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SHORT TAKES

NEW CORPORATORS
HATCH PLAN TO
CORNER GOVT

From Page 1

State government is thus caught between the devil and deep sea. The newly BJP corporators from Mansoorabad, Hayatnagar, B.N. Reddy Nagar, L. B. Nagar, Vanasthalipuram, Hastinapuram, Champapet, Lingojiguda, Saroornagar, Rama Krishna Puram, Kothapet, Chaitanyapuri, Gaddiannaram, Ramanthapur, Habshiguda and other divisions have already drafted an action plan to expose the government and derive political mileage. Sources say since most employees reside in L. B. Nagar and Uppal zones, their anti-government trend has become clear with the election result. They too might raise their voice if distribution of cash relief is not completed in the flood-affected areas. This would turn out to be dangerous for sitting TRS MLAs in L. B. Nagar and Uppal assembly constituencies. They might no more enjoy power in the areas with main opposition BJP winning all divisions in L. B. Nagar and few of them in Uppal constituency.

Sources, however, maintain that development activities will run smoothly in western, southern and northern parts of the city due to the one-sided verdict given to TRS and MIM. It is expected that officials of GHMC, Hyderabad Road Development Corporation Limited (HRDCL) and other nodal agencies will only execute works accorded to them by the state government. Officials say they are just executing agencies, it is up to political parties to decide where developmental activities should happen. They maintain that they are ready with the ₹250 crore SNDP project and are awaiting state government's nod to execute it.



LEOPARD CUB'S
BODY FOUND ON
ROADSIDE

DC CORRESPONDENT
ADILABAD, DEC. 7

The body of a leopard cub was found along the NH-44 at Mekalaghandi near Seethagondi in Gudihathnoor mandal on Monday evening. The cub was found bleeding from mouth and it is suspected that the leopard died after being hit while it was crossing the road by a speeding vehicle. Forest officials reached the spot and recovered the carcass.

Poll impact: GHMC to
shift projects to HMDA

Authority to work on Khajaguda tunnel and other projects

MADDY DEEKSHITH | DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 7

The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) is contemplating to hand over Khajaguda tunnel, 8.5 km double-decker elevated skyway, from Paradise to Kandlakoya along National Highway 44 on the Outer Ring Road (ORR) and other projects to Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA). Officials said that the decision was a direct impact on GHMC polls to minimise political interference.

According to GHMC officials, a 502.9-metre long tunnel is planned as part of a long-term measure to develop a new route connecting Inorbit Mall to Chitrapuri Colony via Hyderabad Knowledge City in order to substan-

tially ease traffic movement in Gachibowli junction. The new route development includes a tunnel, elevated corridor, loop and approach and down ramps, all being taken up at an estimated cost of ₹875 crore.

Of that ₹775 crore will be used for civil works, including about ₹300 crore for construction of the tunnel, while ₹100 crore goes for land acquisition. The 502.9-metre facility, in fact, gets bifurcated into two independent tunnels facilitating bilateral traffic flow Inorbit Mall to Khajaguda end and vice-versa.

Each independent tunnel will be 19 metres wide. The approach ramps will be passing over Khajaguda junction towards Chitrapuri Colony to avoid any traffic conflict at the junction. On the Inorbit Mall end, approach ramps will be an elevated facili-

● **EACH INDEPENDENT** tunnel will be 19 metres wide. The approach ramps will be passing over Khajaguda junction towards Chitrapuri Colony to avoid any traffic conflict at the junction. On the Inorbit Mall end, approach ramps will be an elevated facilitating entry into the tunnel.

tating entry into the tunnel. This apart, two double-decker elevated skyways will be also handed over to HMDA, which also includes the land acquisition process, since all three projects are not included in the Strategic Road Development Plan (SRDP) project.

A 18.5 kms double-decker elevated skyway from Paradise to Kandlakoya along National Highway 44 on the Outer Ring Road

(ORR), is set to take shape soon. It will provide compatibility for a future Metro Rail project on the same pier.

A senior GHMC official, on condition of anonymity, said that the civic body would complete all ongoing projects too if the State government releases ₹10,000 crore from the budget as promised for Hyderabad urban agglomeration. However, the official said that Khajaguda and other two double-decker elevated corridors, which would cost around ₹6,700 crore, will be executed either by TSIC or HMDA based on the decision taken by the government, since both the nodal agencies are self-sustainable. The official said that if the projects will be executed by the GHMC it would face too many complications, primarily political interference.

