



## ACING FLYING KICKS

Actor Disha Patani shares a video that captures her attempting flying kicks with great precision

LEISURE P2



## LOCAL PRODUCTION

India-based Hetero Pharma is all set to produce 100 million doses of Russia's Sputnik V vaccine

INTERNATIONAL P10



## MEN IN BLUE FALTER

Hardik Pandya's superb knock goes in vain as Australia beat India by 66 runs in ODI series opener

SPORTS P12

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Our party never took pollution seriously. It helped. You people were ready with masks even before pandemic hit!

## SHORT TAKES

### Med colleges to reopen from Dec

**Bhubaneswar:** Following a request from Health Ministry, the state government has decided to reopen all medical colleges in the state from December 1. Health and Family Welfare department issued an order in this regard Friday. "After careful consideration and in pursuant to Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoH&FW), the government is pleased to reopen all the medical colleges of the state December 1, 2020," read the order. The medical colleges have been asked to follow all Covid-19 norms and SOPs issued by the state and Central governments.

### 5 Covid patients die in hosp fire

**Ahmedabad:** Five coronavirus patients died after a fire broke out in the ICU of a designated COVID-19 hospital at Rajkot in Gujarat Friday, officials said. The Supreme Court took cognisance of the fire incident and sought a report from Gujarat government on the issue. Gujarat Deputy Chief Minister Nitin Patel said 26 patients at the hospital were rescued and shifted to other facilities. The fire broke out around 12.30 am in the ICU ward located on the first floor of the four-storey Uday Shivanand Hospital in Anand Bungalow Chowk area, where around 31 patients were admitted, Patel added.

### MiG-29K aircraft crashes into sea

**New Delhi:** A MiG-29K trainer aircraft of the Indian Navy crashed into the Arabian sea on Thursday evening following which one pilot went missing while another was rescued, Navy officials said Friday. The incident took place at around 5 pm, they said. One pilot has been rescued and search by air and surface units is in progress for the second pilot," said an official. The Navy has deployed surveillance aircraft and ships to locate the missing pilot. Sources said the Russian-origin jet had taken off from aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya.

# GDP claws back lost ground

## AT -7.5%, ECONOMY REBOUNDS BUT INDIA NOW IN TECHNICAL RECESSION

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Nov 27:** India's economy recovered faster than expected in the September quarter as a pick-up in manufacturing helped GDP clock a lower contraction of 7.5 per cent and held out hopes for further improvement on better consumer demand.

The gross domestic product (GDP) had contracted by a record 23.9 per cent in the first quarter of the 2020-21 fiscal (April 2020 to March 2021) as the coronavirus lockdown pummeled economic activity.

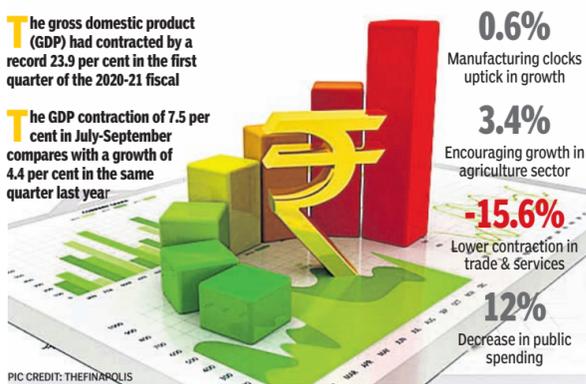
### DEFICIT AT 120% OF ANNUAL TARGET

**The Union government's fiscal deficit further widened to ₹9.53 lakh crore, which is nearly 120 per cent of the annual budget estimate, at the end of October of the current financial year, according to official data released Friday. The deficit widened mainly on account of poor revenue realisation. The lockdown imposed to curb spreading of coronavirus infections had significantly impacted business activities and in turn contributed to sluggish revenue realisation. The fiscal deficit at the end of September 2020 was about 114.8 per cent of the annual budget estimate.**

## SIGNS OF REVIVAL

**The gross domestic product (GDP) had contracted by a record 23.9 per cent in the first quarter of the 2020-21 fiscal**

**The GDP contraction of 7.5 per cent in July-September compares with a growth of 4.4 per cent in the same quarter last year**



PIC CREDIT: THEFINANCIALS

Through the contraction in July-September pushed India into its first technical recession, based on records going back to 1996, a sharp recovery held out hopes for the economy turning around before the end of the fiscal year.

Manufacturing clocked a surprise 0.6 per cent growth in July-September after it had shrunk by a massive 39 per cent in the preceding quarter. Continuing its good showing, the agriculture sector grew by 3.4 per cent, while the trade and services sector

showed lower-than-expected contraction at 15.6 per cent.

Public spending was down 12 per cent. The GDP contraction of 7.5 per cent in July-September compares with a growth of 4.4 per cent in the same quarter last year.

China's economy grew by 4.9 per cent in July-September this year, faster than the 3.2 per cent growth in April-June 2020. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das had Thursday stated that the recovery from the lockdown has been stronger than

expected and the economy could show growth in the fourth quarter.

The improvement in the economy came ahead of next week's interest rate decision by the RBI and coincides with a drop in India's daily virus cases, which have tapered off to half of its peak of more than 97,000 infections a day in mid-September.

Contracting for the eighth consecutive month, the output of eight core infrastructure sectors dropped by 2.5 per cent in October, mainly due to decline in production of crude oil, natural gas, refinery products and steel.

The production of eight core sectors had contracted 5.5 per cent in October 2019, data released by the Commerce and Industry Ministry showed on Friday. The country's foreign exchange reserves rose by USD 2.518 billion to touch a lifetime high of USD 575.29 billion in the week ended November 20, RBI data showed Friday.

In the previous week ended November 13, the reserves had surged by USD 4.277 billion to USD 572.771 billion. In the reporting week, the increase in the forex kitty was on account of a rise in foreign currency assets (FCAs), a major component of the overall reserves.

FCAs rose by USD 2.835 billion to USD 533.103 billion, according to the weekly data by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). **MORE P11**

1800 266 266 1 (tollfree)

## CM for SIT probe into minor's death



Youth Congress activists demonstrate at PMG Square

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 27:** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Friday hinted at a Special Investigative Team (SIT) probe into the kidnapping and murder of a five-year-old girl in Nayagarh district.

Making a statement in this regard, Naveen said, "If SIT investigation is what is required, state government will take steps in this regard and do it immediately."

"My government is always committed for free and fair investigation. I am deeply saddened by the incident and my government is always stands for the rule of law," said the Chief Minister requesting Opposition members of the House to cooperate by participating in the discussion.

Naveen's statement came after both BJP and Congress members created uproar in the House over the alleged murder case for the second day. Soon after the House assembled for the day at 10.30 am, both Congress and BJP members went to the well of the House and raised slogans.

Speaker Surjya Narayan Patro adjourned the House initially till 11.30 am and called for an all-party meeting to restore normalcy in the House. After completion of the all party meet, Chief Minister made his statement amid uproar by Opposition members.

"From the very beginning, we were demanding CBI probe and not an SIT probe. It was suspected that the child was killed for her organs and some people are involved in the murder. We want a fair and free investigation by the CBI and the ouster of the minister (Arum Sahoo)," demanded Leader of opposition in State Assembly Pradipta Nayak.

As per the statement, maximum accidents as well as deaths owing to the road accidents were reported in September when the state unlocked in full swing.

A comparative study of the data showed that more than 800 cases of road accidents were seen during March when the pandemic started. However, as soon as the lockdown was started in April, the cases of road accidents were as low as 231 and a total of 118 deaths were reported from road mishaps.

## 'Delhi Chalo' gathers steam

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Nov 27:** After braving water cannons and clashing with security personnel, thousands of farmers entered the national capital Friday from the Tikri border following permission by Delhi Police to hold peaceful protests at the city's Burari ground.

Carrying flags and shouting slogans, thousands of farmers gathered at various entry points into the national capital in a determined bid to push their way through as part of their 'Delhi Chalo' march while police blocked them with barricades, teargas shells and batons.

Police resorted to lathicharge for a brief time to control protesters who broke barricades. Hours later, they were granted permission to enter Delhi and stage a peaceful protest at Nirankari ground in Burari. "We will not go back till our demands are met. We will stage a peaceful protest now at the designated place. We had to cross several barricades to reach the place but we are ready to face anything," one of the protesting farmers said.

Clashes broke out at multiple places and Delhi's borders resembled a virtual battlezone with rest-



less crowds of farmers, mostly from Punjab and Haryana, milling around and a sea of police personnel keeping them at bay. Drones circled the air and plumes of smoke from teargas shells could be seen from far.

Near Singhu border, three petrol pumps were temporarily closed as a precautionary measure.

"They (police) have been citing COVID-19 guidelines to stop us from marching ahead but we will take all precautions. We will continue with our fight and go ahead with our march despite all challenges ahead," another farmer said.

### 3 farmers attempt self-immolation

**BHUBANESWAR:** Four days after a couple from Nayagarh district attempted self-immolation outside the Assembly building here, three farmers Friday made an unsuccessful bid to set themselves on fire in front of the same structure. The three persons have been identified to be cultivators belonging to Athagarh in Odisha's Cuttack district. They were, however, rescued by security personnel. "Some persons have fraudulently taken loans from the District Cooperative Bank of Athagarh branch in our names. Though we have not actually availed the loans, the bank forced us to repay the loan amount," they alleged.

## Petrol, diesel prices hiked for second day

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 27:** Petrol and diesel prices rose sharply for the second consecutive day at 19 paise and 26 paise per litre respectively here Friday. After the surge, petrol prices stood at ₹82.51 per litre while diesel prices reached ₹78.27 per litre.

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

In five days, petrol price has gone up by 53 paise and diesel rate has risen by 95 paise per litre. Petrol price had been static since September 22, and diesel rate hadn't changed since October 2.

Though the 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 the volatility in the international oil markets from impacting the fuel prices regularly during the pandemic.

OMCs need almost 40 paise per litre increase in the retail price of petrol and diesel.

The benchmark Brent crude has crossed \$48 a barrel on the Intercontinental Exchange (ICE). It has remained over \$43 a barrel. Going by this yardstick, the product prices would have to be increased by up to ₹2 per litre to cover the under recovery on its sale.

### PRICES IN BHUB

Petrol: ₹82.51 (+0.19)  
Diesel: ₹78.27 (+0.26)



**We have invited farmers' organisations for another round of talks December 3. I appeal to them to leave the agitation**

NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR | UNION AGRICULTURE MINISTER

# Will leave White House if EC chooses Biden: Trump

**TRUMP HAS MADE AN UNPRECEDENTED ATTEMPT TO DEFEY THE ELECTION RESULTS BY REFUSING TO CONCEDE AND SPREADING WILD CONSPIRACY THEORIES**

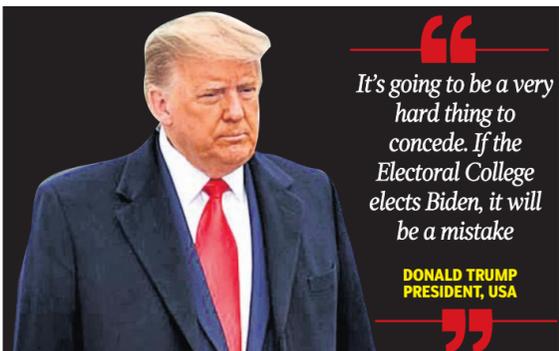
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Washington, Nov 27:** US President Donald Trump said for the first time that he will leave the White House if the Electoral College declares Joe Biden as the winner, but made clear he is not prepared to "concede" the election.

Trump, a Republican, has refused to accept defeat in the November 3 presidential election, and told reporters that it would be "hard" to concede to Biden, a Democrat.

"Certainly I will, and you know that," Trump said when asked by a reporter about leaving the White House if Biden is declared the winner December 14.

"It's going to be a very hard thing to concede because we know there was massive fraud," Trump said,



once again repeating the unsubstantiated claims of voter fraud. The 538-member Electoral College is scheduled to meet December 14

**“It's going to be a very hard thing to concede. If the Electoral College elects Biden, it will be a mistake”**

**DONALD TRUMP PRESIDENT, USA**

ers do not directly choose the president. Instead, they vote for 538 officials, who are allocated to American states based on their population size.

Biden leads Trump 306 votes to 232 under the Electoral College system used to pick US presidents. Biden's tally is far more than the 270 needed to win the race for the White House, and he also leads the popular vote by more than six million.

In his Thanksgiving Day remarks, Trump, however, said it will be a mistake if the Electoral College were to elect Biden.

"It's going to be a very hard thing to concede," Trump told reporters when asked during a press call at the White House what he will do if the Electoral College elects Biden.

"If they do, they made a mistake," he said.

On his plans for his last Thanksgiving in the White House, Trump said, "You can't say what's first or last."

It might be the "first one of the second term," Trump, who is continuing his legal efforts to upend his victory.

Earlier this week, Trump allowed the official start of Biden's transition to power without conceding defeat. Biden is due to be sworn in as president January 20.

State officials have said they do not have any evidence of large-scale voter fraud.

"I don't know what is going to happen. I know one thing, Joe Biden did not get 80 million votes," Trump said, adding that Biden didn't beat former president Barack Obama's vote total with black voters.

## MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	VIATION
SENSEX	44149.72	↓ 110.02
NIFTY	12969.00	↓ 18.00
DOLLAR	74.41	↑ ₹0.13
EURO	88.46	↑ ₹0.51
GOLD	₹47,960	↓ ₹557
SILVER	₹58,744	↓ ₹1129

## WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	29.7°C	28.6°C
MIN	18.2°C	17.4°C
Humidity	92%	76%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Partly cloudy sky	



**JONAS BROTHERS ACCUSED OF BEING MEAN TO BLACK WOMAN**

Pop superstars Jonas Brothers — Kevin, Joe and Nick — have been accused of being mean to a black woman. Garron, a black woman whose profile mentions she is an editor at *The Onion* and a stand-up comedian, claimed that the musician siblings were mean to her, reports *aceshowbiz.com*.

**WHEN CHRIS THOUGHT HE WOULD GET FIRED FROM HARRY POTTER**

Director Chris Columbus had some intense moments while working on the first *Harry Potter* film. Columbus had directed the first two films of the popular franchise based on JK Rowling's novels — *Harry Potter And The Sorcerer's Stone* and *Harry Potter And The Chamber Of Secrets*.



**FORTUNE FORECAST**

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

**ARIES**  
If you're looking to get married, buy the ring today. But before you take the leap, weigh all the pros and cons carefully, says Ganesha. All in all, this may be a day filled with activities related to your relationship and by the time the day ends, you may be on cloud nine!

**TAURUS**  
The time you previously spent on certain activities may not yield results as expected, predicts Ganesha. You will be reluctant to travel today. You may find yourself wanting more space and freedom of expression. A stroll with your sweetheart, hand in hand, may be the highlight of your day, says Ganesha.

**GEMINI**  
You will try very hard to strike a balance between logic and emotions. Though you may succeed in doing so in front of the world, you may not be so discreet with your friends. You will have an excellent time with your sweetheart, but your physical appearance will be a cause of concern to you, says Ganesha.

**CANCER**  
A string of domestic responsibilities awaits you; today, you are about to realise that it is a long, long string. Chances are that this sudden rise in work pressure may also lead to blood pressure problems. Ganesha advises you to stop presuming how people may react to everything.

**LEO**  
You sure love playing a team sport, but that does not diminish the fact that you are a tough player to compete with, says Ganesha. If only they had a rugby team at the local club! You derive a sense of completion from the fact that you have given your best effort to any endeavour.

**VIRGO**  
You will begin your journey on the long, hard road to success, predicts Ganesha. Hard work will be the key to any progress that you make. Avoid short cuts, and all the toil and trouble will pay off with rich returns as recognition and rewards will come your way.

**LIBRA**  
Today promises a definite sense of pride and joy from children who bring home glory, says Ganesha. Fiscal gains are also on the cards, and you may consider it worthwhile to put your money into lucrative businesses.

**SCORPIO**  
In all probability, your mood is extremely hawkish today. Your belligerence may even put off Lady Luck for the time being. Ganesha advises you to stay away from confrontations and troubles of any kind. The evening, however, promises to be relaxing.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Remember that actions always speak louder than words. You will, in all probability, finish your work that has been seeking your attention for long now. You shall also successfully bring continuing disputes to the table and resolve them logically.

**CAPRICORN**  
Success never comes easy, but in your case, it will make an exception, says Ganesha. You will meet with success in social as well as professional life, and this will also make heavy your treasure box. At work, prepare to get loaded with new assignments and simultaneously deal with existing work pressure.

**AQUARIUS**  
Optimism rules today, and you are assured of your success. You are not usually affected by others' opinions, and that is how it should be. But you must keep in mind the inconvenience your decisions may cause people.

**PISCES**  
For those in the creative fields of marketing or advertising, today is an extraordinary opportunity to tweak your marketing mix into bringing in maximum profits with bare minimum efforts. Your health interests will also take priority now, and you will find yourself spending more time in the gym, says Ganesha.

**Sonakshi is a 'licensed scuba diver' now**

**Mumbai:** Actress Sonakshi Sinha is now a certified scuba diver and she says this is something she has been wanting to do for years.

The actress posted a string of pictures on Instagram, and also shared her result of the Open Water Diver Course Final Exam Answer Sheet. The actress scored 100 per cent in the test.

"Knighthood by the holy fins! I am now a licensed scuba diver... something I have been wanting to

do for years, and finally got down to it! My love for the ocean has just grown ever since my first snorkel experience and this is taking it to a whole new level..." Sonakshi captioned the images.

The actress, who is currently holidaying in Maldives thanked her 'super strict' instructor.

"Thank you @oceanic-worldmaldives for giving me my super strict and super cool in-

structor Mohammed, I couldn't have asked for a better teacher (I mean this is the first time I've scored a 100% in ANY exam)! And thanks @grand-parkkodhipparu@kapilmathur1985 (the post certification photographer) for making it happen!!! #scuba-sona #openwaterdiver" she wrote. Sonakshi will next be seen in *Bhuj: The Pride Of India*. The war action film, based on a true story, also stars Ajay Devgn, Sanjay Dutt, Ammy Virk, Nora Fatehi and Sharad Kelkar. It is set during the Indo-Pak war of 1971.

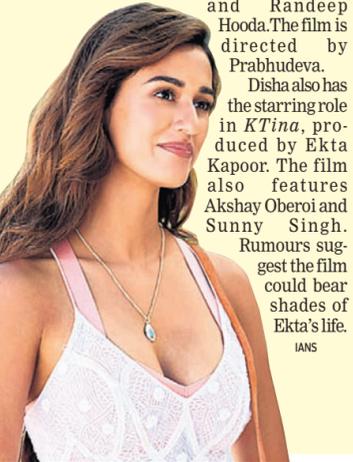


**Disha aces flying kicks**

**Mumbai:** Actress and fitness enthusiast Disha Patani has shared a video that captures her attempting flying kicks and, going by the clip, Disha has aced it, too.

The actress posted the video on Instagram where she is seen pulling off consecutive flying kicks. For the caption, she chose a girl and a sloth emoji. Meanwhile, on the work front, Disha recently wrapped up shooting for *Radhe*, co-starring Salman Khan and Randeep Hooda. The film is directed by Prabhudeva.

Disha also has the starring role in *KTina*, produced by Ekta Kapoor. The film also features Akshay Oberoi and Sunny Singh. Rumours suggest the film could bear shades of Ekta's life.



**Randeep to make digital debut**

**Mumbai:** Bollywood actor Randeep Hooda will make his digital debut with the web-series *Inspector Avinash*, a cop thriller based on real life events of police officer Avinash Mishra.

Directed by Neeraj Pathak and produced by Pathak and Krishan Chowdhry, the show is set in Uttar Pradesh. "I look forward to exploring new challenging roles with each of my characters and *Inspector Avinash* gives me a fabulous opportunity to do that. It's a highly inspiring and interesting role based on true life events of a super cop," Randeep said.

The actor's cop avatar will see him in action in a dramatic retelling of the life of the famed cop dealing with criminal activities of the state. The series is all set to hit the floor in December 2020.

The director says Randeep is ideal for the role of a super cop and will add an interesting dimension to the character.

"We are very excited to have him play the lead. We commence shooting next month in December," Pathak informed.

**'Indian award shows should include films released on OTT'**

**Mumbai:** Actress Bhumi Pednekar is not new to the web space, her film *Dolly Kitty Aur Woh Chamakte Sitare* dropped on OTT earlier this year. She is now awaiting the release of her next film, *Durgamati*, in the digital space.

With OTT making major inroads into the popular psyche, Bhumi feels content driven by the medium deserves to be eligible at various awards ceremonies in India.

"When we started out to make *Durgamati*, we wanted the entertain audiences in cinemas. Then, the pandemic happened and it is now making us realign as an industry. The fact that movie releases have become digital first, is a unique scenario that we are all living with today," she said.

Bhumi added: "Two of my films that are supremely close to my heart have become digital releases, and as an actor, I have realised that these projects are reaching out to audiences worldwide. I am fortunate that *Dolly Kitty Aur Woh Chamakte Sitare* was loved and appreciated by both critics and audiences and I'm hoping they will love *Durgamati* as well."

