring portraits of some of the world's finest and most inspiring performing artistes who happen to be physically challenged, is currently on view till December 6. It is organised by India International Centre and UNESCO to commemorate International Day of Persons with Disabilities observed December 3 annually. The exhibition draws from ongoing photography project shot in India and abroad. The project focuses on some of the world's leading performing artistes from Australia, Cambodia, Canada, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Malaysia, Mauritius and many other countries. As per the organisers, *Born to Perform* is a four-year old and ongoing photography project

FUN post CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		8				
9				10		
11			12	13		
			14			15
16	17	18				19
20				21	22	
23				24		
25			26			27
28						29

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Across
1 Hibernia
3 Dress shop
9 Delicate
10 Foolish
11 Skin problem
12 Colossus
16 Driving hazard
18 Molten rock
19 Brit's raincoat
20 Italian dish
21 Walk in water
25 Scent

Down
26 Say in passing
28 Promised land
29 "Beowulf"
1 Brownie
2 Wanders
4 Miner's find
5 Port-of-Spain locale
6 Kind of leap or physics

7 Balanced
8 Kind of iron
11 Bistro
13 Hammond output
14 Not up to par
15 Flu symptom
17 Alluring beauty
22 Crop up
23 Frolic
24 Aardvark's morsel
26 More, in Madrid
27 Silent assent

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

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

M	O	R	O	N	I	C	B	R	A	W	L	O
A	E	E	A	A	U	L	O					
C	O	L	L	A	P	S	E	D	P	I	T	
A	E	T	T	S	H	T						
W	O	N		B	L	O	C	K	A	D	E	
T	B	E	O	R								
W	I	S	D	O	M	G	R	U	M	P	Y	
E	A	C	K	A								
A	S	T	E	R	O	I	D	R	I	A		
P	A	N	P	T	L							
O	W	N	P	R	E	C	I	P	I	C	E	
S	T	O	V	E	A	G	A	I	N	S	T	

SUDOKU

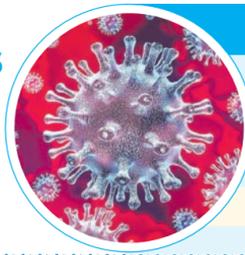
C	3	2	B	4	7	E	D	0	8	A	5	6	1	9
8	0	D	6	A	9	4	C	7	2	B	1	E	5	3
7	6	E	5	1	8	3	A	2	9	4	C	0	B	D
A	5	1	D	E	C	8	9	B	0	6	3	7	2	4
4	B	9	3	0	2	5	6	1	7	D	E	8	C	A
2	C	3	4	6	A	0	8	9	5	B	D	7	1	E
9	1	6	7	B	D	C	5	3	A	2	8	4	0	E
D	A	5	C	2	0	1	E	4	3	7	6	B	9	8
0	4	7	8	3	E	2	B	D	1	C	9	A	B	6
B	E	8	1	9	5	A	7	6	0	4	C	3	2	1
1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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



FINISHING TOUCHES

An artisan paints clay idols at a mandap ahead of Kartikeshwar Puja, Tuesday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	5,97,34,991	4,13,26,117	14,05,827
India	91,77,840	86,04,955	1,34,218
Odisha	3,15,271	3,07,374	1,671

Revenue from coal royalty up 49%

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 24: Revenue from mining activities in the state have increased manifold in the last five years, if data presented in the Assembly Tuesday is any indication. The state government, Tuesday, put forth the data on collection of coal royalty by Mahanadi Coalfields Ltd (MCL) and also the District Mineral Foundation (DMF) funds generated from the miners under the Union government's scheme.

Data furnished by Steel and Mines Minister Prafulla Mallick before the House said that the state has seen a 49 per cent increase in coal royalty collection in the last five years since 2014-15. Similarly, the state witnessed 68 per cent rise in collection of DMF Funds during the last four years since 2015-16.

As per the written statement submitted by the state government before the House, the state saw collection of ₹1420.95-crore coal royalty in 2014-15 which increased to ₹1622.20 crore in 2015-16 and later in 2019-20



MINING EARNINGS

Odisha saw collection of ₹1,420.95-crore coal royalty in 2014-15 which increased to Rs 1,622.20 crore in 2015-16 and later in 2019-20 the numbers escalated to ₹2,110.54 crore

The state recorded 68 per cent rise in collection of DMF Funds during the last four years since 2015-16

The sudden rise in DMF collections could be attributed to a surfeit in collections from Angul district which hosts India's largest coalfield

IN THE HOUSE

the numbers escalated to ₹2110.54 crore.

Similarly, the state government had reported a total of ₹395.44 crore DMF collections in 2015-16 while it went upto ₹3079.01 crore in 2019-20, hinting towards a 68 per cent rise of DMF collections.

The sudden rise in DMF collections could be attributed to a surfeit in collections from Angul district which hosts India's largest coalfield. Likewise, Keonjhar district, which has largest iron ore reserves, also saw a robust growth in DMF collections.

The state government has been

COAL ROYALTY & DMF COLLECTIONS

PERIOD	COAL ROYALTY	DMF COLLECTIONS
2014-15	₹1,420.95 cr	---
2015-16	₹1,622.20 cr	₹395.44 cr
2016-17	₹1,649.07 cr	₹2,114.04 cr
2017-18	₹1,750.94 cr	₹1,800.37 cr
2018-19	₹1,945.37 cr	₹2,595.76 cr
2019-20	₹2,110.54 cr	₹3,079.01 cr

pitching for revision in coal royalty before the Centre as per the provisions of legislations on mining. The revenues and other collections from coal mining in the

state are also expected to rise with further planned coal block allocations and mining activities in the eight new proposed coal blocks in Angul district.

Women can now work in night shifts

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 24: Now, factories and industries can engage women employees in night shifts as the state Assembly Tuesday passed the Factories (Odisha Amendment) Bill, 2020.

The House has approved amendment to the Factories Act repealing the Ordinance brought to this effect.

As per the advice of the Union Ministry of Labour and Employment and request of several industrial organisations, participation of women in factories went beyond 7pm, said State Labour Minister Sushant Singh.

As per the amendment, now the engagement of women workers will be allowed, with consent, between 7pm to 6am in factories with the condition that adequate safety, welfare and security measures and safeguards taken by the concerned factories as prescribed.

Also, workers who would be working for 180 days would be eli-

gible for leaves with wages in the next calendar year, instead of the earlier 240 days. Similarly, the overtime limit has been enhanced from 75 hours to 115 hours per quarter.

The Assembly also passed the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Odisha Amendment Bill, 2020 to increase the threshold under the Act.

The state government has exempted small companies employing up to 50 workers from complying with the Act.

Amendment to the Odisha Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation Amendment Act, 1980 was also approved by the House Tuesday.

Now, the state-run IDCO can be engaged in building of social infrastructure like educational institutions, universities, hotels, multiplexes, commercial complex, healthcare facilities, entertainment facilities, resorts, sports complexes and tourism projects.

CM's Grievance Cell cleared pre-2018 cases

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 24: The state government, Tuesday, said that not a single case filed before 2018 is pending with the Chief Minister's Grievance Cell. The data was furnished by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik before the Assembly in a written statement.

The details given by the CM said that in the last eight years, since 2011-12, it has disposed of 28,879 cases which came before the special cell. He said in the last 10 years the cell received altogether 89,222 grievances out of which 36,302 have been disposed of while a total of 44,611 have been forwarded to the departments concerned for action.

Drug seizures halved: Pujari

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 24: The state government Tuesday submitted a written statement on seizure of cannabis and brown sugar and the number of arrests made in these cases.

Data tabled by Excise Minister Niranjan Pujari revealed that seizures made during the pandemic (2020-21 fiscal) have reduced by almost 50 per cent as compared to the seizures made in 2019.

According to data, the department was able to seize 6396.51 kg cannabis in 2019-20. However, during 2020-21 (till October 31) the seizure of the same was about 3495.80 kg. Similarly, the seizure of brown sugar in 2019-20 was at 1556.4 gram while during the current fiscal it was 631.66 gram.

When it comes to the number of people arrested for such offences, last year it was 279 but in the current fiscal it stands at 147. He talked about several initiatives the government is taking to counter drug abuse. He talked about roping in Multi Disciplinary Squad to crack down on anti-socials indulged in the illegal trade. He stressed on awareness campaigns organised by the government on harmful effects of drug abuse.

CUSTODIAL DEATHS

Govt orders judicial probe amid uproar in Assembly

BJP AND CONGRESS DEMAND STRINGENT LEGAL ACTION AGAINST FORMER PURI SP AKHILESHVAR SINGH

PNN/AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Nov 24: The state government, Tuesday, informed the Assembly that it has ordered judicial investigations into two recent custodial death allegations reported from Puri and Sundargarh districts last week.

Replying to a discussion on the admissibility of an adjournment motion on the state's law and order situation, Minister of State for Home D S Mishra said that separate judicial officers will probe the allegations. He said that the sub-divisional judicial magistrate (SDJM) of Panposh and the first class judicial magistrate (JMFC) of Puri were entrusted with



Law and order situation in the state is under control. The general elections and by-polls were conducted peacefully. Naxal activity has come down in the state... (sic)

DIBYA SHANKAR MISHRA | MOS HOME



The custodial death cases in Puri and Biramitrapur show that British Raj is going on in the state

MOHAN CHARAN MAJHI | OPPOSITION CHIEF WHIP



the task of investigating the alleged custodial deaths at Biramitrapur police station in Sundargarh district and Baselisahi police station in Puri town respectively.

Mishra said that the police have been investigating the allegations in strict adherence to the guidelines of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC).

The opposition BJP and Congress claimed that 32-year-old K Ramesh was hacked to death by the personnel of Baselisahi police station after he was picked up November 18. Another man, Tarique Salim, also died at Biramitrapur police station under mysterious circumstances the next day. Opposition BJP and Congress demanded stringent

legal action against former Puri SP Akhileshvar Singh.

The opposition members also charged the police with committing excesses, saying that six people were tortured at Pipili police station in Puri district last week. A deputy inspector general (DIG) level inquiry was already ordered into the allegation. Senior Congress member S

S Sautja demanded resignation of the Minister of State (MoS) for home, and filing of murder cases against erring police officials including former Puri SP Akhileshvar Singh who was transferred following the incident in Baselisahi police station.

"The state government is responsible for the custodial death of two persons in Puri and Biramitrapur. We demanded a case against the erring police officials including the former SP under Section 302 (murder) and a judicial inquiry by a sitting judge of the Orissa High Court," Opposition chief whip Mohan Majhi of the BJP said.

"As per official report, seven custodial deaths were registered in

Odisha in 2018. However, the guilty was not punished in a single case. What kind of investigation the police are doing?" he asked citing the example of arrest of former MLA Anup Sai, who was arrested by Chhattisgarh police in connection with a double murder case.

Mishra, however, said that the law and order situation is good in Odisha as some elections were conducted smoothly in recent times while there was no communal flare-up in any part of the state. The minister said that the Naxalism also remained under control and the police have successfully conducted lockdown, shutdown and curfew during the pandemic.

Need 'Right to be Forgotten' under Article 21, says HC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Cuttack, Nov 24: Acknowledging the 'Right to be Forgotten' as yet another facet of Article 21 of the Indian Constitution relating to Right to Life and Personal Liberty, the Orissa High Court has advocated for enforcement of such a right through the 'process of court'.

At present, there is no statute in the country which provides for the Right to be Forgotten/getting photos erased from a server permanently, the court observed Monday. The law at present is silent on the remedy for victims of sexually explicit video or photos posted on social media by spurned lovers in order to harass and intimidate women, he said.

According to Article 21 of the Constitution, no person shall be

At present, there is no statute in the country which provides for the Right to be Forgotten/getting photos erased from a server permanently

According to Article 21 of the Constitution, no person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law

deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law. The 'Right to be Forgotten', requiring erasure of data when it is not needed or following revocation of consent by the subject, is recognised under the General Data Protection Regulation, Europe's digital privacy law.

Denying bail to an accused for allegedly posting on social media in-

timidate scenes stealthily recorded with his female friend, Justice S K Panigrahi said, even as the accused has deleted those obscene materials, there is no mechanism available with respect to the victim to get the objectionable contents permanently deleted from the server of the social media platform.

"Though the statute prescribes penal action for the accused, the rights of the victim, especially her right to privacy, which is intricately linked to her right to get deleted in so far as those objectionable photos have been left unresolved," Justice Panigrahi said in the order. "It is also an undeniable fact that the implementation of the 'Right to be Forgotten' is a thorny issue in terms of practicality and technological nuances," he observed.

Mercury dips to 9° C at aringbadi

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 24: Cold wave condition intensified in the state with mercury plummeting to as low as 9 degrees Celsius at Daringbadi.

As per Met department sources, the night temperature has come down to 15 degree Celsius and even below it at 12 places, Tuesday.

Daringbadi in Kandhamal district was the coldest place in the state recording the lowest temperature at 9 degrees C while the minimum temperature at Phulbani was 11, Sonepur 11.4, Angul 11.6, Baripada 12, Keonjhar 12.4, Talcher 12.5, Bhawanipatna 13.6, Jharsuguda 13.8, Koraput 14, Cuttack 14.5 and Chandbali 14.8.

The minimum temperature is likely to be 2-3 degrees Celsius below the normal temperature at many places in the state during next 24 hours and it will increase by 3-4 degrees C in subsequent two days, the IMD said.

The weather forecasting department also said moderate fog would occur at one or two places in Sonepur, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Sundargarh, Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj districts during next 24 hours.

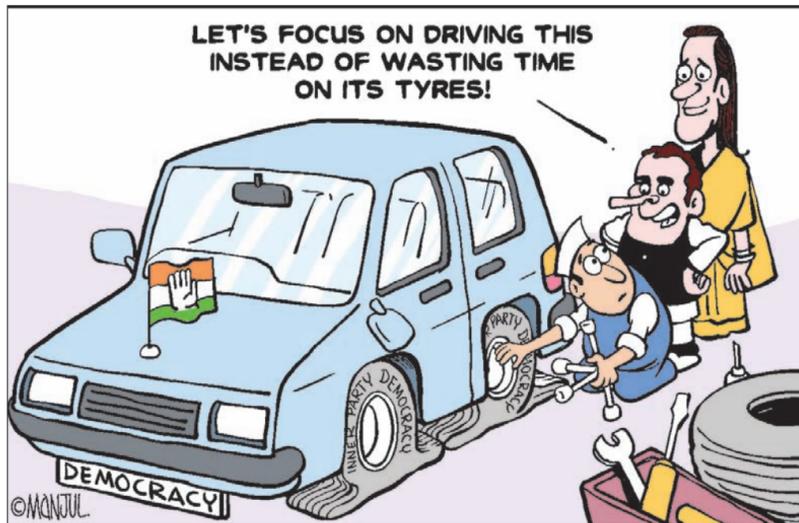
PANEL TO CHOOSE OHRC HEAD

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 24: A meeting under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik is going to be held Wednesday to choose the next chairperson of Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC).

The post has been lying vacant after the retirement of Justice Bimal Prasad Das November 14. The committee also comprises leader of Opposition Pradipta Kumar Naik and the Speaker of Odisha Assembly, Surjya Narayan Patro. The committee will recommend the name to the Governor for approval.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



BMC SENIOR WARD OFFICER HELD FOR ACCEPTING BRIBE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 24: Bhubaneswar division Vigilance officials Tuesday arrested a senior assistant ward officer of Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) while receiving ₹20,000 as bribe.

The accused, identified as Sudhanshu Majhi, was caught red-handed while accepting the illegal gratification. According to sources, the accused senior assistant ward officer of ward 42 was allegedly demanding ₹20,000 from one Prashanta Kumar Ray of Rasulgarh area for release of EMD and security deposit of a work done by the latter in 2018. Ray approached the anti-corruption officials in this connection after which Vigilance sleuths laid a trap to apprehend Majhi.

The Vigilance sleuths arrested Majhi while he was accepting the bribe money. The hand wash of the

Vig arrests CET professor

BHUBANESWAR: Vigilance officials Tuesday arrested an assistant professor of College of Engineering and Technology (CET) in Ghatikia area of Bhubaneswar for amassing assets disproportionate to his known sources of income. Assets of the accused assistant professor, Prasanna Kumar Mishra, who teaches mathematics in CET, have been valued at ₹1.88 crore. During a raid, it was found that Mishra's possessions included two four-storey buildings in Bhubaneswar; one double-storied building in Tangi, two

plots in Bhubaneswar; two two-wheelers, deposits in different banks, investment in LIC, gold ornaments and other household items. After calculation, it was found that Sahu was in possession of assets worth ₹1.88 crore, which constitutes 495 per cent of his known sources of income. He was arrested by the Vigilance sleuths who registered a case (35/20) under various section of Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Act. The court sent him to judicial custody till December 7.

accused and right side pant pocket gave positive reactions with phenolphthalein. Majhi was forwarded to court, sources said.

The bribe money of ₹20,000 was re-

covered from the possession of the accused. Further investigation is on to find out involvement of other BMC officials in this case, a Vigilance source added.

DHARITRI TURNS 47



Dharitri and Orissa POST Chief Executive Adyasha Satpathy flanked by Editor Tathagata Satpathy lights a lamp as part of the Odia daily's 47th foundation day celebrations in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

IIFL HEIST CRACKED

Staffer masterminded robbery: CP



Twin city commissioner of police Sudhanshu Sarangi (R) addresses the media as Cuttack DCP Prateek Singh looks on, Tuesday

PNN & AGENCIES

Cuttack, Nov 24: The twin city Commissionerate Police Tuesday claim to have cracked the sensational daylight heist from India Infoline Finance Limited's (IIFL) Nayasarak branch here November 19 with the detention of the accused late Monday night.

