



MIXED FEELINGS

Actor Nushratt Bharuccha says she is excited as well as nervous about her new project *Chhorii*

LEISURE P2



KERALA COMES TO A HALT

The nationwide strike called by 10 TUs against the Centre's labour policies crippled normal life in Kerala

TWO STATES P7



INDIA, NEPAL TO BOOST TIES

India and Nepal agreed to advance mutual cooperation during a meeting in Kathmandu

INTERNATIONAL P10

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



No, not for job, transfer, admission etc. Every one needs recommendation letter for early vaccination!

Opposition demands Minister Arun Sahoo's resignation



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 26: All businesses of the Odisha Assembly were washed out Thursday as the Opposition BJP and Congress members created ruckus in the House over the murder of a minor girl in Nayagarh.

As soon the House assembled for the day, Opposition BJP and Congress members rushed to the Well of the House shouting slogans, demanding the resignation of Cabinet Minister Arun Sahoo for his alleged involvement in the murder of five-year-old girl Pari of Jadupur village in Nayagarh district. The BJP MLAs were seen holding placards and banners featuring photos of minister Sahoo with the accused, Babuli Nayak.

Amid the pandemonium, Speaker Surjya Narayan Patro adjourned the House initially several times. Later, Sahoo made a statement in the House amidst uproar by the Opposition members following which the Assembly was adjourned for the day. As parents of the murdered girl have alleged involvement of Sahoo in the murder case, BJP legislators said, demanding the resignation of the minister.

"While speaking on the matter Wednesday, the Minister of State for Home had informed the Assembly that Crime Branch will probe the case. We are not satisfied with the decision as the state government had previously handed over several cases to Crime Branch, but the reports were never placed before the Assembly," said BJP chief whip Mahon Charan Majhi. "We will not allow the House to function till Minister Arun Kumar Sahoo resigns from the Cabinet," he threatened.

"We are demanding the resignation of Arun Sahoo as he might try to influence the probe as he is a minister now," Congress MLA Tara Prasad Bahinipati said. Bahinipati also demanded a probe by a High Court-monitored Special Investigation Team (SIT).

MARKET WATCH		
INDEX		VARIATION
SENSEX	44259.74	▲ 431.64
NIFTY	12987.00	▲ 128.60
DOLLAR	74.09	▼ ₹0.07
EURO	87.94	▼ ₹0.05
GOLD	₹48,584	▲ ₹71
SILVER	₹59,722	▼ ₹121

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP	27.7°C	27.4°C
MAX	27.7°C	27.4°C
MIN	18.2°C	16.6°C
Humidity	89%	70%
Rainfall	Moderate	Nil
Forecast	Generally cloudy sky	

Nationwide strike hits normal life

More than 25 crore workers participated in the day-long strike called by ten central trade unions

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 26: A nationwide strike by trade unions in protest against the BJP-led Centre's economic policies Thursday hit normal life in Kerala, parts of West Bengal, Assam and Telangana as public transport went off-road and banking services were disrupted.

All government offices and major business establishments remained closed across Left-ruled Kerala, where public transport also went off the road.

West Bengal witnessed sporadic clashes in several parts as Left unions took out rallies, disrupting vehicular movement and forcing shopkeepers to down the shutters.

The strike also partially affected normal life in Odisha, Puducherry, Assam and Telangana.

With bank unions joining the stir, banking operations in Kerala, West Bengal and north-eastern states were hit. Operations such as cash deposits and withdrawal and cheque clearances were impacted. In other parts of the country, the strike had little effect, but reports suggested that several bank branches witnessed a limited impact.

Bank unions claimed that in the clearing grids, about 20 lakh cheques worth about ₹18,000 crore could not be sent for clearance due to the strike.

Even ATMs in some parts of the country went dry.

However, the country's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) and private



Agitating trade union members outside the Bhubaneswar railway station, Thursday

sector banks were functional.

In Tamil Nadu, banks were closed in 16 districts as the government declared a holiday due to cyclone Nivar, while in Maharashtra, 30,000 bank employees joined the strike and demonstrated before their respective branches.

The day-long countrywide strike has been called by a joint platform of ten central trade unions to protest against the central government's new farm and labour laws, among other workers-related issues, as well as to raise various demands. Various independent federations and associations are also part of the joint platform.

"The states of Kerala, Puducherry, Odisha, Assam and Telangana have reported complete shutdown. Tamil Nadu reported complete shutdown in 13 districts, while the industrial strike

continues in the rest of the districts. Punjab and Haryana have reported that the state road transport buses have not left their depots in the morning," a joint statement issued by the trade unions said.

Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh reported 100 per cent strike, including at BALCO, the statement said. Normal life was affected in West Bengal and Tripura, and sporadic incidents of clashes were reported in West Bengal.

Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC), All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS), Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU), All India United Trade Union Centre (AIUTUC), Trade Union Co-ordination Centre (TUCC) and Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) are part of the joint platform.

DELHI CHALO MARCH PUNJAB FARMERS CLASH WITH COPS

CHANDIGARH: Farmers from Punjab faced water cannons and broke police barriers at the state's border with Haryana as they pushed towards the national capital Thursday in their "Delhi Chalo" march against the Centre's farm laws. At the Shambhu border, the Haryana Police and Punjab protesters in their tractor-trolleys faced each other off on a bridge over the Ghaggar River. Police made announcements on loudspeakers to ask the farmers assembled on the Punjab side of the inter-state border to disperse. As smoke from teargas shells clouded the air and security personnel milled around, people could be seen standing on top of trucks. The Haryana Police had blocked the Amritsar-Delhi highway at this border point with trucks to stop the farmers' tractor-trolleys, some of them laden with food. Farmers chucked some barricades into the river. They were also seen pushing the trucks. A few protesters initially managed to cross the barricades on foot.



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Petrol, diesel prices hiked after a pause

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 26: Petrol and diesel prices rose sharply Thursday after a day's pause as global oil prices remained firm reaching the highest levels this fiscal.

Petrol prices increased by 11 paise per litre from ₹81.59 a litre on the previous day to ₹81.70 per litre Thursday. Diesel prices, on the other hand, increased by a higher margin of 21 paise to ₹71.62 a litre, up from ₹71.41 per litre on the previous day.

Oil companies began increasing pump prices of the two petroleum products from Friday after a nearly two-month-long hiatus in fuel price revision. The prices increased for five consecutive days before a day's pause Wednesday. In five days, petrol prices

PRICES IN BHUB	
Petrol: ₹82.32	(+0.12)
Diesel: ₹78.01	(+0.23)

have gone up by 53 paise and diesel rates have risen by 95 paise per litre. With Thursday's increase, petrol prices have now risen by 64 paise per litre and diesel by ₹1.16 a litre since Friday.

Petrol prices had been static since September 22, and diesel rates hadn't changed since October 2.

Though retail pricing of petrol and diesel has been deregulated and oil marketing companies were following a daily price revision formula, the same was suspended for almost two months to prevent volatility in international oil markets from impacting fuel prices regularly during the pandemic.

AstraZeneca 'error' clouds Covid vaccine study results

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Nov 26: AstraZeneca and Oxford University have acknowledged a manufacturing error that is raising questions about preliminary results of their experimental Covid-19 vaccine.

A statement describing the error came days after the company and the university described the shots as "highly effective" and made no mention of why some study participants didn't receive as much vaccine in the first of two shots as expected.

In the low-dose group, AstraZeneca said, the vaccine appeared to be 90 per cent effective. In the group that got two full doses, the vaccine appeared to be 62 per cent effective. Combined, the drugmakers said the vaccine appeared to be 70 per cent effective.

But the way in which the results were arrived at and reported by the companies has led to pointed questions from experts. In fact, the dose of AstraZeneca Plc's Covid vaccine that showed the highest level of effectiveness was tested in a younger population than a bigger dose that showed fewer efficacies,



A statement describing the error came days after the company and the university described the shots as "highly effective"

according to the head of the US Operation Warp Speed programme. The vaccine being developed with Oxford University was 90% effective when a half-dose was given before a full-dose booster, the part-

ners said on Monday. However, that regime was administered to participants in a group whose age was capped at 55, Warp Speed's Moncef Slaoui said Tuesday in a phone call with reporters.

Researchers have been puzzling about the AstraZeneca report since it was released, wondering why a smaller dose of the vaccine might have appeared to be more effective than a larger one. Most of the people in the trial received a placebo or the regimen of two full doses, which was 62% effective.

53 pc teachers' posts vacant in state varsities

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 26: State Higher Education Minister Arun Sahoo Thursday officially admitted in the Odisha Assembly that 53 per cent of the teaching posts in different state-run universities are lying vacant.

The minister submitted a written statement into this regard when an unstarred question was raised by Congress leader Narasingha Mishra. Mishra had asked the government regarding the number of vacancies of teaching staff in different universities and colleges in the state.

In response, Sahoo gave a written statement saying that Odisha has 10 state-run universities with a total of 1,426 sanctioned posts of professors, associate professors and assistant professors. However, out of these sanctioned posts, 762 posts (53 per cent) are lying vacant.

The minister's response said that all is not good in Utkal University, the top-ranking state-run varsity. The university has 47 sanctioned posts of professors out of which 35 are vacant. It also has 76 sanctioned posts of associate professors out of which 44 seats are vacant. Similarly, varsity has 134



sanctioned posts for assistant professors but 47 posts are vacant.

The state of affairs is the same at Berhampur University, Sambalpur University, Ravenshaw University and others.

He further said that out of the 2,306 sanctioned posts in government degree colleges, 1,033 posts (44.8 per cent) are vacant. Documents furnished by the minister showed that in government degree colleges the maximum number of vacancies are in English department (114 vacant posts), followed by History (87), Economics (86) and Chemistry (75).

At the same time, Sahoo said that in the non-government-aided colleges, 1,353 posts out of the sanctioned posts of 6,364 posts were lying vacant. Most vacancies are in the Odia department (224 vacant posts), followed by 159 vacancies in the English department.

INT'L FLIGHTS SUSPENDED TILL DEC 31

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 26: Country's aviation safety regulator DGCA Thursday extended the suspension of scheduled international commercial passenger flights to December 31.

The restrictions, however, will not apply on international all-cargo operations and flights specifically approved by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), an official circular said.

"In partial modification of circular dated 26.6.2020, the competent authority has further extended the validity of circular issued on the subject cited above regarding scheduled international commercial passenger services to/from India till 2359 hours (IST) of December 31, 2020," the DGCA said in the circular.

International scheduled flights, however, may be allowed on selected routes by the competent authority on a case-to-case basis, the circular added. The suspension of international commercial passenger flights from/to India, which has been in place since March 23 in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, was to expire November 30.

India has highest bribery rate in Asia: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 26: India has the highest bribery rate in Asia and the most number of people who use personal connections to access public services, according to a new report by corruption watchdog Transparency International.

The Global Corruption Barometer (GCB) - Asia, found that nearly 50 per cent of those who paid bribes were asked to, while 32 per cent of those who used personal connections said they would not receive the service otherwise.

The report is based upon the survey which was conducted between June 17 and July 17 this year in India with a sample size of 2,000.

"With the highest bribery rate (39 per cent) in the region, India

also has the highest rate of people using personal connections to access public services (46 per cent)," the report said.

Bribery in public services continues to plague India. Slow and complicated bureaucratic process, unnecessary red tape and unclear regulatory frameworks force citizens to seek out alternate solutions to access basic services through networks of familiarity and petty corruption, the report said.

"Both national and state governments need to streamline administrative processes for public services, implement preventative measures to combat bribery and nepotism, and invest in user-friendly online platforms to deliver essential public services quickly and effectively," the report said.



Although reporting cases of corruption is critical to curbing the spread, a majority of citizens in India (63 per cent) think that if they report corruption, they will suffer retaliation, it said.

In several countries including

India, Malaysia, Thailand, Sri Lanka and Indonesia, sexual extortion rates are also high and more must be done to prevent sextortion and address specific gendered forms of corruption, the report said.

Sextortion is extorting money



or sexual favours from someone by threatening to reveal evidence of their sexual activity through means like morphed images.

In India, 89 per cent think government corruption is a big problem, 18 per cent offered bribes in ex-

change for votes and 11 per cent experienced sextortion or know someone who has.

About 63 per cent of surveyed people think the government is doing well in tackling corruption while 73 per cent said their anti-corruption agency is doing well in the fight against corruption, it said.

Based on fieldwork conducted in 17 countries, the GCB surveyed nearly 20,000 citizens in total.

The report said the results showed that nearly three out of four people think corruption is a big problem in their country and the survey also found that nearly one in five people who accessed public services, such as health care and education, paid a bribe in the preceding year.

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

Some decisions are hard to take, but a firm resolve will help you stay committed. Sentimentality may shake your purpose, but once decided, you must stick to it. Also, learn to take heart-break in your stride, says Ganesha.

TAURUS

Definitely not a day when you plan to get your feet dirty (maybe a pedicure, though). You might delay the start of a new project. Perhaps, a romantic escape with your sweetheart or a day in the spa grooming yourself with a lavish makeover will validate your lethargy today.

GEMINI

Today, it's time to meet those who are close to you, and maybe even those who were close to you at some point of time. Also, it's time to revive old friendships, old memories and sink into nostalgia. You may want to buy a valuable historic artefact, says Ganesha.

CANCER

It is about time that you cultivated healthy eating habits. Today, you will be prone to doing everything in excess. You may overeat or get swept away by emotions. You must keep a check on your emotions, or it may lead to unwanted complications.

LEO

The desire and passion for learning is a life-long quest, says Ganesha. It may be that you love to learn, but dissipating the knowledge you have acquired is equally important. So on this day, it is through teaching that you shall learn just how fascinating and frustrating children can be.

VIRGO

Money matters will hit a major snag today, says Ganesha. Let your mind overrule your heart. Take extreme care of personal belongings, legal responsibilities and new ventures with long-term effects in mind.

LIBRA

Nothing comes for free — keep this in mind as you may have to pay your dues for the success you desire today, especially if it is a new project that you have undertaken. Be prepared to invest a considerable amount of time and effort in your endeavours. Spare money can be used to purchase new assets that may pay dividends in the future.

SCORPIO

You may expect the day to be as dull and mundane as those boring repeat telecasts of sitcoms. But remember, it's not always going to be grey! The dance of planets will usher in new change for a better tomorrow. Keep hoping and who knows you may stumble upon something very interesting, says Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS

The rewards of hard labour will be sweet, so start off by unwinding with some fun today. Ganesha sees quality time being spent with friends and family. All in all, a fun day.

CAPRICORN

Patience is tested when one is in trouble; your patience could be tried today. The trick is in keeping your composure, says Ganesha. Avoid getting into an argument or scuffle with those around you, as luck may not be on your side.

AQUARIUS

Things have become stagnant but it fails to frustrate your spirit. Slow and steady wins the race and it seems you have imbibed it very well. You will be able to seize opportunities coming your way and march ahead on your path. Financially, you will be on a stable ground, says Ganesha.

PISCES

The focus today will be on self-improvement. You may find yourself attending seminars or workshops. Self-employed people are likely to find lucrative deals landing in their laps in the afternoon. Quality time with your family in the evening will give you a sense of balance and of belonging, says Ganesha.



EMBARRASSED TO BE REGARDED AS SEX SYMBOL: KELLY BROOK

Former glamour model Kelly Brook says she never feels sexy as she is more of a goofy clown and is embarrassed to be regarded as a sex symbol. "I feel that is something that is projected on to me rather than how I actually feel about myself," Brook told *Closer* magazine.

JLO REDEFINES OOMPH AT 51, BARES IT ALL FOR NEXT SINGLE

Singer-actress Jennifer Lopez is slaying fans with oomph at 51. She has posed completely nude for the cover of her upcoming single, *In the morning*. She shared the cover art of the single on Instagram that shows her wearing only the engagement ring from fiancé Alex Rodriguez.



Idea of being imperfect can be scary: Sonali

Mumbai: Actress Sonali Kulkarni feels each one of us aspires to be loved, adding that the idea of being imperfect can be scary.

That is the emotion she wanted to explore in her tele play *White Lily And Night Rider*. "Each one of us aspires to love and be loved, but the idea of being imperfect or not good enough can be scary," Sonali said. "This is an emotion felt across ages and we invariably find comfort in a fantasy world of romance. *White Lily, Night Rider* personifies these very insecurities and emotions which makes it a timeless romance for the digital age," she added.

IAN S



Celebs remember 26/11 martyrs

Mumbai: Film celebrities Thursday remembered the horrors of the Mumbai terror attack of 2008 and paid a tribute to the martyrs who laid their lives trying to save the city.

Ten Pakistani terrorists of the terror outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba sneaked into Mumbai through the sea route November 26, 2008, and unleashed havoc in various parts of the city killing over 160 people.

Recalling the horror, superstar Akshay Kumar tweeted: "26/11, a day Mumbai's will never forget. We will forever be indebted to our bravehearts for their supreme sacrifice." Madhuri Dixit posted: "26/11 #MumbaiTerrorAttack. Remembering the heroes who gave up their lives for our safety on this day 12 years ago. Let's never forget their sacrifice."

Ranvir Shorey posted: "Never forget. Prayers for all who laid down and lost their lives on the day: #MumbaiTerrorAttack."

"Praying for peace and healing for every single life that was changed, lost, and altered.#MumbaiTerrorAttack," tweeted Shilpa Shetty. "There is an invisible yet unmistakable connection between every Mumbaikar who lived through 26/11 just as there will be the same between every citizen who will have lived through the pandemic. One has passed, the other will too. In memoriam. #MumbaiTerrorAttack," posted Rahul Bose.

IAN S

Home decor for a dreamy winterland!

FOR WARM AND COMFORTING NOOKS IN THE HOUSE, ONE MUST GO FOR DARK GREEN COLOUR FOR WALLS WHICH RADIATE VIBRANCY, ADVISES EXPERT PARUL MITTAL

Winters are truly magical as it brings along the joy of sipping a hot cup of tea, the ease of snuggling in your blanket and the charm of basking in the afternoon sunlight.

How about you prep-up your space based on your mood? Some like it to be warm, some vibrant and some look for the best of both worlds. This year beat the winter gloominess by tweaking your home decor and relish the cold season thoughtfully with these simple yet effective ideas, shared by Parul Mittal, Director, Greenlam Industries Ltd.

Embracing vibrant nooks
When the winters hit your mood can take a backseat due to the sombre skies outside. This is where a bright shade can instantly make your space feel upbeat and energetic.

For warm and comforting nooks in



your house, go for a dark green colour for walls which radiate vibrancy. While nooks are great spaces to enjoy various activities, it can also be just a pretty customised corner in your house.

The reading shenanigans!

The only thing better than curling up with a good book is having a perfect spot to be cosy in. This space has to feel like you and to make that happen, think about the things that make you feel happy; bring these elements into your

reading area. Start with placing a soft chair and plush throw pillow which is all you would require for seating arrangements. Ditch the bookshelves for ancient trunks or an ottoman to stack your novels. You can also re-create a coffee bar on a stool with a coffee machine and your favourite mug.