There is a growing trend to include digital releases at all top awards across the globe. Bhumi feels the trend should be followed in our country, too. "In such an environment, the award shows

of our country should include films that are released on digital platforms. It will be a huge conversation shifter for our industry and a necessary step to acknowledge the hard work that actors have put into making these magical movies," Bhumi said.

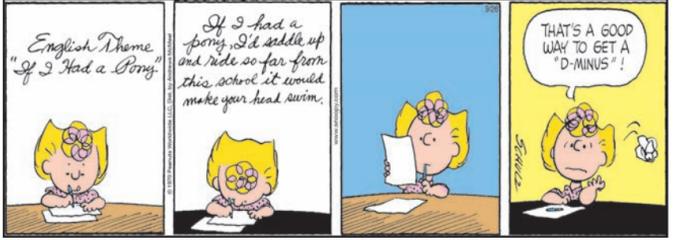
"Prestigious award shows in the West have started recognising pathbreaking digital content, and we should have the same norms even in India. It will be a progressive step that will also benefit the industry to push the envelope in making more cluster-breaking films."

Talking about her upcoming film *Durgamati*, Bhumi said: "Durgamati is one such film and it wowed me on the script level. I have seen the film now, and I can assure you that it is a high concept, content film that will entertain everyone, across age-groups, thoroughly. I can't wait for everyone to see it! I know I have probably worked the hardest for *Durgamati* because it drained me and I loved every bit of the process."

She said doing the film gave her creative satisfaction and she hopes it translates to success when it releases.



**PEANUTS**



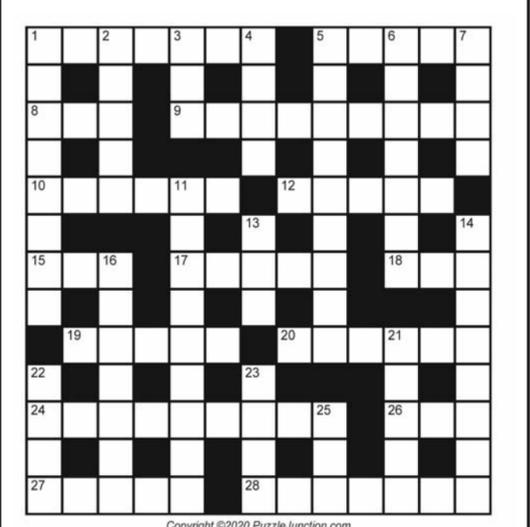
**CALVIN AND HOBBS**



**BREVITY**



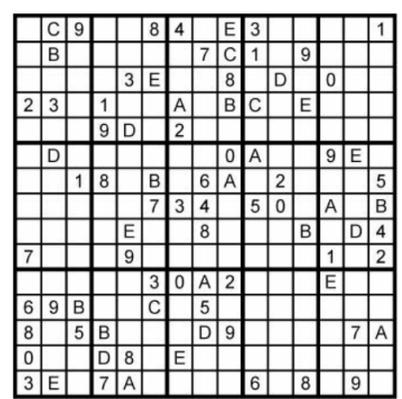
**FUN post CROSSWORD**



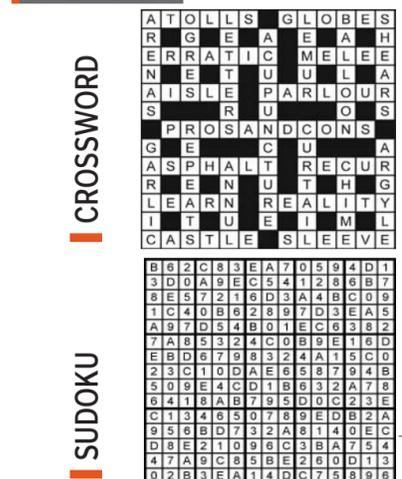
- Across**
- 1 Rabbit homes
  - 5 Avarice
  - 8 Meadow
  - 9 Pantry
  - 10 Reversible pattern fabric
  - 12 Like helium
  - 15 Prefix with natal
  - 17 Preface
  - 18 \_\_\_ mater (brain cover)
  - 19 Pancake topper
  - 20 Fisherman
  - 24 Accentuate
  - 26 Vardalos of "My Big Fat Greek Wedding"
  - 27 Informed
  - 28 Boxing official
  - Down**
  - 1 "Bravo!" (4,4)
  - 2 Bailiwick
  - 3 Canon camera model
  - 4 Plumlike fruit
  - 5 Tyro
  - 6 Act of self-aggrandisement (3,4)
  - 7 Volcano feature
  - 11 Energise
  - 13 Hot time in Haiti
  - 14 Horse-drawn vehicle
  - 16 Chief sanctuary of Zeus
  - 21 Cruise ship
  - 22 Greek cheese
  - 23 Jetty
  - 25 Grimm character

**SUDOKU**

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



**SOLUTIONS**



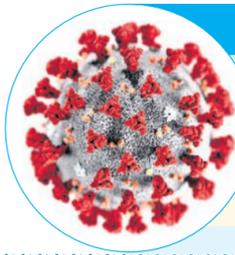
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

# downtown



## BUS TERMINAL PLAN

RDC Anil Kumar Samal, Cuttack Collector Bhawani Sankar Chayani and CMC Commissioner Ananya Das visit Khannagar area in the Silver city for the setting up of a bus terminal, Friday



## COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	6,15,76,403	4,26,06,183	14,42,610
India	93,09,787	87,18,517	1,35,715
Odisha	3,17,239	3,09,747	1,718

# Industries guzzle ₹3,936cr water tax

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 27:** The state government, Friday, informed the Assembly that water tax dues running in crores are pending on several industries of the state leading to huge financial drain on the state exchequer.

The reply came after BJD leader Prafulla Samal raised the issue in the House through an unstarred question. Samal sought to know about the dues pending in terms of water tax on evasive industries.

Water Resource Minister Raghunandan Das submitted a written reply to

## DEFAULTERS GALORE

While the list of defaulters include several big and small private players, it also has a number of government departments too which have failed in payment of the water tax



Some of the big industries whose names were mentioned in the list as water tax defaulters include Tata Steel (Joda), Essar Steel India (Keonjhar), East Coast Railway, Vedanta Aluminium, Mahanadi Coalfields Ltd and others

the query. The minister said that the state has now a total of ₹3,936 crore water tax dues pending on 627 erring industries spread across the state.

As per the statement of the minister, while the list of defaulters include several

big and small private players, it also has a number of government departments too which have failed in payment of the water tax. The government said that the data was upto March 31, 2020.

The minister also said that several cases against the water tax bills have also been filed in the

courts. Some of the big defaulters in the list included private miners and mining ancillary units, state Health department, Industrial Development Corporation of Odisha (IDCO), liquor shops and construction companies among others.

Some of the big industries whose names were mentioned in the list as water tax defaulters include Tata Steel (Joda), Essar Steel India (Keonjhar), East Coast Railway, Vedanta Aluminium, Mahanadi Coalfields Ltd and others.

The minister said that out of the ₹3,936 crore pending dues, lawsuits have been filed by the industries against the dues of ₹3,075 crore. The minister also said that no company has asked for waiver citing bankruptcy.

# 3-hr delay in 21st century's first Nagarjuna Besha

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Puri, Nov 27:** 21st century's first Nagarjuna Besha (warrior attire) of Lord Jagannath and his elder brother Lord Balabhadra at Srimandir's Ratnasinghasan (bejewelled throne) was inordinately delayed by around three hours owing to a dispute between two servitor groups here, an official said Friday.

The Besha, which was scheduled to begin at 4am and complete by 7am, concluded at 10.15am, sources said.

According to sources, the 'Pahuda' ritual of the deities was performed at 1am Friday. What followed was the 'Dwara Phita' ritual which was scheduled to be held at 2am, but was delayed by around 45 minutes. While 'Bhitar Shodha' was completed at 3.25am, Mangal Alati was done at 3.35am. "After a few other rituals, it was around 4.10am when the special attire, weapons and ornaments like Sri Bhujia, Sri Payara, Nakuasi, Karna Kundala prepared by the Chakrakot Balarum Khuntia at Harachandi Sahi in the Pilgrim City reached the Srimandir," added the source.

After performance of the 'Abakash Puja' at 4.35am, the Besha of the deities began at 4.45am, after a delay of 45 minutes. The Besha had just begun when a row erupted between the Khuntia and Simhari servitors.

"Alleging the presence of excess of Simhari servitors at the sanctum sanctorum, Khuntia servitors raised questions on choosing Simhari servitors for safekeeping of the ornaments. This delayed the Besha rituals," said the source, adding that the dispute was, however, resolved following the intervention of the temple administration.

The Besha was completed at 10.15am. While Gopal Ballav was performed at 11.05am, Madhyaan Dhupa and Sakala Dhupa were done at 12.25pm and 1.54pm respectively.

Bhogamandap was scheduled to be completed by 1pm. However, it



A rainbow appears in Puri sky even as the Nagarjuna Besha ritual of Lord Jagannath is being organised at Srimandir, Friday

was also delayed and done at 3pm. Similarly, Besha Olagi was scheduled to be held at 2pm but it began at 3.55pm and concluded at 5pm.

The special attire of the deities has been kept at the Niladri Vihar Museum near the West Gate of the Srimandir, added the official.



Decorative pieces for Nagarjuna Besha being taken to Srimandir in a procession

According to Srimandir chief administrator Krishan Kumar, the delay in Nagarjuna Besha rituals was caused following a dispute between two groups of servitors over a trivial issue. "Will check and ensure all other rituals of the deities are conducted peacefully," the senior IAS officer said.

District Collector Balwant Singh said that the dispute was resolved mutually. The Collector thanked everyone, including devotees and

servitors, for cooperating with the administration in hassle-free conduct of the rare attire of the Lord's.

## The unique ritual

As per the tradition, Lord Jagannath and Lord Balabhadra were decorated with their weapons—wheel, mace and plough for the rare ritual. Besides, decorative pieces made of natural thermocol, tinsel and fabric usually add glitters to the occasion.

## Pandemic blues

This year, however, devotees were deprived of witnessing the rare ritual, which is being organised after a gap of 25 years, as the 12th century shrine has remained out of the bounds for people due to Covid-19 pandemic.

## From the annals of history

Srimandir records claimed that Nagarjuna Besha of Lord Jagannath was held November 26, 1966. The unique ritual was also held in 1967 and 1968. After a gap of 27 years, the ritual was held November 26, 1993. The ritual was last organised at Srimandir November 16, 1994. At least three persons had died in a stampede-like situation on the temple premises during the Nagarjuna Besha ritual of 1993, sources said.

# Banpur ex-CDPO gets three-year RI for graft

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 27:** A special vigilance court here Friday sentenced former child development project officer (CDPO) of Banpur in Khurda to three years rigorous imprisonment for taking bribe of ₹8,740 from an Anganwadi worker in April, 2012. The convict, Raj Kumari Dei, has also been asked by the court to pay ₹15,000 as penalty.

According to sources, the convicted ex-CDPO used to demand bribe from Anganwadi workers of Kumaranga gram panchayat to clear their pending bills. On April 19, 2012, one Bandana Sarangi, an Anganwadi worker of Champadeipur under Banpur block lodged a complaint with the Vigilance SP of Bhubaneswar division in this regard.

## The convicted ex-CDPO used to demand bribe from Anganwadi workers of Kumaranga GP to clear their pending bills

The Vigilance officials laid a trap the next day to catch Dei with proofs. Dei was later caught red-handed while receiving the seized amount from the complainant.

Sanjeeb Dubey, the special vigilance Judge, found Dei guilty after going through the statements of 10 witnesses and material evidences.

She was sentenced to three years of rigorous imprisonment (RI) and was directed to pay ₹15,000 as fine failing which she will be liable to get additional jail term of three months. Public Prosecutor Hemant Kumar Swain carried out the trial on behalf of the Vigilance department.

# Only 7% of DMF funds spent in mining-affected areas

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 27:** The state government has utilised only 7.41 per cent of total fund collected by District Mineral Foundation (DMF) in mining affected areas of 11 mineral-bearing districts.

As per a written reply given by Planning and Convergence Minister Padmanabha Behera in the Assembly, the state government has collected DMF funds to the tune of ₹11,326.57 crore till October this year.

However, the utilisation for various developmental works in areas which are directly affected by mining (within 10 km radius of mines) is only ₹839.87 crore. The total utilisation of DMF funds in all the areas stood at ₹4,704.50 crore.

The expenditure in execution of developmental projects in mining affected areas of Malkangir and Kalahandi districts was ₹100 crore each while the spending in Mayurbhuj was ₹91 crore and



The state govt has collected DMF funds to the tune of ₹11,326.57 crore till October this year

Bargarh ₹88.41 crore.

Ironically, the performance of two mineral-rich districts Keonjhar and Sundargarh was very poor as the utilisation in the directly affected mining areas of the two districts was ₹63.80 crore and ₹63.14 crore, respectively.

The utilisation in other districts was ₹81.30 crore in Angul, ₹85 crore

in Koraput, ₹55.15 crore in Jajpur, ₹77.62 crore in Jharsuguda, ₹34.45 crore in Sambalpur district.

The amended Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act-2015 has made provision of DMF for any district affected by mining-related activities. The fund has been created with contribution from the mining lease holders and it is being utilised for the socio-economic development of the people affected by mining.

The lessees contribute 10 per cent of royalty towards DMF in respect of mining leases granted after January 12, 2015 (blocks received through auction) while the contribution is 30 per cent of the royalty for leases granted before the date.

Drinking water supply, education, healthcare, sanitation, skill development, housing, connectivity, livelihood programmes and environment preservation are some of the priority areas where the government spends the DMF money.

# Manappuram Finance manager grilled over IIFL heist

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Cuttack, Nov 27:** The manager of a branch of Manappuram Finance Ltd has been detained in connection with the robbery of gold and valuables, worth around ₹20 crore, from a branch of IIFL in Cuttack, a senior police officer said Friday.

He is being questioned by the investigators in connection with the robbery, said Cuttack Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Prateek Singh.

The police have now got the court's permission to take five of the seven arrested in the robbery case on remand for three days, he said.



File photo of police probing the IIFL heist

**Since the Manappuram Finance manager was dealing with Amrit for loans, he is now being questioned in this connection**

PRATEEK SINGH | CUTTACK DCP

IIFL's gold appraiser Lala Amrit Ray, arrested Tuesday, is among the five to be questioned in custody, Singh said, adding that it has been ascertained by the investigating

team that he was regularly utilising the mortgaged gold of IIFL to take loans from Manappuram Finance.

"Since the Manappuram Finance

manager was dealing with Amrit for loans, he is now being questioned in this connection," the officer said, without revealing further details.

Singh, however, said that the Manappuram manager could be arrested if, prima facie, his role in the incident is established.

Cash and gold, valued at over ₹20 crore, was robbed from IIFL's Nayasarak branch in Cuttack last week.

At least seven persons, including two employees of the company, have so far been arrested in connection with the case and police have recovered 1kg of gold jewellery and ₹5 lakh in cash from them.

# Utkal VC's thrust on digital infra for varsity's devpt

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 27:** The newly-appointed Vice-Chancellor of Utkal University, Prof Sabita Acharya Friday emphasised on digital infrastructure with an aim to take the premier institution to a new height.

Acharya said this on the occasion of 78th foundation day celebration of Utkal University here. The function was held in the newly-inaugurated Dharmapada Convocation hall on the varsity campus.

At her first official function, Acharya addressed the staff, students and resolved to take the university to new heights of excellence.

The VC said, "Let's all take a pledge to continue working for the development of this magnificent insti-

## Souvenirs 'Utkal Abhidi' and 'Utkal in Media' were released by former VC Soumendra Mohan Patnaik

tution." She sought everyone's co-operation and said expansion of digital infrastructure, better equipment for teaching and learning and cleanliness in the campus will remain her focal points.

## 78TH FOUNDATION DAY



Utkal University Vice-Chancellor Sabita Acharya felicitates her predecessor Soumendra Mohan Patnaik at the foundation day celebration of the varsity

Former VC Soumendra Mohan Patnaik graced the occasion as the Guest of Honour and released a souvenir 'Utkal Abhidi' that captured the achievements of the varsity.

"Utkal University is rising. By becoming the first woman Vice Chancellor of the university, Prof Acharya broke the glass ceiling," said Patnaik while congratulating the new VC.

Under her leadership Utkal will attain great heights with a great sense of responsibility towards the state, he added. The former VC also inaugurated a book 'Utkal in Media',

an anthology of all media publications in the last three years on the occasion.

Chairman of PG Council Basant Kumar Mallik said, "Today is the day we should introspect about our goals, achievements and shortcomings and take an oath to make ourselves better and better in the coming days." University Registrar Avaya Kumar Nayak presented a report on milestones achieved by the varsity last year. He talked about various MoUs signed with international universities through the international office, new courses offered at

## Pradhan for Central varsity tag to Utkal

**BHUBANESWAR:** Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, Friday, wrote a letter to Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal (Nishank) demanding grant of Central University status to Utkal University which observed its 78th foundation day here today.

In the letter, Pradhan said that the university was established in 1943 by the visionary leaders like Maharaja Krishna Chandra Gajapati and Pandit Nilakantaha Das and Godabarisha Mishra. The foundation stone of its 400 acre present campus was laid by first President of India Dr Rajendra Prasad in 1958 and inaugurated by S Radhakrishnan in 1963.

The university is hosting 28 PG departments and 17 self-fi-

nancing courses. It has three constituent colleges and 373 affiliated colleges across nine districts of the state, with the enrollment of almost three lakh students. It was also accredited A+ grade by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) and ranked 96th among universities by national Institute of Ranking Framework (NIRF) in 2020.

"In comparison with Bihar and Andhra Pradesh which have four and three central universities respectively, Odisha has only one. Keeping in mind the university's 75-year-old heritage, I request you to grant the status of central university to Utkal University," Dharmendra said in his letter.

Chandikhol campus, short-term online courses started by HRDC and the infrastructure developed last year. Altogether 167 students have qualified UGC-NET.

"Covid posed a huge challenge before us, but we have tried our best to keep learning and research afloat. We had to rethink our teaching & learning methods due to the pan-

demia," said the Registrar in his address.

The new VC felicitated the superannuated teachers and employees. Director of Student's Welfare Sushanta K Badamali extended the vote of thanks. The function was attended by all teaching, non-teaching staff and students of the university.

**भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान भुवनेश्वर**  
**INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY BHUBANESWAR**  
**9<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CONVOCATION**  
9<sup>th</sup> Annual Convocation of the Institute will be held on **4<sup>th</sup> December, 2020** at Institute campus, Argul, Khordha. Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', Minister of Education, Govt. of India has kindly agreed to grace the occasion as Chief Guest. Degree recipients are requested to visit the Institute website and follow the link <https://www.iitbbs.ac.in/convocation2020> for further information, updates and to complete the requisite formalities for attending the convocation.  
**Registrar**

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# BMC's pvt guards to penalise litterbugs

## STUDENTS' DHARNA

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 27:** In a bid to improve sanitation in the Capital city, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has hired private security agencies to discourage littering and careless disposal of wastes.

Issuing an official order, the civic authority, under 'Mu Safaiwala' campaign has launched the drive at different market places of the city. The agencies hired by the BMC are ordered to coordinate with the enforcement squads of the civic authority and educate or penalise shopkeepers and vendors who are found to be regularly littering in the vicinity.

"We have deployed six security personnel with our enforcement squad. On their first day, Thursday, the security team along with the squad visited market places like Unit 1, Master Canteen, Raj Mahal, Vani Vihar and Rasulgah. The team will continue its visit on regular basis. The inspections may continue even during evening hours



FOR A BETTER CITY

The agencies hired by the BMC are ordered to coordinate with the enforcement squads of the civic authority and educate or penalise shopkeepers and vendors who are found to be regularly littering in their vicinity

The BMC's move of deploying private security personnel came after the civic authority witnessed acute shortage of manpower owing to prioritising containment of the novel coronavirus

The team has been instructed to enforce and educate the owners of business establishments to use dust bins and penalise them if they continue to flout norms

BMC has collected penalties to the tune of about Rs 10 lakh since March this year. Out of this, around Rs 5 lakh penalty was collected on account of violation of sanitation and littering norms.

Meanwhile, the BMC under its intensive sensitization and citizen connect initiatives, Friday, organised a citizen connect programme in ward number 47 and 48. Under the programme, a team of BMC staff, experts, NGO partners, swachh sathis and safaikarmacharis went around the areas like Gopabandhu Sansad back side area and nearby slums and gave message on source segregation, keeping double dust bins in families for dry and wet wastes and making city litter free.

Distribution of leaflets, soaps and promotion of hand washing habit among safaikarmacharies were undertaken. A tableau was engaged to send out source segregation slogan in the area. It is learnt that micro composting centres would be established in these two wards.