Briefing the media at the DCP office here, police commissioner Sudhanshu Sarangi claimed that the robbery was an insider's job.

"Lala Amrit Ray, an employee of IIFL, had masterminded the loot. The accused have been taken into custody. Around 2kg gold, two motorcycles and the clothes they had worn during the loot have been recovered from their possession. The involvement of six persons in the crime was found," Sarangi said.

Ranjan Behera alias Bapu of Biswanathpur under Kisan Nagar police limits is one of the accused. Although Bapu isn't directly involved in the loot, he had orches-

trated the modus operandi of the armed robbery. Lala Amrit Ray, a resident of Aranapur under Kisan Nagar police limits, and Bapu are childhood friends," the police commissioner said.

Sarangi said that Lala Amrit Ray and his brother Lala Ranjan Ray had criminal antecedents. "Mangalabag police had arrested Lala Ranjan Ray for misappropriating about a kg of gold while working with Muthoot Finance here. Although Lala Amrit Ray was also involved in the case, he managed to get bail from the Orissa High Court," Sarangi added.

According to Sarangi, Amrit has been working with IIFL for around five years now, but the company was blank about his complicity in the Mangalabag case. "During investigation, we came to know that Amrit had committed several irregularities in IIFL over the last four years. He managed to hush up the irregularities in connivance with previous auditors. Amrit, however, recently landed in trouble after a new auditor joined the company. Sensing threat, Amrit met with Bapu and told him about his plans to quit the job. The duo prepared a blueprint for the loot," Sarangi said.

He added that the Commissionerate Police would bring all IIFL staffers under the purview of investigation to ascertain the amount of the misappropriated gold and cash.

Highlighting the bleak security arrangements at the ill-fated branch of IIFL, Sarangi said, "The CCTV camera wasn't functional. The alarm system wasn't working. Even the digital locker was defunct since January, 2020. The security guard didn't have any arms. The regular security guard was away as his father got infected by Covid-19."

Sarangi praised the efforts of the Cuttack DCP Prateek Singh and other officers for cracking the case within six days of the heist. The police commissioner also said that the state government has approved ₹14 crore for installation of high-end CCTV cameras at sensitive locations in the Silver City. The Odisha Police Housing and Welfare Corporation has been entrusted with the task to install the CCTVs. The move will help curb the crimes.

Around 2kg gold and two motorcycles have been recovered from the accused

Notably, around four masked and armed miscreants stormed into the IIFL branch November 19 morning and decamped with gold ornaments worth ₹12 crore and ₹4.5 lakh in cash within minutes.

DRUMMING UP SUPPORT



Light and sound owners' associations hold a demonstration at Lower PMG in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday, seeking the state government's permission to perform in social as well as cultural events

Bhagwat on 3-day visit to Odisha

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Nov 24: RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat arrived here Tuesday evening on a three-day visit during which he is slated to attend the annual meeting of Akhil Bharatiya Karyakari Mandal (ABKM) amid strict adherence to Covid-19 guidelines.

The meeting, scheduled to be held Wednesday and Thursday, will be attended by top functionaries of RSS from Odisha, West Bengal, Sikkim besides Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

As many as 35 top office bearers from the regions will participate in the indoor meeting which is being held in a limited scale in view of the Covid-19 pandemic, RSS sources said. Welfare activities undertaken by the 'Swayamsevaks' during the pandemic will be reviewed. Programmes, activities and training for the swayamsevaks for 2021 will also be finalised in the meeting. The RSS chief has no public engagement during his visit.

Placement agency chief held for cheating

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 24: Commissionerate Police, Tuesday, arrested the owner of a placement agency on charges of cheating several job aspirants of over ₹10 lakh. The accused was identified as Mohammed Ansari, a resident of Madhusudan Nagar under Jatni police limits.

Ansari has been staying at Srusti Plaza apartment in Airfield police limits.

According to sources, one Samarendu Rout of Tirtol in Jagatsinghpur lodged a complaint



with Airfield police accusing Ansari of taking over ₹2 lakh from him on the pretext of providing him a job outside the country. During the course of investigations, the cops found that Ansari,

who has a placement agency - Irsat Management and Service Pvt Ltd- at Bhimatangi, used to lure gullible unemployed youths by organising counselling camps in remote areas of Jajpur, Jagatsinghpur and other parts of the state. He used to collect money from the youths by promising high-paid jobs abroad.

Police officials till now have come across 14 such victims who had given ₹10.65 lakh to Ansari.

Police arrested Ansari after registering a case (250/20) in this regard. Court later sent Ansari to judicial custody after rejecting his bail plea.

CONGREGATIONS DURING KARTIKA PURNIMA BANNED

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 24: The state government prohibited congregations of people at ghats, riverbeds and other water bodies on the occasion of Kartik Purnima.

"As such congregations have huge potential for spread Covid-19 infections. Therefore, the state government has directed in public interest to prohibit such activities on the occasion of Kartik Purnima," read an order issued by Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy.

The government has also banned conduct of Bali Yatra this year and all other congregations relating to Kartika Purnima & Bada Osha throughout the state.

Any person found violating this order shall be punished under the provisions of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 and other relevant laws, it said.

On Kartik Purnima, many people congregate at river ghats or near other water bodies to take bath in the wee/morning hours and sail miniature boats.

Besides, Bali Yatra is organised at various places which also attract huge crowds.

State not to lower guard against nCoV: CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Nov 24: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Tuesday said the state cannot lower its guard against Covid-19 even after availability of vaccine to fight the viral infection.

"We need to ensure that we all continue to wear masks, practise social distancing and hygiene to protect ourselves against the infection"

NAVEEN PATNAIK | CHIEF MINISTER

Patnaik said this while attending a meeting of chief ministers with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, as the PM took stock of vaccination preparedness across the country over a videoconference.

"Though we have prepared for seamless vaccination programme to save every life on priority basis we cannot lower our guard, even when the vaccine is available as duration efficacy of the vaccine against Covid-19 is still unknown," the Chief Minister said.

Mentioning that Odisha is fully prepared with a system in place for vaccine distribution when it is available, Patnaik said, the states

14 MORE COVID DEATHS IN ODISHA

State's Covid-19 caseload Tuesday mounted to 3,15,271 after 642 more people tested positive for the infection, while 14 fresh fatalities took Odisha's toll to 1,671, an official of Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said.

Of the 642 new cases, 374 were reported from various quarantine centres, and the remaining detected during contact tracing, the official said.

Keonjhar recorded the maximum number of new cases at 70, followed by Nuapada at 69 and Sundargarh at 66.

Taking to Twitter, the H&FW department said, "Regret to inform the demise of fourteen COVID-19 positive patients while under treatment in hospitals."

Five deaths were recorded in Sundargarh and three in Sambalpur. One patient each succumbed to the infection in Angul, Cuttack,

focus is on frontline health workers, people above 50 years and those with comorbidity. "We need to ensure that we all continue to wear



Demonstrators throw social distancing norms to the winds during a rally at PMG Square in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

Jagatsinghpur, Khurda, Nuapada and Rayagada.

Fifty-three Covid-19 patients have died due to comorbidities, he said.

The positivity rate in the coastal state stands at 5.59 per cent.

Over 56.42 lakh sample tests have been conducted so far, including

masks, practise social distancing and hygiene to protect ourselves against the infection," he said.

Wearing masks is the best vaccine

which the state has to fight the pandemic, the chief minister said. "Let's resolve not to take the virus lightly," Patnaik said.

Crooks dupe senior citizen of ₹6 lakh

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 24: Unknown cyber fraudsters duped an elderly person of ₹6 lakh on the pretext of updating his KYC details to activate his PAYtm account. The victim, Debraj Mishra, 65, has recently lodged a complaint with the Mancheswar police in this regard.

According to sources, Mishra received a phone call from a person, Ramesh who identified himself as the official staff of PAYtm July 27, 2020. Ramesh told the victim that he had to follow some instructions to reactivate his account which had been deactivated just a day before.

Mishra was also asked by Ramesh to recharge his mobile number with ₹10 through his bank account having net banking facilities as process to reactivate his PAYtm account. He later sent a link and asked Mishra to recharge his mobile number by clicking on the link.

Subsequently, he received several messages mentioning the transfer of around ₹6 lakh from his different fixed deposit accounts at



same the branch.

The victim also accused the bank officials of wrong doing by allowing the withdrawal from fixed deposits without his written application, as per prescribed banking guidelines. He sought stringent action against the accused persons under IPC and IT act.

Police have started investigations into the case after registering a case in this regard. Mishra also lodged complaints with the national Cyber crime reporting portal in this regard.

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AFFIDAVIT

I Priyadarshani Nayak, D/o. Pradeep Kumar Nayak resident of At: Mohan Plaza Apartment, Flat No. 202, Plot No. 94, Satya Nagar, Bhubaneswar - 751 007, Dist. - Khordha declare that I change my name Priyadarshani Nayak to "Esther Olive" vide affidavit date 23.11.2020 in Bhubaneswar Court, Executive Magistrate. Henceforth, I shall be known, called, identified as "Esther Olive" for all purpose instead of Priyadarshani Nayak.

FOR A CRIME-FREE PURI



BJD activists take out a rally in Puri demanding a crime-free Pilgrim City, Tuesday

Plus III spot admission deadline postponed

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 24: In view of students facing problems while taking admissions to Plus III courses, the Higher Education department has extended the deadline for spot admission of waiting list candidates for 2020-21 academic year.

The department has sent letters to the principals of degree colleges regarding the revised timeline and directed them to follow the same.

According to the letter, short-listed students can log in to SAMS website and deposit their admission fees by 5pm of December 5. Admission and data updation of students who took admission in the e-space will be done by 5pm



December 9.

Students can get all the detailed information from official websites www.dheodisha.gov.in and www.samsodisha.gov.in

However, new applicants will not be entertained, the department said in the notification.

Earlier, the department had started the procedure of spot admission from November 9, 2020.

Webinar on fisheries held

BHUBANESWAR: ICAR-Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture Bhubaneswar continues the fervour of service to fisher folk and has represented India in two days expert consultation meeting on "promoting innovations in fisheries value chain for improving human nutrition in South Asia" during 24-25 November 2020 organized by SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), Dhaka, Bangladesh on virtual mode. Delegates from member countries participated in the meeting. The purpose of this meet is two-fold. First is to promote innovations in value chain dynamics for sustainable expansion in fisheries and the second is policy recommendations emerging from this consultation for improving human health.

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Cost overruns for new mine ops

FIRMS FIND IT ECONOMICALLY UNFEASIBLE TO OPERATE THE NEWLY LEASED MINES AFTER TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE HUGE PREMIUMS THEY HAVE PAID TO THE STATE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Joda, Nov 24: Many firms, after grabbing mines with promise of high premiums in Joda mining circle in Keonjhar and Koida mining circle in Sundargarh district, have stated their inability to operate the mines for various reasons. This will lead to scores of workers facing job loss, a report said.

According to the report, after the government initiated the mines leases, many new and old mining firms got hold of leases in various mining circles in the state. A kind of competition was found in the mining leases with companies having vied for marginal profits. In such situation, the government had estimated to rake in huge revenue from the mining leases.

But the government's hopes have started petering out for various reasons, some mining experts have pointed out.

In June, leasing process of big mines was taken up. Indian Bureau of Mines (IBM) fixes the prices of the minerals. Some mining companies had got leases of mines with varying premiums of over 150 per cent on mineral prices (per tonnage) to be paid to the state government. Problem started for some mining firms when they started mining operations. They calculated various costs related to mineral extraction and royalty. Taking all such factors into account, they found it unfeasible to operate them. They have meanwhile, apprised the state government of their operational inability.

It may be noted that five of these mines belong to Joda and Koida mining circles. Experts said that this might put the government in a fix



FILE PHOTO

MATHS GONE WRONG

Some mining firms secured leases with varying premiums of over 150 per cent on mineral prices (per tonnage) to be paid to the state govt

After taking into account extraction cost, royalty fees and other charges, firms find the business as a loss-making one

EXPERTS SAY THAT THIS MIGHT PUT THE GOVT IN A FIX AND LEAVE IT WITH TWO OPTIONS— EITHER GO FOR FRESH BIDDING OR FORCE THE FIRMS TO START OPS

and leave it with two options— either go for fresh bidding or force the firms to start operations.

On the other hand, thousands of workers have started losing their jobs while operations have been hampered in these mines.

Since June till date, these firms have been unable to operate their mines leading loss of revenue to the tune of crores of rupees to the state government. "In this situation, hundreds of mining workers have migrated outside after losing their jobs," lamented Maheswar Rout, a labour union leader.

On the other hand, locals have been staging protests, demonstrations and dharnas, seeking jobs in the operational mines.

Besides, transporters/truckers are

unhappy over transportation prices of the minerals. Transporters and the mine lease holders are at loggerheads over the pricing issue in the district. The miners, who have got hold of the leases with more than 100 per cent premiums, are allegedly trying to adopt fraudulent and illegal means to make up for their loss.

Joint director of Mines department, Bhubaneswar, Umesh Chandra Jena, during his visit to Joda area had detected that miners were not abiding by the official guidelines for their profitability.

In his letter 6605/23/9/2020, he had pointed out illegalities in mineral grade tampering.

However, Salil Kumar Behera, the joint director of Joda mining cir-

Locals, activists say no to expansion of Kodingamala mine

KORAPUT: Kodingamala mine in Rayagada is going to be expanded. Public hearing on the project expansion will be held November 25. After protests by locals, the admin decided to hold another public hearing December 2 at Podapadi in Rayagada. However, locals have opposed the project and termed it illegal.

OMC on behalf of the state government will conduct the public hearings.

A delegation of Kodingamali Anchalbasi Sangha has submitted a memorandum to the district administration in this regard. The Sangha activists said that the mining expansion is illegal as mineral extraction in the forest land requires consent of the Palli Sabha and Gram Sabha as per the Forest Protection Act.

Besides, another outfit Kodingamala Surakhya Manch has assured support to the Sangha. The Manch said that the state government has announced January 9 to set up an aluminum plant at Kansariguda. The Manch demanded that the administration after holding a public hearing on the project should only proceed.

He said that Rs1,600 crore has been collected as revenue from the mining sector from June till November. He admitted if mines were not made fully operational, the revenue collection may be affected in the current year.



WITH FINESSE

Artists render final touches to paintings of blackbucks on the concluding day of an art camp 'Aranya', organised by Ganjam Akademi of Fine Arts, at Buddhakhol shrine in Ganjam, Tuesday

OP PHOTO

2 bodies recovered near Bamuni rivulet

POST NEWS NETWORK

Umerkote, Nov 24: Police Tuesday recovered bodies of two youths from near Bamuni rivulet at Chikili village under Jharigaon block in Nabarangpur village.

Since a bike was also found lying close to the bodies, police suspect the youths met an accident Monday night.

Some villagers who had gone near the rivulet to attend nature's call Tuesday morning first spotted the bodies. They immediately informed the police.

Upon reaching the spot, the police recovered the bodies for post mortem. They found an AADHAR card and a Voter ID card carried by one deceased. From these documents, they identified one of the deceased as Mukunda Jani, a resident of Umerkote.

Miscreants snatch bag with ₹5L from woman

POST NEWS NETWORK

Patna, Nov 24: Two miscreants Tuesday snatched a bag containing Rs 5 lakh in cash from a woman at Turumunga village under Patna block of Keonjhar district.

The victim, identified as Annapurna Mishra, is an accountant of a regional cooperative bank.

The incident took place in front of a Bank of India branch. Even though it was a busy hour of the day and the area was crowded, none could get time to react, eyewitnesses said.

Sources said Mishra had withdrawn Rs 5 lakh from the Bank of India branch. After withdrawing the money, she was walking to

The victim, identified as Annapurna Mishra, is an accountant in a regional cooperative bank

her bank with the bag containing the money. She had come only a few metres from the bank when the two unidentified persons riding a black Pulsar motorcycle stopped near her. Before she could guess their motive, they snatched the cash bag away and sped away from the spot. All that happened so fast that none could come to her rescue. After getting information about the incident, Turumunga police reached the spot and launched a probe.

Dumper goes on a mishap spree, kills 6 in Nayagarh

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh, Nov 24: Six persons including two women and two minors were killed after being hit by a dumper in Sarankul town of Nayagarh district, Tuesday afternoon.

The deceased were identified as Rajesh Mohapatra, 17, of Gudiasahi, Nilakantha Moharana, 80, his granddaughter Kajal Moharana, 15, of Suarsahi in the town, Subhasini Sahu, 42, Sarojini Sahu, 35, and Padmalochan Sahu, 30, of Narendrapur.

The mishaps occurred at two separate places in the town. Notably, at first, the dumper hit two women—Subhasini and Sarojini—near Narendrapur of the town killing them on the spot. As the driver fled the scene at a higher speed, it hit more four persons at Suarsahi on the way.

Eyewitnesses said the dumper speedily moved into the Sarankul bazaar and rammed a person Padmalochan supervising works of his under-construction house at Suarsahi. Nilakantha and his granddaughter were standing nearby while Rajesh was on his bike by the roadside.

Three male persons were killed at the mishap site whereas critically injured Kajal was rushed to the Sarankul hospital where doctors



Image from internet

At first, the dumper hit two women near Narendrapur of the town killing them on the spot

As the driver fled the scene at a higher speed, it hit more four persons at Suarsahi on the way

pronounced her dead.

The dumper is stated to be of a consultancy agency, a report said.