Sleep, work, binge-watch

With everyone working from home and with the onset of the winter season, our bedrooms have become a multi-purpose area. The bedroom provides a private sanctuary where you unwind, relax and get ready for the day ahead. Opt for a timeless monochrome palette of black and white which brings peace as well as warmth. You can use black as your luxe statement shade by incorporating it in your furniture like the bed, armless chair and a floor lamp.

AGENCIES

Excited, nervous, charged up for 'Chhorii'

Mumbai: Actress Nushratt Bharuccha has started shooting for the upcoming film *Chhorii* and says she is excited as well as nervous about the project.

Nushratt posted a string of pictures Thursday from the sets of the film's mahurat pooja on Instagram.

In one image, Nushratt is seen posing with the film's clapboard.

"Onto new beginnings, this time for #Chhori. Excited, nervous and charged up for this one! @furia_vishal cannot wait to create magic with you! Thank you @ivikramix and @abundantiaent, along with @crypttv and the sweetest @notjackdavis for having put this thrilling film together and trusting me with it!"

@shikhaarif.sharma Girl you get me, kahaan thi tu ab tak! Nushratt captioned the image. The actress started shooting for the film in Madhya Pradesh Wednesday, at Pipariya in Hoshangabad district. *Chhorii* is a horror film with a social message. It also stars Mita Vasisht, Rajesh Jais and Saurabh Goyal.

The film is directed by Vishal Furia, known for Marathi film *Lapachhapi*.

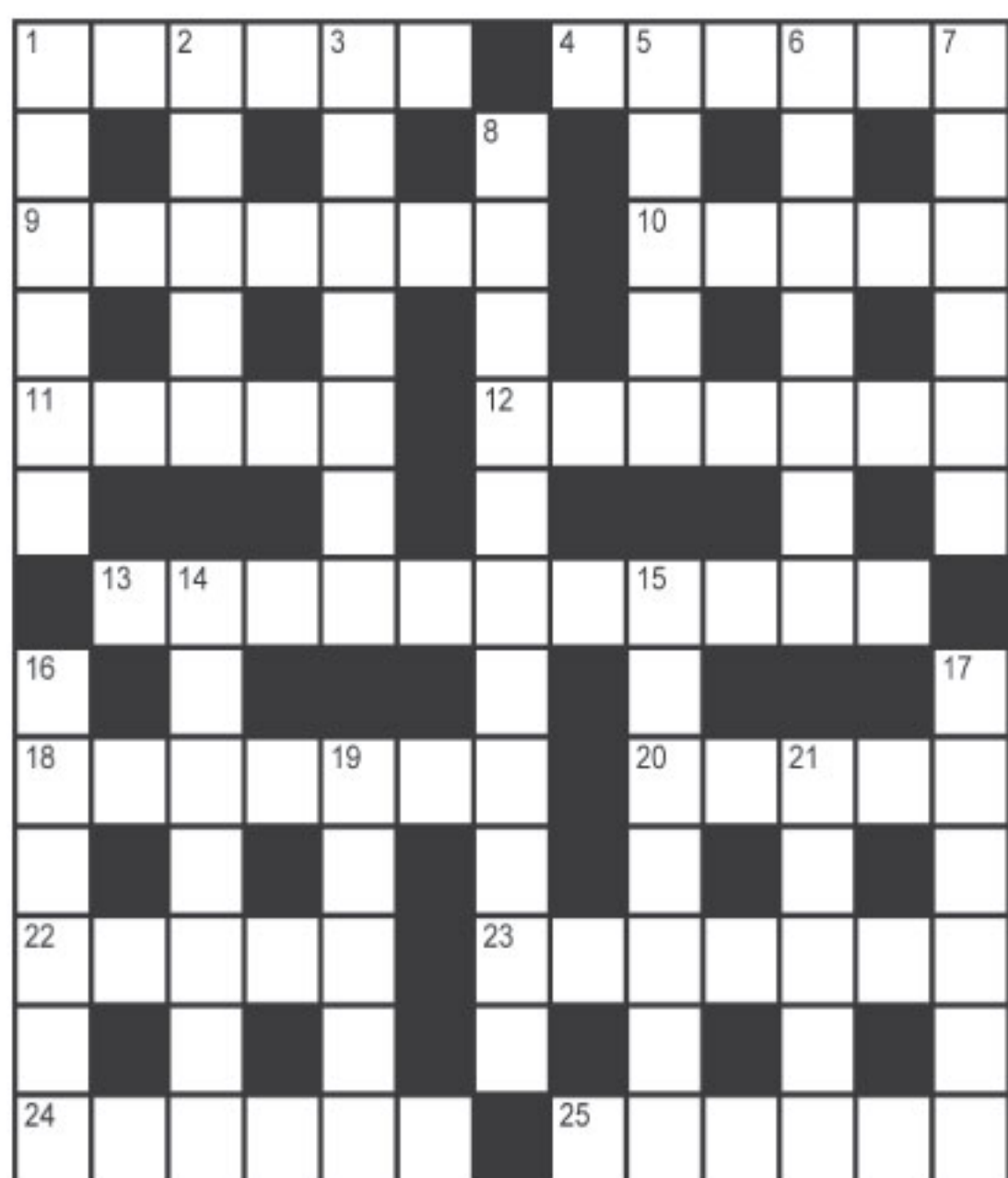
IAN S



Nushratt Bharuccha

FUN post

CROSSWORD



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Across

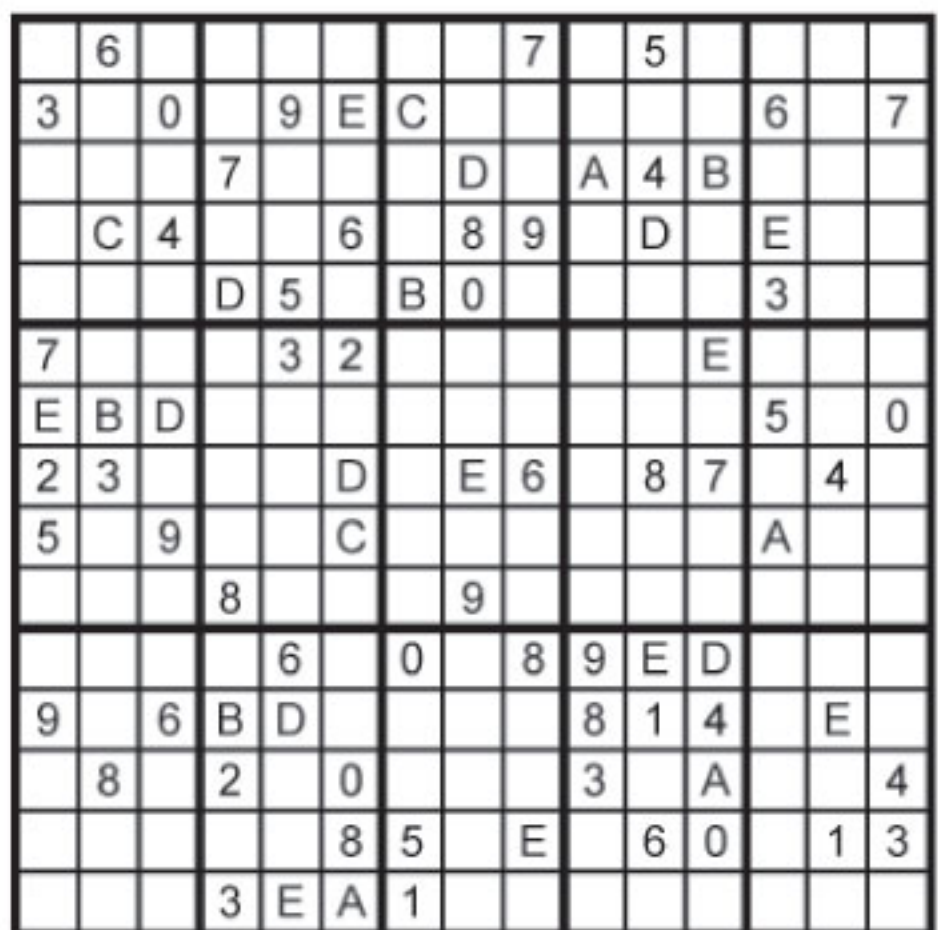
- 1 Coral reefs
- 4 Orbs
- 9 Unpredictable
- 10 Free-for-all
- 11 Bridal path
- 12 Sitting room
- 13 Debate sides (4,3,4)
- 18 Driveway type
- 20 Happen again

Down

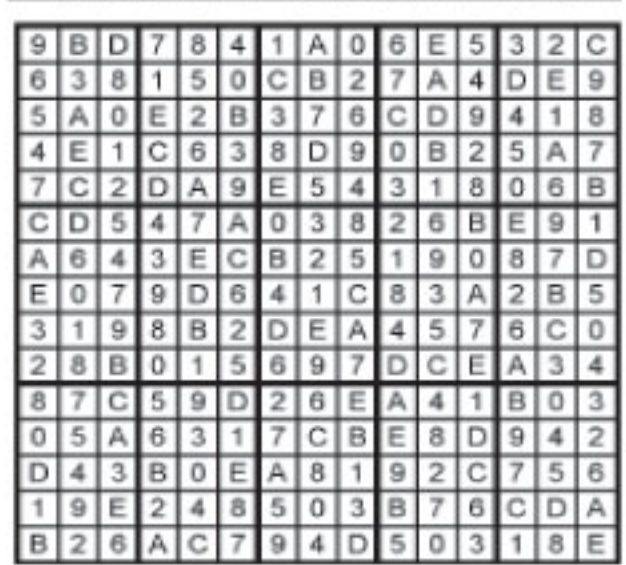
- 1 Combat zones
- 2 Cruel sorts
- 3 Missives
- 5 Large-eyed primate
- 22 Discover
- 23 Type of TV show
- 24 Royal home
- 25 Garment part
- 6 Party favour
- 7 Clippers
- 8 A jab well done?
- 14 Echoes
- 15 Cut short
- 16 Pungent seasoner
- 17 Sock pattern
- 19 Invalidate
- 21 Doorbell sound

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

NAVEEN TO GADKARI

‘Complete bridge over Kanupur project’

INORDINATE DELAY IN CONSTRUCTION OF THE BRIDGE OVER THE SPILL CHANNEL OF RIMULI-ROXY-RAJAMUNDA SECTION OF NH-215 (NEW NH-520) RESULTED IN SEVERE COST ESCALATION OF THE PROJECT

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 26: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik urged Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari to take steps for early completion of the bridge over the spill channel of Kanupur irrigation project in Keonjhar district.

He recently wrote a letter to Gadkari in this regard. A month ago, State Water Resources secretary wrote a similar letter to National Highways Authority of India (NHAI). However, the NHAI officials are yet to take any step for this purpose.

The state government has undertaken construction of Kanupur irrigation project over river Baitarani in Keonjhar which will create an irrigation potential of 29,578 hectares in the tribal dominated Keonjhar district.

The project is being funded by Central assistance under Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Program (AIBP). The construction works for the project has been started since 2004-05,



FILE PHOTO OF THE PROJECT

and is yet to be completed because of various problems, Naveen said in his letter.

The state government has completed major headwork components except the earth dam in the river gap and five blocks of the spillway. These left-over components are suspended temporarily because a 315-meters-long 4-lane bridge is to be constructed over the spill channel of Rimuli-Roxy-Rajamunda Section of NH215 (New NH 520) by NHAI.

The bridge remains a major bottleneck in completion of the balance

components.

As NHAI did not take up the work on its own after several meetings and correspondence at different levels, construction of the bridge came under the purview of Kanupur Project Authority after obtaining the consent of NHAI.

Accordingly, the project authority started the work for the tendered cost of ₹40.68 crore out of which NHAI agreed to bear 80 per cent.

However, later on, the cost of the bridge was revised to ₹100.53 crore due to change in its design because

Funded under the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Program (AIBP) of the Centre, Kanupur irrigation project is aimed at creating an irrigation potential of 29,578 hectare in Keonjhar

of underground geological conditions; and this matter was brought to the knowledge of NHAI. As NHAI didn't agree to bear their share of 80 per cent of the revised cost, the work was stopped.

In order to resolve the issue, the then state Water Resources secretary held a meeting with the NHAI chairman in March, 2019 at New Delhi. The secretary stated in the meeting that since NHAI remained firm in bearing 80 per cent of the initial cost of ₹40.68 crore and nothing beyond that amount was acceptable to the NHAI, the work un-

dertaken by state government was terminated.

The then secretary requested the NHAI chairman to take up the work at their level and assured that state government is ready to bear the committed 20 per cent of the original design cost of ₹40.68 crore.

After the meeting, the bridge work was stopped since August 2019. Even though more than one year has elapsed, the NHAI neither started the work nor communicated about the plan, programme and implementation of the bridge despite several correspondences.

Since the government is taking all out steps for the early completion of the project and is committed for the economic upliftment of the tribal community by providing irrigation to the agricultural fields, completion of the bridge carries a lot of importance.

Naveen requested Gadkari to intervene in the matter in providing an early solution to the issue. Any delay would lead to further cost escalation of the project and loss of benefit it is intended for, he added.

State's Covid-19 toll breaches 1,700-mark

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Nov 26: State's Covid-19 tally rose to 3,16,645 Thursday as 644 more people tested positive for the infection, while 17 more patients succumbed to the infection, pushing Odisha's coronavirus death toll to 1,704, a senior Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department official said.

Five fresh fatalities were reported in Sundargarh, four in Puri, three in Khurda, two in Angul and one each in Dhenkanal, Kalahandi and Mayurbhanj districts, added the official. Khurda district, under which Bhubaneswar falls, has so far reported the highest number of coronavirus fatalities at 286, followed by Ganjam (240), Sundargarh (141), Cuttack (134) and Puri (100),

FRESH DEVELOPMENTS

Cuttack reported the highest number of new cases at 64, followed by Sundargarh (62) and Angul (50)

Five fresh fatalities were reported in Sundargarh, four in Puri, three in Khurda, two in Angul and one each in Dhenkanal, Kalahandi and Mayurbhanj

Odisha has so far tested over 57.32 lakh samples for Covid-19, including 46,730 Wednesday



As many as 369 new cases were reported in quarantine centres, while 275 infections were detected during contact tracing.

Cuttack district reported the highest number of new cases at 64, followed by Sundargarh (62) and Angul (50), said the official.

The H&FW department official said. As many as 53 coronavirus patients have died due to comorbidities.

Odisha has so far tested over 57.32 lakh samples for Covid-19, including 46,730 Wednesday, the official said, adding that the state's positivity rate stands at 5.52 per cent.

FESTIVAL TRAIN SERVICES TO GO ON TILL YEAR END

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 26: East Coast Railway extended the running of festival trains originating from its jurisdiction up to the last week of December. Currently, 20 pairs of festival trains are being run under ECoR jurisdiction.

The trains are Bhubaneswar-Anand Vihar-Bhubaneswar-Bi-weekly Special, Bhubaneswar-Lokamanya Tilak Terminus (LTT)-Bhubaneswar-Bi-weekly Special, Bhubaneswar-Tirupati-Bhubaneswar weekly Special, Bhubaneswar-Chennai-Bhubaneswar weekly Special, Bhubaneswar-Bangalore Cant-Bhubaneswar weekly Special, Bhubaneswar-Puduchery-



Bhubaneswar weekly Special, Bhubaneswar-Rameswaram-Bhubaneswar weekly Special, Sambalpur-Howrah-Sambalpur weekly Special, Sambalpur-Manduadih-Sambalpur-Bi-weekly Special and Puri-Patna-Puri Special.

Others include Puri-Jayanagar-Puri Special, Puri-Surat-Puri Special, Puri-Lokamanya Tilak Terminus (LTT)-Puri weekly Special, Puri-Chennai-Puri Special, Visakhapatnam-Nizamuddin-Visakhapatnam-Bi-weekly Special, Visakhapatnam-Nizamuddin-Visakhapatnam Special, Visakhapatnam-Chennai-Visakhapatnam Special, Visakhapatnam-LTT-Visakhapatnam Special, Visakhapatnam-Gandhidham-Visakhapatnam Special, Visakhapatnam-Cuddapa-Visakhapatnam Daily Special.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I, Sudam Nayak, Vill-Rajib Nagar, P.O./P.S.-Balugaon, Khurda, Odisha declare that my original Land Registration paper - 36/9/I/1998 Dt.05.03.2018 lost in Balugaon Market and I didn't get any Loan from Bank with this land paper. Mob.: 7377196618.

PG admissions to begin Dec 9

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 26: The Higher Education department, Thursday issued standard operating procedures (SOPs) and dateline for admissions to Post Graduate (PG) courses to ensure smooth admissions at various universities and colleges.

The state-level provisional merit list was published November 21, 2020. As per the guidelines, university/college wise first selection list will be published December 5. The reporting, document verification and admission of students at universities and colleges will start December 9 and continue till December 11, 2020.

The updation of the list of students selected by institutions in first selection will be made online December 12.

The second selection list will be published December 17 and its admission process will held from December 18 to 20.

In a first, a Common PG Admission Entrance Test (CPET) was held October 12-20 at 26 centres for admissions to 70 state universities and colleges.

About 62,190 students appeared in the exam for admissions to 83 PG subjects in 70 state-run universities and colleges.

Analysis of CPET exam results (toppers only) shows girls topping in approximately 64 per cent of PG subjects and boys topping in 36 per cent subjects.

Khusi Agrawal (Statistics) became the topper 91.29 per cent score while Ipsita Mohapatra (Geology) secured the second position with 89.97 per cent.

Fake ghee unit busted in Cuttack

CUTTACK: Police claimed to have busted a fake ghee manufacturing unit operating clandestinely at Gabagasta under Sadar police limits here Wednesday night. Acting on a lead from a similar case, a police team conducted raids at the unit and seized a huge quantity of fake ghee, edible oil and machines worth lakhs of rupees. Pouches bearing logos of branded companies were also seized. Police have detained the unit's owner for interrogation, sources said.

FOCUS ON MENTAL HEALTH

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 26: The Rural Outreach Programme in association with Utkal Entrepreneurship and Career Hub (UECH) of Utkal University organised an online workshop on Impact of the pandemic on psycho-social well-being of students here Thursday.

It is a first in the series of workshops on Mental Health that has been planned. Bhaswati Patnaik, HoD, Department was the expert resource person of the webinar where she shared her insights explaining various aspects of mental health issues that have arisen as a result

of the pandemic. This is a first of a kind workshop that the varsity has initiated focusing on the students of its rural campus.

The world is facing the biggest calamity of this century and it has created a road that's not easy for anyone to travel. It is a trying time especially for students with educational institutions remaining shut for more than eight months and with no clarity on reopening.

They also had to suddenly cope up with the new form of online classes. With an aim to help students combat issues related to mental health, the Rural Outreach programme, set up under RUSA 2.0 who is actively

working in the Chandikhol campus, organised this workshop.

Bhaswati Patnaik covered various aspects of mental health in the workshop. She also talked about "Right to Life with dignity" and it is a very important part of mental health as today marks the 71st Constitution Day of India.