Students of self-financing courses stage a sit-in in front of the Ravenshaw University Vice-Chancellor's office in Cuttack seeking reduction in fees, Friday

## Ex-Orissa High Court judge BK Patel new OHRC chairperson

**Bhubaneswar:** The state government Friday appointed former Orissa High Court judge, Justice Bijoy Krishna Patel, as the chairperson of Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC). The post has been lying vacant after the retirement of Justice Bimala Prasad Das November 14, 2020. Justice Patel, a resident of Sundargarh was judge of state high court from 2008 to 2015. "In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (1) of the section 22 of the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993 (Act 10 of 1994), the Governor of Odisha is pleased to appoint Shri Justice Bijoy Krishna Patel, Former Judge of Orissa High Court to be the Chairperson of Odisha Human Rights Commission with effect from the date he assumes charges of his Office," reads the notification by law department.

## Govt amends rules to offer more sops for journalists

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 27:** The Odisha State Working Journalists' Welfare Fund Rules-2006 was amended Thursday. From now onwards, the existing rules will be called as 'Odisha State Working Journalists' Welfare Fund Amendment Rule-2020'. The revised rules will come into effect from the date of publication in the Odisha Gazette.

As per amendment in the welfare fund rules, the state government will sanction ex-gratia of ₹4 lakh to the family after the death of a working journalist.

In addition to health insurance benefits, top-up financial assistance will be sanctioned for treatment of heart, kidney, cancer or other critical illness suffered by a working journalist or any of his/her family members if the medical expenditure exceeds ₹2 lakh.

A working journalist, whose name is submitted or recommended by DIPRO, can avail a home loan up to ₹25 lakh at 3 per cent rate of interest. The subvention will be released annually after repayment of regular installments by the journalist who has taken the loan. A working journalist can get a loan up to ₹50,000 towards purchase of two-wheeler and up to ₹4 lakh for buying four-wheeler at 3 per cent interest rate.

## Gold worth ₹20.14L seized at BPIA

**Bhubaneswar:** Security officials at Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) here Friday seized gold weighing around 400 gram, worth around ₹20.14 lakh. The smuggler has been identified as A Jainulabdeen, who was travelling to Chennai by flight No. 6E 209. CISF personnel detained Jainulabdeen suspecting him during frisking. Later, during examination the passenger was found concealing four pieces of rectangular gold bars wrapped and concealed inside body cavity.

## Abbott launches 'clip delivery system'

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 27:** Abbott, a global healthcare company, has recently launched its clip delivery system, a minimally invasive heart valve repair device, to treat mitral regurgitation in India.

This product puts new technology into the hands of physicians by giving them a life-saving treatment option that may be used for people suffering from mitral regurgitation due to a heart defect or heart failure.

This clip device repairs leaky mitral valves without open-heart surgery and is delivered to the heart through a vein in the leg.

The device clips portions of the leaflets or flaps of the mitral valve together to reduce the backflow of blood (known as mitral regurgitation, or MR), restoring the heart's ability to pump oxygenated blood more efficiently.

Till date, this product has helped in treating more than 1 lakh people suffering from MR worldwide.

Dr. Ravinder Singh Rao, MD, FACC, Director, TAVI and Structural Heart Disease Program, Consultant Interventional Structural Cardiologist, Eternal Hospital, Jaipur said, "Mitral regurgitation with poor left ventricular function carries a poor prognosis. Medicines alone cannot cure this mechanical problem, and only help the heart tolerate it better. Open heart surgeries have risks for some patients. The clip which is catheter based enables a non-surgical mitral valve repair."

# IFS officer Pathak arrested, suspended

PATHAK'S TOTAL PROPERTIES ARE AROUND 435 PER CENT OF HIS KNOWN SOURCES OF INCOME

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 27:** A few hours after the state Vigilance arrested Odisha cadre IFS officer, Abhay Kant Pathak and his son Akash, the state government Friday placed the senior officer under suspension.

On the other hand, the father-son duo was sent to judicial custody till December 9.

The sleuths during one of the biggest raids involving around 150 officers found Pathak possessing disproportionate assets to the tune of ₹9.35 crore.

Meanwhile, the Vigilance directorate in press note revealed that a 20-member SIT has been formed to thoroughly investigate the various facets of the case. The Vigilance team has been questioning the bank officials regarding the huge cash transactions carried out by the father-son duo during the last couple of years. They are also trying to find out Pathak and



IFS officer Abhay Kant Pathak and his son Akash Pathak in police custody

The sleuths during one of the biggest raids involving around 150 officers found Pathak possessing disproportionate assets to the tune of ₹9.35 crore

Vigilance SP Radhakrishnan rubbished Pathak's claims regarding his son getting a monthly salary of ₹1 crore

Enforcement Directorate is likely to probe the source of huge money transactions made by Pathak and his son

his son's investments in mutual funds, various market instruments and benami properties. The travel agencies involved in the booking of chartered flight tickets are being questioned too.

Speaking to media persons,

Vigilance SP Radhakrishnan rubbished Pathak's claims regarding his son getting a monthly salary of ₹1 crore. He said that he failed to produce any documents like salary slip, income tax returns in support of his claims.

## Rope in BYV volunteers for online classes: OPF

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 27:** Odisha Parents' Federation (OPF) has pleaded for engagement of Biju Yuva Vahini (BYV) volunteers to help parents and students in online classes of schoolchildren.

In a letter to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, OPF chairman Basudev Bhatt said, "Schools have been shut since March this year due to Covid-19 pandemic. There is no chance of reopening of schools till December-end. Online classes are the only option for providing education to the students. School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash had revealed that only 31.09 per cent of the total 60 lakh students in government schools are at-

ending to online classes."

Bhatt further claimed that around 50-60 per cent students of private schools affiliated to CBSE, ICSE and BSE/CHSE are attending the online classes. "Non-availability of android phones and data cards and poor network are the main hindrances for online classes," he said.

In the letter, Bhatt claimed that the state Cabinet had approved one

sub-scheme namely Biju Yuva Vahini under Biju Sashaktikaran Yojana in March 2018. The aim of this scheme is to promote leadership and the spirit of volunteerism among the youths.

"More than three lakh youths are associated with BYV and the state government has spent around Rs 450 crore from the public exchequer on the initiative. These volunteers should be engaged in facilitating online classes for school students. We hope their engagement will help in increasing the participation of students in online classes. So, we request the S&ME and Sports and Youth Services ministers to engage BYV volunteers to help students and parents for online classes," Bhatt said in the letter.

## Paree case a minor incident: Soumya

**Bhubaneswar:** BJD leader and Khandapada MLA Soumya Ranjan Patnaik Saturday termed the alleged minor girl (Paree) murder case of Nayagarh as a 'minor incident'. Reacting to the questions on the alleged complicity of a Cabinet minister (Arun Sahoo) in the case, Patnaik said, "This was a minor incident. In later stage, police are saying it was a case of murder. Police investigation will reveal involvement of people in the case and the details." As Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has accepted their (opposition) demand for SIT probe into the incident, there is absolutely no reason for the opposition parties to stall the Assembly proceedings, the BJD legislator said.

# State's Covid-19 tally goes past 3.17 lakh

Odisha records 594 fresh coronavirus cases, 14 deaths in 24 hours



Wearing PPE kits, police personnel gears up to avoid any law and order situation at PMG Square area

PNN/ AGENCIES

### IN SHORT

Khurda reported the highest 56 new cases, followed by Cuttack and Sundargarh with 55 cases each

Sundargarh and Angul reported four deaths each, followed by Balasore and Khurda (two each) while one patient each died in Nayagarh and Puri

Khurda has recorded the highest number of fatalities with 288 deaths so far, followed by Ganjam (240), Sundargarh (145), Cuttack (134) and Puri (101)

Odisha's Covid-19 positivity rate stands at 5.49 per cent

5.49 per cent, as per the data released by the government.

Meanwhile, another 908 Covid patients recovered in state, taking the total recoveries in Odisha to 3,09,747, the H&FW department tweeted. The recovered cases include 83 from Khurda, 65 from Angul, 63 from Cuttack, 56 from Mayurbhanj and 54 from Sundargarh.

# 17 districts join 'orange the world' campaign

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 27:** Around 10,000 people from 17 districts of the state put palm stamps on the walls and created banners to promote gender equality and highlight this year's 16-day activism #orange-the-world.

As a part of the United Nation's 16 days of activism to eradicate violence against women and girls from November 25 to December 10, several people collectively joined and contributed to 'Orange the World' campaign in Odisha.

More than 10,000 people across 17 districts of the state put palm stamps on their walls and banners to promote gender equality and highlight this year's 16-day activism.

According to a research conducted by Journal of Epidemiology



More than 10,000 people from the state have put palm stamps on their walls and banners to promote gender equality

& Community Health, one in every three women in India is subjected to intimate partner violence of a physical, emotional, or sexual nature. But unfortunately, only one in every 10 of these women reports the offence to the police or healthcare professionals, the report reveals.

"We need worldwide support to secure social and legal protection of women to cherish an equal world and it is heartening to note that men have come forward in support of ending gender based violence in the society," said Bibati Mallick, general secretary of Mahila Shramajeebee Mancha, Odisha.

Women rights activist Heenarani Nayak said that online violence against women has emerged as a new challenge. Therefore, Union and state governments must make laws to end violence against women, she added.

Experts opined that Odisha gov-

ernment has taken several steps to curb violence against women such as launching a WhatsApp number for reporting cases of domestic violence during the Covid-19 lockdown. Women and Child Development department has also issued a helpline number 181 to address issues related to violence against women.

However, Odisha has achieved the shady variance of claiming the third place in the country as far as crime against women is concerned, as per the latest report of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).

According to the NCRB report, the crime rate registered per lakh women population stood at 62.4 in 2019. Also the conviction rate stands at negligible 8.3 per cent in the state.

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# Kendu leaves rot in absence of transit pass

FOREST DEPT REFUSES TRANSIT PERMIT WHILE GRAM SABHAS SEEK GOVT NOD FOR SALE OF LEAVES

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhawanipatana, Nov 27:** Kendu leaves worth lakhs of rupees are literally gathering dust as they have remained unsold without transit permits in Bhawanipatana area of Kalahandi district. The forest department has refused to issue transit permits while Gram sabhas of the villages demand it.

Locals say, Gram sabhas are entitled to collect and sale Kendu leaves. They are supposed to get transit permits for before sales.

As a result, the livelihood of scores of Kendu leaf collectors in the region is at stake.

Reports said, the authorities of the Bhawanipatana Kendu Leaf Division have been apprised of the need for issuing transit permission so that collected leaves can be transported elsewhere, but no step has been taken.

Under various provisions of the Forest Rights Dwellers Act-2006, community forest rights have been applied for Dakibandai and Bhoiguda under Bhawanipatana block; Kelia, Mundiguda, Bagadunguri and Atigan under Junagarh block; Dhaundharpur



AS KENDU LEAVES WORTH LAKH OF RUPEES REMAIN UNSOLD AND ARE GATHERING DUST, LEAF PLUCKERS GO THROUGH DIFFICULTIES DURING PANDEMIC AND OPOSED THE FOREST DEPARTMENT'S INTERFERENCE IN FOREST DWELLERS ACT

GARMASABHA MAHASANGH HAS DEMANDED AN IMMEDIATE ISSUANCE OF TRANSIT PERMITS TO GRAM SABHAS.

under Dharmagarh block.

In the current year, 560182 bundles of kendu leaves have been collected. The authorities have signed an agreement with an agency for sale of these leaves.

Locals had requested the officials of the kendu leaf division to provide books of transit permission in February this year, keeping in view the livelihood of tribals and other forest dwellers.

Though forest officials of the Kendu leaf division have visited these villages to assess the leaf collection, they refused to give transit permits to gram sabhas.

As per provision 3(1), provision 4(1) of Forest Dwellers Rights Act 2006 and provision 2(1) of the amended guidelines of 2012 and PCCF(KL), Odisha's letter-3179/2KL(RTI) dated August 25, 2018, gram sabhas themselves can make transit permits and make use of them.

Amid Covid difficulties, the gram sabhas have already prepared transit permits on their own. They are desperate to sell the leaves to clear payments of the leaf collectors.

They had intimated this to the Chief Minister in a letter in July but they alleged that forest department

is creating problem.

They stated in the letter that if the forest department or any other creates hurdles in the sales of leaves, the state government will be responsible for the law and order situation that may accrue.

They demanded nod from the government.

They pointed out, the SC/ST welfare department has made it clear in its letter 10217/SSD/BBSR dated August 5, 2020, interference of anybody in the rights of the SC/ST under Forest Dwellers' Act is illegal under provision 3(1) G of Prevention of Atrocities Act-2015.



Women farmers carrying bundles of paddy after harvest in Muniguda area of Rayagada

OP PHOTO

## Rajabasa cries for tourism status

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Harbhanga, Nov 27:** With the onset of the winter, tourist season has begun in the state despite Covid restrictions. Tourist places in Boudh district are gradually witnessing influx of tourists from inside and outside the district. One of the scenic places is Rajabasa near Saradikhola village under Harbhanga block.

Despite its scenic settings, the place has not been accorded tourism status while the district administration has allegedly ignored its development. As a result, the place has been far from the sight of the tourists.

Rajabasa is 20 km from Charichhak on NH-57 passing through Harbhanga block. The place is ensconced in natural settings. The verdant greenery of the dense forest and gurgling sound of a hilly stream flowing nearby add charm to the place. There are many legends about the place.

Locals find the place befitting



for picnicking. At the onset of winter, they come in hordes for picnicking. Amid dense forests, various forms and pictures have been etched on stones. According to a folktale, a bull and a tiger had a big fight on the top of a huge rock. This stone was being used to tame elephants. It is this place where people had hacked a seven-headed snake decades ago.

The spot draws tourists and picnickers from November to February. But tourists allege lack of infrastructure that has pulled down its tourism potential. There is a need for proper roads, platforms and drinking water. Locals demanded that the place be developed into a tourist destination so that job scope can be created for them.

## WESCO ENGINEER CAUGHT IN VIG NET

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Sundargarh, Nov 27:** Vigilance sleuths Friday arrested a junior engineer of WESCO of Subdega section in Sundargarh district for allegedly demanding and accepting bribe of Rs 15,000.

The arrested engineer has been identified as Jasobanta Narayan Deo.

Sanjib Ddungdung of Mansidpada had contacted Deo, seeking his intervention in installing a new transformer in place of the old one which was out of order since April. Deo had demanded Rs 15,000 from Ddungdung to give a new transformer to the village.

Ddungdung contacted the vigilance department following which a trap was laid. It was when Deo was collecting the money from Ddungdung at Karamdih grid office, the vigilance officials caught him red handed. The chemically-laced currency notes were seized from his possession and subsequently he was arrested. Later, his office and his residence in Sundargarh town were searched.

# Angul remote pockets safe havens for hemp farming

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Boinda, Nov 27:** Despite police, forest and excise departments destroying hectares of ganja plantations and putting farmers behind bars, ganja cultivation is yet to be rooted out from the areas under Handapa and Thakurgarh police limits in Angul district.

Farmers of Mamurijharan, Kholaregeda, Hagirinal, Hataba, Madhapur, Jaygarh, Kundali, Unchbali, Hinjirida, Gundurijharan, Charkhaman and Udal villages under Handapa police limits and Laxmipur, Ghatintali, Rainali, Kansaba, Koraba, Jhatikibahal, Kenchuanali, Khalitoila and Bipradaha villages under Thakurgarh police limits cultivate hemp in difficult-to-reach forest areas.

Buyers, who are usually from



other states, deposit advance money in the bank accounts of farmers.

Saplings planted in July have already attained the required growth and will be harvested in next few days. These days, farmers can be seen watching over their crops from tents pitched nearby.

Sources said, traders are also camping in some pockets to take the harvest to their states. Notably, Handapa police had conducted raids in Kholaregeda forest and destroyed 40,000 ganja plants November 18.

According to information available, 52,10,000 marijuana trees were destroyed in areas under Handapa and Thakurgarh police limits in 2014. Then cases had been registered against 31 farmers and six were arrested. In 2015, 59,20,700 plants were felled and set on fire in areas under the same police limits. Cases against 25 farmers were registered and ten were arrested.

The number plants destroyed in 2016 was 60,30,000 and 12 farmers were arrested while cases were registered against 17 cultivators. A total of 39,40,000 ganja plants were destroyed in 2017 and three illegal farmers were arrested. Similarly, 41,30,600 and 28,32,400 plants were destroyed in 2018 and 2019 respectively. Handapa ranger, Chaitanya Behera said a hunt is on to find out the places where the cultivation is being carried out.

## Migrant's body brought from Bahrain

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhadrak, Nov 27:** Debasish Das, a native of Chandbali area in Bhadrak district had gone to Bahrain as a migrant worker. He along with two others died while carrying out maintenance work in a manhole in Bani Jamra, Bahrain November 16.

His mortal remains arrived at Biju Patnaik International Airport in Bhubaneswar Friday. His body was sent to his native village.

The health authorities in Bahrain linked the mishap to cardiopulmonary arrest due to methane gas suffocation. Preliminary investigation revealed that the workers were at work without safety gears.

## Mao posters spark panic in Kalahandi

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kalahandi/Malkangiri, Nov 27:** Banners of the banned CPI (Maoist) surfaced in Phuladumera village of Trilochanpur panchayat under Bijepur police limits in Kalahandi district Friday.

Phuladumera village is located at the foot of Niyangiri hill. The villagers Friday spotted Mao posters and banners put up in their village. The Banshadhara-Ghumusar-Nagabali division of the outlawed CPI (Maoist) has opposed construction of a road at the foot of the Niyangiri hill. The outfit which is said to be active in the Niyangiri area but has not carried out any activities recently has once again made its presence felt.

The ultras have urged people to observe the annual People's Liberation Guerrilla Army week starting from December 2.

Meanwhile, reports from Malkangiri said, a day after Maoist leader Kishore was gunned down by security personnel in an encounter, a Maoist commander was arrested Friday from Jantri forest in Swabhiman Anchal during a combing operation here.

According to police sources, the arrested cadre is presently being interrogated. Police have withheld his identity for security reasons.

## 2 NAT'L AWARDS FOR BEMC FOR BETTER SANITATION WORK

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Berhampur, Nov 27:** The Berhampur Municipal Corporation (BeMC) has bagged two national awards from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. The awards were presented through virtual function of the ISC-FICCI Sanitation Awards 2020 held Thursday. The municipal body was lauded for its innovative, community-driven and sustainable Faecal Sludge and Septage Management system. The Agrata City Level Federation (CLF) of Mission Shakti SHGs in Berhampur was awarded the 'Best Engagement Model in Sanitation' by a social enterprise or a start-up.

BeMC Commissioner Dr Siddeshwar Baliram Bondar expressed satisfaction after the civic body got the awards.

## Closure order for 275 stone crushing units

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Jajpur, Nov 27:** In order to stop illegal mining of minerals as well as taking a strong stance against rampant smuggling activities, the state government Thursday ordered closure of 275 illegal stone crushing units in Jajpur district. The action was taken as the state exchequer suffered losses worth crores of rupees due to illegal mining.

Jajpur Collector Chakravarti Singh Rathore has constituted a team comprising police, tehsil, forest and other officials. They will monitor shutting down of the crushing units within next 15 days. The team will aggressively act to stop illegal excavation and transportation of Blackstone in the district.

The Collector has asked Jajpur SP Charan Singh Meena to provide adequate police force for successful execution of the state gov-

ernment's decision. The SP has been directed to keep a strict vigil on mushrooming of illegal stone crushers, sources said.

It may be noted here that scores of stone crushing units used to operate in Darpan, Dhamshala and Danagadi tehsils. Complaints were filed at the High Court and National Human Rights Commission over pollution in 2015 and 2009 respectively. Both the HC and the NHRC ordered closure of stone crushing units. A notification was issued for action against them June 22, 2015. 147 small stone crushing units were closed in the same year.

However, in last five years, 128 more illegal stone crushing units were set up in the district. It was alleged that stone crushing units are mainly located along roads. They continue to create massive air pollution, making life difficult for people.

# People still use barter system in this village

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Keonjhar, Nov 27:** If you are told people still swear by barter system even in this age of digitalization and online shopping, you may think it is untrue.

But this ancient practice is still extant in Telkoi area of Keonjhar district, and smalltime businessman Ramesh Samal is to be thanked for this.

Ramesh is a resident of Chhendipada village in Angul district. The smalltime businessman comes to Telkoi areas in Keonjhar district every day carrying vegetables and grocery items starting from mustard oil to soap to spices in a pick-up van.

He sells these items to people and, instead of cash, accepts paddy. "In rural areas, people seldom have liquid cash with them. These people have paddy but don't have money to buy daily use articles. So I am coming to them with a solution. They buy their required articles in exchange for paddy," he said.

When asked why he chooses Telkoi area in Keonjhar district and why



Local people observe, "We are happy with this barter system. We buy utensils, grocery items and clothes in exchange of paddy. And for this, we don't have to go to any markets or shops. We are getting everything at our doorstep"

not his own district, Ramesh said, "Telkoi is known for paddy cultivation. Most of the villagers are farmers. They have paddy but don't have liquid cash to buy goods when they require them. So I want to offer them a service at their door step and, this way, I am earning something to run my family."