The mishap sparked tension in the area as the residents of Narendrapur and Suarsahi put up the bodies on Nayagarh-Odagaon road and staged a road blockade.

Sarankul police reached the spot and tried to persuade the agitators from withdrawing the road blockade but in vain. The tension intensified as the administrative officials did not arrive at the spot.

They relented after the Nayagarh sub-collector and Odagaon tehsildar reached the spot in evening and assured of action. The bodies were sent for post-mortem.

Row erupts over redrawing of Bhitarkanika boundaries

The admin excludes 52 villages from the territorial boundaries of Bhitarkanika while redrawing the boundaries after 40 years

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rajnagar, Nov 24: The redrawing of boundaries of Bhitarkanika National Park (BNP) after a span of four decades under this block in Kendrapara district has sparked up sharp protest, a report said.

The administration has excluded 52 villages from the territorial boundaries of Bhitarkanika while redrawing the boundaries. The residents questioned the yardstick on the basis of which the administration excluded the 52 villages from the limits of Bhitarkanika.

The matter came to fore after the residents under the aegis of Rajnagar-Pattamundai Surakhya Manch met the Rajnagar DFO and submitted a memorandum to him in this regard.

They demanded to revise the map of the national park failing which they will be 'forced to launch an agitation within a week' if their pleas were not addressed, residents Debadutta Sethi, Siba Prasad Mohapatra, Raghendra Mohanty, Tusharkanta Biswal and Jagabandhu Khatua said.

They alleged that the administration without publishing any notice, conducting any surveys or fixing any benchmark whimsically excluded the 52 villages from the territorial limits



Aggrieved villagers under the aegis of Rajnagar-Pattamundai Surakhya Manch submit a memorandum to Rajnagar DFO in this regard

of Bhitarkanika. They demanded that the redrawing of boundaries of Bhitarkanika should be suspended as the residents have not been informed or are aware about it.

They claimed that the block head-

quarters of Rajnagar as well as the panchayats like Mahishasur, Kuranti, Mahulia, Chandibaunshamula and Bhitragad where there is no trace of any jungle and are at a distance of 30 km from the Bhitarkanika forests have been included in its boundaries while the villages on its fringes or even inside it have been excluded from the boundaries of the national park.

These areas have been entangled in the forest laws as these villages have been marked inside the boundaries of Bhitarkanika.

Reports said the administration included all the villages of Rajnagar block and 90 villages of 12 panchayats in Rajkanika block in the territorial boundary of Bhitarkanika April 22, 1975.

The residents claimed that erroneous drawing of boundaries sparked up resentment among the residents for which they have been agitating for the last 45 years.

Minor boy detained over rape & murder

THE VICTIM GIRL WAS ALSO A MINOR AND ABDUCTED 6 MONTHS AGO

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, Nov 24: Police detained a minor boy on charge of his involvement in the rape and murder of a minor girl under Sadar police limits in Ganjam district.

Police detained the minor boy after the victim's body was recovered from a house late Monday night. Police registered a case over a complaint by the victim's father and sent the body for post-mortem, Sadar SDPO Jayant Mohapatra said. Further investigations are



on and the boy will be arrested if his involvement in the case is established, he said.

The SDPO said that the girl was

kidnapped six months back by the minor boy of another area and had been kept confined in a house.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

(1) e-Tender Notice No.e-Tender-Elect-G-36-20

Description of Work: PROVISION OF 1 KWP OFF-GRID SOLAR POWER ACROSS 100 LEVEL CROSSING GATES OVER KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.

Approximate Cost of the work (₹): ₹ 94,50,000.00, EMD : ₹ 1,89,000.00, Cost of Tender Document : ₹ 5,900.00, Completion Period of the work : 6 Months.

(2) e-Tender Notice No.e-Tender-Elect-G-37-20

Description of Work: COMPREHENSIVE MAINTENANCE OF DG SETS OF ELECTRICAL (G) DEPARTMENT AT VARIOUS LOCATION OVER KHURDA ROAD DIVISION FOR A PERIOD OF THREE YEARS.

Approximate Cost of the work (₹): ₹ 45,41,002.26, EMD : ₹ 90,800.00, Cost of Tender Document : ₹ 3,540.00, Completion Period of the work : 36 Months.

Date and time of closing of tender: At 1500 hrs of 11.12.2020 (For both tenders)

No manual offer shall be accepted and such manual offers shall be rejected summarily. Complete information including e-Tender documents of the above e-Tenders is available in website <http://www.ireps.gov.in>.

NOTE: The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website ten days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes / corrigenda issued for this tender.

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (G), PR-366/L/20-21, Khurda Road

First-of-its-kind 'Black Diamond' museum in Angul soon

WHILE ASSAM HAS A SIMILAR MUSEUM BUT IT IS NOT FULLY DIGITISED

POST NEWS NETWORK

Angul, Nov 24: Why has coal earned the moniker 'Black Diamond'? How does coal formation takes place? How coal deposits are detected/ located? Is coal mining without explosion possible? If you wish to learn the answers to these and more pertaining to coal, fret not. Angul town is going to have a museum in the name of 'Black Diamond' which will be the first-of-its-kind museum in the country. Once the museum comes up, it will have all information related to coal, a report said.

While the foundation stone for the museum is to be laid this year, the construction is estimated to be completed in the next one and a half years.

The proposed 'Black Diamond' museum is coming up on a piece of



Project plan pics

land measuring 3.5 acres, at a budget outlay of Rs25 crore. The entire amount will be borne by the Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL).

Assam has a similar museum built by Coal India Limited. But it is not fully digitised, the one coming up here is going to be fully digitised. It will be a three-storied building.

So, it stands to reason that the state-of-the-art museum will be the first-of-its-kind not only in the state

but also in the country.

It is learnt that the museum will house the equipment once used to mine coals. Visitors will get a chance to learn everything starting from discovery to the usage of coal. The museum will also have an international library where a visitor can have the opportunity to read books written by renowned national and international authors. Just a single click will present them a window of opportunity to learn many a thing.

Students, academicians, histo-

rians and researchers in the district are very enthusiastic about the proposed museum, referring it to be a milestone in the fields of education and research.

The district administration informed that the museum will jointly be constructed by the Navaratna company along with another company. Earlier, three locations were identified and one of them has been finalised for the museum. It may be mentioned here that the displaced populace will not be charged anything to gain access to the museum.

Foundation stone for the museum is to be laid this year

The construction is estimated to be completed in the next one and a half years

The museum is coming up on a piece of land measuring 3.5 acres at a budget outlay of Rs25 crore

The entire cost will be borne by Mahanadi Coalfields Limited

The fee amount for general visitors will be decided once the facility is ready.

When contacted, Angul Collector Siddharth Shankar Swain informed that the blueprints for the coal museum and the library have already been finalised. "Once completed, the museum will be a cynosure of all eyes," he added.

It is the Divine Presence that gives value to life. This Presence is the source of all peace, all joy, all security. Find this Presence in yourself and all your difficulties will disappear.

THE MOTHER



Biden's Toughest Job

After weeks of refusing to concede election defeat and violating the tradition of transition of power at the White House, President Donald J. Trump's administration on Monday authorised President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. to begin a formal transition process.

Trump's green light to proceed with the transition is a strong sign that the President's last-ditch bid to overturn the results of the election may be coming to an end.

This is a major relief for everyone as the US is struggling with the rising number of coronavirus cases and the uncertainty over leadership is the last thing that anyone wanted.

However, President-elect Biden waited for neither Trump to concede nor to allow the formal transition of power as he set the ball rolling with a flurry of Cabinet picks announced over the last few days.

The speed with which Biden acted, immediately after it emerged that he was the apparent winner in the November 3 election, is a sign of his resoluteness on ascending the office of the President of the United States (POTUS) and its myriad challenges.

Biden's Cabinet picks suggest a resumption of a more traditional approach to governing, relying on seasoned policymakers with deep expertise and strong relationships in Washington and global capitals. And with a roster that includes several women and people of colour — some of whom are breaking historic barriers in their posts — Biden is fulfilling his campaign promise to lead a team that reflects the diversity of America.

By tapping into many Obama era officials for several key roles, Biden has signalled a sharp shift in foreign policies and the Democrat President's immediate priority after assuming office on 20 January, 2021 could be to reverse some of Trump's policies including the Iran nuclear deal which he helped negotiate as vice-president during Obama's era.

While tackling the pandemic and reviving the US economy are said to be the priority of Biden administration, the President-elect has also laid out a fast-paced agenda to unwind Trump's harsh immigration policies. Biden could face choppy waters in his efforts to reverse some of Trump's policies as a closely divided Congress could hamper sweeping legislative actions on immigration reform. The Democrat President-elect made his reputation for reaching across the political aisle as one of the central tenets of his candidacy. During his 36-year career in the Senate, Biden earned admiration — and some criticism — for his commitment to bipartisanship and could use this skill to reach out to his opponents to score legislative wins.

On Monday Biden tweeted that Vice President-elect Kamala Harris and he spent the afternoon meeting with a bipartisan group of mayors, signalling a start of a strong partnership in the months and years ahead.

During the campaign, Biden had pledged to be a president who seeks not to divide but to unify the American society. If his actions since he won the presidency are any indication, he is already on his way to achieving what he set out to accomplish.

However, the biggest challenge for Biden would be dealing with a global perception about the US. It is no more a question of simply lack of evidence on electoral fraud that Trump has been repeating every single day in his tweets. Some may label it as a domestic issue. But what Trump is doing, with his every utterance, is that he is breaking down the edifice of Democracy itself. It was, repeat was, the USA which had been considered the epitome of what is called the free world. Trump and his campaign team have gone ahead, with virtually no facts substantiating their preposterous charge of voter fraud, and filed cases in several courts in various states of the USA. Although many courts are dismissing their petitions outright, the impression across the world has solidified that elections in the US are susceptible to wrongdoings. This feeling itself has been enough to weaken the eternal struggle across the world for freedom, democracy and the wide spread yearning for elected representatives to govern countries. The blame lays squarely on Trump for bringing the USA down to such repute that an undemocratic and totalitarian leader like Vladimir Putin could dare to say he does not accept the results of the recent US election. This could be Biden's toughest job coming up!

WISDOM CORNER

- Don't gain the world and lose your soul; wisdom is better than silver or gold. **BOB MARLEY**
- You don't need anybody to tell you who you are or what you are. You are what you are! **JOHN LENNON**
- When the power of love overcomes the love of power the world will know peace. **JIMI HENDRIX**

WORDSWORTH

Verecund

A verecund person is modest, bashful or shy. The Oxford English Dictionary's entry for this word, published back in 1916, doesn't suggest it's obsolete or even rare. In fact, it hasn't yet quite vanished, though it has never been common. You need to have learned Latin in your youth — once standard for educated writers of earlier generations, of course — to have been likely to include this word in your prose. Its heyday, insofar as it ever had one, was roughly in the half century after 1850. The word is from Latin verecundus, which derives from the verb vereri, to revere or fear.

Vet

A vet is a most curious word when you look into its history. Like the noun of the same spelling, it's actually an abbreviation of veterinary surgeon. The noun came first, about the middle of the nineteenth century, and the verb followed a few decades later. The initial sense was the obvious one: to submit an animal to examination or treatment by a veterinary surgeon. For example, you might have a horse vetted before racing, to be sure it was fit to run. By the early years of the twentieth century, it had begun to be a figurative term for any careful or critical examination, which remains its principal sense. In Britain, it's also used for the process of investigating the suitability of a person for a post that requires loyalty and trustworthiness. The key point about the verb vet is that it puts the focus on the process of examination or consideration, not on the results of that process. Though the end result may well be approval or its reverse, in the past it has not been a synonym for approve.

LOL

Purchasing new brains

A mid-level executive was so frustrated at being passed over for promotion year after year, that, in frustration, he went to a brain-transplant centre in the hope of raising his I.Q. 20 points. After a battery of physical and psychological tests, he was told by the centre's director that he was an acceptable candidate. "That's great!" the executive said. "But I understand that this procedure can be really expensive." "Yes, sir, it can," the director replied.

"An ounce of an accountant's brain for example, costs one thousand dollars; an ounce of an economist's brain costs two thousand; an ounce of a corporate president's is forty-five thousand. An ounce of a Democrat's brain is seventy-five thousand dollars." "Seventy-five thousand dollars for an ounce of a Democrat's brain? Why on earth is that?" "Do you have any idea," the director asked, "how many Democrats we would have to kill?"

FOCUS WORLD

G20's DEBT RELIEF

A global collapse in economic activity during the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly increased the risk of debt distress in many countries, pushing the poorest ones to the brink. In response, various international organisations have unveiled a number of initiatives to forestall circumstances necessitating between responding adequately to the public-health crisis and servicing existing debts.

Most notably, the G20 has established a Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI), that allows the world's poorest countries to suspend official bilateral debt-service payments until next year. And this month, G20 leaders adopted a new common framework to address sovereign-debt restructuring needs on a case-by-case basis.

For poorer countries grappling with the pandemic, debt not only limits their fiscal space for responding to the crisis but also forecloses on future development. Faced with the sudden costs of the COVID-19 crisis, many countries that are already struggling to service existing debt have needed fresh financing, only to find that it is too difficult or expensive to borrow more. And even if they can manage to do so, the additional debt burden will hamper them for years, limiting their prospects for growth and development.

Far from involving a few unfortunate countries on the margins, today's sovereign-debt distress poses a potentially systemic risk. Since 2014, total sovereign debt as a share of GDP has not only risen substantially; it has also become more fragmented, owing to the use of more diverse debt instruments among a wider range of creditors.

Given these circumstances, the global financial safety net urgently needs to be broadened beyond the support currently offered by international financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. To that end, the DSSI took the first step by suspending principal and interest payments on debt falling due



Although the G20's latest debt initiative misses the mark on many counts (particularly when it comes to addressing the asymmetries between debtors and creditors), it has at least put a common framework for debt reductions squarely on the international agenda

between May 1, 2020, and June 30, 2021 (having been extended from December 31, 2020), thereby expanding the safety net for at least 77 developing countries.

But while the DSSI offers some respite, it also merely kicks the debt-repayment can down the road, leaving the deferred payments to be repaid in full between 2022 and 2024. Debtor countries thus will have to make up the difference with larger repayments, and might even need to borrow more to service their frozen debt, in addition to any other debt taken on during the COVID-19 crisis. The 46 countries that have applied for debt suspension so far eventually will have to cover \$5.3 billion of postponed payments, on top of \$71.54 billion of pre-existing commitments; and any other debt contracted since the COVID-19 outbreak will be added to the burden.

Although the G20's latest debt initiative misses the mark on many counts (particularly when it comes to addressing the asymmetries between debtors and creditors), it has at least put a common framework for debt reductions squarely on the international agenda. The

new initiative has two distinct merits. First, by allowing for a case-by-case approach, it addresses a specific concern raised by private-sector creditors, a key constituency that was not included in the DSSI.

Second, the new framework brings China on board, having overcome some initial resistance stemming from the definition of a state-owned bank (which raised concerns that the China Development Bank and China Export-Import Bank would themselves be exposed to debt restructuring). Because China holds about 63 per cent of overall debt owed to G20 member states, its participation is critical for the initiative's success.

The common framework is an important first step in the right direction. But the G20 cannot stop there; the initiative needs to be expanded into a common scheme for sovereign-debt restructuring. Sovereign debt is the only debt class without a bankruptcy mechanism. While individuals and companies can declare bankruptcy, a country cannot.

So far, the international community has relied on a contractual approach to prevent and resolve

sovereign-debt problems. But this method often involves deep asymmetries between the treatment of debtors and creditors, resulting in an inequitable distribution of losses among different types of creditors. We need a multilateral agency specifically tasked with coordinating creditors, sharing information, and reducing the scope for information arbitrage.

In addition, the new framework should assist debtor countries throughout the restructuring process. For example, as the IMF has already suggested, the G20 should task international financial institutions with providing limited financing in order to give debtors some negotiating space to secure a sustainable debt-restructuring deal.

To tie everything together, the G20 should draw on its Operational Guidelines for Sustainable Financing to promote responsible lending and borrowing alongside orderly, multilateral debt restructuring. It should also support debt transparency and provide the necessary technical assistance, so that countries can strengthen their debt management capacity before finding themselves in debt distress.

Clear procedures, transparency, oversight, and accountability for managing sovereign debt are broad public goods. All people deserve to be fully informed about the steps their respective countries undertake when they borrow internationally, just as they should be aware of their countries' debt obligations and liabilities. A framework that clarifies each step in the process of incurring a debt — including the necessary checks and balances — is critical for ensuring responsible borrowing (and lending) more generally.

The writer, Professor of International Economics at the University of London's Queen Mary Global Policy Institute, is the author, most recently of *The Cost of Free Money* (Yale University Press, 2020).

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IN JEST THIS

Conspiracy theory believers are everywhere



Melvin Durai

THAT SUCH THEORIES EXIST ISN'T SURPRISING, CONSIDERING ALL THE MOTIVES PEOPLE HAVE FOR BLAMING ONE GROUP OR ANOTHER

I used to think that the only people who believed in conspiracy theories were the type of people you might find at a bank having an intense argument with the ATM. "You rascal! I've been watching you give notes to people, and I've been thinking, what's he up to? Then I saw the word 'reserve' on one of those notes. What are you trying to reserve? Seats for your children in medical college?"

In other words, I thought the people who believed in conspiracy theories were a little unstable, to put it mildly. Who would believe, for example, that NASA faked the moon landing, that British intelligence agents were responsible for Princess Diana's death, or that Mother Teresa was an undercover agent for America?