Students and faculties of the rural campus actively participated in this workshop. J Dandpat, OSD, New Campus delivered opening remarks and Sonali Mohapatra, Program Manager, Rural Outreach Programme, Utkal University moderated the sessions.



Health and Family Welfare Minister Naba Kishore Das inaugurates the MRI department at Capital Hospital in Bhubaneswar, Thursday. DMET CBK Mohanty, Bhubaneswar MLAs—Ananta Nayayan Jena (Central) and Susant Kumar Rout (North), and Science and Technology Minister Ashok Chandra Panda were present on the occasion. (Inset) Newly-inaugurated MRI machine at the department

BOOST TO HEALTHCARE



OP PHOTOS

9 places record below 15° C

BHUBANESWAR: Cold wave condition continued to prevail in many parts of the state, Thursday, with mercury falling down to below 15 degrees Celsius at nine places. Light to moderate rain was also reported from a few places including the Capital city. According to a weather bulletin issued by India Meteorological Department (IMD), lowest minimum temperature of 10 degrees Celsius was recorded at Daringbadi while it was 12.6 degrees at Sonepur. Angul and Phulbani towns have recorded a minimum night temperature of 14 degrees Celsius each whereas the temperature at Talcher and Jharsuguda was 14.3 and 14.4 degrees Celsius, respectively.

Closure of 275 illegal stone crushing units to go ahead in Jajpur district

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar/Jajpur, Nov 26: The state government has ordered sealing of 275 illegal stone crushing units in Jajpur to bring to a halt the process of illegal mining of minor minerals, official sources said Thursday.

The action was taken against the stone crushing units for illegal exploration and smuggling of minor minerals and loss of cores of rupees to the state exchequer, said an official.

District Collector Chakravarti

Singh Rathore has constituted a team of officials from the police, tehsil and forest and other departments which will shut the stone crushing units within 15 days and stop the illegal excavation and transportation, primarily black-stone, sources said.

The Collector has also asked the district superintendent of police to provide sufficient force for the operation and also keep a strict vigil on resurfacing of new illegal stone crushers and close those outside the listed 275 illegal crushers which are ordered to be shut.

Activists pledge to protect free speech, personal liberty

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 26: On the occasion of Constitution Day, various human right activists and members of People Collective joined together and stood in protest to save the constitution and to protect the freedom of speech and personal liberty here Thursday. They also supported the nationwide strike by the farmers against the anti-labour and anti-farmer laws.

An activist Narendra Mohanty said that both the state and central government had passed the laws against the farmers and labourers during the difficult times of coronavirus pandemic. "The govern-

ment should immediately withdraw anti-labour and anti-farmer laws," he said.

"We also criticise the government's repression on dissent voices and demands release of all activists, political prisoners who have been arrested on false and fabricated cases because they raise their voices," he added.

Some of those victims are Stan Swami, Surendra Gadling, Sudhir Dhawale, Rona Wilson, Shoma Sen, Mahesh Raj, Varavara Rao, Sudha Bharadwaj, Arun Ferreira, Gautam Navlakha, Vernon Gonsalves, Anand Teltumbde, Hany Babu, Jyoti Raghoba Jagtap, Sagar Tatyaram Gorkhe and Ramesh Murlidhar

Gaichor among others.

The government must recognise the rights of tribal and forest dwellers and stop destruction of natural resources in the name of development, said another activist Prafulla Samantara.

IIT-Bhub observes 'Samvidhan Divas'
Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bhubaneswar celebrated the "Constitution Day" also known as "Samvidhan Divas" to commemorate the adoption of Constitution of India as per the directives of the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India.

The reading of the preamble by President Ram Nath Kovind along with the live telecast from the All



India Presiding Officers at Kevadia, Gujarat via video conferencing mode took place at the scheduled time in front of the gathering consisting of faculty, officers and staff

of the Institute. Speaking on the occasion, R V Raja Kumar, Director, IIT Bhubaneswar, said, "On this day, back in 1949, the Constituent

Assembly of India formally adopted the Constitution of India, which came into effect on 26th Jan, 1950. Our Constitution guards the rights and dignity of every citizen which has been ensured owing to the far-sightedness of its architects."

"The day is celebrated to value and preserve the rich heritage of composite culture for developing the scientific temper; humanism to promote harmony, reforms with the right spirit of common brotherhood amongst all countrymen. It is also a mark of tribute to Bhim Rao Ambedkar, the first Law minister of India, who played a pivotal role in the framing of the Indian Constitution," he added.

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Supply of Vitamin-C-laced rice in Malkangiri from Feb

MACHINES BEING INSTALLED AT 26 RICE MILLS TO ADMIX VITAMIN-C IN RICE



POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Nov 26: The government has initiated a measure to completely eradicate malnutrition in Malkangiri district. As part of this effort, people will be provided with rice laced with Vitamin-C content. Reports said, 5 lakh tonnes of rice are annually supplied to consumers and beneficiaries under the public distribution system (PDS) in the district. It is said that scores of people and children are found to be malnourished as the rice they eat does not have much nutritional values. In view of this, the state gov-

ernment has signed an agreement with a New Delhi-based company which will mix Vitamin C and calcium in the rice. Special machines are required to make the rice nutrient. The civil supplies department had placed an order for these machines for owners of 23 old and 3 new rice mills in the district. A company-based in Mumbai has supplied such machines, valued at Rs 10 lakh. New machines have been installed at many rice mills while installation work at other mills is underway. Meanwhile, joint director of the state civil supplies department

Annually, 5 lakh tonnes of rice are supplied to consumers and beneficiaries under the public distribution system (PDS) in Malkangiri. It is said that scores of people and children are found to be malnourished as the rice they eat does not have much nutritional values

The civil supplies department had placed an order for special machines for owners of 23 old and 3 new rice mills in the district. A company-based in Mumbai has supplied such machines

Ganesh Chandra Pani is camping in Malkangiri and inspecting the installation of machines at rice mills. The joint secretary has made it clear that millers who will not install these special machines will not be given rice for custom-milling. Paddy procurement centres will open in the district November 30. The civil supplies department will supply paddy to rice millers. The millers will lace vitamin C with the rice which will be disbursed to consumers through the PDS from February. However, various quarters have wondered if the Vitamin-C laced rice will help get rid of malnutrition in the district.

Maoist killed in encounter with jawans in Malkangiri

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Nov 26: A Maoist leader was gunned down in an exchange of fire with security personnel inside a forest in Malkangiri district Thursday, a senior police official said. There are no reports of casualty or injury to police personnel during the firing. Sources said, acting on a tip-off about the presence of Maoists in the Jantri forest under Swabhimana Anchal of the district Thursday morning, security personnel launched a search operation in the forest. On being informed about the coming of security personnel, the Maoists opened fire at them. Following which a gun battle between security personnel and the

Maoists took place. As a result of which the leader of the Maoist group was shot dead. Another Maoist has been injured in the operation, said Odisha Director General of Police (DGP) Abhay. On the other hand, the other Maoists successfully escaped from the spot. DGP also said that the cache of arms and explosives including AK-47 rifles was recovered from the hideout. There were plans of bigger attacks by the ultras. DGP tweeted that "There was an exchange of fire between security forces and Maoists today in Swabhimana Anchal. The body of a Maoist with AK 47 has been recovered and the injured Maoist is being evacuated.

Villagers bid tearful adieu to Kalia

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kandhamal, Nov 26: A pall of gloom descended over Milipada village in Kandhamal district Thursday afternoon when the conjoined twin Kalia was cremated following his death last night at Cuttack SCB Medical College and Hospital. "When the twins were born, we were mentally prepared to bear the loss of one. However, after being treated at AIIMS, they were shifted to Cuttack hospital and were undergoing treatment there for last two years. A ray of hope came our way and we expected that things will be alright in future," Jaga-Kalia's grandfather Tula Kanhar lamented. Jaga is now in good condition, expressed the old man.

Man arrested for circulating obscene video of woman

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dharmasala, Nov 26: Police arrested a man on charge of circulating an obscene video of a married woman under this police limits in Jajpur district. The accused was identified as Prashant Kumar Roul of Bhuban village. Reports said, Roul had sent the objectionable video of the woman to one of his neighbours, a betel shop owner and four others which later went viral. The victim lodged a complaint in Dharmasala police station after she came to know about the matter. Local residents have strongly condemned the incident and demanded stern action against the accused. Based on the complaint, police arrested Roul and produced him in court. However, the court rejected his bail plea and remanded him to judicial custody.



The driver of a truck stuck in logjam is preparing food. Owing to Bharat bandh by trade unions, heavy vehicles were stranded on different routes in Sambalpur, Thursday.

Dhenkanal's 'Ideal Town' status turns a misnomer

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkanal, Nov 26: Bestowed with greenery and natural beauties, Dhenkanal town is often dubbed as the 'Ideal Town'. But as you enter the town's limits, you will soon realise that the status is a misnomer. The Dhenkanal municipality is spending crores of rupees to improve sanitation and to add beauty to the town. But the ground reality speaks a different story. As you enter the town, you will be greeted with piles of waste lying everywhere including in front of temples and government offices. There are 'Swachh Sathis' to clean the town. Similarly, 20 battery-operated vehicles are engaged to collect garbage from every ward. These apart, there are municipality staff to collect waste making door to door visits. On an average, the municipality is spending Rs 1 lakh for each ward. In spite of all these arrangements, garbage heaps are sure to be seen at different locations lying uncollected for days. Lalit Nagar in ward no-3 is inhabited by municipality employ-



ees and they too are experiencing this problem. They have taken up the matter with officials on several occasions but to no avail. Peep into ward no-23, there are plastic dustbins with covers here. But these bins can always be seen overflowing, making the areas insalubrious. Local residents allege that the bins are not emptied for days. Even if they inform the vehicles engaged for shifting the garbage, they hardly turn up. At the same time the civic body authorities claim that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they are taking utmost care to ameliorate the sanitation system in the town. The

dweller are being made aware of hazardous effects of piling up of garbage through public address system. All these things are nothing but eye wash, local residents alleged. When contacted, executive officer, Dhenkanal municipality Atanu Kumar Samant parried the question as to why garbage is not being shifted for days, saying he would look into the allegation.

Mentally-retarded man sets his house ablaze in Angul

POST NEWS NETWORK

Angul, Nov 26: In a bizarre incident, a mentally retarded man belonging to Rangamatia village under Chendipada police limits in Angul district set his house ablaze Thursday morning. Later, he also attempted suicide by slitting his own throat with a sharp weapon. According to Chendipada police sources, the incident occurred early in the morning. The man identified as Khakan Behera became outrageous. Behera stays alone and it could be due to his mental instability that he took such a drastic step, the police sources expressed. The local fire brigade team immediately rushed to the spot and doused the flame. On the other hand, Behera was admitted to Chhendipada CHC. His condition is stated to be out of danger. Police registered a case in this connection.

Basil leaves, flowers sent for Nagarjuna Besha

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sonepur, Nov 26: Even as the state government and Srimandir authorities are leaving no stone unturned for the success of 'Nagarjun' attire of the Trinity scheduled for Friday, residents here displayed equal enthusiasm and devotion and sent a consignment of holy basil (Tulsi) leaves and flowers for their use in the ritual, Thursday. The matter came to the fore after a truck (named as a Rath) carrying holy basil (Tulsi) leaves and

flowers left for Puri, Thursday. Tulsi, lotus and marigold packed in 16 baskets have been contributed by the devotees residing in Subarnapur and neighbouring districts. Hundreds of people contributed basil leaves and flowers amid chant of Haribol and ululations as the vehicle left from the Jagannath temple in Binka. The basil leaves and flowers will be prepared as garlands to deck up the deities during their 'Nagarjuna' attire which is being held after a gap



of 25 years. Mahant Banshidhar Das Maharaj, the head of Ramjee mut in Puri will offer these basil leaves and flowers to the Trinity.

In Subarnapur, the Trinity was in hiding during the attack on Puri temple. The area then came to be known as 'Patali Srikheta' as the royal of erstwhile Subarnapur used to send green grams, ghee and Basmati rice on boats in the Mahanadi river for Sunabhog rituals of the Trinity. Organiser Chandrasekhar Ota said the practice has stopped for a long time. However, people have decided to send the holy basil leaves and flowers for the Trinity.

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, KHORDHA

A/T.P.O./Dist. - Khordha

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E-Mail- khurda_municipality@yahoo.co.in

"e" Procurement Notice

No. 3500/Date.24.11.2020

No. C-232:- Bid Documents consisting of Work, Estimated Cost, Cost of Tender Paper, EMD, time of completion, Class of Contractors and the set of terms and conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in Govt. website i.e. www.tendersorissa.gov.in

1. Tender Reference No. : KMPLY/05/2020-21

2. Name of the Work : Civil Construction works as mentioned in website

3. No. of works : 5 Nos.

4. Estimated Cost : Rs.1.78 lakhs to Rs.17.85 lakhs

5. Period of Completion : 3 Months

6. Date & Time of Bidding : 26/11/2020 at 11.00 AM

7. Last date & time for receipt of bids in the portal : 7/12/2020 at 5.00 PM

8. Bids received online shall be opened on : 10/12/2020 at 11.00 AM

9. Name and address of the Officer inviting Bid : Executive Officer, Khordha Municipality

Further details can be seen from the procurement portal i.e. www.tendersorissa.gov.in

Sd./- Executive Officer, Khordha Municipality

OIPR-13082/11/0007/2021

Diamond mine buried in Hirakud reservoir

DECADES AGO, PEOPLE OF JHARA COMMUNITY USED TO SCOUT FOR GEMS AND DIAMOND STONES AT THE CONFLUENCE OF THE MAHANADI AND IB RIVERS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, Nov 26: Even as Hirakud dam is the longest in Asia, this place has another identity. Earlier it was known for its huge deposits of diamond and gem stones. People used to scout for diamond stones at this very place. That's why the place was named as Hira (diamond) kud (an islet/mound). It is learnt that an island spreading over 829.32 acres was in the riverbed of Mahandi, about 10 km to the north of Sambalpur town. The island was at the confluence of Mahanadi and Ib rivers. In summer and winter, water used to gather at the place. People of Jhara community living around the place used to scout and collect nuggets of gems and diamond stones. People used to say that diamond stones were being carried by water of the Ib river and getting deposited at the place. People of Jhara community par-



TREASURE ISLAND LOST

An island spreading over 829.32 acres was in the riverbed of Mahandi, about 10 km to the north of Sambalpur town. The island was at the confluence of Mahanadi and Ib rivers

According to historical records, King Abhay Singh had got 16.5 carat of diamond in March 1766. The king had sent his staff Sardar Khan with the diamond to British officer Lord Clive in Kolkata. Lord Clive was keen on diamond trade and sent his officer Thomas Motto to Sambalpur

In 1809, the Marahattas had plundered a big piece of diamond with 210.6 carat from tribal collectors. In 1806, someone named Rafsiz had got two low quality diamond pieces for Rs 250. In 1818, a diamond of 84 grains, another two pieces of diamond of 288 and 308 grains from Sambalpur queen were sent to the British government through an agent. Queen Ratnakumari had sold some diamonds weighing 22 masa for only Rs 52,000, the price much less than its true value. In 1859, the British took over Sambalpur administration. At that time, some royal ornaments and valuables embedded with two big diamonds had been sent to the British treasury. In 1856, the diamond mine of

Hirakud was put under hammers. Saraswat Behera and Panu Behera, two locals, had taken the diamond mine on lease. As they failed to pay the installments of lease money the British leased out the mine to Diwan Bahadur in May of that year. In fact, Jhara people were permitted by the king to collect diamond. The British cancelled their permission to collect diamonds. The Jhara people did not cooperate with diamond collection, resulting in the loss for the lease holder. Historian Deepak Kumar Panda said confluence of the Mahandi and Ib rivers has submerged the Hirakud reservoir. Along with it, the history of diamond collection at the place had taken a burial. Panda observed that the state government should pay importance on diamond collection. Between 1858 and 1945, a high level meeting was held regarding the construction of the Hirakud dam. On March 15, 1946, the then Governor of Odisha William Harthorn Lewis laid the foundation stone for the Hirakud dam. On the foundation-laying ceremony, kings of Dhenkanal, Athamallik and Paralakhemundi princely states were present. With the construction of the dam, many temples and villagers were submerged in the reservoir. Historical remains and their testimonies have got their burial in the deep waters of Hirakud dam which plays host to thousands of foreign birds in December every year.

OFFICE OF THE PANCHAYAT SAMITI, G.UDAYAGIRI

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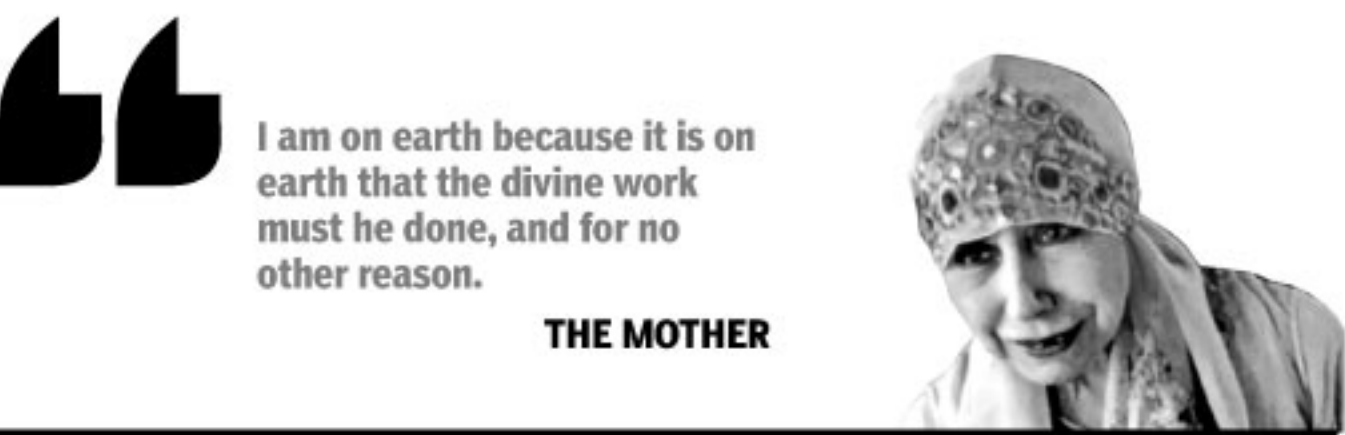
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TENDER CALL NOTICE

Sealed tenders are invited from intended from the different classes of registered State Governments and Contractors of equivalent grades/class registered with Central Government/ MES/Railways, to be eventually drawn up in PWD P-1 Agreement form, for execution of Buildings i.e. civil works. For execution of 2 (Two) numbers of work such as CONSTRUCTION OF CONFERENCE HALL AND NEW PANCHAYAT SAMITI OFFICE BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION OF B.D.O. QUARTER AT, G.UDAYAGIRI BLOCK. Under Panchayat Samiti G. Udayagiri, Kandhamal District. The detailed terms and conditions of tender call notice can be obtained from official website of Kandhamal District, <http://kandhamal.nic.in> and Panchayat Samiti Office from 27.11.2020 and 11 A.M. to 14.12.2020, upto 5 P.M. The bids shall be received through Registered Post/Speed Post only with AD, on or before Dt.14.12.2020 upto 5.00 P.M. The authority will not be held responsible for any Postal delay in delivering of the bid documents or non-receipt of the same.