Ramesh is not the only person selling daily use articles in exchange for paddy. There are several others as

well. Only difference being Ramesh sells from a mobile van. They go around villages carrying their wares on bicycles or motorcycles.

Local people observe that they are happy with this barter system. We buy utensils, grocery items and clothes in exchange of paddy. And for this, we don't have to go to any markets or shops. We are getting everything at our door step.

Even if paddy cultivation is the

barter system an ancient practice of exchanging goods is still extant in Telkoi area of Keonjhar district. Smalltime businessman Ramesh Samal is to be thanked for this.

Ramesh is a resident of Chhendipada village in Angul district. The smalltime businessman comes to Telkoi areas in Keonjhar district every day carrying vegetables and grocery items starting from mustard oil to soap to spices in a pick-up van

main livelihood here, there is no rice mill in the vicinity. This is the reason why they cannot sell their paddy. They say taking their paddy to mills is time-consuming and expensive. Besides, they will face several other problems.

"Even if we take our paddy to mills, there is no guarantee that we will get money at times when we need it most. So the barter system is more suitable to us," they observed.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to bring to the notice of general public that one ID Card of Mr. Bibhu Prasad Singh Samanta issued by ICICI Bank Ltd. having ID card no. 07356 has been found missing and / or lost on 09.11.2020. Any one who finds this said ID card, is requested to return the said ID card to the Manager Debt Services & Management Group, ICICI Bank Limited Unit 3 Bhubaneswar. Therefore, all the customers of ICICI Bank Limited are hereby notified not to make any payment to any unauthorised person holding the said ID card no. 07356. Please take further notice that any body making payment to any person holding the said ID card shall do so at his / her own costs, risk and peril and ICICI Bank shall not be bound and / or responsible for any payment. Date : 27.11.2020 Bhubaneswar For ICICI Bank Limited

### EAST COAST RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice No. ST-SP-TENDER-2020-20 Dated : 25.11.2020  
Name of Work : PROVISION OF INTEGRATED EMERGENCY RESPONSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (VIDEO SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM) AT BARGARH, KESINGA & KANTABANJI STATIONS OF SAMBALPUR DIVISION IN EAST COAST RAILWAY.  
Tender Value (₹) : ₹9,57,261.80, EMD: ₹1,59,200.00.  
Date and time of closing of tender : At 1500 hrs of 17.12.2020.  
No manual offer shall be accepted and such manual offers shall be rejected summarily. Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tenders is available in website <http://www.ireps.gov.in>.  
NOTE: The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 15 days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes / corrigenda issued for this tender.  
Divisional Railway Manager (Signal & Telecom), PR-380/L/20-21 Sambalpur

### BHUBANESWAR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

No. C-234-  
**e-Procurement Notice**  
e-Mail: ee2@bmc.gov.in  
1. Bid Reference No. : BMC-DIV-II-09/2020-21Dt.25.11.2020  
2. Tender Call Notice No. : 63131 dtd.25.11.2020  
3. No. of works : 01 (One)  
4. Bid Value : Rs.3837686/-  
5. Period of Completion : 60 days  
**Date and Time Schedule**  

Start	End	Opening
11.00 A.M. of 28.11.2020	5.00 P.M. of 07.12.2020	4.30 P.M. of 08.12.2020

  
6. Tender details can be seen for the e-Procurement portal <https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in> & BMC Website <https://www.bmc.gov.in>  
OIPR-13002/11/0058/2021  
Sd./ Executive Engineer, BMC Division-II

### OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER

**CUTTACK (R&B) DIVISION NO.II, CUTTACK**  
E-Mail I.D.-eepwcuttack2@gmail.com  
Tel./ Fax No.(0671)-2973399 No. B-469-  
**GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA "e" procurement Notice**  
**e-procurement Notice for Building works**  
**Bid Identification No. E.E. CTC(R&B)-II-10 of 2020-21**  
1. Name of the work :- 02 Nos of Building Works  
2. Estimated Cost :- Rs. 11,68,300/- to 20,53,446/-  
3. Period of completion :- 3 (Three) to 4 (Four) calendar Months  
4. Date & time of sale & receipt of bid document :- From 01.12.2020 to 5 PM of 15.12.2020  
5. Last date / time of receipt of bids :- 5 PM of 15.12.2020  
6. Date & time of Opening of Bids :- 11AM of 16.12.2020  
7. Name and address of the :- Executive Engineer, Officer Inviting Bid, Cuttack (R&B) Division-II, Cuttack  
Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <http://www.tendersorissa.gov.in>.  
Any addendum/ corrigendum/ cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.  
Sd./ S.S. Mohapatra, Executive Engineer, Cuttack (R&B) Division No.II  
OIPR-34137/11/0006/2021

### OFFICE OF THE PANCHAYAT SAMITI, KULIANA (CHANDUA), DIST- MAYURBHANJ

No. 01/2020-21  
**TENDER CALL NOTICE** Date: 27/11/2020  
No. I-25: The Block Development Officer, Kuliana (Chandua) on behalf of Government of Odisha invites sealed tender on percentage (%) rate basis from registered contractors of Odisha PWD/WR/RWD/NH/MI/CPWD for the following work in conformity with the detail tender call notice.  

Sl. no.	Name of G.P.	Name of Work	Name of Scheme	Estimated amount put to tender (in Rs.)	EMD to be deposited (in Rs)	Cost of Tender Paper + GST (in Rs)	Class of Contractors	Period of Completion
1	Purunapani	Const. of New Model AWC Building at Tiloguda under Purunapani GP	OMBADC	1327700.00	13300.00	6000.00	"C" & "D"	6 Months
2	Kuliana	Const. of New Model AWC Building at Hudsahi Panjia under Kuliana GP	OMBADC	1327700.00	13300.00	6000.00	"C" & "D"	6 Months
3	Bhaganpur	Const. of New Model AWC Building at Chandabilla under Bhaganpur GP	OMBADC	1327700.00	13300.00	6000.00	"C" & "D"	6 Months
4	Nadhana	Const. of New Model AWC Building at Dudhassole Uppersah under Nadhana GP	OMBADC	1327700.00	13300.00	6000.00	"C" & "D"	6 Months
5	Bhaganpur	Const. of New Model AWC Building at Badnuagan-II under Bhaganpur GP	OMBADC	1327700.00	13300.00	6000.00	"C" & "D"	6 Months
6	Dumburdiha	Const. of New Model AWC Building at Chirgalathi under Dumburdiha GP	OMBADC	1327700.00	13300.00	6000.00	"C" & "D"	6 Months
7	Keutunimari	Const. of New Model AWC Building at Nadhabani under Keutunimari GP	OMBADC	1327700.00	13300.00	6000.00	"C" & "D"	6 Months
8	Keutunimari	Const. of New Model AWC Building at Rangsole under Keutunimari GP	OMBADC	1327700.00	13300.00	6000.00	"C" & "D"	6 Months
9	Marantandi	Const. of New Model AWC Building at Raghunathpur under Marantandi GP	OMBADC	1327700.00	13300.00	6000.00	"C" & "D"	6 Months

  
**Terms & Conditions:** 1. The tender paper can be obtained from the Block Development Officer, Kuliana (Chandua) on payment of Cost of the Tender Paper (non-refundable) in shape of Cash. 2. The Tender Paper will be sold from date 07.12.2020 to 22.12.2020 on working days only from 11.00 AM to 4.00 PM in the Office of The Panchayat Samiti, Kuliana (Chandua). 3. The sealed Tender paper will be received on working days till 3.00 PM of date 22.12.2020. The same should be submitted either through registered/speed post addressing to "The BDO, Kuliana (Chandua) or same may be dropped in the tender box kept in the Block Office, Kuliana (Chandua) during working hour. The sealed envelope shall be subscribed as "Tender Paper". The undersigned will not be held responsible for any delay in the postal service. 4. The Tender Paper will be opened at 11 AM on date 23.12.2020 in presence of the bidders or their authorised representatives and Block tender committee. 5. The authority reserves all right to reject or cancel any or all Tender without assigning any reason therefor.  
OIPR-24087/11/0002/2021  
Sd./ Block Development Officer, Kuliana (Chandua)

Watch the too indignantly righteous. Before long you will find them committing or condoning the very offence which they have so fiercely censured.  
SRI AUROBINDO



# Ch'garh govt has a fake certificates problem

A "high-level" Certification Investigation Committee set up by the Chhattisgarh government has detected 267 cases of government employees with fake caste certificates. Sources say that Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has given instructions to the state Chief Secretary RP Mandal to dismiss all such employees from service, except those who got a stay order from the court.

Most of these cases are pending before the state High Court or adjournment orders. Apparently, in the last two years alone, 75 cases have been detected. Sources say that even after receiving the adjournment order from the court in these cases, several officers and employees are still working in important posts.

The state General Administration Department (GAD) has stated that a total of 758 complaints were received by the investigation committee of which 267 cases of fake caste certificates were detected.

According to Baghel's instructions, all government servants whose caste certificates are false will be immediately removed from their posts. All such cases will be reviewed department-wise by GAD, which incidentally has 14 employees with fake certificates. The School Education Department apparently has the highest number of cases - 44!

## GEHLOT SEEKS SUPPORT OF RETIRED BABUS

After surviving the Sachin Pilot threat, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot is reportedly trying to strengthen his grip on the state administration and neutralize any potential threat. Sources say that following his appointment of 1989-batch IAS officer Niranjan Arya as the state Chief Secretary, after superseding 10 IAS officers, Gehlot is now in a placatory mode.



**BABUDOM BYTES**  
Dilip Cherian

According to sources, Gehlot is now seeking the support of retired Scheduled Caste officers, in a possible caste twist to an administrative move. He has recently profusely thanked former IAS officers like Mahendra Singh, Lalit Panwar and retired IPS officers Jaswant Sampatram and RP Singh, among others, for their acknowledging that Arya's appointment was "a step in the right direction"

This is to clearly dilute the eddy currents from many other senior officers. They, of course, are unhappy with Gehlot's rather overt attempt to seek the support of retired officers for the successful tenure of his new Chief Secretary.

Was Gehlot being merely polite in responding to the retired officers' congratulatory letter on Arya's promotion or is it a step towards garnering support to consolidate his power base in the state administration? As a seasoned politician, he certainly knows the value of ticking off more checkboxes. We'll have to wait and see whether this works.

## ED CHIEF GETS EXTENSION

SK Mishra will be the first Director of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to serve for three years. The Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer who is from the 1984-batch, was appointed to the post in November 2018 for a fixed tenure of two years. But just before his term was to end, the government modified the earlier order to the effect that the tenure will last for three years. The modification was reportedly done on the legal opinion by Solicitor General since the CVC Act has no mention of extension for the post of ED Director.

Initially, sources say, the government had considered taking the ordinance route but opted for the CVC committee since the appointment of ED Director is governed by the CVC Act.

As ED chief, Mishra is in charge of several high-profile and sensitive investigations including Augusta Westland, Congress leader DK Shivakumar, Yes Bank and others. Does the government want to ensure there is no disruption in the probes of these cases by appointing a new ED chief? We can only speculate.

Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@twitter.com. Let's multiply the effect.

## WISDOM CORNER

- You can either experience the pain of discipline or the pain of regret. The choice is yours. UNKNOWN
- Magic is believing in yourself. If you can make that happen, you can make anything happen. JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE
- If something is important enough, even if the odds are stacked against you, you should still do it. ELON MUSK

## WORDSWORTH

### Bezoar

The bezoar is a hard ball of hair or vegetable fibre that occurs in the stomachs of cud-chewing animals such as goats (though humans get them, too). If you feel like categorising them, a trichobezoar is a hairball, while a phytobezoar is one that contains mostly vegetable fibres. The word is Persian (pad-zahr, counter-poison or antidote) and the bezoar's fame as a cure for poison spread westwards from there in medieval times. You swallowed it, or occasionally rubbed it on the infected part. In A Voyage to Abyssinia, written by Father Lobo in the eighteenth century, he says: "I had recourse to bezoar, a sovereign remedy against these poisons, which I always carried about me". Belief in its near-magical properties was then common. Old herbals are full of recipes using it, such as this one from Nicholas Culpeper's Complete Herbal of 1653: "Take of Pearls prepared, Crab's eyes, red Coral, white Amber Hart's-horn, oriental Bezoar, of each half an ounce, powder of the black tops of Crab's claws, the weight of them all, beat them into powder, which may be made into balls with jelly, and the skins which our vipers have cast off, warily dried and kept for use". Culpeper remarks that "four, or five, or six grains is excellently good in a fever to be taken in any cordial, for it cheers the heart and vital spirits exceedingly, and makes them impregnable". Don't try this at home! (It's not quite as bad as it sounds; scrapings of hart's horn were frequently used as a thickener for jellies, and crab's claws was a common British water plant.)

## LOL

### NUCLEAR POWER

A stranger was seated next to Little Johnny on the plane when the stranger turned to the Little Johnny and said, "Let's talk. I've heard that flights will go quicker if you strike up a conversation with your fellow passenger." Little Johnny, who had just opened his book, closed it slowly, and said to the stranger, "What would you like to discuss?" "Oh, I don't know," said the stranger. "How about nuclear power?" "OK," said Little Johnny.



"That could be an interesting topic. But let me ask you a question first." "A horse, a cow, and a deer all eat grass. The same stuff. Yet a deer excretes little pellets, while a cow turns out a flat patty, and a horse produces clumps of dried grass. Why do you suppose that is?" "Jeez," said the stranger. "I have no idea." "Well, then," said Little Johnny, "How is it that you feel qualified to discuss nuclear power when you don't know shit?"

## FOCUS ECONOMY

# RECESSION OR DEPRESSION



Bharat Jhunjhunwala

**THE KEY QUESTION BEFORE US IS: WHAT WILL DETERMINE WHETHER WE WILL COME OUT OF THE ONGOING TECHNICAL RECESSION SOON OR AFTER A LONG TIME?**

Our GDP growth rate was negative to the tune of (-)24 per cent in the first quarter April to June of the fiscal 2020-21. It was expected to be negative at about (-) 8 to 10 per cent in the second quarter ending September 2020. So, what does this mean? A negative growth rate in a single month is considered inconsequential and an aberration. If it continues to be negative for the entire quarter then the economy is said to have entered a "recession." If the negative growth continues for two consequent quarters then the economy is said to have entered a "technical recession" meaning that the economy has started to contract according to accepted global economic parameters. Beyond this, negative growth can sometimes continue for many years. The United States of America, for example, had negative growth rates in seven out of nine years between 1930 and 1938. Such negative growth rates extending are called "depression."

The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have made different assessments of the present situation. The IMF has assessed the present slowdown to be a "technical recession," and it expects the negative growth rate to turn positive soon. On the other hand, the World Bank has stated that the global economy has already entered into a "depression." The WB expects the negative growth rate to continue for a number of years. Both institutions agree that the global economy has contracted in the first two quarters of the present financial year and, therefore, we are in a technical recession. The difference is that the IMF expects the global economy to bounce back soon while the WB expects the negative growth rate to continue for many years as had happened in the US in the thirties. The key question before us, therefore, is: what will determine whether we will come out of the ongoing technical recession soon or after a long time?

The entire world is hopeful that

The IMF and the World Bank have made different assessments of the present situation. The IMF has assessed the present slowdown to be a "technical recession," while the World Bank has stated that the global economy has already entered into a "depression"

vaccine will soon be developed to contain the Covid-19 pandemic. Many companies have claimed that vaccines developed by them are about 90 per cent efficient. They hope to make these commercially available for widespread use very soon - maybe within a few months. The IMF has assessed that the technical recession will end soon on the basis of this best-case scenario. On the other hand, the Covid-19 virus is known to mutate rapidly and assume new forms. It is possible that a vaccine may be rendered ineffective against the mutated virus. A new round of the pandemic may then be unleashed. It has also been seen that the persons recovering from Covid do not often regain their good health. The output produced by such persons will be less for a long time leading to lower growth rate. Much time may also be taken in the approval, commercial manufacture and distributing the vaccine to the seven billion people of the world. This may take up to three years. Further, past experience suggest that the immediate impact of a financial crisis is less than the subsequent im-

pact. Global economy, for example, had contracted by merely (-)0.1 per cent in 2008 when the last global financial crisis had erupted. It contracted by a huge (-) 2.5 per cent in 2009. This means that an economic shock gets deeper just as a worker who does not get adequate food may continue to work at nominally reduced efficiency for one month but would collapse thereafter. It is not possible to forecast with any sense of credibility whether the present recession will remain "technical" as assessed by the IMF or it has already become a "depression" as assessed by the IMF because of these uncertainties.

The IMF and WB also agree that nearly all countries have succeeded in averting a financial collapse by borrowing and keeping the wheels of their economies turning. This is a happy situation. However, both the institutions also agree that the economy will bounce back with fresh vigour after the pandemic only if the borrowed money is invested in education and technological upgradation just as the students engage in learning with

fresh vigour after the summer vacations. Governments have adopted different strategies to make the borrowings, however. Some have borrowed from the market, while others have asked their central banks to print notes and provide the loans. The difference is that borrowing from the market leads in greater demand for loans, an increase in the interest rate, and a corresponding increase in the interest burden on the government. This increased burden can then lead to default by the government if the economy does not bounce back. The same loan when provided by printing of notes by the central bank leads to an increase in the currency in circulation, to inflation and to debasement of the currency. Thus, whether the money is borrowed by the government from the market or the central bank does not change the long-term scenario. The only difference is whether the borrowing will play out as a default by the government or as debasement of the currency.

The IMF and WB both suggest that the loans taken by the governments to overcome the pandemic should be used for improving the skills and technology. That would be like the student spending a loan to learn a new course that would then enable her to crack the entrance examinations in the ensuing year. The same loan would push her into a deep pit if used for a pleasure trip. A trader from Faridabad recently told me that he made very good business selling packed sweets during the recent festivals. On being asked how he made good business when the economy was floundering, he said that the government employees had a steady stream of income and they made huge buying. This means that the government has used the loans taken during the pandemic to support consumption rather than investment. That does not augur well for our country.

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

## SPECTRUM SOCIETY

# Death by Algorithm?

Our geological epoch, the Anthropocene, in which mankind is shaping the fate of the planet, is characterized by existential threats. Some are addressed in action plans such as the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. But we seem to be caught between knowing that we should change our behaviour and our entrenched habits.

In an overpopulated world, many have asked, "What is the value of human life?" The Covid-19 pandemic has raised this issue once more, framing the question in stark terms: Who should die first if there are not enough resources to save everyone?

Many science-fiction novels, such as Frank Schätzing's 'The Tyranny of the Butterfly', deal with similar concerns, often "solving" the sustainable-development problem in cruel ways that echo some of the darkest chapters in human history. And reality is not far behind. It is tempting to think we can rely on artificial intelligence to help us navigate such dilemmas. The subjects of depopulation and computer-based euthanasia have been under discussion, and AI is already being used to help triage Covid-19 patients.

But should we let algorithms make life-and-death decisions? Consider the famous trolley problem. In this thought experiment, if one

does nothing, several people will be crushed by a runaway trolley car. If one switches the trolley onto another track, fewer people will die, but one's intervention will kill them.

It has been suggested that the problem is about saving lives, but in fact it asks: "If not everyone can survive, who has to die?" Lesser evils are still evils. Once we start finding them acceptable, shocking questions are bound to follow, which can undermine the very foundations of our society and human dignity.

Similar questions were asked as part of the so-called Moral Machine experiment, which collected data on ethical preferences in situations involving autonomous vehicles from participants worldwide, with the researchers discussing "how these preferences can contribute to developing global, socially acceptable principles for machine ethics." But such experiments are not a suitable basis for policy-making.

People would prefer an algorithm that is fair. Potentially, this would mean making random decisions. Of course, we do not want to suggest that people should be killed randomly - or at all. This would contradict the fundamental principle of human dignity, even if the death were painless. Rather, our thought experiment suggests that we should not accept

the framework of the trolley problem as given. If it produces unacceptable solutions, we should undertake greater collective efforts to change the setting. When it comes to autonomous vehicles, for example, we could drive more slowly or equip cars with better brakes and other safety technology.

Likewise, society's current sustainability issues were not predetermined, but were caused by our way of doing business, our economic infrastructure, our concept of international mobility, and conventional supply-chain management. The real question should be why - nearly 50 years after the publication of the eye-opening Limits to Growth study - we still don't have a circular, sharing economy. And why were we unprepared for a pandemic, an event which had been widely predicted?

Big data, artificial intelligence, and digital technologies have left us surprisingly ill-equipped for the challenges now facing us - be it climate change, the Covid-19 pandemic, fake news, hate speech, or even cyber security. The explanation is simple: While it sounds good to "optimize" the world using data, the optimization is based on a one-dimensional goal function that maps the complexity of the world to a single index. Nature, by contrast, does not optimize; it co-evolves. It performs

much better than human society in terms of sustainability and circular supply networks. Both our economy and our society could benefit from bio-inspired solutions that resemble ecosystems, particularly symbiotic ones.