But in recent years, thanks partly to social media, there seems to be no shortage of conspiracy theories or people who believe them. If you follow the mainstream media, you may know that Joe Biden won the recent US presidential election convincingly, but you don't have to look far to find theories claiming a stolen election. Among the theories: ballots for President Donald Trump were burned in large numbers, voting machines were programmed to undercount Trump votes, and thousands of mail-in



votes for Biden came from people who are no longer alive.

It's quite possible that a few voters died after mailing their votes, especially with COVID-19 being so rampant. But it's less likely that people filled out ballots for their dead relatives. Americans are not that crazy. They might cast votes for their dogs, but not their dead relatives.

The COVID-19 pandemic has itself spawned dozens of conspiracy theories. One theory is that the virus was deliberately created in a lab in China. But if you ask conspiracy theorists in the Arab world, it was actually Israeli scientists who were working in the Chinese lab. And if you ask conspiracy theorists in India, you might find that

If you follow the mainstream media, you may know that Joe Biden won the recent US presidential election convincingly, but you don't have to look far to find theories claiming a stolen election

the Chinese lab received 100 per cent of its funding from Pakistan.

Another theory is that the pandemic is a population-control scheme created by Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates. Anybody who believes this theory must also believe that newspaper reporters are wealthy from all the bribes Gates has given them to write positive articles about the Gates Foundation. Did the foundation really spend billions of dollars to help fight hunger and disease around the world? Perhaps the money went directly to a virus-creating lab (along with the millions from Pakistan).

That such theories exist isn't surprising, considering all the motives people have for blaming one group or another. But what's truly

shocking and scary to me is the number of people willing to believe these theories. It's not just oddballs living on the fringes of civilization; it's our neighbours, perhaps even our friends. One study in 2014 found that at least 50 per cent of Americans believe in at least one conspiracy theory (hopefully not the one about Mother Teresa).

Because so many people believe in conspiracy theories, it's hard to create a psychological profile of them, says Dr. Viren Swami, a professor of social psychology at Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge, England.

We can't label all of them 'nutcases,' especially not to their faces. A few of them certainly are, but the rest may be quite normal.

Swami told the Daily Express that people who rely on "more intuitive or emotional thinking" are more inclined to believe conspiracy theories, as are "people who feel powerless, people who feel under threat, people who feel they have no control of what's happening around them."

I can understand why a Trump supporter who feels powerless might want to believe that the election was stolen. But believing that Bill Gates is responsible for the virus? That's a sign that you might need a counseling session with Dr. Swami.

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

Laudable effort

Sir, Mahanga Block Development Officer (BDO) Nihar Ranjan Mallick has set an example by turning up as a labourer for construction of a house under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) in Cuttack district. It was to motivate a PMAY beneficiary who was yet to start construction of his house despite availing work order and installment money. It is found in the state that many beneficiaries don't start house construction even after receiving the work order and first installment money either due to lack of interest or some other problems. Despite repeated reminders from the local PEO, the beneficiaries turn a deaf ear. The government has started a number of targeted programmes to eradicate poverty. However, the benefits of the welfare schemes are not reaching the deserving people. A strict and proper monitoring of all schemes must be done to check corruption and implement the schemes in such a way that their benefits reach the targeted people.

Hitesh Kumar Parida, PANIKOILI (JAJPUR)

Controversial amendment

Sir, The backlash by the Opposition and civil society against the controversial amendment to the Kerala Police Act has paid off, with the Left Democratic Front (LDF) government retracing its steps. The ordinance mandates a jail term of up to three years for defaming or threatening individuals through 'any mode of communication.' Even those supporting the Left Front had expressed reservations against the amendment (Section 118A) which was introduced through an ordinance on Saturday.

NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

Covid protocols

Sir, Madhya Pradesh has launched the 'Roko Toko' campaign to stop and admonish those people who do not wear masks in public places as Covid-19 infections again spread through the state. An amount of over Rs 1.34 crore has been collected in Madhya Pradesh's Jabalpur district alone as fine from people violating the Covid-19 protocols under this campaign. Many states have also been mulling to impose restrictions to check the spike in Covid-19 cases. A lot of people are not following safety guidelines and even attending wedding functions and public gatherings. Taking preventive measures is the only way to deal with the virus. The need of the hour is that people follow Covid-19 protocols and save lives.

Amit Singh Kushwaha, SATNA (MP)



Pinarayi Vijayan: From invincible to vulnerable

THINGS HAVE STARTED TO GO FROM BAD TO WORSE FOR THE KERALA CM AS HE ENTERS INTO 5TH YEAR IN OFFICE

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Thiruvananthapuram, Nov 24: Well begun is half done, goes the old saying and in Kerala, this now aptly fits the once invincible Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, who is now in his fifth year of governance. After a good beginning, he has now turned vulnerable.

Even though Vijayan never led the poll battle in 2016, instead it was handled by his arch rival and old foe, party colleague -- the aging V.S. Achuthanandan. The moment it became clear that the Left Democratic Front has won a resounding victory, defeating the then 'tainted' Congress Chief Minister Oommen Chandy, the master stroke came from the CPI-M party headquarters in Delhi, with Vijayan becoming the Chief Minister and Achuthanandan getting a mere decorative title -- 'Kerala Castro'.

Thus began the journey of Vijayan, fresh from 17 years of experience of being the toughest CPI-M state secretary, he had nothing to look backward as by then, despite handing over the charge to a new secretary, the party in Vijayan's full control.

Vijayan had no experience in real governance before this apart from being a minister for around two years in the 1996 E.K. Nayanar-led Left government as the State Power Minister.

But he made up with his tough demeanour, giving an impression that he is invincible. It came to a point that, much like in the party, in the government too, he became



the last word, with none in his party or the allies ever challenging him.

Incidentally, it was the first time in the history of any Left government, where the Chief Minister held sway over the party, which until then was the other way round, when the governance was driven effortlessly from the CPI-M state party headquarters in the capital city.

None will forget, about how Vijayan 'controlled' the then V.S. Achuthanandan-led Left government between 2006 to 2011.

As Vijayan was running his government with none to challenge him, over confidence stepped in and with that came a bit of arrogance. He declared a war with the media and the common talk was the Chief Minister will speak only when he wishes to speak and not when the media wants him to speak.

His first acid test came when the giant Ochi waves in the last week of November 2017, took a heavy toll of the coastal Kerala in general and the coastal hamlets in particular in the state capital, which left around 143 fishermen killed.

Vijayan, despite being in his office, did not visit the grief-stricken hapless families, and when he finally did, many days later, he literally was chased away, for not arriving on time.

Then next year in August, bad luck struck Kerala again when the state witnessed the worst ever floods in a century which left more than 483 people dead and an estimated loss of close to US \$ 6 billion dented the state's economy. In 2019 again floods hit the state followed by the Covid pandemic.

In between came another test-

GOVT TO WITHDRAW CONTROVERSIAL AMENDMENT

Thiruvananthapuram: The CPI-M-led LDF government in Kerala Tuesday decided to bring out an ordinance to withdraw the controversial amendment to the Kerala Police Act. A special cabinet which met in the afternoon decided to recommend Governor Arif Mohammed Khan to issue an ordinance to repeal Section 118-A which got his assent Saturday. "Cabinet has decided to bring out an ordinance to withdraw the amendment," government sources told PTI. Khan had signed the Kerala Police Act Amendment ordinance brought by the Left front government envisaging addition of Section 118-A to prevent cyber attacks against women and children. However, after political outcry across the country over the controversial amendment, the Left government Monday, decided to put it on hold, saying further action would be taken in this regard after detailed discussion at the state Assembly. Opposition parties and even Left sympathisers had slammed it, saying it was against the freedom of speech and media.

ing time for Vijayan, when he made a move, much to the dislike of many Hindus, and opened the famed

Sabarimala temple for all women. This led to a setback in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, when the Left managed to win just one of the 20 seats.

Since then, things have started to go from bad to worse for Vijayan. During the pandemic time, Leader of Opposition raked up the Sprinklr issue, where Vijayan was accused of giving away precious private data of the Covid patients. And then came the gold smuggling case, which saw his most trusted secretary and senior IAS official -- M.Sivasankar go to jail.

If that was not enough, came another shocker when Bineesh Kodyeri, son of CPI-M state secretary Kodyeri Balakrishnan was picked up by the Enforcement Directorate and was arrested and put in a Bengaluru jail. Following a huge backlash from the Congress and the BJP, Balakrishnan had to relinquish his post.

Then came another huge setback when Vijayan arbitrarily decided to impose a media gag and came out with a new Ordinance. However, it did not have a life span of more than two days, when the national leadership of the party intervened, and Monday he had to pull down.

Despite all these lows, Vijayan is banking up on the local boy polls scheduled for next month. Generally in Kerala, these polls have always looked positive for the Left, and if it manages to win as it has in the past, Vijayan might be able to ward off more trouble to his 'invincibility', as at the moment he has turned vulnerable.

CM's ex-aide held in gold smuggling case

The NIA, the ED and the Customs are conducting separate investigations into the racket that was busted with the seizure of gold July 5



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kochi, Nov 24 (PTI): The Customs Tuesday formally arrested suspended IAS officer M Sivasankar in connection with the sensational gold smuggling case.

A day after a special court for PMLA cases granted it permission to arrest Sivasankar, who is currently in judicial custody a team of officials from the Customs (Preventive) Commissionerate reached the jail where he is lodged and recorded his arrest, sources said. Sivasankar, former principal secretary to Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, is presently lodged in a jail here after being arrested by the Enforcement Directorate probing the money trail in the gold smuggling case.

Soon after recording his arrest, the Customs filed a plea before the Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate (Economic Offences), Ernakulam, seeking departmental custody of Sivasankar, who was the former principal secretary to Kerala Chief Minister.

In the remand report filed in the court, the Customs claimed that the key accused in the gold smuggling case, Swapna Suresh, has revealed that Sivasankar was in the

know and has also abetted the smuggling activities.

The Customs said Suresh made this claim during her interrogation at the Attakkulangara Vanitha jail in Thiruvananthapuram, November 18.

In an affidavit filed in the court seeking 10 day custody of Sivasankar, the Customs said further investigation is warranted to identify whether any more persons are involved in the smuggling of huge quantities of gold into India, which is a grave threat to the economy and national security.

It said interrogation of Sivasankar is required to acquire clarity as to the modus operandi and details of the accomplices behind the smuggling activity, without delay.

Seeking the 10-day custody of Sivasankar, the Customs said it has become most essential for further progress of the investigation.

Monday, the Customs, in its prayer before the Special court for PMLA cases seeking permission to arrest Sivasankar, had submitted that during the course of investigation, it was able to get direct incriminating material against the officer of his involvement in the gold smuggling.

Kerala moves SC against airport lease to Adani Enterprises



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 24: The Kerala government has moved the Supreme Court against the Centre's decision to lease Thiruvananthapuram international airport to Adani Enterprises.

The Left Democratic Front (LDF) government has filed the appeal challenging the Kerala High Court which dismissed the plea October 19 on the grounds that it was directed against the privatization policy of the Centre and hence devoid of merits.

Seeking an interim stay of the high court's verdict, the plea filed through lawyer CK Sasi said that it has challenged the "arbitrary and illegal action" of the Airports Authority of India in attempting to prefer a particular private concessionaire, Adani Enterprises Ltd, for the operation, management and development of Thiruvananthapuram International Airport.

The Kerala government had filed the application in the high court after conducting an all-party-meeting, where demands were raised for the withdrawal of the Union Cabinet's decision to lease the airport to Adani Enterprises.

The Centre had said that the state government did not qualify in the bidding process that was carried out in a "transparent manner."

Adani Enterprises had won the rights to run six airports -- Lucknow, Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Mangaluru, Thiruvananthapuram and Guwahati -- through the PPP model after a competitive bidding process in February, 2019. The Kerala State Industrial Development Corporation (KSIDC) had taken part in the bidding.

"The contention of Kerala...Is that the attempt on the part of the

Adani Enterprises had won the rights to run 6 airports -- Lucknow, Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Mangaluru, Thiruvananthapuram and Guwahati -- through the PPP model after a competitive bidding process in February

Airport Authority to grant right of Operation, Management and Development of Thiruvananthapuram Airport, to a private party...Who has no previous experience in managing airports, is not in public interest and is violative of the provisions of the Airport Authority of India Act, 1994..." the plea said.

It said the Chief Minister had offered to take the project at the rate at par with what was quoted by the Adani group firm.

"The High Court erred in holding that there can be no claim of promissory estoppel as no promise has been extended by the Central Government or Airport Authority of India at any point of time," it said.

"It is submitted that the second respondent (Ministry of Civil Aviation) assured the State of Kerala that there would not be any privatization of Thiruvananthapuram Airport and that a Special Purpose Vehicle with State Government and financial institutions as partners could be created with the value of the state's property as the state's share," the plea said.

New farm laws led to potato & onion black-marketing: Mamata

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bankura (WB), Nov 24: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Tuesday claimed that the new farm laws enacted by the Centre have led to black-marketing of potato and onion, causing sharp rise in prices of the commodities.

Banerjee said that she has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi that the Centre should ensure that there is no black-marketing of these items or provide the necessary power to states for tackling the problem.

"The central government has made destructive farm laws leading to black-marketing of essential food items like potato and onion," the chief minister said at an administrative meeting here.

"Earlier we used to keep a check on prices of these essential food items but the central Acts have robbed the states of their powers. This has caused losses to farmers as well as consumers," the Trinamool Congress supremo said.

Alleging that the central government has looted everything from farmers through the acts, the chief minister said that prices of potatoes are increasing alarmingly.

She said that the state government should not be blamed for the high prices of items like potato or onion, which were earlier in the list of essential commodities.

The Centre in September enacted the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020, which removed cereals, pulses, oilseeds, edible oil, onions and potatoes



CENTRE VS STATE

ALLEGING THAT THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT HAS LOOTED EVERYTHING FROM FARMERS THROUGH THE ACTS, THE CHIEF MINISTER SAID THAT PRICES OF POTATOES ARE INCREASING ALARMINGLY

THE CENTRE IN SEPTEMBER ENACTED THE ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES (AMENDMENT) ACT, 2020, WHICH REMOVED CEREALS, PULSES, OILSEEDS, EDIBLE OIL, ONIONS AND POTATOES FROM THE LIST

Earlier we used to keep a check on prices of these essential food items but the central Acts have robbed the states of their powers. This has caused losses to farmers as well as consumers

MAMATA BANERJEE | CM

from the list. "The Centre has made such an act that (pricing) has gone into the hands of black-marketeers," Banerjee said.

She said that the West Bengal government is still selling potatoes at Rs 25 per kg from its 'Sufal Bangla' outlets with the stock it had procured earlier.

School authorities in dark over resumption of classes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Nov 24: With the West Bengal government yet to take a call on when schools can resume of fine classes, city schools have no inkling whether on-campus process could begin this year or they have to continue with online arrangements till the pandemic situation improves.

Principal of BD Memorial Bijoya Choudhury told PTI Tuesday, the school authorities will initiate the process to start classes with COVID-19 protocols once they receive the advisory from the state education department.

"As of now, we are continuing online mode of teaching and learning in all sections," she said.

Asked if the school plans to charge COVID-19 fee from students, she said there is no such proposal. Principal of Loyola High School



Father Rodney Borneo said, "We don't know when the school can be opened for students. The situation

is fluid. We will entirely depend on the government recommendations in this regard."

Love and jihad don't go together: Nusrat Jahan

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, Nov 24: West Bengal's ruling Trinamool Congress MP from Basirhat Nusrat Jahan slammed the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for using religion as a political tool to consolidate their support base ahead of the state assembly elections.

She also spoke about 'love-jihad' dubbing it two separate things which have no correlation. The Trinamool parliamentarian said that "love" and "jihad" are two different things which do not go hand-in-hand. She said it is a matter of personal choice who wants to be with whom.

"Love is very personal. Love and jihad don't go hand-in-hand. Just before polls, people come up with topics like this. It is a personal choice who you want to be with. Be in love and start falling in love with each other. Don't make religion a political tool," Jahan said in reply to a question during a media interaction here.

The Bengali actor-turned-politician is married to businessman Nikhil Jain.

Earlier, Jahan had participated in the festivities of Durga Puja for which she came under severe attacks by radical Islamists for committing a 'sin' and bringing disrepute to Islam.



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NUSRAT JAHAN | TMC MP

The issue was that the actress was seen playing the dhaak, folding hands before Goddess Durga and dancing to the beats of dhaak (improvvised drums) in celebration of Bengali's biggest festival Durga Puja this year.

duction in fees across the board and not permitting non-essential charges for use of facilities not availed, there is no proposal to factor-in the cost of enforcing COVID-19 safety measures as and when classes start in the school premises, he said. "We have no idea when in-person classes will begin in schools. All arrangements will be in place as the safety of students remains our priority," he said.

State-run and state-aided schools also said, they were yet to receive any advisory from the government.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and Education Minister Partha Chatterjee have not announced any schedule for resuming classes in schools which had been suspended since mid-March.