The authority receives the right to reject any or all the tender without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd./-
Block Development Officer
G. Udayagiri



I am on earth because it is on earth that the divine work must be done, and for no other reason.
THE MOTHER

Vaccine rally

Mankind has been eagerly waiting for a sure-shot cure from Covid-19. The disease has claimed over 14 lakh lives and affected more than 60 million people around the world. Many countries are working on vaccines and, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO), there are 170 vaccine candidates at various stages of development now and out of those eight are at final stages. Till a robust cure for the virus is found, any vaccine that can prevent the deadly virus from entering our bodies is welcome. In this context, the claims by various pharma majors such as Pfizer, BioNTech, Moderna, AstraZeneca and Sputnik that their formulations can be effective between 90 per cent and 95 per cent are heartwarming. Countries like the US, the UK, Russia and China have made rapid strides in vaccine development and this has piled up pressure on India – home to nearly 10 million infections and a toll of 1.40 lakh – to find its own vaccine against the virus. The assertion earlier this week by Adar Poonawala, CEO of Serum Institute of India (SII)—the world’s largest vaccine manufacturer, that his firm can produce 100 million doses of Covishield – a vaccine that can provide 90 per cent protection against Covid-19 – has delighted the people of the country. And rightly so. Unlike its peers in the US, the UK and some other countries whose vaccines will benefit their own countrymen first, the made-in-India Covishield will be suitable for Indian climate. It does not need minus 70 degree Celsius to minus 80 degree Celsius temperature for its storage. The news has enthused stock markets and the market rally has been held up by back-to-back breakthroughs. Indian stock markets have been reaching new peaks every succeeding day. Equity indices resumed their rally Thursday after a day’s breather amid largely positive cues from global markets. After a volatile session, the 30-share BSE Sensex ended 431.64 points or 0.98 per cent higher at 44,259.74. Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty surged 128.60 points or 1 per cent to 12,987. In an inverse momentum, gold, a safe haven to park cash at times of uncertainty, is beginning to slump over last few days. However, the news about vaccines has come amidst resurgence in the Covid-19 cases in Delhi even as states like Maharashtra have clamped prohibitory orders to ensure compliance with precautionary measures. Maharashtra Monday made RT-PCR negative report mandatory for every incoming visitor to the state. Many more states are expected to follow suit. This is going to be an effective step in stemming the reach of the disease. The mandatory negative report will catapult the number of daily tests in the country as people will have no option but to carry a test report on person when visiting these states. A fast-paced testing is an effective way of preventing the fast spread of the virus. The prospect of an early release of vaccines, even though not cent percent effective, can go a long way in putting the wheels of the economy back on rails. At the least, people can now expect that we can have half a dozen vaccines up and running by the end of the second quarter of the next fiscal. Airlines, hotels and aeroplane makers — three industries ravaged by the pandemic-induced collapse — are most likely to find tailwinds going forward. Public transportation, live entertainment and restaurant dining businesses will also find an upturn. From here on market rally will depend on every development on the vaccine front. Vaccine makers are yet to clear various challenges. Given the complexities involved in vaccine development and the humongous logistical challenges, we may have to wait for a shot for at least one more year. Till then, there won’t be any real recovery in the economy.

WISDOM CORNER

- Smart people learn from everything and everyone, average people from their experiences, stupid people already have all the answers. **SOCRATES**
- Do what you feel in your heart to be right – for you’ll be criticized anyway. **ELEANOR ROOSEVELT**
- Happiness is not something readymade. It comes from your own actions. **DALAI LAMA XIV**

WORDSWORTH

■ Bespoke

It’s widely used in Britain and some Commonwealth countries and isn’t entirely unknown even in the USA. I’m told, though its range is restricted to areas like high-end clothing and computer software, sometimes with a hint of Anglophile pretentiousness. Something that is bespoke has been specially ordered and made. It can apply to any goods – a quick look through newspapers in August 2008 found it attached to jewellery, cars, beer, banking services, specially recorded music in films, guided tours, wedding cakes and furniture (“The kitchen/breakfast room is equipped with a good range of matching bespoke units with soft close drawers” – The Herald Express, Torquay, 19 August 2008). However, this wide range of applications is relatively new. In the past it has mainly referred to clothes and is still a term of art in tailoring. It’s the opposite of off-the-peg, off-the-rack or ready-made. (from the Guardian, 10 February 2008: “If I were a man, I’d happily remortgage myself senseless to wear bespoke.”) British readers with long memories may recall a play and film of 1955, The Bespoke Overcoat, starring Alfie Bass and David Kossoff, based on a short story by Gogol. London’s Savile Row tailors have traditionally restricted the word to clothes individually patterned that have been cut and sewn by hand. However, in a rare example of language change by fiat, the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) rejected this meaning in an adjudication in June 2008. It ruled that the historic term of art had moved on and it was legitimate for a tailor offering clothes cut and sewn by machine to refer to them as bespoke, provided that they were made to the customer’s measurements. In effect the ASA removed the historic difference in tailoring between bespoke and made-to-measure. Bespoke looks rather strange, because it’s an adjective formed from the past tense of the verb bespeak. Though rare, that verb is still in the language, though these days it means “suggest the presence of or be evidence of” (as in the Roanoke Times, Virginia, for 22 March 2008: “Their utterly convincing performances bespeak deep familiarity with their characters.”) Bespeak can be traced right back to Old English, before the Norman Conquest. It meant not merely to speak, but to speak up or speak out, exclaim or call out. Later it had a sense of discussing or deciding on some matter; by the end of the sixteenth century it had come to mean arranging for something to be done, engaging a person to do a job, or ordering goods. The adjective bespoke came out of that sense in the middle of the eighteenth century. It is often said that the word originally referred to cloth in a tailor’s shop that had been spoken for, that is, it had been reserved for a particular customer and so was unavailable to anybody else. The historical evidence shows this is not the case; it is a well-meaning but incorrect attempt to come to grips with this old sense of the verb bespeak.

LOL Divorced Barbie

Ralph is driving home one evening, when he suddenly realizes that it’s his daughter’s birthday and he hasn’t bought her a present. He drives to the mall, runs to the toy store, and says to the shop assistant, “How much is that Barbie in the window?” In a condescending manner, she says, “Which Barbie?” She continues, “We have Barbie Goes to the Gym for \$19.95, Barbie Goes to the Ball for



\$19.95, Barbie Goes Shopping for \$19.95, Barbie Goes to the Beach for \$19.95, and Divorced Barbie for \$265.00.” Ralph asks, “Why is the Divorced Barbie \$265.00 when all the others are only \$19.95?” “That’s obvious,” the saleslady says. “Divorced Barbie comes with Ken’s house, Ken’s car, Ken’s boat, Ken’s furniture...”



Brahma Chellaney

FOR ISLAMISTS, BEHEADINGS ARE A POTENT WEAPON OF ASYMMETRIC WARFARE. THE GRUESOME SPECTACLE INSPIRES JIHADI SYMPATHIZERS AROUND THE WORLD, WHILE FOMENTING FEAR IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Last month, an 18-year-old Chechen immigrant stalked, stabbed, and decapitated a history teacher, Samuel Paty, in a Paris suburb near the middle school where Paty worked. Soon after, a Quran-carrying Tunisian man beheaded a woman and fatally stabbed two other people in a church in Nice. In the same month, two British-born Islamic State (ISIS) militants were brought to the United States to face trial for their participation in a brutal abduction scheme in Syria that ended with American and other hostages beheaded on camera.

In a world wracked by violence, such killings stand out for their savagery. While the absolute number of victims is relatively small, the threat this practice poses to fundamental principles of modern civilization should not be underestimated.

The ancient Greeks and Romans instituted beheading as a mode of capital punishment. Today, radical Islamists commonly employ it in extrajudicial executions, which have been reported in a wide range of countries, including Egypt, India, the Philippines, and Nigeria. In Mozambique, up to 50 people, including women and children, have reportedly been murdered – and, in many cases, decapitated – by ISIS-linked fighters this month alone.

Such savagery casts a long shadow – especially because perpetrators so often share images of their actions. Ever since the 2002 decapitation of Wall Street Journal journalist Daniel Pearl in Pakistan, terrorist organizations have taken to posting videos of beheadings online. After murdering Paty, the perpetrator tweeted a photo of the severed head.

For Islamists, beheadings are a potent weapon of asymmetric warfare. The gruesome spectacle inspires jihadi sympathizers around the world, while fomenting fear in local communities, to the point that the Islamists are often able to impose their will – including medieval codes of conduct – on the societies in which they operate.

FOCUS ISLAMIST TERROR

MESSAGE OF ISLAMIST BEHEADINGS



In a world wracked by violence, such killings stand out for their savagery. While the absolute number of victims is relatively small, the threat this practice poses to fundamental principles of modern civilization should not be underestimated

Jihadis represent a tiny minority of the world’s Muslims. But, by making clear their willingness to behave inhumanely, they have ensured that few dare defy them. Just this month, a Bangladeshi cricket star was forced, under threat of Islamist retaliation, to apologize publicly for briefly attending a Hindu ceremony in India. Through such tactics, Islamists are gradually snuffing out more liberal, diverse Islamic traditions in non-Arab countries.

Although beheadings have a particularly visceral impact, they are far from the only way the jihadis incite fear. Earlier this month, ISIS-linked gunmen stormed Afghanistan’s Kabul University, killing at least 35 – mainly students – and wounding dozens more. In Vienna, another Islamist, who had previously been jailed for trying to join ISIS, killed four people and wounded 22 in a shooting rampage.

The persistent scourge of Islamist violence is a clear signal that the global “war on terror,” launched after the September 11, 2001, attacks in the US, has faltered. Even within Western countries, meaningful government action against Islamist extremism has often been stymied by concerns about discrimination. But, far

from protecting Muslims, those crying “Islamophobia” often are making Muslim communities less secure, by allowing extremism to grow unchecked.

The truth is that there is only one country in the world today that is truly cracking down on Islam, rather than on radical Islamism: China. In the last few years, China has incarcerated more than one million Uighurs and members of other Muslim minorities in its western Xinjiang region. Under the pretense of fighting terrorism, the authorities are carrying out a methodical, large-scale erasure of Islamic identities.

And yet the international community – including Muslim countries – has remained largely silent about China’s actions. Last year, Malaysia’s then-prime minister, Mahathir bin Mohamad, explained why: “China is a very powerful nation.”

By contrast, after the Nice attack, Mahathir tweeted that “Muslims have a right to be angry and kill millions of French people for the massacres of the past” The incendiary tweet has since been removed for “glorifying violence,” though Mahathir’s account wasn’t suspended – a missed opportunity to push back against incitement. Turkish President Recep Tayyip

Erdo an, for his part, has called for a boycott of French goods, because French President Emmanuel Macron pledged after Paty’s murder to defend secularism against radical Islam. It is clearly far easier to attack a democracy than to stand up to a ruthless dictatorship.

But none of this will protect Muslim communities, let alone end Islamist terrorism. For that, governments must adopt a new approach, based on a better understanding of the enemy they are fighting.

Islamist extremism is not an organization or an army; it is an ideological movement. As recent attacks show, the existence of a clear doctrine of violence obviates the need to coordinate action. That is why eliminating high-level figures in ISIS or al-Qaeda does so little to stop the bloodshed, and why military action alone will always fall short.

Instead, counterterrorism efforts should target the fount of jihadist terrorism: the militaristic Wahhabi theology, which justifies and commands the use of violence against “infidels.” This means, first and foremost, discrediting that “evil ideology,” as former British Prime Minister Theresa May put it, by attacking its core tenets, starting with the claim (unsupported by the Quran) that 72 virgins await every martyr in heaven.

It also means taming the clerics and other preachers of violent jihad. As the late Singaporean leader Lee Kuan Yew explained, we must target the “queen bees” (the preachers of the violence) who inspire the “worker bees” (suicide attackers), not the worker bees themselves. Otherwise, the war on terror will continue to rage, and violent Islamism will become more deeply entrenched in societies.

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SPECTRUM URBANISATION

Co-create innovative cities



Dr Piyush Ranjan Rout

THIS YEAR'S PANDEMIC HAS HAD A TERRIBLE IMPACT ON PEOPLE IN CITIES, TOWNS, AND COMMUNITIES AND HAS RE-SHAPED URBAN LIFE AROUND THE WORLD

Urbanisation provides the potential for new forms of social inclusion, including greater equality access to services and new opportunities and engagement and mobilisation that reflect the diversity of cities, countries and the globe. Until 2009, more people lived in rural areas than in urban areas. Today, around 55 per cent of the world’s population lives in towns and cities, with the level of urbanisation projected to reach 70 per cent by 2050. Much of the growth in urban populations will take place in Asia and Africa, especially in China, India and Nigeria where the fertility rates remain high.

Yet, too often this is not the shape of urban development. Inequality and exclusion abound, at rates greater than the national average, at the expense of sustainable development that delivers for all. Sustainable Development Goal 11, which formulates the ambition to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. Inequalities in cities have grown since 1990. The world largest cities are also often the most unequal and this year’s theme embraces the action and implementation of the New Urban Agenda, which is putting the topic of inclusive cities as one of the main pillars for urban shift.

This year’s pandemic has had a terrible impact on people in cities, towns, and communities. The impact of Covid-19 has re-shaped urban life around the world. Local communities have played a key role in keeping people safe and maintaining some economic activities. As urban areas are now home to 55 per cent of global population, it accounts for 95 per cent of all confirmed cases and have been at the epicenter of this pandemic. We have seen hospitals overflowing, jobs disappearing, schools closed and movement restricted.

But cities and towns have moved quickly to provide emergency housing solutions and shelter for the homeless, quarantine spaces and water. We must not allow these achievements to be reversed once the pandemic is over. These temporary measures need to lead to long-term policy changes. Otherwise, poverty and inequalities will exacerbate further.

So the 2020 World Cities Day theme “Valuing Our Communities and Cities” offers an important opportunity to reflect on the effects of the Covid-19 crisis, and also how we can help to make the future of human settlements more resilient. Community value encompasses local volunteering and people organising their own neighbourhoods as well as social movements

that challenge poverty, systemic discrimination and racism. In informal settlements and slums in particular, communities are making a significant contribution, while individual households in urban areas are providing an environment for work and study in the home.

Even UN-Habitat’s latest World Cities Report reinforces the benefits of cities that engage all stakeholders, including local communities to foster sustainable cities. Community activities can no longer be taken for granted or under-resourced. Policy-makers and urban managers need to engage communities systematically and strategically in urban planning, implementation and monitoring to co-create the cities of the future. The recognition of communities’ value must be maintained beyond the virus outbreak.

In the transition to a new sustainable urban normality, local communities must play an expanded role supporting government stimulus packages for employment creation, delivery of essential services, ensuring a green economic transformation, the provision of adequate shelter and public space and re-establishment of local value chains. The UN General Assembly has called for encouraging cooperation among countries in meeting opportunities and

addressing challenges of urbanisation, and contributing to sustainable urban development around the world.

Despite all odds, we can and we will recover and use our experiences to build back better and sustainable cities, towns, communities to deal with future pandemics because we have knowledge, skills, innovation but we must overcome egos amongst decision-makers of cities, towns, communities, who often put their personal dreams over larger aspirations. It will be necessary to replace a “copycat cities” governance approach to co-create future cities with a “innovative cities” approach that serves the interests of all citizens.

Governments need to reshape policies, strategies and legislations for diverse urban solutions for all and respect, protect and fulfill human rights for all in cities. Achieving Sustainable Development Goal 11 aims to develop resilient, inclusive, safe, diverse cities by 2030. One of the targets is access to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services for all by 2030 and upgradation of slums. The pandemic offers new opportunities for all.

The writer, an urban management practitioner, can be reached at @piyushrout

Climate change crisis

Sir, It is not all about “one and only” but “one and all” when it comes to the climate change crisis. The Paris Climate Change Agreement has come in for severe, unnecessary criticism from the US outgoing President Donald Trump who has been standing apart from others. No wonder, America has been the true attraction of all in the world on many fronts. But the policy of ‘America First’ has been found to be literally unwelcome, having been encouraging bad ideas like protectionism, isolationism. Hence, all the forums must support common causes like climate crisis at the world stage. The international community has been living off and thriving on various factors like multilateral activities, multiculturalism. Export and import activities have been going on nonstop regardless of trade war all across the world. Fulfilling the needs is a great stimulant to the overall growth both internally and externally. Geographically, people in all continents have been affected by the climate change problems. None of them seems to be spared the impending threats until the collective cooperation is in place. Therefore, it is the joint and just responsibility of one and all to take all the green strategies possible in order to be at one all aimed at protecting Mother Nature and Mother Earth across the Continents and the landmasses out there.
P. Senthil Saravana Durai, MUMBAI

Court verdicts

Sir, Courts in India, especially the Supreme Court, give very lengthy judgements – at times running into hundreds or thousands of pages, for instance the Supreme Court verdict of November 9, 2019 on Ram Jambhoomi. Such judgements are practically not read even by litigants themselves and are beyond the understanding of commoners. Such lengthy court-verdicts are show-pieces for libraries and are read only by researchers and select lawyers. Commoners, including litigants, may find short and precise court verdicts easy to understand and also not depend on lawyers to know salient features of the lengthy court verdicts. Such an improved system will prevent the media and commentators to twist court’s findings. Things can improve a lot if India also adopts practice of countries where there is a limit on number of pages of court verdicts, which is different for Supreme Court, high courts and trial courts in. Or else, every lengthy court verdict exceeding say 50 pages may be compulsorily accompanied by a precise version with a limit of about 50 pages to be simultaneously issued and posted on website on date of judgement itself.
Madhu Agrawal, DELHI

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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Worrying Covid trend in Kerala and West Bengal

THE SOUTHERN STATE AND WB ARE AMONG THE 6 STATES WITH 61 PC NEW COVID CASES DETECTED EVERY DAY

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 26: Kerala, West Bengal, Maharashtra and Delhi are among top six states which are accountable for contributing 61 per cent new Covid-19 cases on daily basis in India. It is an alarming situation at a time when country's per day cumulative figure has been registering downward trend for over 15 days, experts said.

Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh are also on the same path raising concerns amid a surge in deadly disease which has compelled the Ministry of Home Affairs to come with a fresh list of 19 guidelines Wednesday for states and Union Territories across the country allowing them to come with local restriction to contain the spread of the pandemic. As 44,489 new confirmed coronavirus or Covid-19 cases were registered in the last 24 hours in the country, 60.72 per cent of these is contributed by Kerala, Maharashtra, Delhi, West Bengal, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHF) shared the figure in its latest public report, mentioning that Kerala leads the list with 6,491 new Covid cases.