This means reorganizing our troubled world and building resilience and flexibility into policymaking and international cooperation. These hallmarks of sustainable systems are crucial for adapting to and recovering from shocks, disasters, and crises, such as those we face today.

Resilience can be increased in several ways, including redundancies, a diversity of solutions, decentralized organization, participatory approaches, solidarity, and, where appropriate, digital assistance. Such solutions should be locally sustainable for extended periods of time. In other words, rather than "learning to die in the Anthropocene," as suggested by author Roy Scranton, we should "learn to live" in our current troubled times. This is the best insurance against developments that could force us into the moral quagmire of triaging human lives.

Dirk Helbing is Professor of Computational Social Science at ETH Zürich. Peter Seele is Professor of Business Ethics at USI Lugano.

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# Letters

## TO THE EDITOR

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

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

## Simultaneous polls

Sir, The 'One nation, One election' debate refuses to fade. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has kept the discussion alive when he advocated for simultaneous polls during the all-India presiding officers' conference. Though India is a federal and pluralistic country, a time has come to experiment on the possibility of holding concurrent polls through a common voter list. The voter list should be same for all the three elections. The key is taking on board all political parties. Apart from several amendments to the Constitution and the Representation of People Act, 195, the Election Commission will have to brace itself logistically and practically for the mammoth exercise. Serious logistic and practical problems exist because quite often elections are held simultaneously in many states separately in a year much to the consternation of the authorities. The apparently tough, unpleasant and unpopular changes like extending the terms of some state assemblies, and curtailing a few, will have to be undertaken. The advantages, however, of holding simultaneous polls are manifold. The ticklish multi-phased polls which are the bane of the country, diversion of public mind, unnecessary holidays, unmentionable expenditure to ensure multi-level elections in different states, repeated deployment of security personnel and teachers can all be done away with.  
Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

## Corruption and India

Sir, It is sad to learn that according to Corruption Watchdog Transparency International, India has the highest bribery rate in Asia and the most number of people who use personal connections to access public services. 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 bribery rate 39% in the region. India also has the highest rate of 46% people using personal connections to access public services. 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. It is a daily experience with corruption and bribery remains alarmingly high, with nearly one in five citizens paying a bribe to access key government services. The governments must ensure that bribery is criminalised and actively investigated and prosecuted.  
Hitesh Kumar Parida, JAJPUR

# J&K all set for first polls post Art 370 abrogation

The eight-phase District Development Council elections are seen as a triangular contest among the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration, the BJP and the Apni Party floated by former minister Altaf Bukhari

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar/Jammu, Nov 27: Jammu and Kashmir is all set to witness its first elections since being reorganised as a union territory last year with the maiden District Development Council (DDC) polls beginning Saturday, officials said.

They said by-elections to 12,153 panchayat constituencies are also taking place along with the DDC polls. Out of these, 11,814 are in the Kashmir valley and the rest 339 in Jammu. Campaigning for the first phase came to an end Thursday and officials said elaborate arrangements have been put in place for the smooth conduct of the polls and special measures taken in view of the COVID-19 pandemic. As many as 1,475 candidates are in the fray for the first phase of these polls, they said.

The eight-phase elections are seen as a triangular contest among the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD), the BJP and the Apni Party floated by former



**FACT FILE**

- There are 280 DDC seats in the union territory - 140 each in Jammu and Kashmir regions
- 14 constituencies have been earmarked in each of the 20 districts of the union territory
- Out of 1,475 candidates, 296 are contesting the first phase of the DDC polls
- In the first phase of the DDC elections, 43 constituencies will go to polls -- 25 in Kashmir and 18 in Jammu
- For the by-elections to panchayats, 899 candidates were in the fray for the Panch seats and 280 for the sarpanch seats
- A total number of 2,644 polling stations have been set up and there are 703620 electors for first phase

finance minister Altaf Bukhari. The PAGD - an amalgam of several mainstream political parties, including NC and PDP, seeking the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's special status which was

revoked by the Centre last year - has been accusing the Bukhari-led party of being a B-Team of the BJP.

State Election Commissioner KK Sharma has directed for setting

up of special polling stations for Kashmiri migrants at Jammu and Udhampur so that they can effectively exercise their right of franchise. Those registered in Jammu will vote at the designated polling

stations at Jammu and those at Udhampur would be voting at polling stations set up in that district, he said. He said necessary COVID protocols have been put in place for ensuring the safe polls.

Sanitisation of polling stations and counting centres would be done before the polling date and afterwards as well, officials said.

Availability of all protective and sanitisation equipment like sanitisers, non-contact thermometers, face-masks, face-shields and PPE kits have been provided at the polling stations as well as for the staff and the voters, they added.

Sharma interacted with deputy commissioners of all districts of Jammu and Kashmir through video conferencing which was also attended by the respective CMOs and senior officers of state election commission.

He said foolproof method mechanism has been devised for the postal ballots from absentee voters especially COVID-19 patients in home and institutional isolation and quarantine.

# 'J&K an open air prison': Mufti claims she's under house arrest; cops deny

A posse of policemen stopped journalists about 100 metres away from Mufti's 'Fairview' residence in Gupkar area of Srinagar, where she was scheduled to address the media



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Nov 27: Kashmir is an 'open air prison' where no one has the right to express their opinion, PDP president Mehbooba Mufti said Friday after the authorities barred her from holding a press conference at her residence here where she claimed she was placed under house arrest in the morning.

The former J&K chief minister said she was not allowed to visit the Pulwama residence of party leader Waheed Parra who was arrested by the NIA earlier this week. Mufti said her daughter was also put under house arrest.

"Press has been barred from entering my residence in Srinagar. This despite no written orders explaining my arbitrary detention. Kashmir is an open air prison where no one has the right to express their opinion," she said on Twitter.

A posse of policemen stopped journalists about 100 metres away from Mufti's 'Fairview' residence in Gupkar area of the city here, where she was scheduled to address the media.

The police said the presser of the PDP president was not allowed as per the orders from higher-ups.

Mufti had invited journalists for the press conference this morning after she was allegedly put under house arrest. The former CM said she was not allowed for the last two days to meet the family of Parra. She said Parra was arrested on "baseless charges".

"I've been illegally detained yet again. Since two days, J&K admin has refused to allow me to visit @parawahid's family in Pulwama. BJP Ministers & their puppets are allowed to move around in every corner of Kashmir but security is a problem only in my case," Mufti said in a tweet in the morning. The police dismissed Mufti's claims saying she was not under house arrest but was asked to postpone her visit to Pulwama due to security reasons. The police, however, did not elaborate on why the residence of the PDP chief was

blocked and journalists were barred from entering it for the press conference.

"PDP leader Ms Mehbooba Mufti is not under house arrest. She was requested to #postpone her visit to #Pulwama purely due to #security reasons," Kashmir Zone Police said on Twitter.

The former chief minister accused the administration of using "fear and intimidation" to "muffle" any form of opposition just a day before the commencement of the District Development Council (DDC) polls.

"We are one day away from DDC polling & its evident that the admin here is using fear & intimidation in tandem to muffle any form of opposition," she said on Twitter.

"Their cruelty knows no bounds. Waheed was arrested on baseless charges & I am not allowed to even console his family. Even my daughter Iltija has been placed under house arrest because she also wanted to visit Waheed's family," Mufti said in another tweet.

Reacting to the alleged detention, National Conference (NC) vice president Omar Abdullah said personal liberty was being treated as a favour by the government that gives and withdraws it at will, while the judiciary does not interfere.

Mufti had sought security clearance for her visit to the residence of Parra at Naira village on Friday to meet his family.

NC vice president Omar Abdullah accused the Jammu and Kashmir administration of treating personal liberty as a favour.

"Parking a truck in front of our gates is now standard operating procedure for this admin. They did the same to my father recently to stop him from praying. Personal liberty is treated as a favour by the govt, to give & withdraw at will, with no interference from the judiciary," Abdullah wrote on Twitter.

His father and NC president Farooq Abdullah was October 30 prevented from leaving his residence to offer prayers at Hazratbal shrine on the occasion of Eid-Milad-un-Nabi.

**Press has been barred from entering my residence in Srinagar. This despite no written orders explaining my arbitrary detention. Kashmir is an open air prison where no one has the right to express their opinion**

MEHBOOBA MUFTI | PDP PRESIDENT

# Why Goa's tourism industry struggles despite rising footfall

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Panaji, Nov 27: Even as the number of tourists visiting Goa is witnessing a steady rise of late, especially since Diwali, the tourism industry of the state that has been hit hard by the COVID-19 outbreak, has failed to benefit much out of it owing to several factors, its stakeholders say.

Due to the pandemic, most tourists visiting Goa from the neighbouring states prefer to spend only a day and return home by evening instead of staying at hotels, they said.

Besides, the tourists prefer to carry home-cooked food instead of eating out in restaurants as the coronavirus fear still looms large, they said.

Several beaches in the state, including Calangute, Candolim, Baga in North Goa district and Colva and Palolem in South Goa are popular among tourists. They have been witnessing a huge influx of tourists since Diwali vacations.

However, the industry stakeholders say that the rise in footfall has not benefited the sector so far, even as the months of November and December are normally considered the peak season of Goa's tourism.

"The tourists visiting Goa come in their own vehicles and carry home-cooked food to avoid eating out. They buy liquor from wholesale wine stores. Due to these factors, the beach shacks are still wearing a deserted look," president of Traditional Shack Owners' Association, Manuel Cardoso, said.

Shacks are temporary structures, which serve as restaurants and bars with sunbeds on the sand. They are removed during monsoon, only to be set up again during the tourist season.

He said that many members affiliated to his association are yet to set up shacks as they are waiting to gauge the response of tourists. "Majority of the tables at the shacks that are operating now are

empty. Hardly a few people are found entering the shacks for meal or drink," he said.

Cardoso said that the rush of tourists is being witnessed only at the prime beaches. "But if you walk a little away from the main areas, other beach belts are mostly deserted," he said.

Travel and Tourism Association of Goa (TTAG) president Nilesh Shah said, "Hotels are reporting low occupancy despite November being a peak tourist season for Goa's tourism industry, which is considered the backbone of its economy."

Shack owner Julio Fernandes from Calangute claimed that most of the tourists arriving here are from the neighbouring states, who return home by evening.

"The tourists don't stay back. They don't stay in shotel, which is why the hotel occupancy is poor even now," he said. TTAG feels that the guidelines issued by the

government in neighbouring Maharashtra, making it mandatory for the people from Goa to carry COVID-19 negative certificates while entering that state, will further impact Goa's tourism prospects.

Shah said that such guidelines would hit Goa in a big way even as the state expects a revival of tourism industry next month.

The Maharashtra government on Monday made it mandatory for those seeking to enter the state from Delhi, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Goa to carry RT-PCR negative reports, in a bid to stem any further spike in COVID-19 cases following a post-Diwali surge.

However, Goa's Tourism Director Menino D'Souza said there will be no direct impact of Maharashtra's guidelines.

"But it may leave some indirect impact on Goa's tourism business," he said. He said that the tourism industry, hit hard by COVID-19, is slowly getting back on track.



# RELIGIOUS FERVOUR



Devotees pray while having a glimpse of holy relic during the annual Urs festival at Dastageer Sahib shrine in Srinagar, Friday.

# Year-long celebrations to mark 60th anniv of Goa's liberation

Goa was a Portuguese colony for 451 years before the region was liberated by the Indian armed forces in 1961

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Panaji, Nov 27: The Goa government will organise at least one event in every Indian state capital to celebrate the 60th anniversary year of the liberation of Goa from colonial Portuguese yoke, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said Friday.

Sawant said that the Goa government had sought Rs 100 crore from the Centre to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the state's liberation by the Indian armed forces December 19, 1961.

"We will be celebrating the 60th anniversary year of Goa's Liberation in a grand way. We will be holding



a minimum of one event in every state capital to commemorate the year by organising events which showcase our culture, food, literature, etc," Sawant told reporters at a press conference in Panaji.

Goa was a Portuguese colony for 451 years, before the region was liberated by the Indian armed forces in 1961. Sawant said that an or-

ganising committee to finalise and oversee preparations for the 60th anniversary celebrations had already been formed and he as the Chief Minister, would be heading the committee. Prime Minister Narendra Modi would also be formally invited to attend one of the commemorative events, Sawant added. The year-long celebrations would also be used to broadcast Goa's tourism offerings by highlighting various lesser known facets of the state before potential tourists.

"People come for sun, sand and sea. We want people to come to Goa for hinterland tourism, our culture, temples and churches," Sawant said.

# NIA gets 15-day custody of PDP youth wing chief

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi/Srinagar, Nov 27: A Special NIA court Friday sent Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Youth Wing President Waheed Parra to 15-day NIA custody in connection with its probe in the former Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Davinder Singh and Hizbul Mujahideen terrorist Naveed Babu case.

An NIA official related to the probe told IANS, "A J&K court has sent Parra to 15 days NIA custody."

The development comes two days after Parra was arrested by NIA. According to NIA officials, Parra was arrested for supporting Hizbul Mujahideen activities in conspiracy with arrested terrorist Naveed Babu and another key accused Irfan Safi Mir. Before his arrest, Parra was questioned by the anti-terror probe agency Monday.



Peoples Democratic Party youth wing president Waheed-ur-Rehman Parra being produced before NIA court, in Jammu, Friday.

He has recently filed his nomination for the upcoming District Development Council elections in the Union Territory.

Parra was instrumental in the revival of the PDP in south Kashmir, especially in the militancy-affected Pulwama district of Kashmir.

Singh and Babu were arrested January 11 this year while they were travelling together from Srinagar to Jammu.

# Sawant seeks report on coal pollution

Nearly 50,000 trees located in the Western Ghats region of Goa are slotted for felling for multiple central government projects

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Panaji, Nov 27: Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said Friday that the state pollution control authority has been directed to submit a report on coal pollution in the state, amid increasing demands from the opposition as well as the ruling MLAs for shutting down transportation of coal cargo via road and rail through the state.

"I have given an assurance that 50 per cent coal will be reduced. I have asked the Goa State Pollution Control Board to submit a report on (coal) pollution within eight to 10



legislators cannot take law in their hands.

"I can understand being with the people as part of popular sentiment. But MLAs cannot take law in their hands," Sawant said.

Nearly 50,000 trees located in the Western Ghats region of Goa are slotted for felling for the multiple Central government projects, which include expansion of railway lines and highways and drawing of a new high tension power, spread across the protected forests in and around Mollem village.

The projects were cleared by the National Board for Wildlife in April this year. The Opposition, civil society groups and tourism stakeholder bodies have expressed their apprehension that the projects are being pushed at an "express pace" to facilitate movement of coal imported through the Mormugao Port Trust facility in Goa to steel mills in Karnataka's Bellary district and nearby areas.

## of the day quote

Delhi has sufficient infrastructure and equipment to vaccinate its entire population in a few weeks once a COVID-19 vaccine is available



SATYENDRA JAIN | DELHI HEALTH MINISTER

The atrocities committed on the farmers by the Centre through the BJP's Haryana government by letting loose the police force by way of teargas, water cannons and excesses is quite deplorable



M VEERAPPA MOILY | CONGRESS LEADER

To suppress the voice of farmers -- water was rained on them. Roads are being dug up to stop them. But the government is not ready to show or tell them that where MSP being a legal right is written



PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA | CONGRESS LEADER

## SHORT TAKES

### One killed

**Kolkata:** One person was killed after a speeding bike hit a moving bus near Kestopur on the arterial VIP Road here Friday, officials said. Both the vehicles caught fire after the accident, they said. The person riding the bike died at the spot, while the pillion rider was taken to a nearby hospital with serious injuries, the officials said. No passenger on the bus was hurt as the fire was brought under control within an hour, they added.

### Man held

**Jalna:** A 27-year-old man was arrested from Jalna city of Maharashtra for allegedly repeatedly raping a woman and blackmailing her, police said Friday. The Sadar Bazar police apprehended Naser Khan Afsar Khan, a resident of Hind Nagar, and booked him under sections 376 (rape), among other relevant provisions of the IPC and IT Act, an official said. According to the police, the accused had befriended the victim on social media and was in a relationship with her for a year, during which he raped her and extracted expensive gifts from her.

### Five arrested

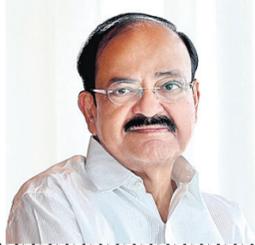
**Rajnandgaon:** Five people were arrested in Chhattisgarh's Rajnandgaon district for allegedly abducting a 23-year-old woman and her 4-year-old son and selling them in Haryana, police said Friday. The arrests were made over the last five days after the victim and her son returned home and her husband filed a complaint on November 22, said Alexander Kiro, Station House Officer (SHO) of Dongargarh police station.

### Bodies found

**Ballia (UP):** The bodies of a 55-year-old woman and her daughter were recovered from their house in Ahirauli village in Uttar Pradesh's Ballia district, police said Friday. Surajwadi and her daughter Rani (22) were found dead at their house in the morning, Superintendent of Police Devendra Nath said.

### Doctor held

**Ahmedabad:** A doctor was arrested Friday for allegedly creating email addresses in the name of officials in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and ordering Gujarat government officials to act promptly on his complaint. The Ahmedabad cyber crime branch arrested Dr Vijay Parikh, an M.D., from his house in Amreli, it said in a release.



Information is the main commodity in the present-day knowledge society, and whoever has quick access to information, has the advantage

M VENKAIAH NAIDU | VICE PRESIDENT

## YOGI TO CAMPAIGN IN HYD

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will campaign in Hyderabad November 28 for the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation elections to 150 wards across 24 Assembly seats



# Razing of Kangana bungalow illegal: Bombay HC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, Nov 27:** The Bombay High Court Friday held that demolition carried out by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) at actor Kangana Ranaut's bungalow here was illegal and smacked of malicious intent.

The court appointed an assessor to evaluate the damage caused so as to decide Ranaut's claim for compensation. The high court also came down heavily on Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut over his tirade against Ranaut.

The Bollywood actor termed the decision as a "victory of the democracy". But in the ruling, the bench of Justices S J Kathawalla and R I Chagla also advised Ranaut to observe restraint while expressing herself. The BMC started demolition of alleged unauthorized construction at Ranaut's Palli Hill bungalow on September 9 following a controversy over her tweet comparing Mumbai to Pak-occupied-Kashmir. She moved the HC on the same day, seeking to declare the action illegal.

The HC stayed the BMC's action but by then a part of Ranaut's bungalow had already been pulled down. Following Ranaut's tweet, Sanjay Raut had threatened to teach her a lesson. Soon thereafter the BMC issued a stop-work notice



THE COURT APPOINTED AN ASSESSOR TO EVALUATE THE DAMAGE CAUSED SO AS TO DECIDE KANGANA RANAUT'S CLAIM FOR COMPENSATION

THE HIGH COURT ALSO CAME DOWN HEAVILY ON SHIV SENA MP SANJAY RAUT OVER HIS TIRADE AGAINST KANGANA RANAUT

THE ACTOR TERMED THE DECISION AS A "VICTORY OF THE DEMOCRACY". BUT IN THE RULING, THE BENCH OF JUSTICES S J KATHAWALLA AND R I CHAGLA ADVISED RANAUT TO OBSERVE RESTRAINT WHILE EXPRESSING HERSELF

under section 354 A of the Municipal Corporation Act. It rejected Ranaut's reply and next day part of the bungalow was demolished.

The photos from the site, documents on record and the chain of events showed that the BMC's action was "predetermined," "malafide," (with dubious intentions) and in breach of a citizen's rights, the HC said on Friday.

"The manner in which the action was carried out leaves no doubt that using Section 354 was unauthorized, bad in law and aimed at preventing the petitioner from taking recourse to preventive legal action," the bench said.

"Irresponsible statements made by a citizen in an individual capacity, however distasteful, are

best ignored...Illegal and colourable action/s on part of the state or its agencies vis-à-vis a citizen, is far too serious and damaging to society to be overlooked," the HC said.

Whether it is unauthorized construction or irresponsible statements hurting the sentiments, no action against the individual by anyone, "much less by the state, can lie except within the four corners of law", the HC said.

"By no means, colourable exercise of power or resort to threats, use of muscle power and/or causing of injury by unlawful means to such person or to his/her property, can be permitted in any civil society...Such actions are the very antithesis of the rule of law," the bench said.

Commenting on Raut's role, the

court said that the Sena leader "without being bothered that the rule of law should always prevail, was determined to teach a lesson to the petitioner (Ranaut)". "Such conduct does not befit a leader like Shri Raut, who is also a Parliamentarian," it said.

The BMC's stop-work notice to Ranaut was illegal, it said, and quashed it. Such a notice could be issued only in cases of ongoing illegal construction, but in this case the alleged illegal construction was already in existence, the HC observed. "The court is convinced that the notice dated 7th September, the action of demolition following it on 9th September 2020 are actuated by malafides, and in any event, involve a clear malice in law," it said.

# Nitish loses cool, hits out at Tejashwi



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Patna, Nov 27:** The Bihar Assembly Friday plunged into turmoil following an uncharacteristically angry outburst by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar after having stoically listened to barbs and allegations by opposition leader Tejashwi Yadav.