Chatterjee had said, no decision would be taken which would endanger the safety of students.

national



“If the NDA government (in Bihar) does not provide 19 lakh jobs to youth within one month, we will hit the street and carry out protest across the state”
TEJASWI YADAV | RJD LEADER

TARUN GOGOI SETS ON HIS FINAL JOURNEY

“Baad Diya He” (just leave it) – a phrase that former Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi often uttered when faced with a quandary. And when he departed from the world, people fondly remember him as a leader who never left them in difficult times



of the day quote

Your (BJP's) inefficient and bankrupt economic policies led to eight consecutive quarters of slowdown. From slowdown the economy was thrown into lockdown and from lockdown to recession



KT RAMA RAO | TRS WORKING PRESIDENT

We are the people who believe in an 'Akhand Bharat'... We believe Karachi will one day be a part of India



DEVENDRA FADNIS | FORMER MAHARASHTRA CM

The way Devendra ji has said that time will come Karachi will be the part of India... we have been saying that India, Pakistan and Bangladesh should be merged



NAWAB MALIK | MAHARASHTRA MINISTER

Allahabad HC upholds right to choose partner

AGENCIES

Prayagraj (Uttar Pradesh), Nov 24: The Allahabad High Court has struck down its previous judgement in which it held that religious conversion “just for the purpose of marriage” was unacceptable. The court said that essentially it does not matter whether a conversion is valid or not. The right of two adults to live together cannot be encroached upon by the state or others.

“To disregard the choice of a person who is of the age of majority would not only be antithetic to the freedom of choice of a grown up individual but would also be a threat to the concept of unity in diversity,” court said.

The right to choose a partner irrespective of caste, creed or religion is intrinsic to the constitutional right to life and personal liberty, the Allahabad high court held, adding that two previous judgments that objected to religious conversion for the purpose of marriage did not ‘lay down good law’.

The decision by the two-judge bench was delivered November 11 but made public Monday.

The decision may now pose a legal problem for the Uttar Pradesh government, which is planning a law to regulate interfaith relationships on the basis of the two previous judgments that were both delivered by single-judge benches.

The bench, comprising Justices Pankaj Naqvi and Justice Vivek Agarwal, was hearing a petition by a Muslim man and his wife, who converted from Hinduism to Islam, to quash a police complaint against them by the woman's father.

The petitioners contended they were both majors and competent to choose their life partners.

The court agreed with the petitioners, Salamata Ansari and Priyanka Kharwar a.k.a. Alia, both residents of Kushinagar district. The judges held that any inter-



The high court said that its earlier verdict on conversion was not good law

The Allahabad High Court has struck down its previous judgement in which it held that religious conversion “just for the purpose of marriage” was unacceptable

The court said that essentially it does not matter whether a conversion is valid or not. The right of two adults to live together cannot be encroached upon by the state or others

No conspiracy found in ‘love jihad’ cases

Lucknow: The Special Investigation Team (SIT) set up to probe cases of love jihad in Kanpur, has not found any evidence of foreign funding or organised conspiracy. The team has submitted its report to the Inspector General (IG) Monday. The SIT probed a total of 14 cases, including 11 in which the police have filed a charge sheet against the accused. IG Mohit Agarwal said, “A total of 14 cases had come up in Kanpur in which the parents had alleged that their daughters were implicated by the boys by deception. The SIT investigated all the cases. Of

these 11 cases were found in which some crime was committed and 11 people have been sent to jail.” However, in three cases, the adult women have given a statement in defence of the men, which has contributed to the final report. There has been no further probe in these three cases. Agrawal further said that in these cases of alleged love jihad, the SIT found that four of the accused men had been in touch with each other. Apart from this, in three cases, the accused had allegedly told their names as that of some other religion.

ference in a personal relationship would constitute a “serious encroachment” on the right to freedom of choice. “We fail to understand that if the law permits two persons even of the same sex to live together peacefully then neither any individual nor a family nor even state can have objection to relationship

of two major individuals who out of their own free will are living together,” the verdict said.

The judgment also contradicted two previous judgments – one delivered in 2014 and the other in 2020 – that said that religious conversion only for the sake of marriage was not valid under law.

Farmers block passenger train service in Amritsar

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 24: A day after the Railways resumed train services in Punjab, the farmers Tuesday blocked the railway track at the Jandiala railway station in Amritsar district. Following the fresh blockade, the trains are being diverted.

A railway ministry official, wishing not to be named, said the farmers blocked the entry of the Golden Temple Express at the Jandiala Railway station.

He said the train was diverted to Amritsar via Taran Taran station. It reached Amritsar station at 8.45 a.m.

The official said that the Amritsar District Collector and Senior Superintendent of Police failed to pacify the farmers.

Following the fresh blockade, four trains to Amritsar will run via diverted route, the official said.

He further said that the agitating farmers are only allowing goods train to pass through the Jalandhar-Amritsar route.

Only Jalandhar-Amritsar route is a problem as of now, while Jammu-Jalandhar route is clear, he added.

SHORT TAKES

UP cop's brother murdered

Amroha: A young man in Uttar Pradesh was lured for a late night drink binge and then murdered by his tenants over money dispute. The victim turned out to be the younger brother of a woman sub-inspector, who registered a complaint after her sibling went missing last week. Amroha SP Vipin Tada told reporters, “Akshay was a resident of Friends Colony in Amroha district. He went missing Thursday. After a complaint, a manhunt was launched and Akshay's body was found in a deserted place.”

Maoist arrested in Jharkhand

West Singhbhum: A Maoist leader has been arrested in Jharkhand's West Singhbhum district in a joint operation by the CRPF and the local police. Soma Angaria (30), wanted in several criminal cases, was apprehended Monday from Birbal Tola in Goikera police station area, a police officer said. Angaria confessed that he had a role in some of the criminal cases filed against him, he said.

1st Kisan Rail leaves for Assam

Indore: The first Kisan Rail of Western Railway (WR) carrying 180 tonnes of onions left for New Guwahati station from Indore in Madhya Pradesh Tuesday. Railway officials said 20 general category coaches are attached in this Kisan Rail, which they said will leave for New Guwahati every Tuesday from Indore's Laxmibai Nagar station. After flagging off the train, Indore MP Shankar Lalwani said, “There is a lot of enthusiasm among the farmers about the first Kisan Rail of Western Railway. Such trains will increase inter-state trade of farmers' produce. This will help us in realising Prime Minister Narendra Modi's dream of a self-reliant India”.

70-year-old man shot dead

New Delhi: A 70-year-old man was shot dead allegedly by two unidentified bike-borne men outside his house in West Delhi's Vikaspuri. The accused fled the spot after shooting the man identified as Attam Singh, who received bullet injuries on his head, police said Tuesday. “The deceased is an Afghan refugee who settled in India 28 years ago. He does sewa at Gurdwara at Anandpur Dham village in Karala,” said Deepak Purohit, Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) west Delhi.

India test-fires land-attack version of BrahMos missile

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 24: India Tuesday “successfully” test fired the surface-to-surface supersonic cruise missile BrahMos as part of a series of planned trials of the weapon, known for its precision strike capabilities, official sources said.

The range of the new land-attack version of the missile has been extended to 400 km from the original 290 km but its speed has been maintained at 2.8 Mach or almost three times the speed of sound, they said.

“The land-attack version of the missile was test-fired in the Andaman and Nicobar at around 10 am and it was a successful trial”, an official source said.

According to official sources, in the next few days, the Indian Air Force and the Indian Navy are scheduled to carry out separate test-firing of the new version of the air-launched and naval versions of the supersonic cruise missile respectively.

BrahMos Aerospace, an India-Russian joint venture, produces the lethal weapon that can be



launched from submarines, ships, aircraft, or from land platforms.

India has already deployed a sizeable number of the original BrahMos missiles and other key assets in several strategic locations along the Line of Actual Control with China in Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh.

In the last two-and-half months, India has test fired a number of missiles including an anti-radiation missile named Rudram-1 which is planned to be inducted into service by 2022.

On October 18, a naval version of the BrahMos missile was successfully test fired from an indigenously-built stealth destroyer of the Indian Navy in the Arabian sea.

‘Oxford Covid vax results give hope but early days yet’

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 24: Given its low pricing and higher temperature storage, Oxford University's Covid-19 vaccine candidate holds promise for India and is a more viable option than the Moderna, Pfizer or Sputnik V vaccines under development, say scientists while cautioning that the data presented is still preliminary.

There is plenty to be hopeful about and the Oxford AstraZeneca is a good option to begin with, but it is also important to remember the numbers are tentative and a full analysis is difficult, several scientists said on Tuesday.

On Monday, pharma major AstraZeneca announced that an interim analysis of clinical trials of its Covid-19 vaccine in the UK and

Brazil showed it was 70 per cent effective on average. The ChAdOx1 nCoV-2019 vaccine, being produced in collaboration with Oxford University, was found to be 70.4 per cent effective when combining data from two dosing regimens from Phase 3 clinical trials. However, in two different dose regimens, the vaccine's efficacy was 90 per cent in one, and 62 per cent in the other.

“These findings show that we have an effective vaccine that will save many lives. Excitingly, we've found that one of our dosing regimens may be around 90 per cent effective and if this dosing regimen is used, more people could be vaccinated with planned vaccine supply,” explained Andrew Pollard, director of the Oxford Vaccine Group and chief investigator of the Oxford



Vaccine Trial. Tempering the excitement that the announcement created, virologist Upasana Ray said we should be happy but vigilant.

The interim results look promising but it would be difficult to analyse it fully without the full peer reviewed report, the senior scientist at Kolkata's CSIR-IICB added.

“There are knowledge gaps like why the lower dose gave better efficacy results or how long this vaccine can be stored in the refrigerator



Intel alert on SFJ's Nov 26 Khalistan flag-raising call

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 24: Security agencies have alerted law enforcement agencies in Delhi to keep strict vigil in the national capital as the banned Sikhs For Justice (SFJ) group in its latest move has given a call to farmers of Punjab and Haryana to raise “Khalistan flags” November 26 at India Gate here.

Even though many of such moves of the secessionist group in the past few months turned futile, Indian agencies are taking all possible measures to maintain peace and proper functioning of the law-and-order situation in the city as well as across India by not ignoring such inputs.

The alert comes amid information that 10 central trade unions November 26 will observe a nationwide general strike in protest against the Centre's policies, such as privatisation of public sector units and new labour and farm laws. They have also decided to back a two-day farmers' agitation on November 26 and November 27.

Informed sources, requesting anonymity, told IANS that the SFJ might have taken cognizance of the information, finding another

opportunity to give call to woo farmers of Punjab and Haryana.

In its “illegal and anti-national” appeal, the SFJ called for farmers' support to raise Khalistan flags November 26 at India Gate to highlight that “the only solution to farm bills is to carve their independent homeland out of India through a referendum”.

SFJ General Counsel Gurbat Singh Pannun, in a video message, advised farmers to reach Delhi on November 25 where arrangements for their night stay have been made at Gurudwaras Bangla Sahib; Rakab Ganj Sahib; Sis Ganj Sahib and Majnu Ka Teela and where Khalistan flags will be supplied to them for hoisting on India Gate, said sources.

Highlighting the significance of November 26, Pannun stated that “while Mumbai attacks of

2008 were perpetrated by agents of Indian deep state, Farms Bill are an open onslaught launched by the Modi government as an economic terrorism against farmers of Punjab and Haryana”.

The SFJ called for the move November 26 as it will be observed as the 12th anniversary of the terrorist attack in Mumbai. Series of terrorist attacks took place November 26, 2008 in Mumbai when 10 Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists carried out 12 coordinated shooting and bombing lasting four days killing 166 people and injuring over 300. In these gruesome attacks, nine terrorists were killed and the lone survivor, Ajmal Kasab, caught and was sentenced to death at Yerwada Central Jail in Pune in 2012. On November 11, 2012, Kasab was hanged in Yerwada Jail in Pune.

SEEKING SHELTER



Pedestrians waded through a waterlogged road during heavy rain triggered by Cyclone Nivar, in Chennai, Tuesday PTIPHOTO

Married off as toddler, woman seeks legal help

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jaipur, Nov 24: A 20-year-old woman married at the age of 2.5 years has taken the court's shelter to seek a better future for herself.

She has said in court that this kind of child marriage was unacceptable to her and she wants to build her own future by studying further. Samta was married in 2003 in Osian Tehsil of Jodhpur district when she was only 2.5 years-old. Her in-laws have been constantly pressuring her to live with them in their house, but Samta has been opposing this. The in-laws even started threatening her family.

Hence Samta finally took the court's shelter and requested for the cancellation of the child

marriage in Family Court-1 of Jodhpur. On the basis of the complaint, Judge Mahendra Kumar Singhal on Monday issued summons to the so-called husband of Samta.

Samta told IANS, “Child marriage is all unacceptable to me and am keen to study further to have a bright future for myself.”

She further said that she received information about the campaign against the child marriage being run by Dr. Kriti Bharti, Managing Trustee and Rehabilitation Psychologist of Sarathi Trust. Without any delay, she contacted Bharti for help to get her marriage cancelled.

With the help of Dr. Kriti Bharti, Samta filed suit for cancellation of child marriage in Jodhpur Family Court-1.

SEDITION CASE

HC grants Kangana interim protection from arrest



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 24: The Bombay High Court Tuesday granted interim protection from arrest to actor Kangana Ranaut and her sister Rangoli Chandel in connection with an FIR registered against them under sedition and other charges, but directed them to appear before Mumbai Police January 8.

The FIR was registered pursuant to orders passed by the Bandra magistrate's court here directing the police to carry out an inquiry against Ranaut and her sister following a complaint lodged against them for allegedly “trying to create hatred and communal tension” through their social media posts.

A division bench of Justices SS Shinde and MS Karnik was hearing a petition filed by Ranaut and her sister; seeking to quash the FIR and the October 17 order passed by the magistrate.

The court said three summonses were issued by the police and the same need to be honoured.

Ranaut and Chandel's advocate Rizwan Siddique then assured the court that the sisters shall appear before the Bandra police in Mumbai on January 8 from 12 pm to 2 pm for recording of their statements. The high court accepted the statement.

of the day quote

She [Mamata Banerjee] was talking about outsiders. Who are outsiders inside her own country? Interestingly, TMC follows the policy of Mahatma Gandhi who was from Gujarat but, if any person comes here [in West Bengal] from another state, they will be called outsiders



DILIP GHOSH | WEST BENGAL BJP CHIEF

I will tell you clearly. In the coming two to three months, our government is being formed in Maharashtra and you should remember that



RAOSAHEB DANVE | UNION MINISTER

The Opposition (in Bihar) should accept the mandate and support the government in the state with a positive state of mind as its role is important in a democracy



TARKISHORE PRASAD | BIHAR DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Father throws 3 kids into canal

Chandigarh: In a shocking incident, a drunken man allegedly threw his three minor children into a canal in Haryana's Karnal district, the police said Tuesday. As the police were informed, officials rushed to the spot and divers were used to locate the children, aged between three and eight years old. The accused, Sushil Kumar, a resident of Nalpar village, was arrested and he confessed to the crime.

Techie burnt alive by kin

Hyderabad: A 38-year-old software engineer was killed in Jagtial district allegedly by his relative on suspicion that he performed black magic, police said Tuesday. The incident occurred Monday evening when he had gone to visit his relative in Malaya mandal, they said. The victim, employed in Bangalore, was set ablaze.

Ghana national held in Hydrabad

Hyderabad: A 32-year-old Ghana national was arrested here Tuesday by the Excise Enforcement on charges of peddling cocaine and over 60 grams of the narcotic seized from his possession, officials said. On reliable information, a team of Excise Enforcement sleuths kept a vigil near a hospital and caught the Ghana national when he came to deliver the cocaine to a customer and seized 61 grams of cocaine from him.

Man rapes friend's mother

Jaipur: In a shocking incident, a 21-year-old man allegedly raped his friend's mother in Alwar district of Rajasthan, police said Tuesday. The 58-year-old victim was alone in her house when the accused committed the crime Sunday, Sunil Jangid, SHO, Shahjahanpur said. The accused, Vikas Jat, used to visit his friend's house frequently.

Son beats father to death

Fatehpur: A 55-year-old woman, who was beaten up by her son in Sujapur village here, succumbed to her injuries Monday, police said. Additional Superintendent of Police Rajesh Kumar said that Laakhan Singh Sunday beat his mother, Savitri, with a stick following an argument.



I am very happy to note that the Central government had reportedly invited the farmer organisations for talks December 3

AMARINDER SINGH | PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER

KOVIND INAUGURATES AIR INDIA ONE FLIGHT

President Ram Nath Kovind Tuesday boarded the Air India One - B777 aircraft - on its inaugural flight to Chennai, read Rashtrapati Bhavan statement



ED raids premises linked to Shiv Sena MLA

THE SENA MLA WAS IN NEWS WHEN HE WROTE A LETTER SEEKING RE-OPENING OF AN ALLEGED ABETMENT TO SUICIDE CASE OF 2018 IN WHICH REPUBLIC TV'S EDITOR-IN-CHIEF ARNAB GOSWAMI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 24: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) raided premises linked to Shiv Sena MLA Pratap Sarnaik in Maharashtra Tuesday in connection with a money laundering case being probed against a security service provider company and others, official sources said.

His party called the raids a "political vendetta" and said the Maharashtra government or its leaders will not surrender to pressure from anyone.

Sources said the searches are being conducted by the central agency at 10 locations in Mumbai and neighbouring Thane.

CRPF personnel were seen assisting ED sleuths during the operation that was launched early morning. "The searches are being conducted on the Tops group (a company in the business of providing security) promoters and related people, including some politicians," an official source said.

Agency officials also questioned the MLA's son Vihang. The probe,



JOLT TO MVA

SOURCES SAID THE SEARCHES ARE BEING CONDUCTED BY THE CENTRAL AGENCY AT 10 LOCATIONS IN MUMBAI AND THANE

CRPF PERSONNEL WERE SEEN ASSISTING ED SLEUTHS DURING THE OPERATION THAT WAS LAUNCHED EARLY MORNING

sources said, is related to some overseas transactions by the entities involved.