Maharashtra has reported 6,159 new cases, while Delhi registered another 5,246 new cases in the last 24 hours, the report said.



In terms of Covid-19 death, 60.50 per cent of the 524 case fatalities reported in the past 24 hours are concentrated in Delhi, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Haryana, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh.

Maharashtra, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal are the common states among the top six states contributing the maximum to new cases as well as daily deaths.

Delhi with 99 deaths reported the maximum new fatalities followed by Maharashtra (65) and West Bengal (51).

India's present active case-load (4,52,344) is 4.88 per cent of the total positive cases, and has been sustained below the 5 per cent mark.

As per the report, 65 per cent of the active cases are in eight states and Union Territories (UTs) which have contributed to the maximum daily new cases and the daily highest deaths. Maharashtra with 85,488

active cases is on top among these eight states and UTs followed by Kerala (65,234), Delhi (38,287), Rajasthan (26,320), Uttar Pradesh (24,876), West Bengal (24,752), Haryana (20,948) and Punjab (7,129).

The Ministry's data says that 61 per cent of the total deaths are concentrated in Maharashtra (34.57 per cent with 46,748 deaths, Delhi (6.45 per cent) with 8,720 deaths, West Bengal (6.04 per cent) with 8,172 deaths, Uttar Pradesh (5.65 per cent) with 7,644 deaths, Punjab (3.46 per cent) with 4,684 deaths, Haryana (1.69 per cent) with 2,291 deaths, Rajasthan (1.64 per cent) with 2,218 deaths and Kerala (1.57 per cent) with 2,121 deaths.

Meanwhile, the data reveals that the total recovered cases in India are nearing 87 lakhs (86,79,138) and the national recovery rate stands at 93.66 per cent Thursday including 36,367 recoveries registered in the last 24 hours in the country.

KERALA COMES TO A STANDSTILL

The 24-hr nationwide strike called by various trade unions in protest against the Centre's labour policies crippled normal life in Kerala

AGENCIES

Thiruvananthapuram, Nov 26: The 24-hour nationwide trade union strike called Thursday by the central trade unions barring the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS) evoked a total response in Kerala.

The strike has been called to protest against various policies of the Central government.

The shops, markets, offices across Kerala were closed while the main roads were also empty, barring a few private vehicles plying.

The few who arrived at the various railway stations in the trains found themselves sitting at the stations as there were no three wheeler or taxi services.

Likewise the banks also remained non-functional.

The only activity that was witnessed in the state capital was when the official buses of the local ISRO unit were lined up with the police security to carry the staff in a convoy

Sabarimala pilgrims were exempted from the strike, and Kerala SRTC ferried devotees across the hill temple route as per usual



Pic from thenewsminute

DON'T ALLOW CORPORATES INTO BANKING SECTOR: LJD

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: The Union government should reject the Reserve Bank's internal committee's recommendation to allow industrialists and corporates to launch private sector banks in the country, Dr Varughese George, national general secretary of Loktantrik Janata Dal (LJD), said Thursday.

"The RBI seems to have not learnt lessons from the huge scams that happened in the past one decade.

Many public sector banks had to agree to take over the liabilities of several private sector banks that did not become operational due to mismanagement," he said in a statement here. The country survived the recession in 2009 and 2012 due to the existence of public sector banks and the United Nations had acknowledged it since then. All democratic and progressive forces should come together to oppose this recommendation, he said.

BENGAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

Rahul to take stock of Cong's poll prep

The meeting will discuss the proposed alliances in the state with like-minded parties



AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 26: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi is set to take stock of the preparations for the West Bengal Assembly elections Friday. The state is scheduled to go to the polls next year.

The meeting will discuss the proposed alliances in the state with like-minded parties and will be attended by West Bengal in-charge Jitin Prasada, Congress state president Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury and the Congress Legislature Party leader Abdul Mannan and will be held virtually. However, Mannan has tested positive for Covid.

The 294-member assembly will be going to the polls early next year. While the Trinamool Congress (TMC) has the challenge to save its government, the Congress also

has to retain its ground. In 2016 the Congress fought in alliance with the Left parties and secured 44 seats becoming the second largest party but half of its MLAs have since joined the TMC.

The Congress is also facing the BJP which has made inroads in the state winning 18 Lok Sabha seats in the 2019 general elections. The Congress is in a dilemma over whether to go with the Left or the TMC. Its state leaders have been talking to the Left leaders informally about a seat sharing agreement but nothing has been finalised, said sources.

Two senior Congress leaders Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury and Deepa Das Munshi are against the TMC while the CLP and some MLAs are not averse to joining hands with the TMC if it gives a fair deal to the Congress, sources said.

The Congress leaders are insisting on finalising the alliance soon to start preparing for the elections. The Left and the Congress held a joint rally November 23.

As many as 90 segments in the 294-member West Bengal assembly have sizeable Muslim voters, who can be a deciding factor in any poll battle.

Normal life gets partially affected in Bengal

The ruling Trinamool Congress in the state didn't support the strike but said it backed the Left and Congress's flagging off the economic issues

AGENCIES

Kolkata, Nov 26: Normal life was partially affected in West Bengal Thursday due to a nationwide trade union strike, during which sporadic clashes were reported in several parts of the state.

The 24-hour bandh called by a joint committee of the Central trade unions in protest against the Centre's economic policies began at 6 am.

Bandh supporters, mostly activists of CPI(M)-affiliated outfits like CITU and DYFI, brought out rallies in Jadavpur, Garia, Kamalagazi, Lake Town and Dum Dum areas in and around Kolkata, disrupting vehicular movement and asking shopkeepers to pull down the shutters of their establishments, an official said.

They picketed outside Howrah railway station, asking vehicle op-

erators to stop services but a large police contingent was deployed to ensure normal plying of vehicles, he said.

Left activists blocked roads in Central Avenue, Hastings, Shyambazar and Moulaali areas of Kolkata, the official said.

Congress workers tried to forcibly shut down shops in Burrabazar area, triggering tension, he said.

Left Front Chairman Biman Bose led Congress and Left workers to block Mallickbazar Crossing in the city.

He alleged that the TMC government in the state was trying to muzzle a "spontaneous people's movement" with brute force.

Protesters clashed with the police at Barasat and Belgharia in North 24 Parganas district, Paschim Bardhaman's Durgapur, Coochbehar's

Mathabhanga, Dhupguri in Jalpaiguri and Midnapore town in Paschim Medinipur district, the official said.

Agitators hit the streets in several parts of Howrah district and blocked roads briefly, he said.

Bandh enforcers also burnt tyres and broke the windscreen of buses in Coochbehar and Jhargram districts, the official said.

Suburban train services in the Sealdah division were affected as agitators blocked railway tracks at several stations, an Eastern Railway



Protestors burn a tyre during the nationwide strike by ten Central trade unions against various policies of the NDA government, in Kolkata, Thursday

spokesperson said.

Bandh supporters obstructed tracks at Dakshin Barasat, Baharu, Dhakuria, Joynagar, Champahati, Subhasgram and Betheria Gholastations in the south section and Ichapur, Palta, New Barrackpore, Barrackpore and Dum Dum Cantonment stations in the main section, he said.

Train services in South Eastern Railway's Howrah-Kharagpur section were partially affected as agitators blocked railway tracks at Balichak, Midnapore and a few other stations for some time, an SER spokesperson said.

Train services in the rapid transport system remained normal, a Metro Rail spokesperson said.

Flight services at the Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport here also remained unaffected, an official said.

Banking services were partially affected as several branches and ATMs remained closed.

A senior office-bearer of the All India Bank Officers' Confederation (AIBOC) said bank employees responded spontaneously to the strike call and work was also affected at the Reserve Bank of India office here.

Operations at the Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port's Kolkata Dock System were partially affected but its Haldia Dock functioned normally.

The strike affected the state's jute industry, with many mills remaining closed and a handful operating at 30-50 per cent capacity, sources at the Indian Jute Mills Association said.

Several tea gardens in the Doars region in north Bengal remained closed but the strike did not impact operations in the tea estates in the Darjeeling Hills, a senior trade union leader said.

Kerala declares 2-day mourning in Maradona's honour

AGENCIES

Thiruvananthapuram, Nov 26: The Kerala government has announced a two-day state mourning following the death of football legend Diego Armando Maradona. Kerala Sports Minister EP Jayarajan has announced that the mourning will be observed in the state starting Thursday.

Maradona died due to cardiorespiratory arrest at his home in the Tigre district on the northern outskirts of the capital Buenos Aires Wednesday.

The football legend was no stranger to Kerala as in 2012, he had arrived on a two-day state visit to inaugurate a new showroom of a jewellery chain in Kannur.

Incidentally, the man who was instrumental in Maradona signing up as a brand ambassador of the jewellery group was Isham Hassan who has been left heartbroken following the demise of the legendary footballer.

Clutching an autographed football signed by Maradona, Hassan,

while recalling his times with the Argentine, said that even the football appears to be sad and it does not have any air in it.

"I got this autographed football from him when we were in Malaysia when he came to inaugurate a new showroom of our group. This trip was three years back and we travelled sitting next to each other from Dubai to Malaysia and we stayed in the same hotel there," said Hassan.

"It was two years back that I met him last in the UAE. His manager was an Arab national and since I knew Arabic, we gelled well right from the time I met him first many years ago. The only barrier between him and myself was the language. Despite that handicap, we used to converse with the help of a translator. Later on, I used to interact with him with the help of his daughter who could speak English. The last I saw him was two years back in the UAE and after that, we had conversations over telephone," added Hassan, who is making every effort to travel to Argentina to take part in the funeral.



Charles Antony, a musician by profession, is another person who is grieving as it was he, who along with Maradona, sang a Spanish song when the latter was in Kannur. Antony has composed a song in memory of the legend which starts 'Adieu Diego Maradona', and he is now singing that for the TV channels in the state.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan also made it a point to issue a condolence message where he said that football is the most beautiful game in the world and Maradona was

the most popular figure in it. I feel outside of Argentina, it would be Kerala which has maximum fans of Maradona and along with his worldwide fans, Kerala also mourns his passing away.

Maradona shrine in Kerala

When V Ravindran heard that football legend Diego Maradona had passed away, one of the first things he remembered was the deafening applause that one of the greatest footballers of all time received as he stepped out of the Blue Nile hotel in Kannur district of Kerala

October 23, 2012.

"Three months before Maradona arrived, his team came to inspect hotels in Kannur. They selected our hotel and gave us a list of preparations that they wanted for a VIP's stay, without revealing the name. We thought that it would help our business too. Two rooms were joined together and made into a large suite room. We arranged everything as they mentioned. Later in October we were informed that the guest was Maradona. I was overjoyed, because I was a great fan of the game and of Maradona," Ravindran, the owner of Blue Nile hotel says.

Room number 309 of the hotel is still kept as a tiny museum in memory of Maradona's visit. The accessories used by the football player: plates, spoons, bed sheets, bathroom accessories and even the shell of the prawns he ate were kept in glass frames. The room also has a display of rare pictures of the footballer and newspaper clippings about him. The room is rented out to other customers as 'Maradona special suite'.

No bail or agency custody for ill Kerala ex-minister

AGENCIES

Kochi, Nov 26: A special court in Kerala's Kochi Thursday refused to give bail to arrested former minister VK Ebrahim Kunju, and also rejected the Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau's (VACB) plea for custody.

Kunju, a senior legislator of the Indian Union Muslim League - the second-biggest party of the Congress-led UDF, was arrested by the VACB last week from a leading private hospital in the Palarivattom flyover collapse case.

His arrest was recorded by VACB last week while he was under treatment for multiple myeloma at the private hospital.

Thursday, the Muvattupuzha vigilance court did not give the nod for either his bail or for the custody of the VACB, and instead asked the probe team to question him for a day Monday from 9 am to 5 pm. It also specified that he should be given adequate rest in between



and should not be put under duress.

Kunju was earlier questioned a few times by the VACB over a graft case in connection with the flyover project. He is the fifth accused named in the case and his sudden arrest was seen as payback by the Pinarayi Vijayan government, after it became engulfed in numerous scams and allegations.

Built at a cost of Rs 42 crore during Congress leader Oommen Chandy's term as Chief Minister, the 750-metre flyover was supposed to last for over 100 years. It was opened in October 2016 but within three years started crumbling and had to be closed.

of the day quote

India will achieve its target of reducing 35 per cent emissions intensity of its GDP well before the year 2030

Prakash Javadekar | Union Environment Minister

The central government is treating farmers as enemy of the State

Harsimrat Kaur Badal | SAD Leader

Schools in the national capital will not reopen till the government is convinced about students' safety

Satyendrar Jain | Delhi Health Minister

SHORT TAKES

Civilian injured

Jammu: One civilian was injured Thursday in ceasefire violation by Pakistan on the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch district of J&K. Defence Ministry spokesman Colonel Devender Anand said at about 1.30 p.m. on Thursday Pakistan initiated unprovoked ceasefire violation by firing with small arms and shelling with mortars in Kirri, Qasba and Shahpur sectors of Poonch district to which Indian army retaliated befittingly.

Five girls hurt

Gurugram: Five girls sustained injuries during celebratory firing at a wedding in the Sohna area here, the police said Thursday. According to the police, an unknown person probably from the groom's side opened fire while he was drunk during a wedding in Kharoda village here on Wednesday evening which injured five girls.

6 killed in accident

Guwahati: At least six people of a wedding party were killed and two others critically injured in a road accident in Dibrugarh's Lepetkata early Thursday, police said. Dibrugarh district Superintendent of Police Thube Prateek Vijay Kumar said that the accident happened on National Highway 37 when a vehicle in which the victims were travelling lost control and hit a parked trailer truck.

Farmers rescued

Tirupati: Two of the three farmers who were stranded in the floodwaters were rescued by Tirupati police in Andhra Pradesh's Chittoor district Thursday. "Tirupati police rescued two persons along with National Disaster Response Force (NDRF). Efforts are being made to rescue one more," said a police official.

Girl ends life

Muzaffarnagar (Uttar Pradesh): An eight-year-old girl in Uttar Pradesh apparently died when she allegedly hanged herself from a ceiling fan at her home in Muzaffarnagar district. According to Station House Officer (SHO) of Charthawal police station, Dharmendra Singh, by the time police reached the spot for investigation, the family members of the girl had already buried the body.

Four killed

Aurangabad: Four persons were killed and one critically injured when their speeding car collided with an oil tanker on Aurangabad-Beed highway in Maharashtra on Thursday, police said. The accident occurred at around 10 am.



The country's farmers are standing resolutely in the face of Modi government's cruelty against them

Rahul Gandhi | Congress Leader

AHMED PATEL LAID TO REST

Senior Congress leader Ahmed Patel was laid to rest at his native village Piraman in Gujarat's Bharuch district Thursday. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi attended the funeral of the party's key strategist and troubleshooter, who died Wednesday



OUTRAGE OVER FARM LAWS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh/New Delhi, Nov 26: Farmers from Punjab faced water cannons and broke police barriers at the state's border with Haryana as they pushed towards the national capital Thursday on their "Delhi Chalo" march against the Centre's farm laws.

By late evening, a large group of them had reached the road toll plaza at Panipat, about 100 km from Delhi. Bhartiya Kisan Union (Haryana) leader Gurnam Singh said the protesters planned to spend the night there and will resume the march the next morning. There were traffic snarls during the day at Delhi's border with police checking vehicles coming in from Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. Metro services between Delhi and NCR areas were restricted.

At the Punjab-Haryana Shambhu border, police and Punjab farmers in their tractor-trolleys were locked in a confrontation for a couple of hours in the morning. Police made announcements on loudspeakers asking the farmers assembled on the Punjab side to disperse.

But as protesters tried to push through barricades, the Haryana Police used water cannon and lobbed teargas shells. Farmers chucked some steel barricades into the Ghaggar river from the bridge where they had been stopped. Apart from this confrontation in Ambala district, there were face-offs between the protesters and police in Haryana's Sirsa, Kurukshetra, Fatehabad and Jind districts bordering Congress-run Punjab.

Police had placed cement and



Members of various farmer organisations gather at Punjab-Haryana border as they participate in the Delhi Chalo protest march against the farm reform laws, in Sirsa district

PTI PHOTO

steel barricades and parked trucks on the road to stop the farmers' tractor-trolleys, some of them laden with food for the planned two-day protest, which many felt could extend further. But a few hours later, at most border-points, the farmers were let through.

At Shambhu, a few protesters initially managed to cross the barricades on foot. Later, police eased the blockade, allowing the tractors to proceed on the road to Delhi, 200 km away. But barricades were also set up at other points on this Amritsar-Delhi highway that passes through BJP-run Haryana.

At Karnal, there was another face-off and police again used water cannon. By afternoon, several groups of protesters - from Punjab and Haryana - were travelling towards Delhi on tractor-trolleys. Police diverted private vehicles and long lines of trucks were parked on the road.

"It is condemnable that Haryana Police is using such measures to sup-

press an assembly of peaceful protesters. We are protesting in a peaceful manner, but they want to prevent us from using our democratic right to protest," a Punjab farmer told reporters earlier at Shambhu. Police used water cannons also against protesters trying to enter Kaithal district, and at Khanauri border where farmers were protesting under the banner of Bhartiya Kisan Union (Ekta-Ugarhan).

Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi, and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal were among the opposition leaders who slammed the Haryana Police action at Shambhu. Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh and his Haryana counterpart Manohar Lal Khattar exchanged words over Twitter.

The Congress veteran asked Khattar why his government was stopping farmers, and the BJP leader told him to stop "inciting" them.

Amid LAC row, India boosts surveillance

The lease of the two drones came in the midst of India's plans to procure up to 30 weaponised versions of the Sea Guardian drones from the US to bolster the Navy's overall surveillance capabilities in the Indian Ocean Region

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 26: The Indian Navy has taken on lease two Sea Guardian drones from an American defence major to enhance surveillance over the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) but the unmanned aerial vehicles can be deployed in the Ladakh region if the need arises, people familiar with the development said.

The two non-weaponised MQ-9B Sea Guardian drones have been leased for one year with an option of extending the period by another year, they said. The lease of the two drones came in the midst of India's plans to procure up to 30 weaponised versions of the Sea Guardian drones from the US to bolster the Navy's overall surveillance capabilities in the Indian Ocean Region.

The hi-tech drones, manufactured by US firm General Atomics, arrived at the naval air station INS Rajali in Tamil Nadu earlier this

month. In September, the government unveiled a new defence acquisition procedure (DAP) under which the three services were allowed to take on lease military equipment, hardware and platforms like helicopters, simulators and transport planes and UAVs among others.

The leasing of the two drones came in the midst of the tense border row between India and China in eastern Ladakh. A fleet of Poseidon 81 maritime reconnaissance and anti-submarine warfare aircraft was also deployed to carry out surveillance on the movement of Chinese troops in eastern Ladakh in the last few months.

"If there is a need, the two Sea Guardian drones can be deployed in Ladakh," said one of the persons cited above. The P-8Is were also deployed to keep an eye on the movement of Pakistani troops after the Pulwama terror attack last year.