Kumar, who is known for his composure and impeccable manners all through his four terms in office, was seen standing up and screaming "jhooth bol raha hai yeh" (he is speaking a lie).

Kumar, who chose not to react when the 31-year-old RJD leader made a series of personal attacks and allegations in his nearly an hour-long speech, erupted in anger when the latter sought to interject during a statement made by JD(U) leader and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Vijay Kumar Chaudhary.

Chaudhary had voiced his disapproval of references made by Yadav in his speech to a murder case in which Kumar had been named an accused, a case of plagiarism lodged by a JNU scholar with regard to a book published by a Patna-based think-tank which was endorsed by the chief minister, besides the Srijan scam which is being investigated by the CBI.

Yadav rose in his chair and said, it was a serious matter that I raised on the basis of facts. Is it not true that the chief minister had to pay a fine in connection with the murder case. The interjection by the young leader proved to be the proverbial last straw for the chief minister, who got up and screamed he is speaking a lie. "I challenge the Chair to get the veracity of his

statement examined and take necessary action. I have been listening to his diatribe simply because he is the son of a friend whom I treat like a brother. Does he know how his father (Lalu Prasad) became the chief minister? Has he forgotten who made him the deputy CM? I had to part ways simply because he did not heed my advice to explain things," Kumar said trembling with anger.

Notably Kumar was among the leaders of the erstwhile Janata Dal who had supported Lalu Prasad in the election for the legislature party leader in 1990 wherein the latter's victory against veteran leaders Ram Sundar Das and Raghunath Jha had enabled the then Chhapra MP to become the chief minister of Bihar and script a political success story.

After remaining bitterly opposed to each other for over a decade thereafter, Kumar and Prasad had joined hands with the objective of defeating BJP in 2015. The Grand Alliance they had formed taking the Congress along, won the assembly polls held that year handsomely.

In 2017, Yadav's name cropped up in a money laundering scheme and the RJD's stout refusal to heed demands of resignations of the young leader, who had become the deputy chief minister at only 26 years of age, caused Kumar to walk out of the Grand Alliance and return to the NDA. "When I had asked him (Yadav) to explain things, he did not because he could not. Now even a charge sheet has been filed against him. What nonsense are you (Yadav) talking? Do I not know you well enough?" Kumar said as the House erupted in pandemonium.

## 3 soldiers killed

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Jammu, Nov 27:** Three Indian soldiers were killed in ceasefire violations on the Line of Control (LoC) by Pakistan troops in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch and Rajouri districts, official sources said Friday.

Naik Prem Bahadur Khatri and Rifleman Sukhbir Singh were critically injured on the LoC in the Sunderbani Sector of Rajouri district during firing by Pakistan troops on Friday. "Both injured soldiers later succumbed to their injuries," Defence Ministry spokesman Colonel Devender Anand said.

Meanwhile, Subedar (JCO) Swatantra Singh -- critically injured on the LoC in Poonch district Thursday -- succumbed to his injuries Friday.

## SNOW FUN



Tourists visit Nehru Kund after fresh snowfall in Manali, Friday

PTI PHOTO

# Bihar BJP MLA seeks police cover

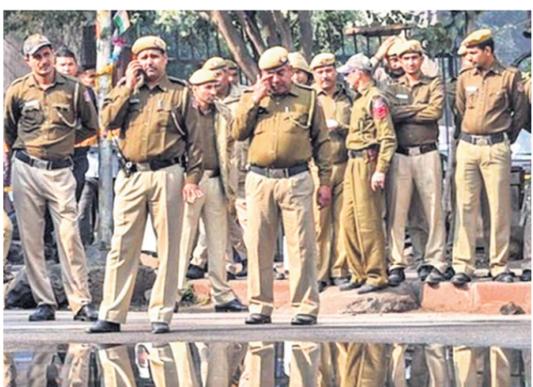
BJP MLA Lalan Paswan Thursday lodged the FIR against Lalu Prasad under the Prevention of Corruption Act at the vigilance police station in Patna

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Patna, Nov 27:** A day after lodging an FIR against RJD chief Lalu Prasad for allegedly asking him to abstain from voting in the Bihar Speaker's election, BJP MLA Lalan Paswan Friday sought police protection.

Speaking in the Assembly, Paswan claimed that he is facing threats to his life. Paswan on Thursday lodged the FIR against Lalu Prasad under the Prevention of Corruption Act at the vigilance police station in Patna.

The MLA from Pirpaiti in Bhagalpur, claimed that he has the audio of conversation with Lalu Prasad, who is jailed in Ranchi. "He asked me to support the RJD and he will promote me in future," he said. "I was in the house of (former Deputy Chief Minister) Sushil Kumar Modi on Tuesday evening when Lalu Prasad called me. My PA picked the call and gave it to me. As he (Lalu Prasad) is senior to me, I



gave him respect and enquired about his well-being."He told me to support the RJD during voting for the Speaker in the Assembly. I told him that I belong to the BJP and it is not possible for me to do it. Then he said that I should be absent on voting day by making an excuse

of being infected with coronavirus," Paswan alleged.

His allegations had sparked off a huge controversy in Bihar: Deputy Chief Minister Tarkishore Prasad and JD-U leader Shrawan Kumar also supported Paswan's demand for security.

## TN CM welcomes SC decision

In a statement issued, Palaniswami thanked the apex court for announcing holidays for Tamil's harvest festival

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chennai, Nov 27:** Tamil Nadu Chief Minister K.Palaniswami Friday welcomed the Supreme Court's decision to declare January 14 and 15, 2021 as holiday for itself owing to the Pongal festival.

In a statement issued here, Palaniswami thanked the apex court for announcing holidays for Tamil's harvest festival. Pongal festival is celebrated to thank rain/sun Gods and farm animals on the first day of Tamil month Thai.

For Tamils, the Pongal festivities take place for over four days, the first day being Bhogi, when people burn their old clothes, mats and other items. Homes are painted afresh. The second day is the main Pongal festival celebrated on the first day of the Tamil month Thai. The third day is the Mattu



Pongal when bulls and cows are bathed and their horns painted and worshipped as they play an important role in farms. Women feed the birds with coloured rice and pray for the welfare of their brothers.

In some parts of the state, Jallikattu -- a bull-taming sport -- is held.

The fourth day is the Kанныm Pongal -- the day to go out and meet relatives and friends, and go sightseeing.

## SUSHIL MODI GETS RS TICKET

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, Nov 27:** The BJP Friday named former Bihar deputy chief minister Sushil Kumar Modi its candidate for the by-election to a Rajya Sabha seat in the state.

Modi's election to the Upper House is all but certain as the BJP-NDA has a majority in the state assembly. Election to the seat is due for December 14 if the rival alliance led by the RJD decides to contest.

The seat had fallen vacant following the death of Lok Janshakti Party founder and Union minister Ram Vilas Paswan. With the LJP out of the Bihar NDA after its decision to fight on its own in a bid to target Chief Minister Nitish Kumar-led JD(U), a BJP ally, the saffron party has decided to reclaim the seat which it had offered to Paswan from its quota.

The BJP leadership had decided to not have Modi, one of its most prominent leaders in Bihar, continue as deputy minister in the state government after the recent Assembly polls.

# Huge gap in demand and supply of organs: AIIMS chief

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Nov 27:** There is a "huge gap" in the demand and supply of human organs and tissues for transplant in the country and the myths prevalent in this domain must be busted to ensure that lives are saved by timely availability of vital body parts, AIIMS Director Dr Randeep Guleria said Friday.

He was speaking during a webinar where the country's largest paramilitary force -- the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) -- handed over a total of 79,572 organ donation pledges undertaken by

its personnel to Union health minister Harsh Vardhan. The country is observing the 11th Indian organ donation day on Friday.

Vardhan urged people to come together for this noble cause, saying it was time for everyone to "bust the myths" and realise that the act of donating organs is not against "religious or religious customs". "There cannot be a bigger godly work than organ donation," Vardhan said.

Guleria said the AIIMS was working to "very soon" start a lung transplant programme even as it has facilities available for transplantation of heart, kidney, liver, pancreas,



cornea, heart valve and bones. The AIIMS chief said the premier medical institute at present has organ banks for eyes, heart valves, bones and "in future a skin bank will

also be operational". "I am sure a time will come when there is no shortage (of donated organs) and people will not die while waiting for an organ," he said.

The Union minister said India was moving fast in this domain over the last few years and occupies the third position in the world but still many people in the country die due to unavailability of organs. Citing data, he said while in Spain there were 48 organ transplants per 1 million population, in India the figure was less than one. Guleria also gave some details and statistics.

"While the law for organ donation and transplantation was enacted way back in 1994, even today there is a huge gap in the demand and supply of human organs and tissues which is primarily because of lack

of awareness and acceptance of brain death in our society," the senior pulmonologist said. He said every year one lakh cornea is required but only 50,000 are collected.

"We need 1.7 lakh kidneys each year but only 7,000-8,000 are transplanted; about 25,000 livers are required every year in the country but only 1,500-1,700 are transplanted.

"So, there is a huge gap... This really shows that there is a huge need for all of us to work together to fulfil this gap so that those who need organs are able to get them and can live a good quality life," the AIIMS Director said.



No government in the world can stop the farmers who are fighting the battle of 'truth'

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

## DELHI BREATHES EASY

Delhi's air quality improved to be in the "moderate" category Friday morning due to favourable wind speed and is likely to get even better, according to the India Meteorological Department



## of the day quote

In a democracy, every citizen and every section of the society has the constitutional right to peaceful demonstration for their demands. The central government should also leave its stubborn attitude and talk to the farmers and accept their demands at the earliest



BHUPINDER SINGH HOODA | FORMER HARYANA CHIEF MINISTER

The farmers are agitated due to anti-agriculture policies of the BJP government at the Centre. Instead of adopting a positive attitude towards their demands, it's inhuman that the BJP government is firing teargas shells, throwing cold water and lathi-charging them. This act is highly condemnable



AKHILESH YADAV | SAMAJWADI PARTY CHIEF

Punjab is a sensitive state bordering Pakistan, so we don't want that peace should be disturbed



HARISH RAWAT | CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY AND PUNJAB IN-CHARGE



Firefighters inside the ICU where the fire broke out Friday

# 5 Covid patients die in Guj hospital fire; SC takes note

In August, eight COVID-19 patients were killed after a fire broke out on the top floor of a four-storey private hospital in Ahmedabad

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, Nov 27: Five coronavirus patients died after a fire broke out in the ICU of a designated COVID-19 hospital at Rajkot in Gujarat Friday, officials said.

The Supreme Court took cognisance of the fire incident and sought a report from Gujarat government on the issue. Gujarat Deputy Chief Minister Nitin Patel said 26 patients at the hospital were rescued and shifted to other facilities.

The fire broke out around 12.30 am in the ICU ward located on the first floor of the four-storey Uday Shivanand Hospital in Anand Bungalow Chowk area, where around 31 patients were admitted, Patel added.

Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani expressed grief over the

incident and ordered a probe into it. He also announced a compensation of 74 lakh to the kin of each deceased.

Rajkot Police Commissioner Manoj Agarwal said, "Out of the 11 coronavirus patients admitted to the ICU ward, five lost their lives in the fire, which was quickly brought under control before it could spread to other floors."

Patel said the blaze broke out in the ICU ward and was brought under control within half an hour by the fire brigade. While three coronavirus patients died on the spot, two others succumbed to the injuries while they were being shifted to another hospital, he added.

"Nobody else was injured in the incident. Twenty-six other patients, including those who were undergoing treatment on the upper floors,

were shifted to other hospitals," Patel said.

Preliminary probe revealed that the fire was a result of short circuit in a ventilator, he said, adding that the private hospital had fire NOC and all the firefighting equipment was installed there. The Chief Minister's Office said senior IAS officer AK Rakesh would carry out the probe into the incident.

In August, eight COVID-19 patients were killed after a fire broke out on the top floor of a four-storey private hospital in Ahmedabad.

In the Supreme Court, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, assured the bench that the Union home secretary will convene a meeting latest by Saturday and issue directions on fire safety in government hospitals across India.

A bench of Justices Ashok Bhushan, R S Reddy and M R Shah, while taking note of the surge in COVID-19 cases in the country, said that states have to rise to the occasion and be above politics to deal with the pandemic.

It is high time that strict measures are taken to implement the policy, guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to contain the surge of coronavirus cases nationwide, the bench said.

Mehta told the bench that the ongoing COVID-19 wave appears to be harsher than before and ten states are currently contributing 77 per cent of the total positive cases. The bench observed that strict measures are needed to deal with the situation and posted the matter for further hearing December 1.

## SHORT TAKES

### Three killed as bus catches fire

Jaipur: Three persons were killed and six others injured Friday when a private bus travelling from Delhi to Jaipur caught fire after coming in contact with a high-tension power line, police said. The Jaipur-Delhi national highway was blocked after a truck overturned near Labana village. Due to this, a private bus driver tried to take his vehicle in the wrong direction.

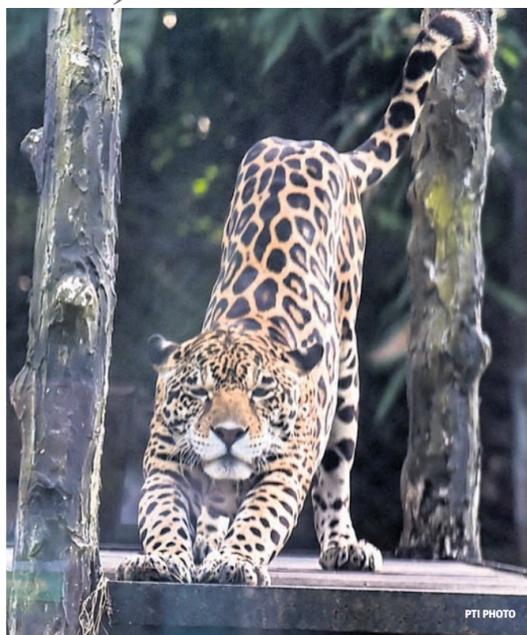
### 2 elephants found dead

Jabalpur: One of the two wild elephants spotted in the rural areas of Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh over the past couple of days was found dead Friday afternoon, a forest official said. The carcass was spotted near Mohas village, some 15 kilometres from the district headquarters, and a team of veterinarians were at the spot to ascertain the cause of death, which, prima facie, looks like one from cardiac arrest, said divisional forest officer (DFO) Anjana Turkey.

### Protests in Meghalaya

Shillong: An umbrella body of youth organisations organised black flag protests in Meghalaya Friday demanding implementation of Inner Line Permit system (ILP) in the state. Rallies were taken out in the state capital and the districts with the protestors carrying black flags. Shopkeepers downed their shutters when the pro-ILP activists were passing through the roads in Lewduh and Khyndailad areas here and distributing black flags to commuters.

## JUST CHILLING



A leopard rests inside an enclosure at Alipore Zoological garden in Kolkata

# PM to review vaccine work in Ahmedabad, Pune and Hyd

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad/Pune/Hyderabad, Nov 27: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Pune, Ahmedabad and Hyderabad Saturday to review coronavirus vaccine development work at facilities there, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said.

"Tomorrow, PM @narendramodi will embark on a 3 city visit to personally review the vaccine development & manufacturing process. He will visit the Zydrus Biotech Park in Ahmedabad, Bharat Biotech in Hyderabad & Serum Institute of India in Pune," the PMO tweeted.

"As India enters a decisive phase of the fight against COVID-19, PM @narendramodi's visit to these facilities & discussions with the scientists will help him get a first hand perspective of the preparations, challenges & roadmap in India's endeavour to vaccinate its citizens," the PMO added.

Modi will visit pharma major



Zydrus Cadila's plant to get information about its vaccine development, Gujarat Deputy Chief Minister Nitin Patel said.

The Prime Minister will reach the plant, located in the Changodar industrial area, over 20 km from Ahmedabad, around 9.30 am, an official said.

Zydrus Cadila had announced that the phase-I clinical trial of its vaccine candidate ZyCoV-D was over and it has commenced phase-II clinical trials from August. Modi

will then proceed to Pune, where he will visit the Serum Institute of India, which has partnered with global pharma giant AstraZeneca and the Oxford University for the vaccine, a senior official said.

The Prime Minister will reach Pune around 12.30 pm, he said. Modi's visit is aimed at reviewing the status of the vaccine candidate for coronavirus infection and to know about its launch, production and distribution mechanism, he said.

The Prime Minister will then fly to Hyderabad where he is scheduled to visit vaccine maker Bharat Biotech's facility, an official said. Modi will land at Hakimpet Air Force station and go to Bharat Biotech's facility at Genome Valley around 50 km from Hyderabad.

Bharat Biotech's Covaxin is undergoing phase-3 trials. The PM will fly back to Delhi in the evening after his hour-long visit to the facility, the official said.

# 'Stubble burning rose by more than 20 pc this year'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 27: Stubble burning incidents saw a steep rise of more than 20 per cent this year in comparison to the last two years, a factor which plays a significant role in spiking pollution levels in the Delhi-NCR, K J Ramesh, member of the newly formed commission for air quality management, said Friday.

Ramesh said the 'Air Quality Management in the National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas' has started discussions with stakeholders and he excluded confidence of coming up with an "acceptable and suitable solution" to combat air pollution by next year.

He said 2018 recorded 51,751 incidents of farm fires from mid-October to November end. This figure was the highest between 2010-2018, he said. The number dropped marginally to 50,738 a year later. "This year, 73,000 cases of farm fires were reported until November 17," Ramesh, who was the former director general of the India Meteorology Department, said citing a study done by the Air Pollution Action Group.

Ramesh was speaking at a webinar on 'Clean Air Management for Public Welfare'. The webinar was organised by the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, a research body under the Ministry of Earth Sciences. IITM has launched several initiatives like SAFAR (System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research) to track air pollution.

Farm fires or stubble burning post-harvest season during October-November in the states of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan significantly contribute to the pollution levels in Delhi-NCR.

Last month, the Centre announced formation of the Air Quality Management in the National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas.

# In SC, Centre blames Delhi govt for rise in nCoV cases

THE CENTRE SAID THAT DELHI GOVERNMENT WAS WELL AWARE THAT THE CONFLUENCE OF WINTER, FESTIVAL SEASON AND POLLUTION WERE LIKELY TO WITNESS A SURGE IN CASES AND THIS FOREKNOWLEDGE OUGHT TO HAVE LED TO STRICT ENFORCEMENT AND INFORMATION, IEC MEASURES BEING INSTITUTED WELL IN TIME BUT THIS WAS NOT DONE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 27: The Centre Friday blamed Delhi government for rising COVID-19 cases in the national capital and said that despite "repeated exhortations" it did not take steps to enhance testing capacity, particularly for RT-PCR, which remained static at around 20,000 tests for a long time.

In its affidavit, filed before the top court, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), said "while there were regular advertisements on achievements of Delhi Government, including on dengue prevention and control, no ads on COVID appro-

private behaviour were to be seen. The people, at large, were also not apprised about this through regular outreach measures".

It said, "That despite repeated exhortations in the wake of rising COVID-19 cases, the Delhi Government did not take steps to enhance testing capacity, particularly for RT-PCR, which remained static at around 20,000 RTPCR tests for a long time".

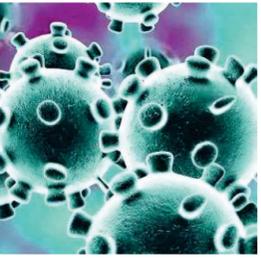
A bench of Justices Ashok Bhushan, R S Reddy and M R Shah took the Centre's affidavit on record and observed that "Things are going from bad to worse but no concrete steps are being taken.

States will have to rise above the



politics. All states will have to rise to the occasion," the bench said while posting the matter for further hearing December 1.

The Centre said that despite is-



suaging several elaborate and exhaustive guidelines for containment and prevention of the infection and for ensuring proper treatment of COVID patients, Delhi

government saw its first wave of Coronavirus infection in the month of June-July and the union government immediately had to take pro-active and pre-emptive steps to control further spread of Covid-19.

The Centre pointed out that to deal with the shortcomings, which lead to a massive increase in the COVID infection and the increasing strain on the capacity of medical infrastructure in the hospitals of Delhi, the Union Home Minister Amit Shah was constrained to call another meeting on November 15 to review the situation in the national capital.

It said that even now, "after it was committed that GNCTD would increase ICU

(non-ventilator) beds by around 2,680, the Chief Minister, vide its letter dated November 19, 2020 addressed to the Union Home Minister, has expressed his inability to enhance ICU beds in the Delhi (State Government and private) hospitals by more than around 912, and has asked the Central Government to create the additional 1,700 ICU beds".

It said that several meetings were held by cabinet secretary, union home secretary and health secretary with all concerned officials of Delhi government, municipal bodies and others to review the status of COVID-19 management and it was emphasised that all steps be taken to contain the situation in Delhi.