Gudur joins BJP



TPCC treasurer Gudur Narayan Reddy meets BJP national president J.P. Nadda in the presence of state BJP president Bandi Sanjay, BJP national vice president D.K. Aruna and (right) BJP national secretary N. Indrasena Reddy in New Delhi on Monday.

WE HAVE DETAILS OF KCR'S FRAUDS, SAYS BANDI

From Page 1

The BJP hopes to cash in on the glamour of a movie star and popularity that Vijayashanti can bring to the party. The party is also planning to target Gajwel and Siddipet in the Assembly elections. Vijayashanti was well known in that Constituencies and people when she was an MP.

Meanwhile, BJP state president Bandi Sanjay said that all the corruption done by the Telangana CM are with the BJP. "In coming days we will make him stand in court," Sanjay said While interacting with the media in New Delhi, he said the BJP will approach the High Court and file a petition along with evidence about the

corrupt practices of KCR, and his Cabinet ministers and MLAs," Sanjay said, "By stopping registrations in Telangana, the common people are facing a severe time apart from the land regularisation scheme. With the CM ruling like a monarch, some of the people have cancelled their children's marriages and dreams of new houses," Bandi said.



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivaraj Singh Chouhan during a press conference at the state BJP office in Nampally on Monday.

Shivraj slams TRS, Cong
for provoking farmers

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 7

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivaraj Singh Chouhan slammed the opposition parties for provoking farmers and misleading them.

Addressing a press conference at the state BJP office here on Monday, he said that Congress' boat was sinking, which was the reason they were trying to save themselves by misleading farmers. He slammed the hypocrisy of Congress, DMK, AAP, SP, Akali Dal, TMC and Left parties on farm laws. Chouhan recalled that NCP chief Sharad Pawar

● **THE MADHYA Pradesh** Chief Minister said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had increased the MSP for farmers of all produce, unlike their sorry plight during Congress regimes.

had written to him in 2011. "There's need to amend APMC Act to encourage private sector investment in marketing, infrastructure and to provide alternate competitive marketing channels in the overall interest of farmers, consumers and agri-trade." He reminded that former prime minister

Manmohan Singh also supported the new laws, which he tried during his tenure. He questioned Manmohan Singh's U-turn on the Farmers Act. He said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had increased the MSP for farmers of all produce, unlike their sorry plight during Congress regimes.

The veteran leader said that TRS was also misleading farmers because it was now scared of the rising popularity of BJP and Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao was spreading wrong propaganda against the Union Government only to salvage his political career.

Power utilities can
decide on claims: SC

From Page 1

"We make it clear that the One-Man Committee was entrusted only with distribution of personnel between the two States, which distribution has been finalised by the One-Man Committee," the Supreme Court said.

On the applications raising the plea relating to salaries and allowances, the court said, "They need no consideration in these proceedings and employees of power utilities are free to adjudicate their claims before appropriate forum in accordance with law"

Having held that that the report by Justice Dharmadhikari on staff distribution between two States is final and non-challengeable, the court said, "We have found no

● **SC VERDICT** came on petitions by Telangana Power Utilities, certain employees and employees' associations challenging the June 20, 2020, concluding report by the One-Man Committee.

merit in the objections to One-Man Committee's Concluding Report dated 20.06.2020 it is obligatory for power utilities of both the States and all concerned to carry out and implement the directions of the One-Man Committee Report."

The top court verdict came on petitions by Telangana Power Utilities, certain employees and employees' associations challenging the June 20, 2020, concluding report by the One-Man Committee.

The SC noted that in the erstwhile state, the power utilities were Andhra Pradesh Generation Corporation, Andhra Pradesh Transmission Corporation and four Power Distribution Companies — Eastern, Southern, Central and Northern DISCOMS. By three Andhra Pradesh government orders issued on May 29, 2014, for distribution companies, generation companies and transmission Corporation, the assets and liabilities of the corporations and companies were to be apportioned between the two new States. However, the dispute arose after power utilities of the two newly formed states could not arrive at any consensus with regard to modalities for allocation and distribution of personnel.

SERIOUS | CONCERN

Excise department officials have busted drug rackets and arrested over 10 persons in last two months

Middlemen gone, now techies in narcotics trade

NAVEEN KUMAR | DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 7

The shortage in supplies of drugs, particularly ganja, during the Covid-19 lockdown appears to have taken the middlemen out of the equation, with techies and students, who are now peddling the stash directly from suppliers. The State Excise department alone has arrested 10 such individuals in the last two months. The alarming rate of drug busts recently in the city has the authorities concerned.