THE NEW NORMAL



Bride and groom, wearing masks, perform rituals during their marriage ceremony amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, in Surat, Thursday

PTI PHOTO

CBI BOOKS FORMER J&K MINISTER

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 26: The CBI has booked former Jammu and Kashmir Minister Taj Mohiuddin in connection with alleged illegal regularisation of encroached forest land in his name under the Roshni Act, officials said Thursday.

Along with Mohiuddin, a former Congress minister in the erstwhile state, the agency has also

booked Mohammed Ramzan Thakur, former Deputy Commissioner Shopian, Mohammed Yousuf Zargar, the then Additional Deputy Commissioner, Hafizullah Shah, the then Assistant Commissioner Revenue and Ghulam Hassan Rather, the then Tehsildar.

The CBI received a complaint from the Anti-Corruption Bureau of Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory which is now part of the

FIR, they said. The then Tehsildar Shopian had processed and placed 190 cases of vesting of ownership rights to the occupants of state land before a committee chaired by Thakur on June 16, 2007. The committee approved only 17 of them including over 13 kanals of land which was allegedly illegally encroached upon by Mohiuddin.

It is alleged that the land encroached upon by Mohiuddin be-

longed to the forest department which had raised objections to its regularisation under the Jammu and Kashmir State Lands (Vesting of Ownership to Occupants) Act also known as the Roshni Act.

The objections were allegedly ignored by the committee which had told the forest department that the matter had been disposed of and their objections did not serve any purpose.

PM makes another pitch for simultaneous polls

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 26: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Thursday again emphasised the need to introduce the "One Nation, One Election" formula to save time and money of the country.

Reiterating his idea for simultaneous elections across India, the Prime Minister said that "One Nation, One Election" is not a matter of debate only but this is the need for India. The Prime Minister pitched the idea while addressing the concluding session of the 80th All India Presiding Officers Conference via video conferencing

in Gujarat's Kevadia on the occasion of the celebrations of Constitution Day.

Modi suggested that a single voters' list should be prepared for the Lok Sabha, assembly and panchayat polls, saying that separate lists are a waste of resources. "Only one voter list should be used for Lok Sabha, Vidhan Sabha and other elections. Why're we wasting time and money on these lists?," Modi said.

"One Nation, One Election" isn't just an issue of deliberation, but also need of the country. It hampers the developmental work and all of you know about it. We must think about

it seriously and office-holders can lead deliberations on this." "I would urge you to take initiatives to make aspects of our Constitution more popular among our youth and that too, through innovative methods," said the Prime Minister.

Modi has been committed to the idea of "One Nation, One Election" since he first became Prime Minister in 2014. As per the Prime Minister, "One Nation, One Election" would reduce the cost of holding elections, and limit all elections to a single season as elections happen somewhere or the other almost all the time at present.

Modi had been pressing for hold-



ing a constructive dialogue to enable the Election Commission to hold

elections simultaneously to bring down expenses. Besides, this will also give governments more free time to implement welfare schemes.

It is often argued that the Model Code of Conduct gets in the way of the government announcing projects or policy plans for the benefit of the people. In 2003, Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee had taken up the matter with Congress President Sonia Gandhi who was receptive to begin with, but the idea could not be ultimately pursued.

In a swipe at the Congress over the delay in the Sardar Sarovar dam project, he said that those who caused the delay still have no regrets.

Noting that the Indian Constitution has many features but a special feature is "importance of duties", the Prime Minister said that Gandhi ji was very keen on it as he saw a close link between rights and duties. He said that when politics takes over people and nation-first policies, the nation has to pay a heavy price.

"Our Constitution shows us the way to fight every challenge in the 21st century. Our Constitution is moving swiftly towards its 75th year. In such a scenario, we have to work in a planned way to turn processes in sync with the new decade."

of the day
quote

I pay my tributes to the martyrs of 26/11 Mumbai terror attack. Nation will always remember their valour and sacrifice. My solidarity with the families who were victims of this dastardly attack

M. VENKAIAH NAIDU | VICE PRESIDENT

Love jihad is a hoax. It is part of a sinister, majoritarian agenda. Interfaith marriages are allowed under the Indian law, it is even encouraged by some governments

P. CHIDAMBARAM | CONGRESS LEADER

Instead of listening to the voice of the farmers over the agriculture laws which snatched the support price from them, the BJP government is attacking them with water cannons in the chilling cold season. Everything is being taken away from the farmers while the government is distributing banks, loan waivers, airports, railway stations to capitalists

PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA
CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY

SHORT TAKES

Three held

Thane: Three persons, including a former dealer with a finance firm, were arrested from Maharashtra's Thane city for allegedly cheating the company's authorised dealers of over Rs 18 lakh, police said Thursday. An offence under relevant sections of the IPC and the IT Act has been registered the arrested accused at the Wagle Estate police station, senior inspector Nitin Thackeray of Crime Unit I said. The main accused Altamash Unawalla (27), a resident of Mumbai, had hacked the details of registered dealers of the finance firm from Rajasthan, Punjab, and Bihar, between August and October this year, the official said.

1 dead, 45 hurt

Umaria: An elderly woman was killed and at least 45 others members of a marriage party were injured when their bus overturned in Madhya Pradesh's Umaria district on Thursday morning, police said. The accident took place at Marhai turn under Amarpur police station limits, about 55 km from the district headquarters, when the victims, belonging to Shadhul, were returning along with the bride from Satna, they said.

Three killed

Anuppur: A 46-year-old man, his wife and daughter died after his step-brother allegedly set their house on fire over a property dispute in Madhya Pradesh's Anuppur district in the wee hours of Thursday, police said. After committing the crime, the accused, Deepak Vishwakarma (32), allegedly hanged himself to death, Jaithari police station's inspector K K Tripathi said.

Naxal shot dead

Raipur: A Naxal, allegedly involved in the recent killings of a police official and forest personnel, was killed in an encounter with security forces in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district on Thursday, police said. The cadre, identified as Santosh Podiam, was carrying a reward of Rs 1 lakh on his head, they said. The gunfight took place at around 5 am in Darbha forest under Kutru police station limits when a joint team of the District Reserve Guard (DRG) and the District Force was out on an anti-Naxal operation, Inspector General of Police (Bastar range) Sundarraj P said.



India cannot forget Mumbai attack. Today's India is facing terrorism with new strategy and new polity. I praise those security officers who have been playing major role in securing the country

NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

GOPAL RAI COVID POSITIVE

Delhi Environment Minister and Aam Aadmi Party leader Gopal Rai Thursday said he has tested positive for coronavirus infection. Rai suffered from corona-related symptoms after which he underwent a test which turned out to be positive. He is now in self-quarantine



3 killed as Nivar wreaks havoc in TN



PTI PHOTO

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai/Puducherry, Nov 26: Three persons were killed and an equal number injured as the very severe cyclonic storm Nivar wreaked havoc in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry Thursday.

According to the Tamil Nadu government, three persons lost their lives due to rain related incidents and three got injured. The state government also said that 26 cattle had also died in the storm. On its way the cyclone also damaged several houses, uprooted trees and power lines in Tamil Nadu's Cuddalore, Marakkanam and in Puducherry Thursday.

A total of 101 houses, including thatched huts and tiled houses were damaged by cyclone, the Tamil Nadu government said. According to the government, about 380 trees were uprooted by Nivar and 14 acre banana plantation was also damaged.

In Tamil Nadu's Villupuram district, police said the fallen trees have been removed to ease the flow of traffic. The government said it was carrying out the repairs quickly to restore power lines. A total of 19 electric poles, which fell down, have been repaired.

At Marakkanam near Puducherry, several power poles fell down and the fishermen community requested the Tamil Nadu government to restore the power lines at the earliest. In the suburbs of Tamil Nadu capital Chennai, water got logged due to rains af-

fecting the residents as well as the traffic flow.

Bus services that were stopped from November 24 afternoon ahead of the cyclone were resumed on Thursday afternoon in seven districts of Tamil Nadu. Suburban train services in Chennai will also be resumed at 3 p.m.

About 2.27 lakh persons have been housed in 3,085 relief camps. Chief Minister K.Palaniswami appreciated the work done by the Greater Chennai Corporation and Greater Chennai Police in removing the fallen trees and helping the needy.

Palaniswami also visited Cuddalore to inspect the cyclone damages and meet the affected people. In Puducherry also several trees were uprooted by the cyclone and the power supply was disrupted. Puducherry Chief Minister V.Narayanamsamy told a news channel that power supply will be restored in a phased manner on Thursday itself.

He said, a lot of trees have fallen due to the cyclone and rain was continuing. Narayanamsamy said the low lying areas were inundated and work was on to drain the water. "Fallen trees were being removed. Power supply was disrupted and it will be soon restored in a phased manner in 12 hours", he said. As regards the cyclone damage to life and property, Narayanamsamy said the assessment will be made.

He said 80 relief camps have been set up in Puducherry.

Tejasvi charged with trespass

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, Nov 26: Hyderabad police Thursday booked BJP leader Tejasvi Surya for entering Osmania University and addressing a meeting without permission.

A case of trespass was booked against BJP youth wing president on a complaint by the university authorities. Telangana Director General of Police M. Mahender Reddy said that a case was booked on a complaint by the university registrar.

The case was registered three days after Surya, who is also a Member of Parliament from Bengaluru, and his followers threw open the university gate and removes the barricades to enter the



Telangana Director General of Police said that a case was booked on a complaint by the university registrar

campus. The young leader, who was in Hyderabad to campaign for BJP in Greater Hyderabad

Municipal Corporation (GHMC) elections, addressed the students at Arts College and claimed that the police at the behest of Telangana government tried to stop him.

The police, however, had denied this. M. Ramesh, Deputy Commissioner of Police, East Zone, had tweeted that police has not stopped any one at the Osmania University gate and that the programme is going on smoothly. "The law and order situation is peaceful and there is no tension as reported," he had said.

Meanwhile, the BJP has condemned booking of case against Surya. Party's national general secretary Bhubender Yadav said this shows the desperation of Telangana government.

2 soldiers killed in terror attack

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, Nov 26: Barely 48 hours ahead of the start of DDC polls in Jammu and Kashmir, two soldiers were killed in a terror attack in broad daylight just outside Srinagar on Thursday, officials said.

Terrorists in a car fired indiscriminately on an army patrol at Shariefabad on the Srinagar-Baramulla Highway, critically injuring the two soldiers who later succumbed. The attack came on the 12th anniversary of Mumbai 26/11 attack.

Jammu and Kashmir Police's Special Operations Group (SOG)

and CRPF Valley Quick Action team (QAT) rushed to the spot to cordon off the area and nab the attackers. The Army, in a statement, said terrorists fired indiscriminately at its Quick Reaction Team (QRT) in which two soldiers were killed but troops maintained restraint to avoid collateral damage.

"Terrorists fired indiscriminately at Quick Reaction Team of Indian Army in general area Aban Shah Chowk, HMT, Khushipora, Srinagar today afternoon. Being a crowded area, troops exercised restraint to avoid any civilian casualties and collateral damage. "Two soldiers were critically in-

jured and were evacuated to the nearest medical facility. However, they have succumbed to their injuries. Area has been cordoned and search operation is in progress."

Inspector General of Police, Kashmir Range, Vijay Kumar said that three terrorists travelling in a Maruti car carried out the attack on army patrol.

He said two of them could be Pakistani terrorists and one local terrorist. "Three terrorists were travelling in a Maruti car. Two of them were carrying weapons, two of them could be Pakistani terrorists and one local terrorist," he said.



Apart from his role in the Mumbai terror attacks, he was also part of the terror plot that

David Headley, Tawahhur Rana were involved in, against the Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten. The

newspaper had published 12 cartoons of Prophet Mohammad in 2005, leading to protests including violence by Muslims worldwide.

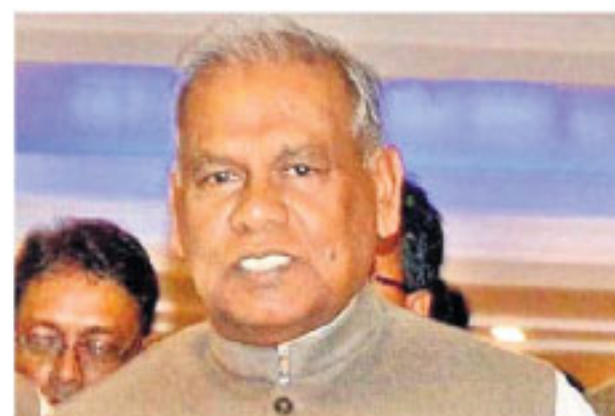
Headley, Rana and Mir had planned a terror attack against the employees of the newspapers in Denmark between 2008 and 2009. Mir was indicted in the US District Court, Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division, Chicago, Illinois, on April 21, 2011 and an arrest warrant against him was issued the next day, as per the FBI records.

He was charged with conspiracy to injure property of foreign government; providing material support to terrorists; killing a citizen outside of the US and aiding and abetting; and bombing of places of

public use.

In his forties, Mir is short in height and has skin discoloration on his face and a scar on his left cheek and right eye, as per the FBI record. "Mir once wore a beard and hair down to his shoulders. He may have altered his appearance through plastic surgery," the FBI has noted in its file and suspects that Mir is hiding in Pakistan.

Despite India's persistent efforts and requests for cooperation from the Pakistani establishment into the case, Islamabad has been evasive. Except for a few terrorists who were arrested in Pakistan, Lashkar-e-Taiba chief Hafiz Saeed and all the key members of the terror plot have gone scot-free.



"Sushil Modi has been sidelined by his own party. Now, he is making every effort to prove his presence in the party and become relevant for the top leadership. Hence, he is dragging the name of Lalu Prasad to bring himself into the limelight," claimed Virendra.

Reacting to Virendra's claim, Sanjay Mayukh, the BJP Chief Spokesperson, said, "This is the real face of the RJD to pressure MLAs of other parties. We want to initiate an investigation into the

matter. The truth about the phone call will automatically come out."

JDU chief spokesperson Neeraj Kumar said, "Lalu's party does not believe in a fair investigation. How can he stay in the bungalow of the RIMS director and be given assistants? He is a convicted person and is violating all the rules of the prison manual. How is he getting such hospitality? I appeal to the Ranchi High Court to take cognisance of the matter."

Sushil Kumar Modi on Tuesday evening alleged that Lalu Prasad had called a BJP MLA and asked him to abstain during the voice vote for the election of Speaker in the Bihar assembly. MLA Lalan Paswan had claimed that former Bihar CM and RJD patriarch Lalu Prasad called him at a time when he was at the residence of Sushil Kumar Modi.

WHITE BLANKET



A man clears snow from a roof after fresh snowfall, in Lahaul-Spiti, Thursday

PTI PHOTO



of the day
quote

Our police and intelligence agencies do an extraordinary job every day to protect us all from terrorist activity

RISHI SUNAK | UK CHANCELLOR

Perpetrators of the "ghastly" 26/11 Mumbai attacks must be brought to justice by Pakistan. Pakistan must do what is required to bring the perpetrators of this heinous crime to justice

RANDHIR JAISWAL | INDIA'S CONSUL GENERAL IN NEW YORK

We think the Biden administration has a great opportunity because there is so much leverage on Iran through the sanctions

ELLIOTT ABRAMS | US SPECIAL ENVOY FOR IRAN

SHORT TAKES

Greek civil servants hold 24-hour strike

Athens: Civil servants in Greece have walked off the job in a 24-hour strike expected to disrupt public transport and services, on a variety of demands, including better workplace protections against the coronavirus. Ferries to the islands were halted and the Athens metro system and tram were shut for Thursday's strike, although buses continued to run in the capital. Flights that had been canceled or rescheduled were reinstated, however, as air traffic controllers called off their strike after a court ruled their participation illegal.

Gunmen abduct 28 travellers

Kabul: Unidentified gunmen intercepted vehicles and abducted 28 travellers in Afghanistan's eastern Wardak province, police spokesman Hajji Mohammad Ofiani said Thursday. "The armed militants committed the crime and abducted 28 civilians from Kabul-bound vehicles in Jalriz district," the official said to Xinhua. The official, however, blamed the Taliban militants for kidnapping the passengers, but the armed outfit has yet to make a comment. Ofiani also added that efforts are underway to locate and ensure the safe release of the abducted persons.

Bilawal Bhutto tests Covid +ve

Islamabad: Pakistan's leading opposition politician Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said Thursday that he has tested positive for the coronavirus. The 32-year-old chief of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and son of former two-time Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto went into isolation after being infected with the virus. "I have tested positive for #COVID-19 & am self-isolating with mild symptoms. I'll continue working from home & will be addressing PPP foundation day via video link. Wear a mask everyone, see you on the other side IA (Insha Allah)," Bilawal tweeted.

Pak shuts schools

Islamabad: Pakistan shut its schools and postponed exams Thursday to try to curb new coronavirus infections and a rise in the number of people in hospital with COVID-19. Students, including those at higher educational institutions as well as in private schools, are expected to continue classes through distance learning until December 24, when schools are scheduled to go on winter break until January 11.

INDIA, NEPAL AGREE TO BOOST TIES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kathmandu, Nov 26: India and Nepal Thursday agreed to step up efforts to advance mutual cooperation as Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla met the country's top leadership and held "productive" talks with his Nepalese counterpart on a range of bilateral issues.

Shringla was accorded a warm welcome on his maiden visit to Nepal at the invitation of Foreign Secretary Bharat Raj Paudyal, amid a strain in bilateral ties following a bitter border row between the two countries.

He paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli at the latter's official residence at Baluwatar, according to prime minister's Press advisor Surya Thapa.

Shringla also called on Nepal's Foreign Minister Pradeep Kumar Gyawali and handed over 2,000 vials of anti-virus drug Remdesivir to him as part of India's continuing assistance to the Himalayan nation to help it contain the COVID-19 pandemic.

Earlier, the foreign secretary met his Nepalese counterpart and had a "very productive and useful exchange" with him. "FS @harshvshringla had a productive meeting with @PaudyalBR during which they took stock of bilateral



cooperation and discussed issues of mutual interest," the Indian embassy in Kathmandu said in a tweet.

"Both sides appreciated the progress made on the numerous bilateral initiatives and projects. It was agreed to take further steps to advance mutual cooperation," it said in another tweet. Speaking to the media, he said: "We had a very productive and useful exchange." "The very large number of issues of bilateral cooperation that we went through, it shows the multifaceted and comprehensive nature of our cooperation. We both agreed on various steps to advance some areas of cooperation, on very good progress on commitments made by the leadership and looking at



I know the country has grown weary of the fight. We need to remember - we're at war with the virus, not with one another

JOE BIDEN | US PRESIDENT-ELECT

38 MILLION JOBS LOST IN E. AFRICA

The Eastern Africa region's labour market has been the worst hit on the continent from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic as an estimated 38 million jobs lost



26/11 ATTACK ANNIV

Pakistan yet to catch 19 most wanted terrorists



AGENCIES

Lahore, Nov 26: Twelve years after the 26/11 attack, Pakistan has placed 19 members of the banned Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) in a list of the "Most Wanted Terrorists" for their role in the heinous assault, but it has not initiated any serious efforts to nab them and also punish seven others who are facing trial here.