# international



I'm telling you, I'm not going to take it (Covid-19 vaccine). It's my right  
JAIR BOLSONARO | BRAZILIAN PRESIDENT

## DISNEY TO LAY OFF MORE EMPLOYEES

Walt Disney Co. has unveiled its plan to lay off about 32,000 employees, up from the previously announced 28,000 job cuts in September, as the raging Covid-19 pandemic continues a heavy toll on its theme park businesses



## of the day quote

I would like to assure the people of Nepal that once a vaccine is rolled out, meeting Nepal's requirement would be a priority for us  
HARSH VARDHAN SHRINGLA | INDIAN FOREIGN SECRETARY

Is it fair to eliminate a human life to solve a problem? Is it fair to hire a hit man to solve a problem?  
POPE FRANCIS | HEAD OF CATHOLIC CHURCH

We firmly oppose any form of official exchanges and military contacts between the US and Taiwan  
REN GUOQIANG | CHINESE DEFENCE MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON

# Pak Cabinet approves chemical castration of rapists: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, Nov 27: Pakistan's Cabinet has approved two anti-rape ordinances which called for the chemical castration of rapists with the consent of the convict and setting up of special courts for rape trials, according to a media report. A meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Legislative Cases chaired by federal Law Minister Farogh Naseem Thursday approved the Anti-Rape (Investigation and Trial) Ordinance 2020 and the Criminal Law (Amendment) Ordinance 2020. The ordinances

have already been approved in-principle by the federal Cabinet Tuesday, the Dawn News reported.

The concept of chemical castration for first or repeated offenders has been introduced mainly as a form of rehabilitation, and subject to consent of the convict, it said.

According to law minister Naseem, it is mandatory under the international law to take consent of the convict before castrating him. In case, chemical castration is ordered without taking consent, the convict might challenge this before a court of law, he said.

If a convict would not agree to cas-



tration, he would be dealt with in accordance with the Pakistan Penal

Code (PPC) under which the court might award him death sentence, life

imprisonment or 25-year jail term, the minister said.

However, he said, it is up to the court to decide the punishment. The judge may order chemical castration or the punishment under the PPC. The court might order castration for a limited period or lifetime, Naseem said.

The ordinances also provide for setting up of special courts to conduct trial in rape cases. Special prosecutors for the special courts will also be appointed.

As per the proposed legislations, anti-rape crisis cells headed by a commissioner or deputy commissioner

will be set up to ensure prompt registration of a first information report, medical examination and forensic analysis.

It also bars the cross-examination of a rape survivor by the accused. Only judge and lawyers of the accused will be able to cross-examine the survivor.

The proposed laws include in-camera trials, witness protection for the victim and witnesses, use of modern devices during investigation and trial, legal assistance to the victims and appointment of independent support advisers for the victims.

# Hetero to produce 100mn doses of Sputnik V vaccine in India

AGENCIES

Moscow, Nov 27: One of the developers of Russia's Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine announced Friday that India-based drugmaker Hetero will produce over 100 million doses of the jab.

"Hetero, one of India's leading generic pharmaceutical companies, have agreed to produce in India over 100 million doses per year of the world's first registered vaccine against the novel coronavirus infection - Sputnik V," the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) said in a statement, adding that production was expected to start in early 2021.

The move, which RDIF cast as another step in its efforts to scale up international manufacturing of its flagship vaccine, will see Hetero begin production in India at the start of next year, according to a joint statement on the Sputnik V Twitter account. The statement said Phase II-III clinical trials were still underway in India, which with a population of over 1.3 billion is the second most populated country in the world after China.

Although Russian authorities gave Sputnik V their regulatory approval under an accelerated procedure in August, trials in Russia, designed to assess its safety and efficacy, are also ongoing.

"While we look forward to the



Hetero, one of India's leading generic pharmaceutical companies, has agreed to produce Sputnik V in India from next year

Although Russian authorities gave Sputnik V their regulatory approval in August, trials in Russia are ongoing

Sputnik V vaccine will be priced at \$10 per dose on international markets, costing less than some other registered Covid-19 vaccines

clinical trial results in India, we believe that manufacturing the product locally is crucial to enable swift access to patients," said B. Murali Krishna Reddy, Hetero's director of international marketing.

He said the deal chimed with an objective being promoted by the Indian Prime Minister of making things in India.

Earlier this week, Russia said interim results from the Sputnik V clinical trials showed the vaccine was 95 per cent effective, similar to other international vaccine makers that have also published test re-

sults showing efficacy rates of 90 per cent and higher. Russia also announced that the Sputnik V vaccine will be priced at \$10 per dose on international markets, costing less than some other registered Covid-19 vaccines.

Russia was the first country to announce the registration of a coronavirus vaccine in August - dubbed Sputnik V after the Soviet-era satellite - but did so ahead of large scale clinical trials. Currently, the third and final phase of trials is underway, with some 40,000 volunteers involved in blind testing of the vaccine.

# Ethiopians flee Tigray capital in fear of imminent assault

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nairobi, Nov 27: People continued to flee the capital of Ethiopia's embattled Tigray region in fear of an imminent assault after Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said the army had been ordered to move in for the "final phase" of an offensive to arrest the defiant regional leaders.

Fighting reportedly remained well outside Mekele, a densely populated city of a half-million people who had been warned by the Ethiopian government of "no mercy" if they didn't separate themselves from the Tigray leaders in time.

Abiy Thursday told residents to stay indoors and disarm as the army, with tanks, was given the order to move in. His government has vowed to protect civilians.

Food and other supplies are running out in the Tigray region of 6 million people. The United Nations continues to urge immediate access for humanitarians that are neutral and impartial. Ethiopia's government has said a "humanitarian access route" would open under the management of the country's Ministry of Peace, with no details. Multiple crises are growing. Refugees from Eritrea have been in the line of fire as fighting sweeps by their camps of nearly 100,000 in the region's north.

And the BBC has reported seeing Ethiopian forces standing by the border with Sudan, and hearing from



refugees that people are being impeded from leaving Ethiopia. Ethiopia's government has not commented on that.

More than 40,000 refugees have crossed into a remote part of Sudan where local communities and humanitarian workers struggle to provide food, shelter and care. Nearly half of the refugees are children. The spread of COVID-19 is just one concern.

"We cannot keep social distancing here in the camp," said Mohammed Rafik Nasri, from the UN refugee agency. "It is really challenging among the several issues in need that are growing because the number is growing. Today we are receiving a convoy of 1,000 arriving in the camp. And shelter is one of the biggest challenges that we have at the moment."

Scared, sometimes without word of loved ones left behind, the

refugees continue to share horrific accounts of the fighting and plead for it to stop.

"It makes me so sad. The country has no peace. You see one tribe killing another. It is so hard," said one, Atsbaha Gtsadik.

With communications and transport links severed, it remains difficult to verify claims about the fighting that erupted Nov. 4 between Ethiopian forces and the heavily armed forces of the Tigray People's Liberation Front, which once dominated Ethiopia's government but has been sidelined under Abiy's rule. The two governments now regard each other as illegal.

Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of people have been killed. The fighting threatens to destabilise Ethiopia, which has been described as the linchpin of the strategic Horn of Africa, and could even destabilise its neighbours.

## SHORT TAKES

### 4 killed in Pak shooting

Islamabad: At least four people were killed in a shooting at a vehicle in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, officials said. The incident took place in North Waziristan district Thursday. The victims, employees of the state-owned National Engineering Services Pakistan, were on their way to some work-related assignment when their vehicle was targeted by unknown militants.

### UK PM warns of 3rd lockdown

London: UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson has warned of a potential third "new year national lockdown", if England eases up on coronavirus restrictions. Addressing a Downing Street briefing Thursday, the Prime Minister said: "If we ease off now, we risk losing control over this virus all over again, casting aside our hard-won gains and forcing us back into a new year national lockdown with all the damage that would mean." He said there was "no doubt the restrictions in all tiers are tough" but admitted previous tiers "were never quite enough", reports the BBC.

### 13 Aussie soldiers face dismissal

Sydney: Australia has told 13 Special Forces soldiers they face dismissal in relation to a report on alleged unlawful killings in Afghanistan, the head of the country's army said Friday. An independent report published last week in redacted form said there was evidence that 39 unarmed Afghan prisoners and civilians were killed by 19 Australian soldiers. None of the 19 soldiers were identified in the report.



A balloon depicting Red Titan, a character from "Ryan's World", is seen during the 94th Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade closed to the spectators due to the spread of the coronavirus in Manhattan, New York City, Thursday

## Iran's top nuke scientist killed

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dubai, Nov 27: Iranian state television is reporting that a scientist that Israel has alleged led a military nuclear program in early 2000s has been "assassinated."

State TV Friday cited sources confirming the death of Mohsen Fakhri-zadeh.

It said it would offer more information shortly.

Fakhri-zadeh led Iran's so-called "Amad," or "Hope" programme. Israel and the West have alleged it was a military operation looking at the feasibility of building a nuclear weapon in Iran. Tehran long has maintained its nuclear programme is peaceful.

The International Atomic Energy Agency says that "Amad" programme ended in the early 2000s. Its inspectors now monitor Iranian nuclear sites.

## Experts recommend polypropylene for Covid mask filters

AGENCIES

Canada, Nov 27: With the Covid-19 pandemic showing no signs of abatement, scientists now recommend adding a third layer to cloth face masks to prevent the disease from spreading. They prefer using a non-woven polypropylene fabric for this third layer.

However, most people are still unaware about this material or where to get it.

According to Canada's Public Health Agency, nearly all recent studies that have examined layering have found that using additional layers in face masks enhances filtration, and some fabrics help to filter more than others. Scientists at Canada's McMaster University have recommended the use of industry-grade "spunbond" polypropylene as a middle layer in washable cloth masks.

The fell of spunbond polypropylene meant for the clothing and furniture industries is similar to that of any fabric. Aside from being washable, it will not divert supply of medical-grade polypropylene from the manufacture of formal personal protective equipment.

There are various types of non-woven polypropylene. While traditional materials for clothing and furniture have a woven or knitted structure, non-woven materials have a random arrangement of fibre, similar to spaghetti on a plate. This randomness enables high particle filtration while remaining highly breathable.



Scientists recommend using an additional layer of polypropylene fabric in cloth masks to act as a filter

The most common types of non-woven polypropylene include spunbond, meltblown and sunlance materials. Some varieties of spunbond polypropylene are randomly oriented fibres that are compressed and melted together in a pattern of small, closely spaced welds, called point bonds.

In fact, lightweight medical-grade spunbond polypropylene, which is found in the outer layers of three-layer certified medical masks, is specially meant medical uses. But when used as a single-use material, it should not be washed.

Washable spunbond polypropylene is one of many materials used as interfacing, to give structure to waistbands and collars as well as around zippers. In addition, it is used to seal the bottom of couches and chairs. It is readily available from fabric distributors and is not in short supply as it is not part of the supply chain for personal protective equipment.

# UK royal family 'cannot stomach' watching 'The Crown'

THE CLAIM COME AMIDST THAT CAMILLA PARKER BOWLES, THE DUCHESS OF CORNWALL, HAS BEEN RECEIVING ONLINE ABUSE DUE TO HER PORTRAYAL IN THE NETFLIX DRAMA

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

London, Nov 27: The UK royal family "cannot stomach" watching "The Crown" despite the popularity of the Netflix series which is based on the reign of Queen Elizabeth II, according to a royal commentator.

The claim come amidst that Camilla Parker Bowles, the Duchess of Cornwall and the second wife of Prince Charles, has been receiving online abuse due to her portrayal in the Netflix drama.

Omid Scobie, a London-based writer and the royal contributor for ABC News, said that some family members cannot bear the thought of watching the new episodes.

Scoobie said on his Heir podcast that their issue is with the show nearing modern day events.

"I think as the show progresses into the more present-day house of Windsor it becomes harder and harder for members of the Royal Family to even stomach the idea of watching it," he said.

"There is already a lot of talk about series five and series six."

The Queen is said to have watched and liked the first season.

Sunday Express reported in 2017 that it was Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex, and Sophie, Countess of Wessex, who encouraged the Queen to watch the series.

However, in 2018, Sunday Express reported that the Queen was an-



nnoyed after watching a scene in which Prince Philip was portrayed as being unsympathetic and in-

sensitive to young Prince Charles' struggles with being bullied at school.

In September 2019, the Queen's communication secretary, Donal McCabe, wrote to The Guardian saying: "Your article (The writer of 'The Crown' reveals he keeps royal household in the picture) may have the unfortunate consequence of leading your readers to believe that the television series The Crown is made with some sort of endorsement by the royal household, or an acceptance by the royal household that the drama is factually accurate."

"We appreciate that readers of the Guardian may enjoy this fictionalised interpretation of historical events but they should do so knowing that the royal household is not complicit in interpretations made by the programme."



**We need to be watchful about the sustainability of demand after the festivals and a possible reassessment of market expectations surrounding the vaccine**

**SHILPAN SHAH** | ECONOMIST, CAPITAL ECONOMICS (SINGAPORE)

## CAIT DEMANDS 7-DAY BAN ON AMAZON

Traders' body CAIT has demanded a 7-day ban on Amazon for not displaying the mandatory details including the country of origin of the products sold on the e-commerce major's platform



## of the day quote

Amid the global pandemic, companies have been leveraging technology to pivot their businesses at hyperspeed. This new all-digital world poses an opportunity for business leaders to rethink how they not only connect with their customers, but also their employees



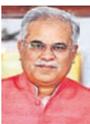
**DULLES KRISHNAN** | AREA VICE PRESIDENT, SALESFORCE INDIA

Stores were shut, people scared to get out and orders were pouring in (for BigBasket). There was a surge in business, and we had 20% workforce. We realised that we can't give this up... (realised) how important this quality is... Resilient organisations are winners



**HARI MENON** | CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, BIGBASKET

The state government is not slacking its paddy procurement efforts amid Covid-19 crisis. Even though the Centre has not fulfilled the state's demand for gunny bags to store procured paddy, Chhattisgarh is still somehow trying to arrange the bags



**BHUPESH BAGHEL** | CM, CHHATTISGARH

## SHORT TAKES

### Hero MotoCorp gets new COO

**New Delhi:** Two-wheeler maker Hero MotoCorp Friday said it has appointed global mobility expert Michael Clarke to the newly created position of Chief Operating Officer, with the additional role of Chief Human Resources Officer. Clarke will join the company with effect from January 1, 2021 and report to Pawan Munjal, Chairman and CEO of Hero MotoCorp, the country's largest two-wheeler maker said in a statement.

### Duroflex aims to double revenue

**Kochi:** Mattress maker Duroflex has set a target of doubling its turnover to ₹1,000 crore by 2022-23 with the ongoing capacity expansion that will help widen its reach to the northern and western markets. The company, in which private equity firm Light House invested ₹160 crore two years ago for a 24% stake, has the capacity to produce 7 lakh mattresses annually that will now cross 10 lakh.

### Govt's paddy buying rises 18.8%

**New Delhi:** The government's kharif paddy procurement jumps 18.78% to 310.61 lakh tonnes so far this year, with over 65% been purchased from Punjab alone, according to the Union food ministry. About ₹58,644.65 crore worth of paddy has been purchased at the MSP from about 28.45 lakh farmers so far, it said in a statement. Paddy procurement commenced in Punjab and Haryana from September 26 due to early arrival of the crop, while in other states from October 1.

### Adani tops DHFL bid

**New Delhi:** Billionaire Gautam Adani's roads-to-mining group outbid US-based Oaktree with a ₹33,000 crore bid for collapsed housing lender, DHFL, but rival bidders want it out of the race for allegedly missing the deadline - a charge Adani Group denies saying it followed due process and the "cartel" wants to prevent value maximisation.

# LAKSHMI VILAS BANK BECOMES DBS INDIA

THE DEBT-RIDDEN 94-YEAR OLD BANK IS NOW A PART OF HISTORY

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Nov 27:** Tamil Nadu-based Lakshmi Vilas Bank (LVB) with pre-independence lineage Friday lost its identity after its merger with the Indian subsidiary of Singapore's DBS Bank.

The debt-ridden 94-year old bank's fate was sealed with Union Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approving Scheme of Amalgamation Wednesday. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had announced November 27 as the effective date of merger for LVB with DBS Bank India Ltd (DBIL).

All the branches of LVB will function as branches of DBIL with effect from November 27, the RBI had said in a statement.

Although depositors of the bank

now have clarity, promoters and investors of the bank have been left high and dry. LVB was asked to write off ₹318-crore Tier-II Basel III bonds by ahead of its merger with DBS Bank by RBI on Thursday citing Section 45 of the Banking Regulation Act, resulting in losses to the investors of these bonds.

Besides, the shares of the bank are going to be delisted as per the Scheme of Amalgamation -- Lakshmi Vilas Bank Limited (Amalgamation with DBS Bank India Limited) Scheme, 2020.

Many stakeholders including bank unions have raised questions on the manner in which the LVB was merged with subsidiary of a foreign bank, saying that RBI has gifted LVB for free.

Bank employees' union AIBEA



has said that the Reserve Bank's culpability in the failure of the 94-year-old bank needs to be looked into and that the proposed merger of the lender with DBIL will provide a back-door entry for a foreign banking entity into the Indian market.

In a letter to Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Wednesday,

the All India Bank Employees Association (AIBEA) said the approach of merger of the Tamil Nadu-based lender with Indian subsidiary of a Singapore-based bank is opposite to the policy of Aatmanirbhar Bharat professed by the government.

DBIL became lucky in the second

attempt. In 2018, DBS had approached LVB to acquire about 50% of the stake in karur-based lender for a much higher valuation, ₹100-Rs 150 per share.

LVB then had appointed J P Morgan to scout for investors for the bank. But, when the DBS approached the RBI with the proposal, it sought an exemption from the stake dilution norms The RBI didn't agree with the proposal and hence rejected it.

The RBI had superseded LVB's board November 17 after the private sector lender was placed under a 90-day moratorium restricting cash withdrawals at ₹25,000 per depositor.

The RBI simultaneously placed in public domain a draft scheme of amalgamation of LVB with DBIL.

## JSPL GETS CSR IMPACT AWARD

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 27:** Jindal Steel & Power Ltd (JSPL) has been honoured with India International CSR Impact Awards, 2020 during the India International CSR Summit & Impact Awards held online by Brand India. JSPL has been awarded in the category of Most Innovative Project of the Year for its 'Asha- the Hope' project.

JSPL's President & Group Head (CSR, Education and Sustainability) Prashant Kumar Hota received the award during the programme, in which eminent leaders from industry and civil society and NGOs were present.

Chairperson of JSPL Foundation Shallu Jindal said, "Asha- the hope is one of our flagship programmes for empowering people with special needs, particularly those who are in their formative age group."

## SBI opens Treasury Satellite Center

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 27:** State Bank of India (SBI) Friday opened a Treasury Satellite Center in City. The centre was inaugurated by SV Sastry, Deputy Managing Director, SBI Global Markets in the presence of B Raghvendra Rao, Chief General Manager (CGM), Global Markets and RumaDey, Chief General Manager, Bhubaneswar Circle.

On this occasion, some top customers of Odisha state like Paradeep Phosphates Limited, Indian Metal and Ferro Alloys (IMFA), Kashvi Power and Alloys, Tata Refractories Limited, IFGL Refractories Limited also interacted. Treasury Satellite Centre, a unit of RTMU Kolkata, will provide



vide end-to-end solutions in the entire gamut of treasury needs through customised products.

The new centre will also be useful for extending personalised services, providing inputs/views in forex & treasury and necessary assistance to branches for building new relationship, sanction of limits, tracking MTMs, compliance with regulatory guidelines.

# Estimates show 'upside potential' for economy

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Nov 27:** Chief Economic Adviser KV Subramanian Friday said there is an "upside potential" in the estimates about the economy during the current financial year amid a faster-than-expected recovery.

He said the final print could be better than GDP estimates given by various institutions, including the Reserve Bank of India, which projected contraction of 9.5% during 2020-21. During the second quarter, India's economy recovered faster than expected as a pick-up in manufacturing helped GDP clock a lower contraction of 7.5% and held out hopes for further improvement on consumer demand bouncing back.

The gross domestic product (GDP) had contracted by a record 23.9% in the first quarter of 2020-21 fiscal (April 2020 to March 2021) as the coronavirus lockdown pummeled economic activity. The GDP contraction of 7.5% in July-September 2020 is compared with a growth of 4.4% in the same quarter last year, according to data released by the statistics ministry Friday.

Compared with the estimates provided by several of the analysts,



Subramanian said, the Q2 numbers, have been more encouraging, which were being reflected in the high frequency indicators earlier as well. Sustainability of the economic recovery depends critically on the spread of the pandemic, he said adding that while the peak of first wave was crossed in September; winter months must warrant caution.

Giving outlook for the near future, he said, "We should be cautiously optimistic and the caution is warranted because economic impact is primarily due to the pandemic."

Given the uncertainty, he said, it is difficult to predict if positive territory can be hit in the third or fourth quarter.