With the bulk of clientele purchasing drugs coming predominantly from the IT sector, police officials are calling on employers also to keep an eye on other aspects of their employees life and not just focus on their work.

Officials of Rachakonda police say that the IT officials should keep an eye on their employees and should conduct sessions explaining the ill-effects of these drugs and ask them not to use any of them. Police also said they are already setting up meetings and seminars at schools and colleges for warning the students. While the primary reason for procuring the drugs is addiction, they also make easy money by selling drugs within their circle, officials said. Vizag Agency area, which is a 12-15 hour drive from the city, is the main source for ganja which is peddled and sold in Hyderabad.

Being caught and using the drugs can ruin their career, said N. Anji Reddy. Asstt

Excise Superintendent of Hyderabad Enforcement team. "One should know that possession, sales, transportation and consumption of drugs is an offence punishable under section 27 of NDPS Act with a punishment for a period from 6 months to one year of imprisonment," he said.

In the last two months, the state Excise department has arrested 10 individuals who started with consuming ganja during their college, got addicted and later turned into suppliers of the contraband by the time they gained employment. "Ganja is the gateway drug. Once you get addicted to it, you would want to try other drugs and there is no turning back. Without family supervision and control, addicts go through financial crunch and ultimately become peddlers to make money. They start by selling to their close circles initially and then expand the clientele by ultimately falling into the net of law enforcement agencies and landing in jail," said the official.

Police officials also asked parents to keep an eye over the recreational activities of their child. "Adults should question students spending time with friends at secluded places like the cellars, terrace and open places at colonies etc. They should also ask them to be accountable of their allowances and be wary of their frequent tours to Araku, Kasol, Kodaikanal or Goa," a police official said.

RECENT DRUG CASES IN THE CITY

DEC 7: Two engineering students who can 1 kilo of ganja concealed in their backpack, died in a road accident in Dundigal when the bike they were travelling in crashed into a divider.

DEC 2: The Excise Enforcement officials seized 56 blots of LSD and 236 grams of hashish oil from three techies in the Tarnaka area.

NOV 27: A Btech dropout who was selling marijuana oil to buyers through online delivery applications was apprehended by the Special Operations Team of Malkajgiri. Officials seized 2 liters of marijuana oil, also known as liquid hashish, along with other contrabands from his possession.

NOV 27: A 20 year old was arrested by the Excise Enforcement team of Hyderabad in possession of ecstasy pills and MDMA from Bowenpally.

NOV 24: A 32 year old Ghana nation-

al in possession of cocaine was arrested within a fortnight after his bail by the Prohibition and Excise department.

NOV 24: The District Task Force team, along with the Uppal police, arrested two men and seized four kilos of Alprazolam drug along with other chemicals at Nacharam.

NOV 22: Three Yemen nationals were arrested in possession of 30 grams of MDMA and 1.1 kilos of marijuana among other contraband by the Excise District Task Force officials.

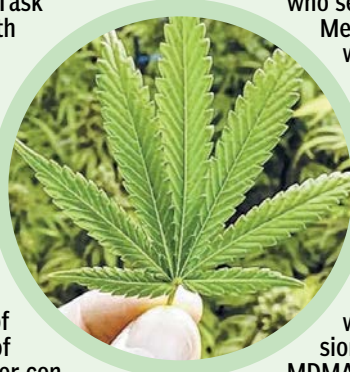
NOV 20: A techie, a former employee of Facebook and a MSc graduate from Canada, turned peddler was caught in possession of 1.2 kilos of

marijuana and 830 grams of hashish oil by the Excise Enforcement team.

NOV 19: Three men were caught by the North Zone Task Force team, who seized 200 grams of Mephedrone (MD) worth Rs 10 lakh from their possession.

NOV 17: The North Zone Task Force police nabbed two men, an alleged drug supplier from Goa and a manager of a pub from Hyderabad, who were in possession of 200 grams of MDMA and seized the contraband from their possession.

NOV 4: A toddy shop owner from Tandur was arrested by the Vikarabad police for selling the product laced with marijuana to the customers.



SYNONYMS AND DOUBLE ENTENDRES
USED AMONG THE SOCIAL CIRCLE FOR
MARIJUANA AND OTHER DRUGS

- Molly in the market
- Sativa strain
- Stone good green
- Better spinach
- Good giggles
- Panama red
- Alligator cigarette
- Pot, roach, doobie, joint, dope, herb.