The security agencies here are clueless about the whereabouts of these 19 most wanted terrorists. Some of them have been hiding in Pakistan and others are believed to have fled the country. These terrorists were either crew members of the boats used by the attackers or financiers of the 26/11 attack.

The move to place 19 LeT terrorists in the list apparently came following the Paris-based global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog's recent decision to retain Pakistan on its grey list till February 2021.

The Financial Action Task Force made the decision after Islamabad failed to fulfill its six key obligations, including failure to take action against two of India's most wanted terrorists — Jamat-ud-Dawa (JuD) chief Hafiz Saeed and Jaish-e-Mohammed head Masood Azhar.

The security agencies have prepared a list of over 1,200 most wanted/high profile terrorists in

Pakistan to enable more coordination among authorities to go after them, officials from the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) told PTI. The FIA, Pakistan's top investigating agency, has been probing the Mumbai terror attack case since 2009 and is looking for the 19 "most wanted terrorists" involved in the deadly terror assault that sent shockwaves across the country and even brought India and Pakistan to the brink of a war.

In November 2008, 10 LeT terrorists sailed into Mumbai from Karachi and carried out coordinated attacks, killing 166 people and injuring over 300. Nine of the attackers were killed by police while lone survivor Ajmal Kasab was caught and hanged after trial in India. On the 12th anniversary of the Mumbai terror attack, its mastermind Saeed is in jail in Lahore, serving a collective over 21-year sentence under terror financing charges. Saeed, a UN designated terrorist whom the US has placed a USD 10 million bounty on, was arrested on July 17 last year. Saeed-led JuD is the front organisation for the LeT.

And the LeT operations commander Zakir Rehman Lakhvi has been operating with impunity in the country after securing bail in the Mumbai terror attack case over five years ago.

‘Ethiopia to begin final phase of Tigray offensive’

REUTERS

Addis Ababa/Nairobi, Nov 26: The Ethiopian military will begin the "final phase" of an offensive in the rebellious northern Tigray region, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said Thursday, hours after an ultimatum for Tigray forces to surrender expired.

The government gave the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) 72 hours on Sunday to lay down their arms or face an assault on Mekelle, the regional capital of 500,000 people. Rights groups raised concerns for civilians caught up in military operations in which thousands are already believed to have died since fighting began on Nov. 4. Reuters was not immediately able to reach the TPLF for comment. Claims by all sides have been impossible to verify because phone and internet connections to the region are down and access to the area is tightly controlled. "The 72-hour period granted to the crim-



inal TPLF clique to surrender peacefully is now over and our law enforcement campaign has reached its final stage," Abiy tweeted, adding that civilians would be spared and thousands of fighters had already surrendered. The TPLF has denied its fighters are surrendering. Abiy's office said authorities had begun distributing aid in areas under the control of the federal government in the Tigray region. Four camps for displaced persons were being established. A statement added: "This humanitarian assistance will now be further reinforced with the opening of a humanitarian access route

to be managed under the auspices of the Ministry of Peace." Nearly 43,000 Ethiopian refugees have fled over the border to Sudan, though the flow has dropped from many thousands per day to several hundred in the past few days, according to data from the UN refugee agency analysed by Reuters. Ethiopian refugees arriving in Sudan have told aid workers that other Ethiopians fleeing fighting have been prevented from crossing, two humanitarian sources told Reuters. It was not immediately clear who in Ethiopia was blocking the refugees from crossing, one of the sources said.

"As far as we know, the border remains open," the UN humanitarian coordinator in Ethiopia, Catherine Sozi, told Reuters. Abiy has said refugees are welcome to return. An aid worker at the border crossing point of Hamdayet, in Sudan, said they witnessed Ethiopian soldiers on Wednesday "screaming" at refugees that it was safe to return home.

WHO reminds all to get more active

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Geneva, Nov 26: As the coronavirus leaves many people housebound and many Americans sit to feast for Thanksgiving, the World Health Organization says people need to get more active, insisting that up to 5 million deaths worldwide could be avoided each year if people would run, walk and simply move more.

The UN Health agency, launching updated guidelines on sedentary behaviour, is pointing to figures that one in four adults — and four in five adolescents — don't get enough physical activity, a situation that's complicated by the COVID-19 crisis that has shut up many peo-

ple indoors.

It recommends at least 21-2 hours of "moderate to vigorous aerobic activity" for adults per week, and an hour per day for kids and teens. A lack of physical activity leads to extra health care costs of \$54 billion per year; plus another \$14 billion in lost productivity, WHO said.

The findings come as the Geneva-based agency, which is coordinating the global response to the coronavirus pandemic, released an update on "WHO Guidelines on physical activity and sedentary behavior" — building upon and expanding recommendations in the previous guidelines published a decade ago.

"Physical activity of any type

and any duration can improve health and well-being, but more is always better," said Dr. Ruediger Krech, WHO's director of health promotion.

"If you must spend a lot of time sitting still, whether at work or school, you should do more physical activity to counter the harmful effects of sedentary behavior." Regular physical activity is important to help prevent heart disease, diabetes and cancer while also reducing symptoms of depression and anxiety, and "boosting brain health," WHO said in a statement. People aged over 65 should focus on balance, coordination and muscle strength "to help prevent falls," it said.

A THIRD OF ENGLAND FACES TOUGHEST COVID CURBS

AGENCIES

London, Nov 26: More than 20 million people across large swathes of England will be forced to live under the toughest category of COVID-19 restrictions when a national lockdown ends December 2, while London was placed in the "high alert" second-toughest tier.

Health minister Matt Hancock Thursday announced final details of a regional system set to take effect when blanket restrictions on England's 55 million population end after a month-long lockdown dictating the terms of daily life for the country's citizens and businesses. "Hope is on the horizon but we still have further to go so we

must all dig deep. The end is in sight, we mustn't give up now," Hancock told parliament, alluding to growing prospects for a vaccine against the coronavirus in the coming months.

Britain has Europe's highest official death toll from the COVID-19 pandemic and has been hit hard by a second wave. The government's response on lockdown rules, procurement and testing has been criticised as disjointed, expensive and slow. "We must follow these new rules and make sure that our actions today will save lives in future and help get our country through this," Hancock said. Thursday's decision had been keenly awaited by businesses across the country who



ability to trade in the critical pre-Christmas period will be affected. Hospitality is one of the large sectors that will suffer the most in higher tiers.

Hancock said cases were rising in parts of the capital and needed to be brought under control.

London will be in tier 2; it was also in tier 2 before the national lockdown

was imposed, although a tighter set of rules for each tier was announced earlier this week.

For London, this means no mixing of households indoors and a maximum of six people permitted to meet outdoors, hospitality venues can only offer alcohol alongside a substantial meal, and attendance will be tightly limited at sporting events. PRE-CHRISTMAS 'SIGH OF RELIEF': "Many businesses across London and the Square Mile will be breathing a collective sigh of relief now that they will be able to trade in the run up to Christmas," said City of London Corporation Policy Chairwoman Catherine McGuinness.

However some large regions of England, including the northern city of Manchester and the prosperous southeastern county of Kent, were placed in tier 3, the most restrictive, where the rate of infection is highest.

In tier 3, hospitality venues must remain closed, except for takeaway services.

"This will cause real hardship for people whose jobs will be affected and risk the loss of many businesses," Mayor of Greater Manchester Andy Burnham said. The decisions have been made according to five criteria, including the pressure on health services in each region and the rate of change in positive coronavirus cases.

of the day quote

A country which has seen decades where the poor were disenfranchised to receive access to banking credit and facilities today celebrates the fact that under the MUDRA Yojana over ₹10L cr has been leveraged, thereby giving birth between the year 2015 to 2018 (to) 51 lakh new entrepreneurs

SMRITI IRANI | UNION MINISTER

The future of the world is also the responsibility of the G20. G20 countries as a grouping must guide and lead the world by addressing climate change and working towards universal healthcare

SURESH PRABHU | INDIA'S SHERPA TO G20

Majority of players in the gems and jewellery sector are MSMEs. We need to come forward to augment their efforts in marketing, packaging logistic and access to low-cost finance

PIYUSH GOYAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Raymond to raise ₹40cr

New Delhi: Textile and apparels firm Raymond Ltd Thursday said its committee of directors has approved raising of ₹40 crore through private placement of non-convertible debentures. The committee of directors has approved allotment of 400 secured listed rated redeemable non-convertible debentures (NCDs) of face value ₹10,00,000 each at par, Raymond Ltd said in a regulatory filing. The NCDs will have a coupon rate of 8.85 per cent, it added.

Activa 6G special edition launched

New Delhi: Honda Motorcycle and Scooter India Thursday said it has launched a special edition of its scooter Activa 6G, with price starting at ₹66,816 (ex-showroom Gurugram), to commemorate twenty years of the Activa brand in the country. Celebrating the success of Activa's 20-years unparalleled journey of leadership and trust of over two crore Indian customers, the company has launched the special 20th-anniversary edition of Activa 6G, HMSI said in a statement.

M&M announces share swap deal

New Delhi: Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd (M&M) Thursday announced a share swap deal with TVS Automobile Solutions Pvt Ltd to merge its multi-brand car and two-wheeler service venture -- Mahindra First Choice Services Ltd -- with TASL. Under the transaction, M&M will acquire 2.76 per cent stake in the TVS group firm TASL, which is into multi-brand automotive aftermarket and related services, for about ₹35 crore.

Fidelity invests in Nykaa

Mumbai: Omnichannel retailer Nykaa Thursday said global asset manager Fidelity has invested in the company through a secondary sale of shares by existing investors and employees. The city-based company, which had achieved 'unicorn' status through an earlier fund-raising round which valued it at USD 1.2 billion, did not disclose the quantum of funds or the valuation at which Fidelity Management and Research Company invested.



Digital infrastructure has become indispensable to the functioning of society. India can create \$1 trillion of economic value using digital technology by 2025
AMITABH KANT | CEO, NITI AAYOG

'SMARTPHONE SHIPMENTS TO RETURN TO GROWTH'

As consumer spending shifts from travel, dining out and general leisure to consumer electronics during the pandemic, the global smartphone market is expected to return to growth during the holiday quarter this year amid strong push towards 5G



GREEN ENERGY SECTOR

PM sees \$20bn annual investment

AGENCIES

Chennai, Nov 26: Prime Minister Narendra Modi said Thursday he expects the energy-hungry country's burgeoning renewable energy sector to require an annual investment of \$20 billion a year.

"Demand for energy in India will keep growing. There are huge renewable energy deployment plans for the next decade," Modi told the third global RE-Invest conference.

India's green energy capacity, which encompasses solar, wind, bio-power, and small and large hydropower, is currently at 136 GW. That is expected to increase to 220 GW by 2022, Modi said.

"These are likely to generate business prospects of the order of \$20 billion a year," he said, adding that the country's green energy sector has attracted investments of \$64 billion over the last six years.

While India has increasingly adopted renewable energy, it is also home to some of the world's most



polluted cities due to its longtime heavy reliance on coal and other fossil fuels. The capital New Delhi has the world's dirtiest air, with millions choking every winter due to a hazy smog arising from burning of farm stubble, coal-fired plants and car emissions.

Modi said the South Asian nation was among the few countries on track to meet a goal of the 2015 Paris agreement of capping the rise in average temperatures to well below 2 degrees Celsius before the end of the century. He did not elaborate. The virtual conference was also attended by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte and senior government officials from Britain and Denmark.

Flipkart partners AWPO to onboard Army veterans



AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 26: Walmart-owned Flipkart Thursday said it has collaborated with the Army Welfare Placement Organisation (AWPO) to onboard ex-Army personnel across its value chain. As part of the FlipMarch initiative, Flipkart has partnered with the AWPO to identify and onboard selected candidates in roles across the organisation, it said in a statement.

Selected personnel will be offered customised induction, sensitisation programmes and curated learning programmes to enable a seamless transition and help them learn the nuances of the various corporate job roles, it added. Flipkart's hiring of ex-servicemen will help provide opportunities to new career paths and offer more options post serving in the armed forces, it said.

"Flipkart is a socially responsible organization which works towards the development of the society and its stakeholders. We have several ex-members of the Armed forces leading important charters here at Flipkart, and we are delighted to announce FlipMarch to take this initiative ahead," Flipkart Chief People's Officer Krishna Raghavan said.

Raghavan added that the loyalty, discipline and risk-taking ability of the members of the armed forces are of great value to Flipkart and will play a crucial role in building a robust organisation. "This partnership brings together two influential service providers serving the nation - a leading home-grown e-commerce marketplace and another providing opportunities to Indian Army Veterans," Major General Deepak Sapra, managing director of AWPO, said.

Economic recovery 'stronger' than expected

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 26: After the 23.9% GDP contraction in the April-June quarter following the COVID-19 pandemic, economic recovery momentum has been stronger than expected, Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das said Thursday.

Das, however, said that we need to be watchful of the demand momentum sustaining after the festivities as well, and also warned of downside risks to growth coming from a rise in virus infections in select pockets.

The heavy contraction in Q1 was attributed to the near-complete chilling of all economic activity in the wake of one of the strongest lockdowns enforced anywhere in the world. The RBI, which has introduced many unconventional measures to aid recovery apart from cutting key rates by 1.15%, expects the economy to shrink by 9.5% in FY21.

"After witnessing a sharp contraction in the economy by 23.9% in Q1 and a multi-speed normalisation of activity in Q2, the Indian economy has exhibited stronger than expected pick-up in momentum of recovery," Das said, speaking at the annual day event of



Foreign Exchange Dealers' Association of India (FEDAI).

"We need to be watchful about the sustainability of demand after festivals and a possible re-assessment of market expectations surrounding the vaccine," he added.

Analysts at Icmr, a rating agency, had earlier this week raised doubts

After witnessing a sharp contraction in the economy by 23.9% in Q1 and a multi-speed normalisation of activity in Q2, the Indian economy has exhibited stronger than expected pick-up in momentum of recovery

SHAKTIKANTA DAS | GOVERNOR, RBI

over the sustainability of demand and attributed the spurt to pent-up requirements following the lockdowns and also the festivities.

In what can assuage some concerns following the inflation overshooting the upper end of the RBI's target band for many months, Das reiterated the rate-setting panel's resolve to "see

Google India FY20 rev rises 35% to ₹5,593.8cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 26: Tech giant Google saw its India revenues grow 34.8% to about ₹5,593.8 crore in 2019-20 over the previous financial year, as per regulatory documents.

Google India's total income was at ₹4,147 crore in the financial year ended March 31, 2019, according to Registrar of Companies filing shared by market intelligence firm Tofler.

The net profit was higher by about 23.9% at ₹586.2 crore in FY20 as compared to ₹472.8 crore in the preceding fiscal, it added.

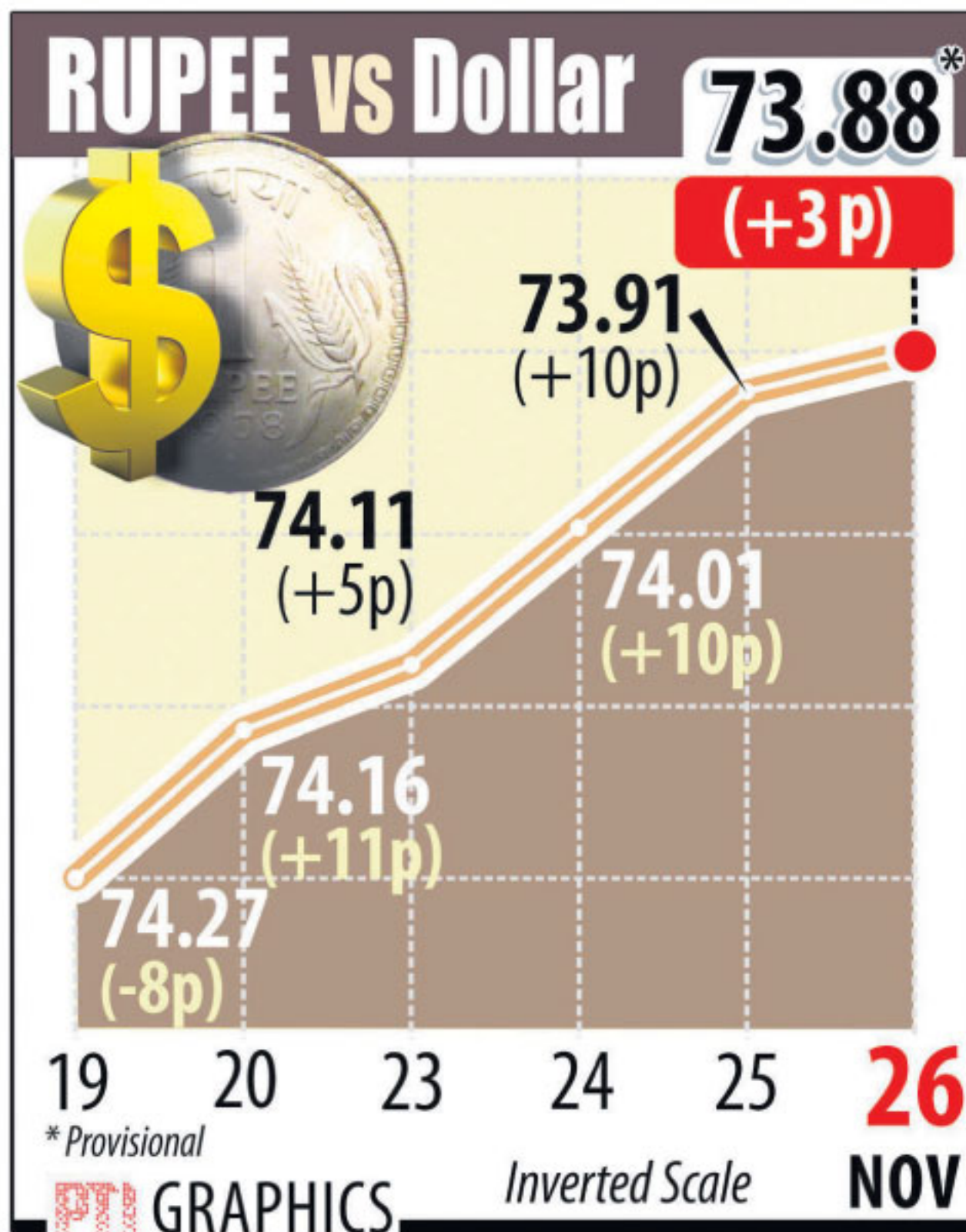
"The Board is glad to inform you that during the period beginning from April 1, 2019, and ending

March 31, 2020, the company has achieved a turnover (revenue from operations) of ₹3,947 million, which is higher than the earlier year of ₹39,928 million," the filing said.

Google India's total expenses rose 30.4% to ₹4,455.5 crore in FY20 from ₹3,416.5 crore in 2018-19.