"I would say that the given what we have seen in Q1 and Q2 and with the optimism that is being seen in

COMPARED WITH THE ESTIMATES PROVIDED BY SEVERAL OF THE ANALYSTS, SUBRAMANIAN SAID, THE Q2 NUMBERS, HAVE BEEN MORE ENCOURAGING

AS FAR AS H2 OF THE CURRENT FISCAL IS CONCERNED, THERE IS UNCERTAINTY ALTHOUGH THERE IS SHARP RECOVERY, SAID THE CEA

the estimates, I do see upside potential in that estimate given the good recovery that is happening," he said when asked about growth estimates for the entire financial year. As far as the second half of the current fiscal is concerned, he said there is uncertainty although there is sharp recovery especially in the manufacturing sector.

"But given the uncertainty, I think it would be difficult to say whether we will hit the positive in Q3 or Q4. My sense is that we should definitely be continuing this recovery provided that the pandemic remains in control."

He said some sectors that are affected by social distancing will continue to experience demand slump till the time the pandemic does not go away.

# FM pushes CPSe to exceed capex target by March

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Nov 27:** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Friday exhorted large central public sector enterprises (CPSEs) to exceed their planned capital expenditure (Capex) target for 2020-21 by March to accelerate economic growth hit by the COVID-19 crisis.

She held a virtual meeting with secretaries of power, mines and atomic energy along with the chairman and managing directors (CMDs) of 10 CPSEs, belonging to these ministries, an official statement said.

This was the fifth in the ongoing series of meetings that the finance minister is having with various stakeholders to boost the economic growth amid the pandemic.

While reviewing the performance of CPSEs, Sitharaman said that Capex by CPSEs is a critical driver of economic growth and need to be scaled up for the 2020-21 and 2021-22.

Appreciating the efforts of the ministries and CPSEs for making visible efforts to meet the capital expenditure targets, the finance minister said that "more efforts are



still required to achieve the target of 75 per cent CAPEX by Q3 and more than 100 per cent by Q4 of the FY21".

The overall achievement as on November 23, 2020, is ₹24,227 crore (39.4 per cent) against the Capex target for 2020-21 - ₹61,483 crore, the statement said.

Sitharaman encouraged the CPSEs to perform better to achieve targets and to ensure that the capital outlay provided to them for the year 2020-21 is spent properly and within time. The finance minister said the better performance of CPSEs can help the economy in a big way to recover from the impact of COVID-19.

Sitharaman asked the secretaries to closely monitor the performance of CPSEs to ensure to achieve the Capex targets and make plans for it.

# Govt to allow Uber, rivals to charge 20% commission

AGENCIES

**Mumbai, Nov 27:** India will allow app-based taxi aggregators such as Uber Technologies and Ola to charge up to 20% commission on ride fares, according to guidelines issued on Friday, diluting an earlier proposal to cap fees at 10%.

Industry experts had warned that a 10% cap would hit revenue and operations of the likes of Uber, which have faced increased regulatory scrutiny in several countries. The final guidelines, which are to be considered by the state governments when issuing licences to aggregators, say drivers should receive 80% of the ride fare with the taxi companies receiving the re-

maining 20%.

The new rules come at a time when ride-hailing companies have seen revenues drop as travellers turn to personal vehicles to ensure safety and social distancing to reduce the risk of catching the novel coronavirus.

Additionally, several companies have continued to mandate remote working rules, impacting demand for taxis.

The government guidelines recommended that so-called surge prices at busy times can be a maximum of 1.5 times the base fare and that companies must provide insurance cover for drivers and limit them to working no more than 12 hours a day.

# Centre mulls norms for MDO appointment

KULDEEP SINGH, OP

**New Delhi, Nov 27:** The Union government is planning to frame fresh guidelines to bring transparency in appointment of Mine Operator-cum-developer (MDO). According to sources from the government, NITI Aayog was directed to frame guidelines for selection and appointment of MDOs in consultation with secretaries of Ministry of Mines, Ministry of Coal, Ministry of Steel and Ministry of Finance.

In a recently held meeting, it has been noted that draft model contract agreement of ministry of Coal for appointment of MDO for coal sector needs to be reviewed and vetted. Sources said, it has been pointed out that appointment of MDOs before



According to sources, NITI Aayog was directed to frame guidelines for selection and appointment of MDOs

the allotment of mineral block appears inappropriate and this may not be allowed in the future.

It is to be mentioned here that there is no specific provisions as of now in the Mines and Mineral (Development and Regulation) Act 1957 (MMDR) regarding the appointment of Mine developer cum operator. However, the Coal Blocks Allocation Rules, 2017, framed by the Ministry of Coal, provides legal

provision for MDOs. The section 2 of of Coal Blocks Allocation Rules, 2017 lays provisions for appointment of MDOs through competitive bidding process.

Sources said the government may make amendment in section 11(1) of Coal Mines Special Provisions Act 2015, which deals with pre-date appointment of MDOs. The government can also make amendment in the rule 2 of Coal

Blocks Allocation Rules. Sources said that the allottee would have to follow competitive bidding process based on standardised Modal Contract Agreement for selection of MDOs.

**Mine Developer Operator**  
The role of Mine Developer-cum-operator is to undertake, design engineering, procurement construction operation of the mines for the excavation and delivery of the coal.

However, MDOs are also assigned additional work for post allotment development activities such as assistance in securing, clearance land acquisition, ensuring mine access, physical possession of land, implementing rehabilitation and resettlement, equipment handling and maintenance, coal production as per mining plan.

## BATTLE OF THE BILLIONAIRES

AGENCIES

**Mumbai/New Delhi, Nov 27:** Jeff Bezos and Mukesh Ambani, two of the world's richest men, face a turning point in a battle for preeminence in India's booming, nearly trillion-dollar retail market.

The outcome of a legal dispute which has embroiled the billionaires' Amazon.com and Reliance Industries Ltd empires - where a court ruling is imminent - may shape India's retail landscape for years to come.

The winner in the fight for Future Retail Ltd, Amazon's estranged local partner, will get pole position in the race to meet the daily needs of more than a billion people.

Accusations of insider trading and contractual breaches, as well as nationalistic cries to keep the US

giant at bay, mark the high-stakes fight, which has snowballed from what began as a dispute between Amazon and Future.

If Amazon succeeds, it may slow Reliance's plans to expand its e-commerce and brick-and-mortar operations. If Amazon loses, its hopes of expanding its interests in India's second-largest retailer and cashing in on its key grocery supply chain will be dashed, industry insiders say.

Amazon is trying to stop Reliance's \$3.4 billion purchase of Future Group's retail assets. The US company, which won an injunction from an arbitrator to block the Reliance-Future deal, accuses its partner of breaching some pre-existing agreements, misleading the public and insider trading. Future denies the allegations.



Amazon, Reliance and Future did not respond to requests for comment. Bezos' behemoth is a formidable foe, but Ambani has a history as a disrupter. He has shaken foreign telecom firms by offering dirt-cheap data. Industry executives see his e-commerce plans as a threat for Amazon and Walmart Inc's Flipkart.

"If Reliance moves faster and faster, obviously it'll become very difficult for anyone else to gain," said Himanshu Bajaj, head of consulting firm Kearney's India retail practice. Reliance, seeking to expand its JioMart e-commerce business, this month completed a \$6.4 billion fund-raising by selling a stake in its re-

tail arm to investors as Silver Lake Partners and KKR & Co

tail arm to investors as Silver Lake Partners and KKR & Co.

## GROCERIES, 'BIG BROTHER' IN AMERICA

India's retail market will grow 46% over the next four years to an annual \$1.3 trillion, reckons Forrester Research. The key bat-

tle is over groceries, expected to be worth around \$740 billion a year by 2024. Founded by Kishore Biyani, dubbed India's retail king, Future transformed the country's retailing in recent decades, before COVID-19 hit the business so hard this year that Biyani was forced to find a new buyer. Around 1,300 of Future's more than 1,700 retail outlets in 400 cities sell groceries. Its budget supermarkets cater to middle-class shoppers, while its upmarket stores offer products like imported cheese and fresh guacamole, relatively rare in India's retail landscape.

That makes Future a prized asset for both Reliance and Amazon. Reliance and Future dominate the market, with the next competitor, Avenue Supermarts Ltd's DMart, having just 220 outlets in around 70 cities.

Poor bowling, fielding costs Men in Blue opening ODI despite valiant Hardik show as Smith, Finch tons help Aussies take 1-0 lead in three-ODI series

# SLOPPY INDIA GO DOWN



Steve Smith

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sydney, Nov 27: Hardik Pandya's career-best effort wasn't good enough to compensate for a forgettable bowling effort as India slumped to a 66-run defeat against Australia in the first ODI, making a rather unimpressive start to the tour, here Friday.

Virat Kohli's men started exactly on a note they wouldn't have liked, giving away 374 runs in 50 overs with rival captain Aaron Finch and his illustrious predecessor Steve Smith hitting contrasting hundreds.

A pitch that looked docile during the first half suddenly came to life in the second as Josh Hazlewood (3/55) bounced out the Indian top-order, including Kohli and a frightened Shreyas Iyer, who got himself into a tangle.

Pandya's 76-ball 90 and a 128-run stand with senior opener Shikhar Dhawan delayed the inevitable but it was always a catch-up game after the team was reduced to 101/4 inside 14 overs.

Big-hearted leg-spinner Adam



Aaron Finch

PICT: ESPNCRINFO

Zampa dismissed Dhawan and Pandya in quick succession as India surrendered to scoreboard pressure finishing at 308/8 after 50 overs.

Pandya carried his blazing IPL batting form into the first game of the series but it was his fast-

medium bowling that Kohli missed on the day as he lacked options when Smith sent his regular bowlers on a leather-hunt. India badly missed a sixth bowling option with none of their specialist batters good enough to roll their

SCORECARD				
AUSTRALIA				
	R	B	4s	6s
David Warner c Rahul b Shami	69	76	6	0
Aaron Finch c Rahul b Bumrah	114	124	9	2
Steve Smith b Shami	105	66	11	4
Marcus Stoinis c Rahul b Chahal	0	1	0	0
Glenn Maxwell c Jadeja b Shami	45	19	5	3
Marnus Labuschagne c Dhawan b Saini	2	2	0	0
Alex Carey not out	17	13	2	0
Pat Cummins not out	1	1	0	0
<b>EXTRAS:</b> 21 (B-1, LB-6, NB-2, WD-12);				
<b>FALL:</b> 1/156 (Warner), 2/264 (Finch), 3/271 (Stoinis), 4/328 (Maxwell), 5/331 (Labuschagne), 6/372 (Smith).				
<b>BOWLING:</b> Mohammed Shami 10-0-59-3, Jasprit Bumrah 10-0-73-1, Navdeep Saini 10-0-83-1, Yuzvendra Chahal 10-0-89-1.				
INDIA				
	R	B	4s	6s
Mayank Agarwal c Maxwell b Hazlewood	22	18	2	1
Shikhar Dhawan c Starc b Zampa	74	86	10	0
Virat Kohli c Finch b Hazlewood	21	21	2	1
Shreyas Iyer c Carey b Hazlewood	2	2	0	0
KL Rahul c Smith b Zampa	12	15	1	0
Hardik Pandya c Starc b Zampa	90	76	7	4
Ravindra Jadeja c Starc b Zampa	25	37	0	1
Navdeep Saini not out	29	35	1	1
Mohammed Shami b Starc	13	10	1	1
Jasprit Bumrah not out	0	3	0	0
<b>EXTRAS:</b> 20 (LB-2, W-15, NB-3);				
<b>FALL:</b> 1/53 (Mayank), 2/78 (Kohli), 3/80 (Iyer), 4/101 (Rahul), 5/229 (Dhawan), 6/247 (Pandya), 7/281 (Jadeja), 8/308 (Shami).				
<b>BOWLING:</b> Mitchell Starc 9-0-65-1, Josh Hazlewood 10-0-55-3, Pat Cummins 8-0-52-0, Adam Zampa 10-0-54-4, Marcus Stoinis 6.2-0-25-0, Glenn Maxwell 6.4-0-55-0.				

arms for even two to three overs. It was a day when the bowling unit barring Mohammed Shami flopped badly and poor fielding only added to their woes. As many as three sitters were dropped and numerous sloppy efforts on the field added to the misery.

The normally steady Yuzvendra Chahal earned the ignominy of worst figures by an Indian spinner and Jasprit Bumrah's wretched ODI form continued.

India's fastest bowler Navdeep Saini also struggled like any newcomer does, unable to hit the right length on Australian tracks. Ravindra Jadeja wasn't as costly as Chahal but since the past two and half months, his bowling has lacked sting.

India's eternal nemesis Smith seems ready to torment them a lot in next two months if his 11 fours and four sixes were any indication Friday.

Not for once was he troubled by the Indian bowlers, who were already under the pump after a 156-run opening stand between

Finch and David Warner (69). A lot of credit should go to Warner and Finch for the manner in which they attacked Chahal.

While Finch used his feet to smother the spin and play against the turn, Warner stayed back in the crease to hit Chahal with the turn, disturbing his line and length completely. It helped as Smith and Maxwell had no problems in flaying the bowlers during the last 10 overs.

While chasing, Mitchell Starc's wayward first over that cost 20 runs did give India the much required impetus at the onset but Hazlewood's splendid short bowling saw the end of Mayank Agarwal, Kohli leaving the visitors out of sorts in a jiffy.

Vice-captain KL Rahul couldn't keep down an innocuous full-toss from Zampa and India were in deep trouble even before 15 overs had ended.

A high percentage of dot balls (148) in the Indian innings also showed how only one team dominated the proceedings.

## Body language was disappointing: Virat

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sydney, Nov 27: India skipper Virat Kohli Friday questioned his team's body language after the opening ODI loss to Australia and said Hardik Pandya not being fit to bowl is affecting the side's balance as he doesn't have enough all-rounders at his disposal.

"Everyone needs to show the intent in the entire 50 overs. Probably, we played 50 overs after a long time that could have an affect...But having said that we have played so much ODI cricket that it is not something we don't know how to do," Kohli said in the post-match presentation. "I think the body language in the field wasn't great after around 25 overs. It was a disappointing part. If you don't take your chances against a top-quality opposition they'll hurt you and that is what happened today."

With Hardik Pandya not yet to fit to bowl, Kohli said it is affecting the balance of the team. "We have to find out a way to get few overs from part-timers. Unfortunately, someone like Hardik is not ready to bowl yet, we have to accept that, we don't really have all-round options as such right now," he said.

"That is an area to be looked at, it is a big part in any team's balance, someone like Marcus (Stoinis), (Glenn) Maxwell bowling a few overs for Australia helped."

Kohli said his bowlers couldn't pick wickets regularly and it allowed the Australians to post a big total in the end. "The key to winning games is picking up wickets, that is something we were not able to do, also lapses in the field were

HARDIK PANDYA



also a reason why we couldn't capitalise on any kind of momentum, the pressure that we created in early part of the innings."

Talking about the batting unit, Kohli said: "I think we gave ourselves the best chance. Hardik's innings was the best example of that. As a batting unit we committed nicely to positive cricket and we are going to do that in the future as well."

Winning captain Aaron Finch said he took his time early in the innings. "Found it reasonably hard to get my timing. Took a couple of chances, got lucky," he said. Finch heaped praise on his teammates for their performance despite not being able to train much as a unit.



Virat Kohli is having a chat with Mohammed Shami, Friday

## Arsenal, Leicester in knockouts



Arsenal players celebrate a goal against Molde; (R) Jamie Vardy is ecstatic after scoring the equaliser for Leicester

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Nov 27: Arsenal's academy products helped the team cruise into the knockout stage of the Europa League while Leicester needed a late equalizer from Jamie Vardy to advance.

Arsenal's record signing Nicolas Pepe showed his better side after he was sent off in a goalless draw at Leeds in the Premier League Sunday, scoring the opening goal in a 3-0 away victory at Norway's Molde.

The homegrown talents did the rest as Reiss Nelson doubled the lead and Folarin Balogun — less than a minute after coming on as a substitute — netted the third with his first goal for the club.

Hoffenheim and Leicester also progressed into the round of 32 with two matches to spare. The Premier League club equalized three times in a 3-3 draw at Braga, with Vardy grabbing the final goal in injury time.

Carlos Vinicius scored his first two goals for Tottenham while Harry Winks netted a spectacular one from 56 yards as a dominant

Spurs side beat Bulgarian team Ludogorets 4-0.

AC Milan failed to win for the second straight game as the Italian powerhouse was held to a 1-1 draw at Lille, while Rangers was held 2-2 by Benfica after giving up a two-goal lead against the Portuguese side for the second game in a row.

A minute of silence was observed before all the matches to honor Diego Maradona, who died on Wednesday at the age of 60. Maradona's former club Napoli paid special tribute to the Argentine before a 2-0 win over Rijeka.

Arsenal used a second-half scoring burst to maintain a perfect record with four wins from four. Just a minute after hitting the crossbar, Pepe curled a ball into a top corner of the net five minutes into the second half.

Five minutes later, Joe Willock — another academy product — provided a fine cross for Nelson to tap in the second. Balogun finished it off from close range seven minutes from time.

Vardy equalised five minutes into stoppage time to put Europa



League newcomer Leicester into the next stage. Fransergio had put the hosts 3-2 up four minutes earlier.

It was 1-0 down after Al Musrati scored four minutes into the game. Harvey Barnes canceled that out five minutes later with an angled shot high into the net, but Paulinho restored the host's one-goal advantage in the 24th from close range. Luke Thomas netted Leicester's second equalizer in the 79th.

Vinicius gave Tottenham the lead 16 minutes into the game after he met a deflected pass from Dele Alli to beat Ludogorets goalkeeper Plamen Iliev on-on-one.

The Brazilian added his second in the 34th. Tanguy Ndombele started the move with a run up the field before unleashing a low shot that was parried by Iliev, with Dele crossing for the forward to net again.

Harry Winks made it 3-0 in the second half from near the halfway line on the left, lobbying a spectacular shot over the keeper and into the net. It was his third goal for Spurs. Vinicius set up Lucas Moura in the box to finish the rout with his third goal in four Europa League games.

## LOCKIE FIFER FASHIONS NZ WIN

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Auckland, Nov 27: A savage spell of fast bowling from Lockie Ferguson (5/21) and an unbeaten 48 from Jimmy Neesham (24b, 5x4, 3x6) propelled New Zealand to a five-wicket win over the West Indies in the series-opening T20I, Friday.

Neesham produced his highest score in T20I and combined in partnerships of 77 with Devon Conway (41) and 39, unbroken, with Mitchell Santner (31 n o) to see New Zealand home with four balls to spare.

In a rain-interrupted match decided under the Duckworth-Lewis system, New Zealand replied with 176/5 to the West Indies' total of 180/7.

The West Indies owed their competitive total to captain Kieron Pollard (75 n o, 37b, 4x4, 8x6). Pollard added a powerful finish to a West Indies innings reduced by rain to 16 overs lifting his team to 180/7 as they batted first after losing the toss.



Lockie Ferguson (C) celebrates his five-wicket haul against West Indies, Friday

PHOTO: ESPNCRINFO

In an innings which ebbed and flowed around three rain breaks, the West Indies blasted their way to 58 without loss after 3.2 overs, then lost five wickets for one run in the

pace of Ferguson's onslaught.

The tourists were happy with their total, but New Zealand methodically chased it down. South Africa-born Conway, in his debut,

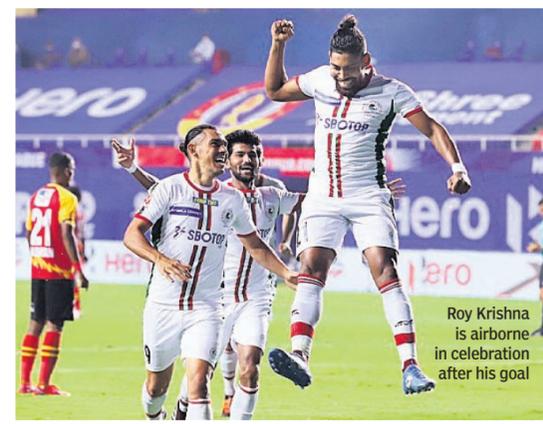
## ATKMB draw first blood in Kolkata derby

AGENCIES

Goa, Nov 27: Former I-League arch-rivals Mohun Bagan, now known as ATK Mohun Bagan (ATKMB) after merging with ATK, and East Bengal (EB) began their rivalry in Indian Super League, with ATKMB drawing first blood with a 2-0 win over EB, Friday.

Second half goals by Roy Krishna and Manvir Singh were enough for ATKMB to mark a historic start to the Kolkata derby on a different stage.

The Red and Golds showed a lot of promise on the field but couldn't beat the Bagan defence which stood strong till the end. At the other end, Krishna's quality came to the fore and proved to be a big dif-



Roy Krishna is airborne in celebration after his goal

ference between the two teams. After a goalless first half, Krishna finally broke the deadlock in the 49th minute with a clinical finish. Jayesh Rane initiated the move with a pass to Javier Hernandez at the edge of the box. The Spaniard took a touch and squared the ball for Krishna who found the back of the net.

In the 85th minute, Manvir sealed the fate of the game with a quality goal from a solo effort. The forward went past Narayan Das on the right flank before cutting into the box and finding the back of the net with a swerving shot.

ATKMB bagged the bragging rights and also climbed to the top of the league table after the victory with six points from their first two outings.