- The drugs are purchased from various sources and are posted on social media platforms.
- The rates are given out openly in the photo caption with hashtags like #cannabis #peace.
- Post is picked up by prospective buyers who either comments or mostly message the seller personally.
- Sellers accepts payment through merchant apps like Paytm or Google Pay or cash and promises 'nodal point' delivery to the buyer, irrespective of age.

IN BRIEF

**KCR releases
Vriksha Vedam**

Hyderabad: Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao released the book, *Vriksha Vedam* published by Green India Challenge on the occasion of TRS MP J. Santosh Kumar's birthday at Pragathi Bhavan here on Monday. The book has *shlokas* highlighting the importance of trees. Rao said, "We have a rich culture, which treats trees as Gods."

**WE OWE A LOT TO
ARMED FORCES
PERSONNEL: GOV.**

Hyderabad, Dec. 7: Governor Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan on Monday said that we all owed a lot to the armed forces personnel. She said that armed forces personnel were making numerous sacrifices and were showing exemplary valour in protecting our country and ensuring our peaceful living.

The Governor was launching the Armed Forces Flag Day event, which is celebrated on December 7th every year, at the Raj Bhavan, here.

Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan stated that it was our duty to contribute generously to the Armed Forces Flag Day Fund so as to express our gratitude to the service and sacrifices made by our brave armed forces personnel.

"The armed forces personnel are living for the country. We cannot compensate for their sacrifices. But we can do our bit by donating generously to the Armed Forces Flag Day Fund as a token of our respect and gratitude to them," she added.

The Governor also offered to start self-employment training on behalf of the Raj Bhavan for the benefit of the war widows and other members of the armed forces' families for their empowerment.

She stated that the proposed training was aimed at economically empowering them in the true spirit of Atma Nirbhar Bharat initiative of our Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The proposed training would help them overcome the economic setbacks caused due to the Covid-19 and its consequent disruption of economic activities.

As part of the event at the Raj Bhavan, here, the Governor made a generous donation to the Armed Forces Flag Day Fund. — *INN*

**WAKF BOARD
EXTENDS AID TO
DIVORCED WOMEN**

**ATHER MOIN | DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 7**

Wakf Board Chairman Mohammed Saleem on Monday distributed cheques among divorced women towards their monthly pension.

The Wakf Board extends financial aid to Muslim divorcee based on the decree and amount fixed by the magistrate. About 355 women are getting a monthly pension from the Wakf Board. Every month Wakf Board distributes ₹5.92 lakh.

The chairman distributed the pension amount for August. He said apart from this the board is also providing financial aid to the needy persons. Due to lockdown, there is a delay in payment. However, the remaining amount will be distributed as early as we get the grant in aid from the state government.



Flood victims queue up outside the Mee Seva centres to apply for compensation of ₹10,000 by the state government, only to find them locked, in Hyderabad on Monday.

— *S. SURENDER REDDY*

Mee Seva offices close doors on flood victims

Thousands line up only to be told that money will be credited

**SANJAY SAMUEL
PAUL | DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 7**

Mee Seva centres across the city saw another flood of people on Monday with thousands of them lining up at these offices in various parts of the city to apply for ₹10,000 flood relief that the state government had promised to victims of floods that hit the state in October.

Though cash compensation had reached many victim families soon after floods, the government subsequently announced that those who had suffered apply through Mee Seva centres. Post filing of applications at these centres, families continued to receive ₹10,000 per household till the Code of Conduct for elections to Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) council kicked

in. Compensation to beneficiaries got stalled after that.

At that time, Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao assured victims that those who had not get compensation could apply from December 7 onwards.

As a result, hundreds of people started forming queues from 3 am onwards on Monday at Mee Seva centres in the city to apply for compensation. When it was found that the portal was not opening, GHMC commissioner Lokesh Kumar issued a note around Monday noon announcing that flood victims need not approach Mee Seva centres for filing applications. "GHMC officials will visit the respective houses at various locations to collect applications. Compensation will then be deposited directly into bank

accounts of the victims," the commissioner stated.

This news disheartened thousands of flood victims still standing in long queues. They started fuming at the state government saying it had made false promises and was cheating common people. They also alleged that the government is paying compensation only to those close to the ruling party.