Sarnaik, 56, represents the Ovala-Majwada constituency in the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly and is also a spokesperson for his party. The legislator was in news when he wrote a letter seeking re-

opening of an alleged abetment to suicide case of 2018 in which Republic TV's editor-in-chief Arnab Goswami was arrested by Mumbai Police recently. Goswami is now out on bail.

Sarnaik had also demanded a unanimous resolution in the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly

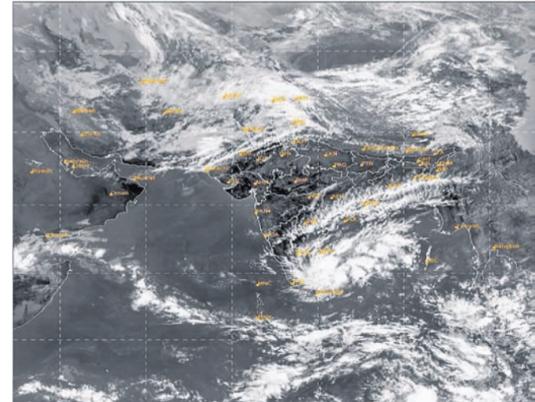
for legal action against actress Kangana Ranaut, who, he said, has "maligned" the image of Maharashtra and Mumbai through her tweets.

"This action (ED raids) is definitely a political vendetta. The ED or other agencies should not work as if a branch of a political party," Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut told reporters.

He said Sarnaik's properties were raided while the latter was not at home, and added that no matter how many notices are issued, only truth shall prevail in Maharashtra. Raut also said there is no ban on probes by an agency and it can take action if there is evidence. "But, you want to mentally harass the people related to the (state) government. These actions will backfire on you. And I think that time is nearing," he said.

The Shiv Sena was earlier an ally of the BJP but snapped ties with it last year over the issue of sharing the chief ministerial post and it is in power in the state along with the NCP and the Congress.

Cyclone Nivar likely to intensify into very severe cyclonic storm



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 24: Cyclone Nivar is expected to intensify into a 'very severe cyclonic storm' and cross Tamil Nadu and Puducherry coasts between Karaikal and Mamallapuram on the late evening of November 25, IMD Director General Mrutunjay Mohapatra said Tuesday.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) had initially predicted that Cyclone Nivar was likely to intensify into a 'severe cyclonic storm' but has now estimated that it will intensify further. Nivar is the second cyclone in the Bay of Bengal this year. In May, Cyclone Amphan had developed into a 'super cyclonic storm'.

"Our forecast is it will intensify into a very severe cyclonic storm by (Tuesday) tonight

"It is very likely to cross Tamil Nadu and Puducherry coasts between Karaikal and Mamallapuram around Puducherry during 25th November late evening as a very severe cyclonic storm with a wind speed of 120-130 kilometres per hour gusting to 145 kmph," Mohapatra said.

Besides strong winds, the cyclone is also expected to bring heavy rains. The IMD has issued red alert for coastal and north inte-

rior Tamilnadu, Puducherry and Karaikal, for November 25, the top meteorologist said.

"Isolated extremely heavy rainfall activity also very likely over coastal and north interior Tamil Nadu and Puducherry (Pudukottai, Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Karaikal, Nagapattinam, Cuddalore, Ariyalur and Perabalu districts during 24th and Kadalur, Kallakurchi, Puducherry, Villupuram, Tiruvannamalai, Chengalpattu to Ariyalur, Perambalur and Karaikal districts during 25th) and over Nellore and Chittoor districts of Andhra Pradesh on 25th and over Rayalseema and southeast Telangana 26th November," the IMD said.

He added that cyclone leads to multi-hazard scenario. In event of the cyclone, there could be serious damage to thatched huts, disruption of power and communication lines, damage to roads, uprooting of trees. There could be damage to horticulture crops like banana and papaya.

The IMD has also suggested total suspension of fishing operations and motorboats and small boats, shifting of people residing in coastal areas to safer places, judicious regulation of road, air and rail traffic.

He said the IMD will issue hourly updates from November 25 when the cyclone crosses the coast.

38K new cases take Covid-19 tally close to 92L

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 24: With 37,975 new Covid-19 infections, India's total case tally reached 91,77,840 Tuesday.

Not only was it the 17th straight day when India reported less than 50,000 cases in 24 hours, but the number of fresh cases were also around 13 per cent less (6,084) than a day before (44,059). The last time daily new cases crossed the 50,000-threshold was November 7.

According to the data released by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, 490 new deaths took the toll to 1,34,218 in the last 24 hours. The total active cases now stand at 4,38,667. Recoveries are at 8,60,49,55.

AWARENESS DRIVE



A woman wearing face mask stands in front of a mural on novel coronavirus and protective measures in New Delhi, Tuesday

Mumbai Police file charge sheet in fake TRP scam

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 24: The Mumbai Police Tuesday filed a charge sheet in a court here in the alleged TRP (Television Rating Points) rigging scam.

The charge sheet was submitted before a magistrate's court by the police's Crime Intelligence Unit (CIU), which is conducting a probe into the case, an official said.

The crime branch has so far arrested 12 persons, including Republic TV's western region distribution head and owners of two other channels, in connection with the case, he said.

The fake TRP scam came to light last month when ratings agency Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) filed a complaint through Hansa Research Group, alleging that certain television channels were rigging TRP numbers. Hansa had been tasked with in-

The crime branch has so far arrested 12 persons, including Republic TV's western region distribution head and owners of two other channels, in connection with the case

stalling barometers, which record viewership data (which channel has been watched and for how long) at sample households.

TRP is important as advertising revenue of channels depends on it. Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh last month claimed that Republic TV and two Marathi channels Box Cinema and Fakt Marathi were involved in manipulating TRPs. Republic TV and other accused

have denied wrongdoing and manipulation of the TRP system.

Earlier, Republic TV's Chief Executive Officer (CEO), two Chief Operating Officers (COOs) and Chief Finance Officer (CFO) were summoned by the police for questioning in the fake TRP racket case.

The statements of Republic TV's executive editor Niranjan Narayanswamy and senior executive editor Abhishek Kapoor were also recorded by the police.

The Maharashtra government last month withdrew its "general consent" given to the Central Bureau of Investigation to probe cases in the state, in the wake of the CBI taking over a case registered by Uttar Pradesh Police against "unknown" channels and persons over alleged fudging of TRP.

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) recently filed a money laundering complaint in the alleged TRP rigging scam being investigated by the Mumbai Police.

Guard against laxity in Covid-19 fight: PM to CMs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 24: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Tuesday cautioned states and Union Territories against any laxity in fighting the Covid-19 pandemic and called for reducing the positivity and fatality rates by focusing on curbing the virus transmission.

Interacting with chief ministers, the Prime Minister also called for more RT-PCR tests, even as he underlined that India's Covid-19 situation is more stable than other countries in terms of recovery and fatality rates.

Modi asked them to work towards bringing the positive rate to less than 5 per cent and the fatality rate to less than 1 per cent and called for more RT-PCR tests.

"We need to speed up our efforts to reduce transmission of the virus. Testing, confirmation, contact tracing and data must be given top priority," he said.

Miracle baby in UP stuffed in gunny bags, survives

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Meerut, Nov 24: A baby girl was found stuffed inside three gunny bags on the side of a road in Uttar Pradesh's Meerut, just 85 kms from Delhi. The infant, left to die in the cold apparently by her parents, is in hospital and recovering.

The newborn was found reportedly when people heard her wails and, to their horror, discovered her bundled in layers of sacks.

A gut-wrenching video shows passers-by remove the sacks one by one to reveal the crying infant. "What kind of parents can do such a thing," a woman is heard saying in the clip.

The people called the police, who rushed her to a local hospital. The baby is healthy and is being treated, said the police.

"When they brought the baby she was in very bad shape, her placenta was attached to her



REPRESENTATIVE PHOTO

body and there was a rotting smell. We sent her to the newborn care unit. She is in a much better condition," said Manisha Agarwal, the doctor in charge at the District Women's Hospital, Meerut.

The doctor said managing the baby's temperature was critical. "She was thrown out in the open and this can affect her. It is very important for her to have mother's milk within an hour of delivery. This must not have been given to her. This is harmful for her, we are doing our best to treat her," Dr Agarwal said.

Interfaith couples uneasy as 'love jihad' storm gathers force

ON SUNDAY, THE BJP TERMED 'LOVE JIHAD' A SERIOUS PROBLEM AND BACKED THE DECISION OF ITS GOVERNMENTS IN UTTAR PRADESH, HARYANA AND MADHYA PRADESH TO ENACT LAWS AGAINST IT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 24: Crisscrossing lines of religion as they navigated love, societal approval and marriage, interfaith couples have never had it easy but the many hurdles on their road to 'happily ever after' are now increasingly edged with unease - and the oxymoronic stamp of 'love jihad'.

Their challenges increase as the chorus gets louder with politicians and others speaking out and several states declaring their intention to come out with a law against 'love jihad', a term coined by a section of

Hindu groups for Muslim men allegedly forcing women to convert in the guise of love and marriage, said several couples.

The societal scanner on their relationships has perhaps never been so intense with every incident, whether of crime or an advertisement or a film, impacting on their day to day lives, said a cross-section of men and women in interfaith relationships and marriages.

"The term 'love jihad' itself is a farce. How can one bring jihad into a relationship? How can one be restricted on the grounds of religion in marital things? We hope the apex



court looks into a law if passed, and strikes it down," said Delhi-based Sheena Shahulhameed, who is married to a Hindu man.

On Sunday, the BJP termed 'love jihad' a serious problem and backed the decision of its governments in Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Madhya

Pradesh to enact laws against it. "Many mothers and sisters have suffered its bad consequences. This is a state matter and state governments should enact law against it," BJP general secretary Arun Singh said. The same day, debate over Mira Nair's "A Suitable Boy" escalated with Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Nottaram Mishra saying state police had been asked to examine a scene of two protagonists, a Hindu girl and Muslim boy, kissing with a temple in the backdrop. And once more, there was heated debate on 'love jihad', with #BoycottNetflix even

trending on Twitter. The following day, Monday, an FIR was registered in Madhya Pradesh Monday against two Netflix executives for allegedly hurting religious sentiments through the series. It was a gathering storm.

Last month, the term reared its head when jewellery brand Tanishq was forced to pull down an ad showing a Muslim mother-in-law organising a baby shower for her Hindu daughter-in-law. A few days later, a Hindu girl was shot dead by her Muslim classmate in Faridabad and her family claimed 'love jihad'.



There is now real hope that vaccines, in combination with other tried and tested public health measures, will help to end the pandemic

TEKDOS ADHANOM GHEBREYESUS | WHO DIRECTOR-GENERAL

MATTER OF CONCERN

Changes in climate can increase infectious disease risk in animals, with the possibility that these diseases could spread to humans, warn researchers



of the day quote

Over the half a century since the establishment of China-Ethiopia diplomatic ties, traditional friendship of the two countries has been getting stronger



XI JINPING | CHINESE PRESIDENT

I am very sorry for the increased inconvenience again in daily life and difficulties in the people's livelihoods



MOON JAE-IN | SOUTH KOREAN PRESIDENT

One of the reasons we need a strong military is for our fight against international terrorism. As we have been doing in Afghanistan for almost 20 years



JENS STOLTENBERG | NATO SECRETARY GENERAL

EU secures 160mn doses of Moderna nCoV vaccine

AGENCIES

Brussels, Nov 24: The European Union has struck a deal for up to 160 million doses of US firm Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine candidate, the head of the European Commission said Tuesday, taking the EU's potential stock of COVID-19 shots to nearly 2 billion.

Last week, Moderna said its experimental vaccine was 94.5% effective in preventing COVID-19, based on interim data from a late-stage clinical trial.

"I am happy to announce that tomorrow we will approve a new contract to secure another COVID-19 vaccine," Ursula von der Leyen said, adding the deal "allows us to buy up to 160 million doses of a vaccine produced by Moderna."

Actual purchases will be carried out by EU governments if the vaccine is approved by the EU's drug regulator. The delivery timeline is unknown. The doses would



be enough to vaccinate 80 million people as the vaccine is expected to be administered in two doses.

In August the EU's executive Commission, which co-leads talks with vaccine makers on behalf of member states, said it had held preliminary talks with Moderna over a deal for 80 million doses and

an option for 80 million more. The terms of the contract have not been disclosed. An EU official involved in the talks told Reuters last week the EU was seeking a price below \$25 per dose for Moderna's vaccine.

But Moderna Chief Executive Stephane Bancel said on Sunday the company would charge governments between \$25 and \$37 per dose, depending on the amount ordered. A spokesman for the Commission declined to comment on pricing.

It is the sixth supply deal the EU has negotiated with COVID-19 vaccine makers and takes the total number of doses secured by the bloc to 1.96 billion for its population of around 450 million.

Brussels has already struck deals with AstraZeneca, Pfizer-BioNTech, Sanofi-GSK, Johnson & Johnson and CureVac. It is also in talks to buy US firm Novavax's potential COVID-19 vaccine.

England to cut travel quarantines to 5 days with tests

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Nov 24: Just in time for holiday travellers, England is cutting the two-week quarantine facing people arriving from regions not on Britain's coronavirus safe list, reducing it to as little as five days if they test negative for COVID-19.

The change to the quarantine rules, which was announced Tuesday and takes effect on December 15, has been long-awaited by the travel industry, one of the worst-hit sectors during the pandemic.

The change will bring the rules governing quarantines in England more in line with other European countries, including Germany.

Under the new rules, passengers can reduce the 14-day quarantine period by paying for a test from a private firm on or after Day 5 of their arrival at a potential cost of around 100 pounds (\$133).

The change does not apply to people arriving from other parts of the United Kingdom.

With Ethiopia on brink of escalation, diplomacy in doubt



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nairobi, Nov 24: Alarm spiralled Tuesday over Ethiopia's imminent tank attack on the capital of the defiant Tigray region, with a rush of warnings about protecting civilians three weeks after the war began. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's 72-hour ultimatum for the region's leaders to surrender ends Wednesday.

His military has warned civilians there will be "no mercy" if they don't move away from the leaders in time - which some human rights groups and diplomats say could violate international law.

"The highly aggressive rhetoric on both sides regarding the fight for Mekele is dangerously provocative and risks placing already vulnerable and frightened civilians in grave danger," United Nations human rights chief Michelle Bachelet said. The allegation that the Tigray leaders were hiding among civilians "does not then give the Ethiopian state carte blanche to respond with the use of artillery in densely populated areas." A year before taking power in Ethiopia and introducing reforms to win the Nobel Peace Prize, Abiy successfully defended a PhD thesis in conflict resolution. Now he sits in Africa's diplo-

matic capital and rejects calls for dialogue. Meanwhile, a powerful voice in efforts for dialogue, the United States, is in disarray as the Trump administration remains focused on internal politics after losing the November election - and after President Donald Trump infuriated Ethiopia with comments on a separate issue this year. The diplomatic vacuum has brought Ethiopia, one of Africa's most powerful and populous countries, to what Amnesty International calls "the brink of a deadly escalation"

at the heart of the strategic Horn of Africa. With time running out before the assault on Mekele and its population of some half-million people, the UN Security Council is reportedly meeting Tuesday to discuss the situation. But efforts by the UN secretary-general, the African Union, the European Union and others have been turned aside.

In an unusually public disagreement over the weekend, the current AU chair, South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, backed three high-level envoys for Ethiopia, an initiative the UN chief quickly praised for "efforts to peacefully resolve the conflict." Ethiopia, however, said the envoys would meet with Abiy and not the Tigray leaders.

S'PORE ARRESTS BANGLADESHI MAN UNDER ISA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Singapore, Nov 24: Singapore said Tuesday that its security agencies have arrested a Bangladeshi man, who was plotting attacks against Hindus in his own country and planning to fight in Kashmir, after they investigated the suspicious activities of 37 people as part of the heightened security measures in the city-state following recent terror attacks in Europe.

In a statement, the Ministry of Home Affairs said that counter-terrorism investigations into the suspicious activities of 37 people in Singapore have been carried out after most of them posted on social media, inciting violence or stoking community unrest in the aftermath of the terror attacks in France.

Of the 37 people, 14 are Singaporeans and 23 foreigners, mostly Bangladeshis, it said.

As for the 23 foreigners, 16 of them, including 15 Bangladeshis and one Malaysian have been repatriated, it said.

Seven foreigners are still under investigation, it added. One Bangladeshi man under investigation - identified as 26-year-old Ahmed Faysal - has been arrested under the Internal Security Act (ISA) following investigations into "terrorism-related activities", the ministry said.

Preliminary investigations by the Internal Security Department (ISD) showed that Faysal was radicalised and harboured the intention to "undertake armed violence in support of his religion", the Channel News Asia reported, citing the statement issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).

Faysal had been working as a construction worker in Singapore since early 2017, and became radicalised in 2018 after "imbibing online propaganda on ISIS", the statement said. He was arrested November 2.

CHEERFUL MOOD



A woman wearing a mask to prevent the spread of the coronavirus holds a Christmas lantern as she assembles a display in Quezon city, Philippines

PTI PHOTO

China criticises Pope

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beijing, Nov 24: China criticised Pope Francis Tuesday over a passage in his new book in which he mentions suffering by China's Uighur Muslim minority group.

Foreign ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said Francis' remarks had "no factual basis at all."

"People of all ethnic groups enjoy the full rights of survival, development, and freedom of religious belief," Zhao said at a daily briefing.