When contacted, a Google India spokesperson said: "In the FY19-20 financial year, Google India made a pre-tax profit of ₹11,383 million, resulting in ₹3,020 million of corporate income taxes payable, and invested almost ₹4 billion in our Indian operations".

Google India is engaged in the rendering of IT and IT-enabled services to its Group Companies engaged in the internet industry.



AMAZON TUSSLE

'Not every development material event for disclosure'

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 26: Kishore Biyani-led Future Retail Ltd Thursday accused e-commerce giant Amazon of adopting a media strategy of "having every development reported and converted into a line of communication with stock exchanges" regarding the Amazon-Future Coupons' arbitration proceedings in Singapore.

The Court of Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAC) had turned down a plea of Future Retail Ltd (FRL) to be excluded from being a party to arbitration. In a regulatory filing dis-



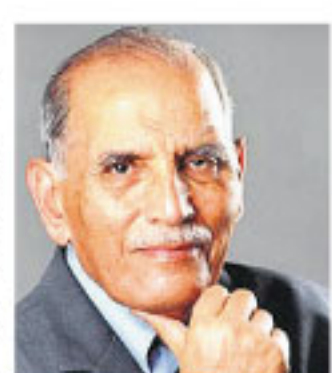
closing the development, FRL said, "...This disclosure is being made out of abundant caution to avoid any speculation given Amazon's media strategy of having every development reported and converted into a line of communication with stock exchanges." FRL said it is "in receipt of a communication dated 25th November, 2020

IT industry pioneer and TCS founder FC Kohli dead

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 26: Faqir Chand Kohli, who sowed the seeds of the \$190-billion IT industry, has passed away Thursday. He was 96. The sector's largest company TCS, of which he was the founding chief executive, announced the death of Kohli and said it was the insistence of JRD Tata which got Kohli to join the Tata Group, which now counts on its infotech arm for a bulk of resources.

Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran termed Kohli as a "true legend" who laid the foundation of what has been a "spectacular IT revolution" and set the stage for a dynamic modern economy that we enjoy today.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 26: The income tax department will validate with the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) the unique document identification number (UDIN) of chartered accountants when they upload tax audit reports, the finance ministry said Thursday.

To curb fake certifications by non-CAs misrepresenting themselves as chartered accountants, the ICAI in 2019 made generation of UDIN from the ICAI website mandatory for every kind of certificate and tax audit report and other attests made by their members as required by various regulators. The ministry said that in line with the ongoing initiatives of the income tax department for integrating with other



government agencies and bodies, income-tax e-filing portal has completed its integration with the ICAI portal for validation of UDIN generated from the ICAI portal by the chartered accountants for documents certified/attested by them.

Income-tax e-filing portal had already factored mandatory quoting of UDIN with effect from April 27, 2020, for documents certified/attested in compliance with the Income Tax Act, 1961 by a chartered accountant.

"With this system level integration, UDIN provided for the audit reports/certificates submitted by the chartered accountants in the e-filing portal shall be validated online with the ICAI," the ministry added. It said this will help in weed-ing out fake or incorrect tax audit reports not duly authenticated with the ICAI.

'INDIA CAN BEAT CHINA IN LOW-COST MANUFACTURING'

INDIAN INDUSTRY CANNOT BE COMPETITIVE UNLESS THE PROMOTERS AND MANAGERS TREAT WORKERS AS PARTNERS, ARGUED BHARGAVA

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 26: India has the capability to become a lower cost producer than China if the industry and the government work together, Maruti Suzuki India Chairman RC Bhargava said Thursday.

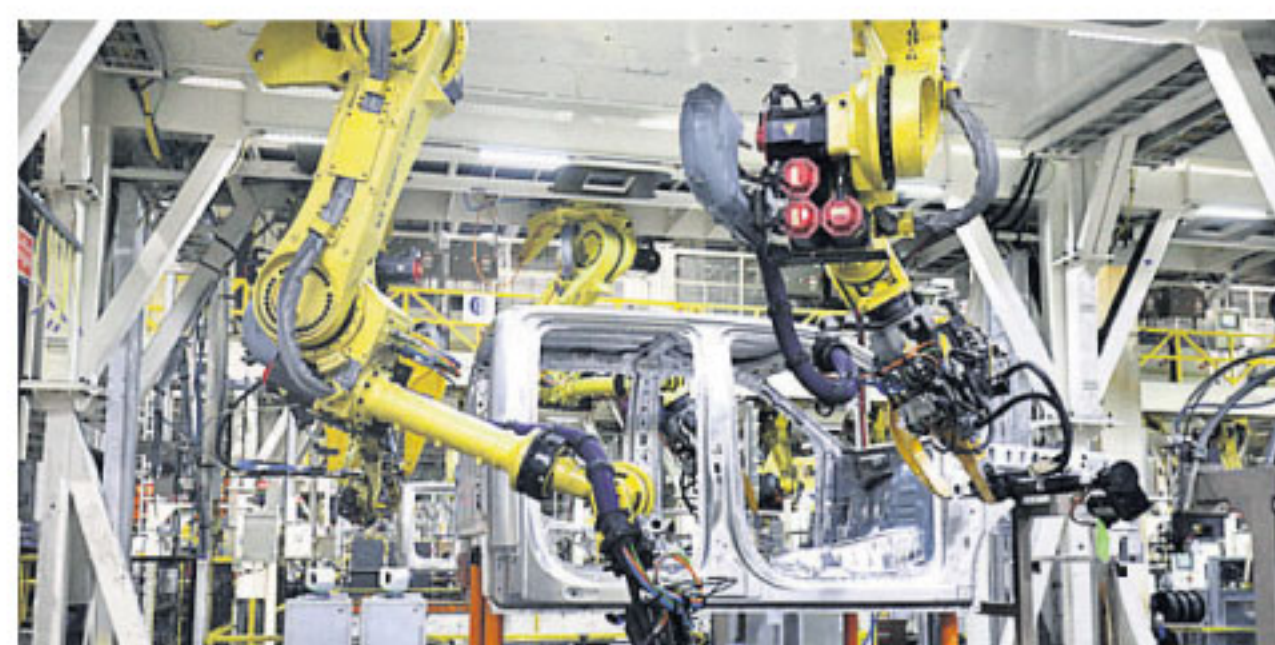
Bhargava presented his ideas on making Indian manufacturing globally competitive at an online dialogue with the country's management leaders organised by All India Management Association (AIMA).

Bhargava argued that the only objective of government policies has to be to increase the competitiveness of Indian industry so that it can make things at the lowest cost and the best quality in the world. "The more the industry can sell, the more jobs will be created in the econ-

omy," he said.

He pointed out that Maruti Suzuki produces more cars each year without adding to its workforce, but the increased sales of cars each year create more jobs in the service economy. Bhargava said that there is fault in the policy thinking that focuses on job creation by each sector instead of job creation in the total economy.

With regard to states reserving jobs in manufacturing for locals, Bhargava said that it is an anti-competitive step. The LeaderSpeak session, which was 33rd in the series, was moderated by Harsh Pati Singhania, President, AIMA and Vice Chairman and Managing Director, JK Paper Ltd, while Rekha Sethi, Director General, AIMA, anchored the session.



The protection for the MSME sector has been the bane of Indian manufacturing, according to Bhargava. He argued that the MSMEs have to be as globally competitive as the large companies because the supply chain determines overall competitiveness. He said

that the government should understand that the small-scale businesses in manufacturing and the services are different animals and must be treated differently by the policymakers. Indian industry cannot be competitive unless the promoters and managers treat workers

as partners, argued Bhargava. He pointed out that Maruti owes its success to explaining to its workers that they will prosper if the company grows and backing that with policies and actions that delivered income and career growth to the employees. He said that Indian workers had been protected and pampered by the government and the courts before 1991 and the managements themselves had made no attempt to educate workers about what they would gain if the company grew.

Indian industry struggles with high cost and low efficiency in every area because of the nature of politics in the country, according to Bhargava. He said that not only the logistics, but India's competitiveness is lower through entire infrastructure because of government

control. The cost of finance is also high in India because of government ownership of banks, which results in high lending rates and loss of competitiveness of Indian industry, he added.

The lack of trust between the people and the industry is a major constraint on policymaking, he said, adding that that when people see promoters and their families using companies for their own benefit instead of benefit of all stakeholders, they suspect politicians who support the private sector.

However, he expressed satisfaction with the government for supporting private industry and talking about building trust. "Big industrialists have to win trust. The government cannot do it for them," he said.



BACK IN BLUE

Rohit-less India venture into unknown against mighty Oz as Tour Down Under embarks today with 1st ODI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sydney, Nov 26: A new world and a different shade of retro blue awaits a circumspect Indian cricket team which re-enters the international arena without a white-ball colossus in Rohit Sharma, facing the might of a menacing Australia in the first ODI here, Friday.

The absence of an injured Rohit will certainly leave a gaping hole at the top of the order, something that skipper Virat Kohli wouldn't have fancied at the onset of a gruelling two-month tour.

Kohli's men, who had been on a COVID-enforced international break since the disastrous away series against New Zealand that ended early March, now kick-start their international calendar in a series where a lot of probing questions are expected to be asked.

For those who believe in superstition, the return of the 1992 World Cup's navy blue jersey isn't a good omen as one of India's worst performances (7th in 9 teams) happened in that particular edition.

For the more pragmatic, it will be more about how Kohli's men get their combination right in the absence of Rohit, whose injury has been a topic of national debate.

Whether it's the young Shubman Gill or the slightly more experienced Mayank Agarwal, whoever



Shikhar Dhawan's selfie with new Team India jersey, which takes back to 1992 World Cup

partners an in-form Shikhar Dhawan, the challenge of facing a Mitchell Starc or a Pat Cummins first up will still be an onerous one.

So 'King Kohli' again has his task cut out as he gears up to combat a high quality pace attack, which is likely to be complemented by the wrist-spin of Adam Zampa, who has at times been the Indian captain's nemesis.

Facing an Australia team in their own backyard with a Steve Smith, who is getting back his rhythm, an eternally hungry David Warner and a future great in Marnus Labuschagne isn't the best of propositions and thus some priorities

will be tested.

For the next two years, 50-over cricket is the least important format, so will it be a 'win-at-all-costs' approach by Kohli and coach Ravi Shastri or a more easygoing mindset keeping the Test series in mind.

For starters, Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami could both start but the team management may have to rest one of the two alternately, keeping in mind their importance in the more traditional format.

Hence Shardul Thakur and Navdeep Saini need to up their respective games by a few notches if one of the two seniors are rested.

But do they have the wherewithal to trouble a world class Australian top-order, which can be destructive on most days?

Then there will be an acid test in store for KL Rahul, a stylish batsman, who will have to find those gaps with ease, expect his skipper to have a ear for his suggestions and take those tricky DRS calls while successfully reading Yuzvendra Chahal's googlies behind the stumps.

An enviable template has been set by 'that genius from Ranchi' and Rahul, of all people, will be the first to admit that his position is an unenviable one.

It's an inspired move to ensure an extra batting or bowling option that will lend the necessary balance to side, something that has been com-

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

AUSTRALIA: Aaron Finch (C), David Warner, Steve Smith, Marnus Labuschagne, Glenn Maxwell, Marcus Stoinis, Alex Carey, Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc, Adam Zampa, Josh Hazlewood, Sean Abbott, Ashton Agar, Cameron Green, Moises Henriques, Andrew Tye, Daniel Sams & Matthew Wade.

ODI	Date	Venue	Time (IST)
1st	Nov 27	Sydney	9:10 AM
2nd	Nov 29	Sydney	9:10 AM
3rd	Dec 2	Canberra	9:10 AM

MOST RUNS (CURRENT SQUAD)
IND: Virat Kohli; 629 runs (15 inns)
AUS: Steve Smith; 467 runs (7 inns)

MOST WICKETS (CURRENT SQUAD)
IND: Yuzvendra Chahal; 6 wkts (1 inns)
AUS: Mitchell Starc; 12 wkts (6 inns)

LOWEST TOTALS (IN AUS)
INDIA: 63; Sydney; 1981

HEAD-TO-HEAD	IND	AUS	NR
Matches	140	52	78
Mat	51	13	36

HIGHEST SCORES (IN AUS)
INDIA 331/4; Sydney; 2016

AUSTRALIA 359/5; Sydney; 2004

AUSTRALIA 101; Perth; 1991

promised a bit because of Hardik Pandya's inability to bowl due to an earlier case of stress fracture.

If it is Pandya's explosive hitting at No.6 or 7 that will give his captain the confidence to play two spinners, Shreyas Iyer's show at No.4 during the last tour remains a feel good factor for the visitors.

Chahal could be the man that the Australian middle-order, espe-

cially the likes of Marcus Stonis, Glenn Maxwell and Alex Carey, would be wary of.

But in the absence of a steady death bowler like Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Bumrah will once again be expected to carry the maximum workload. The premier slinger wouldn't mind if rival skipper Aaron Finch once again find him in his nightmares.

Bayern, City, Real win; Reds stunned

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Nov 26: After the Champions League paused to pay tribute to Diego Maradona, defending champion Bayern Munich and Manchester City won to advance to the knockout rounds.

The Argentina legend's death was announced two hours before the first games kicked off. A minute's silence was observed by players before each of the eight games, which were all played in empty stadiums because of the coronavirus pandemic Wednesday.

Bayern's 3-1 win over Salzburg included Robert Lewandowski's 71st Champions League goal, tied for third all-time with Real Madrid great Raul. Bayern's victory was their 15th straight in the CL dating to the start of last season.

Lewandowski opened the scor-

ing in the 43rd minute before Kingsley Coman doubled the lead in the 52nd. Then Marc Roca was sent off before Leroy Sane struck the third Mergim Berisha pulled one back for Salzburg.

Bayern's maximum 12 points in Group A is seven clear of Atletico Madrid, who were held 0-0 at home to Lokomotiv Moscow.

City's 1-0 win, courtesy Phil Foden's goal, at Olympiakos means six elite teams are already into the last 16 with two rounds of the group stage still to play. Barcelona, Juventus, Chelsea and Sevilla advanced Tuesday. Liverpool wasted the chance to join them, as the 2019 champion lost 0-2 at home against Atalanta.

Eden Hazard's seventh-minute penalty in a 2-0 win at Inter Milan helped Real Madrid getting back on track after a shaky start to the campaign.

Sylla late goal helps NEUFC salvage draw



Kwesi Appiah

AGENCIES

Goa, Nov 26: NorthEast United FC (NEUFC) came back from a two-goal deficit to snatch a point from Kerala Blasters in their second game of the ISL season Thursday in Bambolim.

Sergio Cidoncha (fifth minute) and Gary Hooper (45th) gave Kerala Blasters a two-goal lead in the first half but Kwesi Appiah (51st) and Idrissa Sylla (90th) made sure that NEUFC ended the night with a point.

Kerala Blasters looked dominant right from the off and found the net in the fifth minute of the match before NEUFC could settle in. Seityasen Singh sent a curling free-kick from the right flank and skipper Cidoncha met the delivery with a brilliant header.

Vicuna's men could have doubled the lead in the 23rd minute when Cidoncha set up the perfect ball for Hooper inside the box. The move started with a backpass from Khassa Camara which was intercepted by Hooper. The striker went forward with the ball and passed it on to his right to Cidoncha who quickly returned the favour. However, the former Norwich City striker failed to convert a tap-in from within the six-yard box.

NEUFC started to look dangerous after the first 30 minutes and created a big chance to equalise. Ashutosh Mehta latched onto a through ball from Gallego as he entered the penalty box from the right side and tried to push the ball into the net but it rolled wide.

In the 45th minute, the Highlanders were dealt a huge blow when Rakesh Pradhan brought down Puitea to give away a penalty. Hooper converted the spot-kick and made amends for his earlier miss.

NEUFC came back strongly in the second half and pulled one back in the 51st minute thanks to some poor defending by Kerala defenders. Gallego's corner fell on to Appiah inside the box after a miscommunication between Albino Gomes and Bakary Kone. Appiah tried to push the ball into the net first time with his shoulder but Hooper blocked it from the goal line but the Ghanaian did not make a mistake in finding the back of the net from the rebound.

The away side finally restored parity in the 90th minute when Sylla controlled a long ball from Gurjinder Kumar with his chest inside the box and fired it into the net.

Thousands line up to farewell Maradona at Casa Rosada



People line up to attend the wake of Diego Maradona at the presidential palace in Buenos Aires, Thursday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Buenos Aires, Nov 26: Impatient fans were confronting police as thousands lined up to say goodbye to Diego Maradona Thursday at the Argentine presidential mansion staging the funeral.

Fans threw bottles and metal fences at police near the Casa Rosada in the heart of Buenos Aires. Open visitation started at 6:15 am. Local time (0915 GMT) after a few hours of privacy for family and close friends.

Maradona's wooden casket was in the main lobby of the presidential office, covered in an Argentine flag

and a No.10 shirt of the national team. Dozens of other shirts of different football teams were thrown in by visitors who passed by in tears.

Maradona died Wednesday of a heart attack in a house outside Buenos Aires where he recovered from a brain operation November 3.

The first to bid farewell were his daughters and close family members. Then came former teammates of the 1986 World Cup-winning squad including Oscar Ruggeri. Other Argentine footballers, such as Boca Juniors' Carlos Tevez, showed up, too.

The lines started outside the Casa Rosada. At the same time, a wave of



people tried to get ahead and confronted police, who used tear gas to contain them. Bodyguards were stopping fans from taking pictures and controlling access to the building. Many fans were breaking down as soon as they left.

Fans who walked past the casket blew kisses into the air, struck their chests with closed fists, and shouted 'Let's go Diego'. Most, but not all, wore masks due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A giant black screen in front of the Casa Rosada is showing historic photos of Maradona as fans go-

When Diego magic gripped Kolkata

KOLKATA: His promise to bring 'big-time' football to India remained unfulfilled as Diego Maradona died after cheating death more than once, leaving a cricket-mad nation devastated.

A lot many in the 'City of Joy' will recall how a little bulky version of Maradona huffed and puffed during a charity football game here three years ago.

He played against a cricketing demigod in Sourav Ganguly, who was among the first to react to his death in Buenos Aires by saying that he lost his hero.

The Argentine legend had managed to dribble, show glimpses of his deft left foot and even crooned Spanish songs, as he sweated it out with a bunch of school children and bid them adieu with a promise to 'bring football' to India.

In December 2017, he turned up in shorts, enjoyed every bit of the maddening attention even though the gruelling session literally drained him as he was seen drenched in sweat, pouring water on his head.

But he had no complaints and was eloquent in his three-minute Spanish speech. "I'm here for football... It is a big step, that we



Maradona in Kolkata, 2017; (inset) in 2008

take to uplift football in India," he said about his three-day private trip, nearly nine years after his first visit to the city.

He also obliged his many die-hard fans with photographs and did not mind sitting on the pitch for that perfect frame. He then headed straight near the packed galleries and wowed his fans with shooting some footballs in the air.

It was not for nothing that India reacted with shock,

anger and sadness after his heart stopped beating Wednesday.