Saraswathi Bai was one of those standing in the queue at Mee Seva in Ramnagar when it was announced that the centre will be taking no more applications for flood compensation. "They will not give us any compensation. If they come to our location, it is the house owners who will get compensation while we are the real victims of floods. This government has cheated us," she stated angrily.

Another compensation seeker Muralidhar Rao waiting in the queue at Khairatabad observed that the GHMC commissioner could have made his announcement before December 7. "Then, people would not have come so early in the morning and stood in queues, leaving their jobs for the day. Authorities could have come out with the announcement at least a day earlier," he remarked.

Saba Fathima, a resident of Chandrayangutta, said, "The queues at Mee Seva centres in the area were very long. With so many people and fear of Covid-19, I did not dare to stand in any of the queues to submit my application for flood relief. Whichever the way this government extends help, I hope we will get the financial help soon," Fathima added.

Air quality in Hyderabad found good in Nov.: CPCB

**T.S.S. SIDDHARTH | DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 7**

Hyderabad City has finally started breathing better. Proof of it lies in data released by Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), which reveals that air quality in three major southern cities — Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Chennai — this November has been comparatively better than November last year. As per this data, the average concentration of PM2.5 in Hyderabad has reduced by 17.88 per cent.

The city's average PM2.5 concentration of this November was 56.32µg/m3 as compared to 68.58µg/m3 during the same period last month. Air quality monitoring stations in Sanathnagar and Zoo Park recorded the highest average PM2.5 of 62µg/m3.

In the whole month, the city witnessed a single day,

where the city's air quality matched the PM2.5 standards prescribed by World Health Organisation (WHO).

However, according to an online tool developed by IQAir AirVisual and Greenpeace Southeast Asia, air pollution from PM2.5 and NO2 have been responsible for 7,577, 6,228, and 6,374 premature deaths respectively in Bangalore, Hyderabad, and Chennai from January 1 to September 4 this year.

Avinash Chanchal, climate campaigner at Greenpeace India said: "Apart from industries, vehicular pollution continues to be a major source of pollution in these cities. Expansion of the city area and population, along with growth in economic activities in peri-urban areas, has resulted in high vehicle ownership rates. Coronavirus pandemic has given us an opportunity to introspect. It is high time

the governments and local authorities adopt systemic reforms on clean energy and transport that includes promotion of decentralised model of renewable energy." PM 2.5 causes serious health risks, like cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, apart from lung cancer.

Exposure to air pollution increases our vulnerability to viral respiratory infections, both in terms of transmission and severity of infection. With conditions of Covid-19 epidemic prevailing, current evidence indicates that chronic exposure to air pollutants is associated with more severe infections and higher mortality.

There are studies that underscore the importance of continuing to enforce existing air pollution regulations for protecting human health both during and after the pandemic crisis.

2 CONSTRUCTION WORKERS ELECTROCUTED

**DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 7**

Two labourers working at a construction site in the Asifnagar area allegedly died of electrocution on Monday afternoon.

According to the police, The deceased were identified as Chintu, 22, and Kotes, 25, who were working at a construction site on Asifnagar road when they collapsed after being electrocuted while shifting steel rods.

Both of them were rushed to Osmania General Hospital where doctors pronounced them dead. A case has been registered by the Asif Nagar police and investigation is on. The bodies have been shifted to Osmania Hospital mortuary for post-mortem.

Body of woman found

**NAVEEN KUMAR | DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 7**

The body of an unidentified woman in her 40s, was found in a secluded place near the Jalpally Lake in Pahadi Shareef on Monday. Police are yet to ascertain whether she was sexually assaulted before she was murdered.

According to the police, the woman's body was found by the residents who informed the Pahadi Shareef police via Dial 100. "We have taken up the investigation and our CLUES team along with the dog squad too have exam-

ined the spot," said an official.

"She is suspected to have been attacked with a boulder on her head leading to her death. We are probing from all possible angles including whether she was sexually assaulted before being murdered," police said, adding local police stations were alerted and recent missing cases were being checked. The police are also investigating if she was murdered at the spot or killed elsewhere and the body dumped there. The body meanwhile, was shifted to hospital for post-mortem.

COPS ARREST MAN INVOLVED IN PROPERTY OFFENCES

**DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 7**

The Rachakonda police arrested a 25-year-old who was involved in property offences and seized ₹4.51 lakh worth stolen loot from his possession on Monday.

Ganapuram Nikhil alias Koushik was involved in six offences including robbery, automobile theft and an extortion case, said the police.