Zhao made no mention of the camps in which more than 1 million Uighurs and members of other Chinese Muslim minority groups have been held. The US and other governments, along with human rights groups, say the prison-like facilities are intended to divide Muslims from their religious and cultural heritage, forcing them to declare loyalty to China's ruling

Communist Party and its leader, Xi Jinping. China, which initially denied the existence of the facilities, now says they are centers intended to provide job training and prevent terrorism and religious extremism on a voluntary basis.

In his new book "Let Us Dream," due Dec. 1, Francis listed the "poor Uighurs" among examples of groups persecuted for their faith.

Francis wrote about the need to see the world from the peripheries and the margins of society, "to places of sin and misery, of exclusion and suffering, of illness and solitude."

In such places of suffering, "I think often of persecuted peoples: the Rohingya, the poor Uighurs, the Yazidi - what ISIS did to them was truly cruel - or Christians in Egypt and Pakistan killed by bombs that went off while they prayed in church," Francis wrote.



India to build new dam in Afghan

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kabul / New Delhi, Nov 24: In a move that further strengthens India-Afghan relations, the government Tuesday announced that it is building a new dam in Afghanistan that will provide clean drinking water to millions of people in Kabul.

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, who led the Indian delegation at the 2020 Afghanistan Conference held virtually in Geneva from November 23 to 24, said that India has just signed an agreement with Afghanistan to construct Shatoot dam, which would provide safe drinking water to 2 million residents of Kabul city.

The Conference is co-hosted by the United Nations, the government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, and the government of Finland and aims to reaffirm the commitment of the international community to Afghanistan during the second half of the transformational



Representative image

decade 2015-2024.

The minister at the conference also announced the launch of Phase-IV of the High Impact Community Development Projects in Afghanistan, which envisages more than 100 projects worth US\$ 80 million that India would undertake in Afghanistan.

India had earlier built the 202-km Phul-e-Khumri transmission line that provided electricity to Kabul city. In his statement, Jaishankar emphasised India's long-term commitment to the

development of Afghanistan and the benefit of its people as a contiguous neighbour and strategic partner.

Jaishankar highlighted that no part of Afghanistan today is untouched by the 400-plus projects that India has undertaken in all 34 of Afghanistan's provinces. More than 65,000 Afghan students have also studied in India. India's development portfolio in Afghanistan has to-date amounted to over US\$ 3 billion.

Afghanistan's growth has been constrained by its landlocked geography, the minister pointed out, highlighting New Delhi's efforts to provide an alternate connectivity through Chabahar port and a dedicated Air Freight Corridor between India and Afghanistan. India's humanitarian assistance of 75,000 tonnes of wheat to strengthen food security of Afghanistan during the Covid pandemic has been transported through Chabahar port.

CHINA'S 'SPACE DREAM': A LONG MARCH TO THE MOON

IT IS CHINA'S FIRST ATTEMPT TO RETRIEVE MATERIALS FROM AN EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL BODY WHICH IS EXPECTED TO LAST MORE THAN 20 DAYS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing/Wenchang, Nov 24: China Tuesday successfully launched its maiden unmanned spacecraft to collect samples from the lunar surface and return to earth, which space scientists here say is the Chinese space programme's most complex operation ever.

The Chang'e-5 lunar probe was successfully launched from the Wenchang Spacecraft Launch Site in the southern island province of Hainan, state-run CGTN reported. The spacecraft was launched by a Long March-5 rocket at 4.30 am Beijing Time.

Change-5 is one of the most complicated and challenging missions in China's aerospace history, as well

as the world's first moon-sample mission in more than 40 years.

The US sent astronauts to the moon to collect samples. In the Soviet Union's unmanned lunar sampling missions, the spacecraft took off from the moon and returned to Earth directly.

The mission faces new technical challenges and much could go wrong, Chinese space scientists said. "It is the Chinese space programme's most complex mission ever," Pei Zhaoyu, deputy director of the Lunar Exploration and Space Program Centre of the China National Space Administration (CNSA) told the official media.

The 8-tonne spacecraft has four independent but interactive components. This includes one to stay



Long March-5 rocket carrying the Change 5 lunar mission lifts off at the Wenchang Space Launch Center

PTI PHOTO

in lunar orbit as a docking station, one to go down to the moon's surface and drill for samples, one to take the material back to the dock station

and another to bring the samples back to Earth.

Explaining why China chose to do what has been accomplished by

the US and Soviet Union much earlier, Pei was quoted by the state-run Xinhua news agency as saying that China chose a complicated technological approach including unmanned rendezvous and docking in lunar orbit, and could bring back more samples and lay a technological foundation for manned lunar missions. A major space power, China launched its first Mars mission 'Tianwen-1' July 23 this year. The Mars spacecraft which included an orbiter, lander and rover is on its way to the red planet.

The Chang'e-5 will help promote China's science and technology development and lay an important foundation for China's future manned lunar landing and deep space exploration, Pei said.

More importantly, scientists have found in the lunar samples the ideal material for nuclear fusion, and enough of it to meet human's energy needs for about 10,000 years, Pang added. China's future moon missions will explore the possibility of building an international lunar research base, the report said.

After it enters the lunar orbit, the lander-ascender combination will separate from the orbiter-returner combination.

While the orbiter-returner orbits about 200 km above the lunar surface, the lander-ascender will touch down on the northwest region of Oceanus Procellarum, also known as the Ocean of Storms, on the near side of the moon in early December, the Xinhua report said.

business

of the day quote

A cohesive national retail policy would go a long way in reviving the sector and help generate up to 30 lakh additional jobs in the country by 2024



SHASHWAT GOENKA | CHAIRMAN, CII NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON RETAIL

SMEV welcomes the announcement of setting up charging kiosks at every fuel station. It is a massive initiative that if done quickly and in sufficient density could address the issue of range anxiety



SOHINDER GILL | DIRECTOR GENERAL, SMEV

Every year over 30 million tonnes of paddy stubble are burnt in Punjab and Haryana alone. The idea of Verve Renewables was initiated with the sole intention of curbing the problem



SURVAT KHANNA | CEO, VERVE RENEWABLES

SHORT TAKES

Enough syringe supply in India

New Delhi: An industry body of syringe and needle manufacturers Tuesday said that it has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi offering an additional capacity of over 350 million syringes per month depending upon the requirements during the vaccination programme against the COVID-19. This capacity is already built up by the manufacturers taking learning from mask and PPE kits experience India faced in March and April 2020, All India Syringe & Needle Manufacturers Association (AISNMA) said in the letter.

Diageo targets zero emissions

New Delhi: Global spirits major Diageo Tuesday announced its 'Society 2030: Spirit of Progress' plan under which it targets to achieve net zero carbon emissions across direct India operations by 2025. Moreover, it aims to achieve net water positive impact in India by 2026. Under its global 'Decade of Action' to help achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, Diageo, the maker of popular brands like Johnnie Walker, said it will ensure 100 per cent use of recycled content.

FIMI urges govt to ban exports

New Delhi: Miners' body FIMI has urged the Centre to immediately put a complete ban on illegal exports of iron ore pellets stating that such a move would help meet the domestic requirement of the key material used in making steel. In a recent letter to Steel Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, FIMI also made a plea to the government for urgent intervention to introduce a price monitoring and regulation mechanism for sale of steel by integrated producers.

Hiring activity up, says report

New Delhi: Recruitment activity in India witnessed an uptick in September and though competition for jobs is lower compared to several months ago, it is still 30 per cent higher compared to a year ago, says a report. According to LinkedIn's latest edition of the 'Labour Market Update', hiring recovery in India reached 30 per cent year-on-year in September. Findings from the latest edition show that hiring activity is improving and the digital divide is narrowing, suggesting a recovery in hiring for the non-tech sectors.



We have relaxed the requirement of mandatory mock trading sessions to facilitate testing of new software or existing software that has undergone any change of functionality

AJAY TYAGI | CHAIRMAN, SEBI

BENCHMARKS RALLY TO RECORD HIGHS

Indian equity indices conquered new peaks Tuesday, with the Nifty closing above the 13,000-level for the first time, as banking, FMCG and auto stocks saw heavy buying amid optimism over COVID-19 vaccine progress.



BIZ BUZZ

JSW Steel launches website to help MSMEs

NEW DELHI: JSW Steel has launched a dedicated website for MSMEs to help them purchase steel even in smaller quantities, a top official said Tuesday. MSMEs are usually smaller companies which produce various products for domestic and international markets. And facilitating with timely and affordable deliveries will enable them to compete much better, JSW Steel Director - Commercial Marketing and Corporate Strategy - Jayant Acharya said. "With this aim, JSW Steel has launched (website) JSW For MSME. We are encouraging MSMEs to register so that we understand their requirements better. JSW Steel extends help to MSME with preferential pricing for its steel products."



Delhi 27th fastest-growing residential market

NEW DELHI: India's national capital has been ranked 27th, while Mumbai and Bengaluru were placed at the 33th and 34th positions respectively in a global index that measures annual price appreciation of luxury residential properties, according to a Knight Frank report. Auckland in the Australasia region topped the index with 12.9 per cent price appreciation in the July-September quarter, compared to the same period last year. Manila and Shenzhen were at 2nd and 3rd positions respectively with 10.2 per cent and 8.9 per cent price rise. The property consultant on Tuesday released its Prime Global Cities Index Q3 2020 report. In the Q2 (April-June) report, Bengaluru and Delhi were at 26th and 27th positions, while Mumbai was ranked at the 32nd position.



Mercedes Benz ties up with SBI for car finance

MUMBAI: Luxury car manufacturer Mercedes-Benz Tuesday said it has partnered with State Bank of India (SBI) for car finance at 'attractive' interest rate besides many other benefits. The collaboration will give Mercedes-Benz India access to the unparalleled market penetration of SBI's HNI customer base, while the bank's customers will enjoy exclusive benefits on booking its luxury cars, the company said in a release. The tie-up guarantees many financial benefits including an attractive rate of interest. Besides, all customers booking a Mercedes-Benz car online through SBI's digital platform YONO will get an additional benefit of ₹25,000 at the dealerships, it said. "We are confident the SBI customers will be highly excited with the seamless online journey," he added.



Voda Idea cedes further ground

THE DECLINE IN LOSS-MAKING VI'S RMS WAS 'LED BY A DIP' IN SUBSCRIBERS WITH AS MANY AS 8 MILLION CUSTOMER LOSSES IN THE SEPTEMBER QUARTER

AGENCIES

Mumbai, Nov 24: Vodafone Idea (Vi) has lost further ground to rivals - Reliance Jio and Bharti Airtel - with its revenue market share (RMS) slipping 22 basis points (bps) sequentially to 22.6% in the September quarter, dragged mainly due to comparatively lower network-related spends which led to more subscriber losses, say analysts.

Conversely, market leader Jio reported 34 bps gain on-quarter, taking its RMS in the July-September period to 41.3%, while No 2 telco, Bharti Airtel's was stable at around 34.2%, said sector experts, analysing latest telco financial data collated by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai).

The decline in loss-making Vi's RMS was "led by a dip" in subscribers - as many as 8 million customer losses in the September quarter, said Axis Capital. Subscriber fall continues to be a problem area for the loss-making telco, which lags its two rivals on 4G coverage.



■ **VI'S ₹1,040 CRORE CAPEX IN THE SEPTEMBER QUARTER WAS WELL BELOW AIRTEL'S ₹6,790 CRORE AND JIO'S ₹5,426 CRORE**

■ **THE TELCO IS HOPING TO RAISE ₹25,000 CRORE IN THE NEXT COUPLE OF MONTHS VIA A MIX OF DEBT AND EQUITY**

Emkay Global expects the telco to suffer "further market erosion" in coming quarters due to its low investments in the network.

Cash-strapped Vi's ₹1,040 crore capex in the September quarter, FY21 was well below Airtel's ₹6,790 crore and Jio's ₹5,426 crore. The telco is hoping to raise ₹25,000 crore in the next couple of months via a mix of debt and equity to invest in its 4G network and also clear its balance ₹50,400 crore of AGR arrears to the government.

Jio's quarterly RMS gains were driven by a combination of strong sequential growth in revenue from national long distance (NLD) services, the residual impact of tariff hikes taken nearly a year back and 4G users up-trending to higher value data packs, say analysts.

"Jio's NLD revenues recorded a strong rebound with a 64% sequential jump in the fiscal second quarter, after falling 53% in Q1," said Emkay. The brokerage added that

the market leader also "sustained its numero uno position in 18 circles," with revenue contribution from its top-7 markets stable at 53%.

Airtel's RMS was flattish but reported gains in key circles such as Bihar, Maharashtra and also retained its leadership in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Emkay estimates Airtel's revenue from its top-7 circles stood at 59% in the July-September period. Trai data showed that Jio, Airtel and Vi's quarterly adjusted gross revenue (including NLD revenue) rose 5%, 4% and 3% sequentially to ₹16,095 crore, ₹13,306.1 crore and ₹8,813 crore respectively.

"Vi's higher AGR (including NLD) in the September quarter was due to lower cash payments towards interconnect usage charges (IUC), post-changes in GST rules for payment of IUC invoice," Axis Capital said.

TWO-WHEELER SEGMENT TO 'SEE GROWTH'



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 24: India's two-wheeler exports will see sustained growth in the second half of next fiscal after witnessing temporary hurdles in the first half this year due to COVID-19 and weakened crude oil prices, hurting the economies of key exporting destinations, according to ratings agency Ind-Ra.

Exports momentum is expected to continue in the remaining part of FY21 and FY22, primarily driven by the exporting countries' lower penetration level, demand for usage as commercial fleet, stability in crude prices, lack of public infrastructure and aversion to public transport amid COVID-19, India Ratings and Research said in a statement.

India exports two-wheelers mainly to African, Asian and Latin American countries, constituting 37.5 per cent, 22.9 per cent and 21.4 per cent, respectively, during the first half of FY21, it added.

Within this, Nigeria, Colombia, Nepal, Bangladesh and Philippines together accounted for around 50 per cent of the total exports in FY20 (in terms of value), the rating agency said.

Musk now 2nd richest in world

AGENCIES

San Francisco, Nov 24: Tesla chief Elon Musk has surpassed Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates to become the second-richest person in the world.

The Bloomberg Billionaires Index put the Tesla chief executive - with a \$127.9 billion fortune - above Gates - at \$127.7 billion - for the first time.

The 49-year-old entrepreneur has added more than \$100 billion to his net worth since January 2020, making him one of the fastest-growing among the world's 500 richest people.

The jump in Musk's fortune came as the shares of the electric car-maker Tesla soared and its market cap neared \$500 billion Monday.

The wealth gap between Musk and Gate is not huge, and it is possible they could switch places again.

Bill Gates' current net worth is \$127.7 billion, and he would have ranked on the top had he not donated so prodigiously to charities over the years. Gates has donated more than \$27 billion to his namesake foundation, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, since 2006.

Gates was the richest man for four years running till 2017 when Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos overtook him. Bezos continues to be the rich-



The jump in Musk's fortune came as the shares of the electric car-maker Tesla soared and its market cap neared \$500 billion

est man in the world with an estimated net worth of \$182 billion

Despite the pandemic, which has resulted in business closures and job losses, this year has been a good one for those listed on the Bloomberg index, who have collectively gained \$1.3tn since January.

A week ago, Musk overtook Zuckerberg and advanced into third place. The 36-year-old Facebook founder has fallen back into fourth spot this week, behind the French businessman Bernard Arnault, the chief executive of LVMH, the world's largest luxury goods company.

NPAs to rise further: S&P

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 24: Non-performing loans in the Indian banking sector is likely to witness an uptick and may shoot up to 11 per cent of gross loans in the next 12-18 months, S&P Global Ratings said Tuesday.

It said forbearance is masking problem assets for Indian banks arising from COVID-19 and the financial institutions will likely have trouble maintaining momentum after the proportion of Non-performing loans (NPL) to total loans declined consistently so far this year.

While financial institutions performed better than we expected in the second quarter, much of this is due to the six-month loan moratorium, as well as a Supreme Court ruling barring banks from classifying any borrower as a non performing asset, S&P Global Ratings credit analyst Deepali Seth-Chhabria said.

In its report titled The Stress Fractures In Indian Financial Institutions, S&P said with loan repayment moratoriums having ended on August 31, 2020, NPLs in the banking sector will likely shoot up to 10-11 per cent of gross loans in the next 12-18 months, from 8 per cent on June 30, 2020.

According to S&P, the banking system's credit costs will remain elevated at 2.2-2.9 per cent this year and next.



WHILE FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS PERFORMED BETTER THAN EXPECTED IN THE SECOND QUARTER, MUCH OF THIS WAS DUE TO THE SIX-MONTH LOAN MORATORIUM, AS WELL AS A SC RULING

Resumption of economic activity, government credit guarantees for small to mid-size enterprises, and buoyant liquidity is helping to limit stress. Our NPL estimates are lower than previous but we are still of the view that the sector's financial strength will not materially recover

until fiscal 2023 (ended March 31, 2023), it said.

According to S&P 3-8 per cent of loans could get restructured.

Banks and non-bank financial companies (NBFCs) have also been strengthening their balance sheets and bolstering their equity bases. Banks have also been building reserves and creating excess COVID provisions, which in our view should help them smooth the hit from COVID-related losses.

For NBFCs we rate, performance has been improving. Like with banks, collections have surged for NBFCs. Top-tier NBFCs are benefiting from surplus system liquidity, as indicated by a sharp reduction in risk premiums. Weaker finance companies, however, have faced higher risk premiums. We expect such polarisation to persist in 2021, S&P added

'66 billion transactions to shift from cash to cards'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 24: About 66.6 billion transactions worth USD 270.7 billion are expected to shift from cash to cards and digital payments by 2023 in India, and further increase to USD 856.6 billion by 2030, a report by Accenture said Tuesday.

This rapid shift to digital payments due to the COVID-19 pandemic is urgently increasing the need for banks to modernise their payment systems, the report, titled 'Playing the Long Game in Payments Modernisation', said.

The report is based on a survey of 120 payments executives at banks globally regarding the transformation of their payments business, as banks make multi-year investments to compete with non-bank digital-payments providers and comply with new regulations.



Conducted between July and August this year, the report surveyed markets including Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, India, Norway, Singapore, Thailand, the UK and the US. It noted that the expected drop in cash volume is based on GlobalData and Accenture

Research assumptions. Also, the forecast of non-cash transactions in consumer spending is calculated using cash evolution data and MSC rates provided by GlobalData.

The report forecasted that nearly 420 billion transactions worth USD 7 trillion, globally are expected to

shift from cash to cards and digital payments by 2023 - and increase to USD 48 trillion by 2030. In India, 66.6 billion transactions worth USD 270.7 billion are expected to shift from cash to cards and digital payments by 2023 - and increase to USD 856.6 billion by 2030, it said.

The rapid move to digital payments has put additional pressure on banks, with three-quarters (75 per cent) of surveyed bank executives saying that the pandemic has increased the urgency of their plans to modernise payment systems, the report added.

COVID-19 has accelerated the shift to digital payments at a pace banks could not have predicted. The pandemic will permanently change how consumers shop and pay for products as they prioritise convenience above all else, Sulabh Agarwal, who leads Accenture's

Payments practice globally, said.

He added that while banks' investments in new payments systems have focused primarily on meeting compliance deadlines, the way they will drive value moving forward is by embracing the changing consumer dynamic and improving the customer experience.

While India has been ahead of the curve in terms of real-time digital payments infrastructure driven by UPI and 24x7 NEFT, the pandemic has led to a further increase in digital, contactless payments as consumer behavior has undergone a shift, Sonali Kulkarni, Lead - Financial Services, Accenture in India, said. With newer players launching their payments offerings and increased uptake of 'Buy Now Pay Later' schemes, consumer experience and convenience is bound to improve significantly, she added.

AGENCIES

CARS24 RAISES \$200 MILLION IN GLOBAL FUNDING



Chennai, Nov 24: CARS24, an online transaction platform for pre-owned vehicles, became the latest Indian startup to become a unicorn. The company on Tuesday announced raising \$200 million in Series-E funding round led by DST Global where it was valued at over \$1 billion. Existing investors in the startup, such as Exor Seeds, Moore Strategic Ventures and Unbound, also participated in the funding round.

The company will use the funds raised to invest aggressively in technology and product innovation and scale up new business verticals. With more than 200,000 transactions annually and a four-fold increase in website engagement, CARS24 had already surpassed its pre-Covid business level, the company said.

"Traditionally, selling or buying cars has been a tiresome process. But, in the past five years, we have strived to transform the customer's journey the CARS24 way, which is hassle-free, safe and transparent. With this investment, we will continue to innovate our product and bolster our capabilities to provide the best experience for all parties," Vikram Chopra, co-founder and chief executive, said in a statement.

KOHLI, ASHWIN NOMINATED FOR PLAYER OF THE DECADE AWARD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, Nov 24: The talismanic Virat Kohli and Ravichandran Ashwin were Tuesday nominated for the coveted ICC Men's Player of the Decade Award with the Indian captain featuring in all five men's categories for his incredible run in the last 10 years.

Kohli and veteran off-spinner Ashwin are the two Indians among seven players nominated for the most prestigious award.

Besides the Indian duo, Joe Root (England), Kane Williamson (New Zealand), Steve Smith (Australia), AB de Villiers (South Africa), and Kumar Sangakkara (Sri Lanka) are the other contenders in this category.

In the Men's ODI Player of the Decade category, former India skipper MS Dhoni and run-machine Rohit Sharma also found a place alongside Kohli, Lasith Malinga (Sri Lanka), Mitchell Starc (Australia), De Villiers and Sangakkara.

Kohli and Rohit also featured in the Men's T20I Player of the Decade

category, which also included Rashid Khan (Afghanistan), Imran Tahir (South Africa), Aaron Finch (Australia), Malinga and Chris Gayle (West Indies).

Kohli has also been nominated in the Men's Test Player of the Decade and ICC Spirit of Cricket Award of the Decade categories. Besides Kohli, Dhoni also found a place in the ICC Spirit of Cricket Award of the Decade award category.

Kohli, who averages more than 50 in all formats, has already amassed 70 international hundreds and is only behind Ricky Ponting (71) and Sachin Tendulkar (100). He is third in the list of leading run-scorers of all time with 21,444 runs, behind Ponting (27,483) and Tendulkar (34,357).

In the past decade Kohli has amassed over 7000 runs in Tests while in the shorter formats, the Indian skipper has accumulated more than 11,000 runs in ODIs and over 2,600 runs in T20s.

The final winners will be decided on the basis of the number of votes a player receives.

LIST OF NOMINATIONS

MEN'S PLAYER OF THE DECADE

Virat Kohli (India), Ravichandran Ashwin (India), Joe Root (England), Kane Williamson (New Zealand), Steve Smith (Australia), AB de Villiers (South Africa), and Kumar Sangakkara (Sri Lanka).

WOMEN'S ODI PLAYER OF THE DECADE

Meg Lanning (Australia), Ellyse Perry (Australia), Mithali Raj (India), Suzie Bates (New Zealand), Stafanie Taylor (West Indies) and Jhulan Goswami (India).

WOMEN'S PLAYER OF THE DECADE

Ellyse Perry (Australia), Meg Lanning (Australia), Suzie Bates (New Zealand), Stafanie Taylor (West Indies), Mithali Raj (India), Sarah Taylor (England).

MEN'S ODI PLAYER OF THE DECADE

Virat Kohli (India), Lasith Malinga (Sri Lanka), Mitchell Starc (Australia), AB de Villiers, Rohit Sharma (India), MS Dhoni (India), and Kumara Sangakkara (Sri Lanka).

MEN'S TEST PLAYER OF THE DECADE

Virat Kohli (India), Kane Williamson (New Zealand), Smith, James Anderson (England), Rangana Herath (Sri Lanka), and Yasir Shah (Pakistan).

MEN'S T20I PLAYER OF THE DECADE

Rashid Khan (Afghanistan), Virat Kohli (India), Imran Tahir (South Africa), Aaron Finch (Australia), Lasith Malinga (Sri Lanka), Chris Gayle (West Indies), and Rohit Sharma (India).

ICC SPIRIT OF CRICKET AWARD OF THE DECADE

Virat Kohli (India), Kane Williamson (New Zealand), Brendon McCullum (New Zealand), Misbah-ul-Haq (Pakistan), MS Dhoni (India), Anya Shrubsole (England), Katherine Brunt (England), Mahela Jayawardene (Sri Lanka), and Daniel Vettori (New Zealand).



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 24: India's star opener Rohit Sharma and pacer Ishant Sharma will miss the first two Tests against Australia and are also doubtful for the remaining two after it was conveyed to the

BCCI that the duo will require close to a month to be match fit.

The two, who are undergoing rehabilitation at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) in Bangalore, are already out of contention for the limited-overs leg of the series, which begins with the

ODIs Friday.

They were kept in the Test squad for the series starting December 17 but tough quarantine rules have made their availability uncertain.

"The NCA has given a report that both Rohit and Ishant will take at least another 3 to 4 weeks

Rohit, Ishant to miss first two Australia Tests, also doubtful for remaining two matches

HUGE BLOW TO INDIA

to get match fit," a BCCI source told this agency Tuesday.

Rohit, while talking to this agency last week, had stated that his hamstring injury is fine now and he is only working on strength and conditioning to be battle-ready at the NCA.

Ishant, on the other hand, is recovering from a side strain. "Even if they travel now they will have 'hard quarantine' since they will travel by commercial flight. Hard quarantine means not being able to train during the 14 days like the whole team," the source said.

"So, now if only Cricket Australia can convince the government and allow them to train during quarantine," he added.

The Indian team, which landed here after the IPL earlier this month on a chartered flight, was allowed to train in quarantine as Australia battled a fresh wave of

COVID-19 cases.

National coach Ravi Shastri had Sunday stated that the two cricketers' chances of playing the Test series hinge on whether they are able to board a flight to Australia within this week.

"If you need to play in the Test series or any red-ball cricket, you've got to be on the flight in the next three or four days. If you aren't, then it's going to be tough," he had said.

The four-Test series, after the day-night opener in Adelaide, will move to Melbourne (December 26 to 30), followed by games in Sydney (January 7 to 11) and Brisbane (January 15 to 19).

India will be without skipper Virat Kohli after the first Test as he will return to the country to be there for the birth of his first child. The visitors had won the 2018-19 series 2-1.

Thapa, Esmael on target as CFC win

AGENCIES

Goa, Nov 24: Chennaiyin FC (CFC) had a wonderful start to their Indian Super League 2020-21 campaign as they defeated Jamshedpur FC 2-1 in their season-opener at Tilak Maidan here, Tuesday.

First-half goals from Anirudh Thapa (first minute) and Esmael Goncalves (26th) were enough for the two-time champions to secure the victory. Nerijus Valskis (37th) pulled one back for the losing side, but they couldn't find the equaliser, which could have earned them a point.

Chennaiyin got off to a dream start as Thapa opened the scoring seconds after the kick-off. After a neat exchange of passes in the centre, Rafael Crivellaro slipped a through-ball for Esmael who ran down the right flank.

The forward drilled a low cross into the centre of the box for Thapa whose late run and a splendid first-time strike was more than what the Jamshedpur defence and the goalkeeper could deal with.

It was a fantastic start to the match as both teams seemed unwilling to sit back with a deep

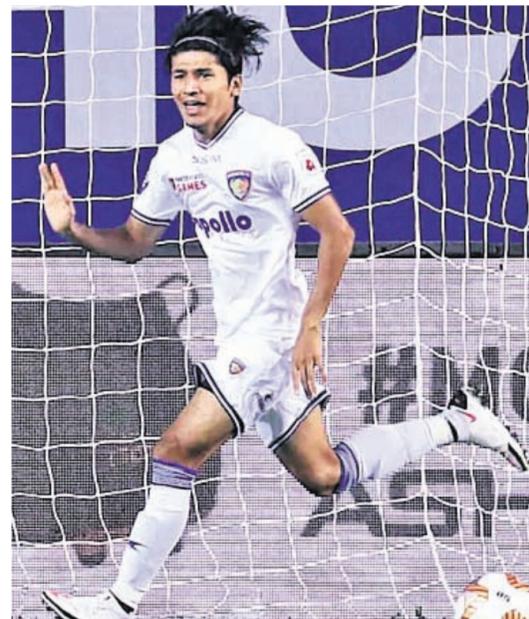
block. Jamshedpur's attack led by last season's Golden Boot winner Valskis tried to press for an equaliser but it was Chennaiyin's energetic forays forward that stood out.

Esmael had multiple opportunities to score in the first half but was finally rewarded for his athletic centre-forward play when Issac Vannalsawma decided to nudge Lallianzuala Chhangte inside the box in the 25th minute.

Chhangte felt a slight push on his back as he contested for an aerial ball inside the box and the referee pointed to the spot. Esmael, also known as Isma, converted the penalty to double his team's lead.

Jamshedpur tried to build their attacks from the flanks but their attacks were well dealt with by the Chennaiyin defence until the 37th minute.

The defenders failed to spot Valskis' run into the box as Jackichand clipped a delightful cross into the box from the right flank. The Lithuanian striker got off the mark with a neat header into the net from what was his team's first shot on target.



Anirudh Thapa wheels away in celebration after scoring Chennaiyin FC's first goal against Jamshedpur in their ISL encounter, Tuesday

Virat needs to set tone, feels Clarke

Former Oz skipper believes whitewash is obvious if Indian captain doesn't set momentum before leaving

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sydney, Nov 24: Former Australia captain Michael Clarke has warned that India could be 'smoked 0-4' in the Test series if skipper Virat Kohli does not set the tone in the white-ball games before his departure.

The 32-year-old Kohli has been granted paternity leave by the BCCI to be with his wife for the birth of their first child. He will lead the team in the white-ball series, comprising three ODIs and as many T20s, and the opening Test at Adelaide before heading back home.

"These ODIs and these T20s are where Virat Kohli can really stand up and lead from the front," Clarke said on 'Sky Sports Radio' Tuesday.

"If India don't have success in the ODIs and the T20s, they are in deep trouble in the Test matches and they'll get smoked 0-4, in my opinion," he added.

Clarke feels that despite featuring in only one Test, the talismanic Indian skipper could still play a huge role in the outcome of the red-ball series by dominating in the limited overs game. "I think the tone he sets with this team will play a big role when he leaves, after the first Test match."

The much talked about contest between the two best sides in the world would begin November 27 with the ODI series-opener in Sydney.

The former World Cup-winning skipper said Jasprit Bumrah will also have a huge role in the much anticipated series, adding that the star pacer needs to bowl aggressively to put the pressure on the



home side. "Opening bowler, probably the best short-form bowler in the world at the moment but his success in Test cricket has been exceptional as well."

"He's quick, he's got a really different action, so I think he needs to set the tone and be really aggressive to the Australian batters," Clarke said.

The 39-year-old pointed out that Bumrah has been winning the duel against the formidable David Warner and also has the ability to trouble star batsman Steve Smith. "Again, it's not just about the wickets he takes, it's how he bowls. He's got Davey Warner's measure at the moment. He's got him out a number of times."

"Even to someone like Steve Smith, he's got to use that short ball consistently and regularly, like Jofra Archer did to Steve Smith in the Ashes."

"They've (Bumrah and Kohli) got to take the Aussies on and those two players are India's best two players to be aggressive to the Australians," he added.

STEVE SMITH SAYS...

Rohit is obviously a tremendous white-ball player, he has proven that for a number of years now at the top of the order, so obviously it leaves a bit of hole. But I guess the beauty with the Indian team is there are so many batters coming through, that are of high quality (giving examples of Mayank Agarwal & KL Rahul)

The same (like Rohit) I think with Virat and the Test squad. You know there are a number of players who can come in and do a good job. Virat is of obviously of high quality, and we know how good he has been in all forms for a long period of times, so it is certainly going to leave a hole but I still do believe that they have got some quality batters waiting in the wings to fill that void

TIM PAINE SAYS...

It still annoys me that we lost that Test series. Whether we had Steve (Smith) or David (Warner) or not, you don't want to be losing any Test matches or Test series you're involved in, so that still grinds me a little bit.

(However) we're a much better all round side (now). Not just adding Steve and David back into it, which is a hell of a lot of runs to add back into a side, but I think every other cricketer in that team has improved in the last 18 months as well and we've been playing some really good cricket

Target the fifth stump to Smith: Sachin to bowlers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 24: Steve Smith's unconventional technique will warrant a slightly wider line from Indian bowlers, the iconic Sachin Tendulkar said, urging the pacers to target the 'fifth stump' to blunt the redoubtable batsman during the upcoming series in Australia.

Smith, who missed the last India-Australia series in 2018-19 due to a ball-tampering ban, will be itching to go out there and prove a point. He has always performed against India and has six hundreds and a 92, a statistic that won't be lost on India skipper Virat Kohli.

"Smith's technique is unconventional... Normally, we tell a bowler in Test matches to bowl on and around off-stump or may be fourth stump line. But for Smith, because he shuffles, may be that line (of delivery) moves further away by four to five inches," Tendulkar told this agency in an interview.

"One has to aim between (imaginary) fourth and fifth stump for Steve to nick one. It's just a mental adjustment of line, more than anything else," the former captain said.



"Smith, I read, said he is ready for the short-pitched stuff... Probably he is expecting bowlers to be aggressive upfront with him. But I think, he needs to be tested on and around that off-stump channel. Keep him on back-foot and induce that early mistake."

Can't an in-swinging yorker be more effective, considering Smith's pronounced trigger from leg to off stump?

"For that to happen, you have to see how much the ball is swinging. All those things matter. You can't use saliva, so it's a different case,



If wickets have a lot more life. In England during the Test matches, on occasions, the Dukes wouldn't be swinging much.

"I don't know if they will have greenish wickets for the ball to do a little bit. If the ball doesn't swing. That swinging yorker, you might not even see."

The Indian bowling attack comprising Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami, Ishant Sharma and Umesh Yadav is a 'potent one' but Tendulkar would ideally like the team management to identify a defensive bowler as well.

ENGLISH STADIUMS TO HOST FANS NEXT WEEK

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Nov 24: Supporters are set to return to English Premier League games next week for the first time since March.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson is allowing a return of spectators to sports stadiums as part of an easing of coronavirus restrictions when the national lockdown ends December 2.

A maximum of 4,000 fans will initially be allowed into venues in the areas with the lowest COVID-19 infection rates and up to 2,000 in the areas placed in the next tier of restrictions. The highest-risk areas still won't be allowed fans.

Plans for the return of spectators in October were put on hold due to

a spike in coronavirus cases. The government will announce Thursday which tiers English cities and regions will be placed into.

"We are able to get the turnstiles turning sooner than expected," Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said on Monday, "taking a cautious approach and starting with the lowest risk areas first. I'm confident that sports will take every step to ensure their fans are safe, and fans will play their part and look out for each other until we can safely get everyone back in."

Britain has been Europe's hardest-hit country during the pandemic, with 55,230 known deaths within 28 days of a positive coronavirus test including another 206 in Monday's daily update.