The CCS police on Bhongir, with the help of Valigonda police, apprehended the habitual property offender on Monday morning at 7 am at Nagaram circle in Valigonda.

"On questioning, he revealed his criminal record and confessed to have offences reported in Rachakonda Police Commissionerate in the last few months. We recovered 14.5 grams of gold, four motorcycles, nine smartphones and some cash from his possession," police said.

5 from SR Nagar PS test Covid +ve

**DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 7**

Covid returns to SR Nagar police station as five cops, including two sub-inspectors and three constables, were tested positive in the last few days. SR Nagar police inspector K. Saidulu said that three of the five were previously tested positive and recovered in June.

The first case at the station was reported on May 31, when a 38-year-old Blue Colts constable residing in Secunderabad with his family was tested positive for Coronavirus. Soon, there were 14 cases in SR Nagar police station and all of them recovered in June.

"Out of the five tested positive now, two of them have almost completed their 14 days quarantine. Other staffers who came in contact with the five are asked to go under self isolation and seek help if symptoms develop," said the police inspector.

TS REPORTS 517 NEW COVID-19 CASES, 2 DEATHS

**DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 7**

There were 517 new cases in the state taking the total number to 2,73,858 and two deaths with total number to 1,474 in the state.

There are 7,778 active cases in the state. With the protests, marches and other political activity in the state there is fear that the cases will rise.

The state government has asked people to wear masks but 50 per cent of them are not following properly. The GHMC recorded 102 cases, Medchal Malakjiri 36 and RangaReddy 57 cases.

● **THE STATE** government has asked people to wear masks but 50 per cent of them are not following properly.

GROWTH | MEET 'Entrepreneurship 360' fixed as summit's theme

Hyd to host virtual global summit

**DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 7**

Hyderabad will be hosting the first virtual global summit, with a \$250 million potential for entrepreneurs. This 60-hour non-stop summit will start on Tuesday with 200 sessions that will feature over 300 global speakers.

In a virtual media conference by TIE on Monday, it was pointed out that the features include start-ups getting a chance to explain their business module to attract investors, match-making with investors and mentoring. The summit themed 'Entrepreneurship 360', will focus on issues faced by entrepreneurs, provide a platform for funding, insights into growth

● **THE SUMMIT** will focus on issues faced by entrepreneurs, provide a platform for funding, insights into growth strategies and scale up business with focus on new start-up ideas, and investments in start-ups.

strategies and scale up business with focus on new start-up ideas, and investments in start-ups.

Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu will inaugurate the summit, which also will be graced by Union Minister for Road Transport Nitin Gadkari, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, Telangana IT Minister K.T. Rama Rao, and former Andhra Pradesh chief minister N. Cha-

ndrababu Naidu, according to Mahavir Sharma — Chairman TIE Global.

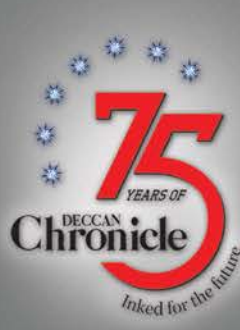
He said, "The TIE Global Summit 2020 is a unique initiative. It aims to bring together start-ups, entrepreneurs, global leaders, including heads of countries, successful business leaders, investors with a strong intent to invest in start-ups across India to get investments worth billions of dollars".

Sridhar Pinnapureddy, President, TIE, Hyderabad, said, "With 20,000 start-ups and entrepreneurs attending the summit, we aim to help solve their most critical problems such as acquiring new customers, both in India and abroad, access to funding, mentors and board members. 200

Startups will be funded, around 40,000 1-on-1 interactions between entrepreneurs, mentors and others."

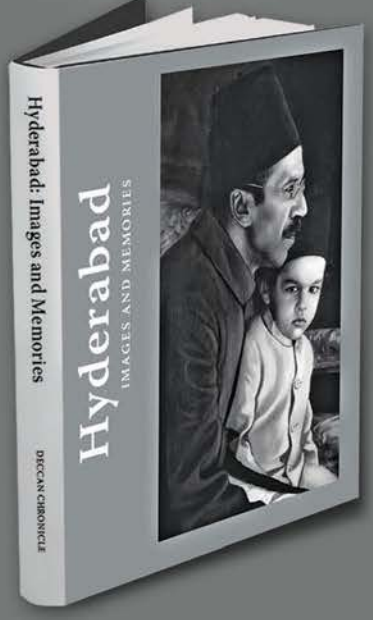

Those likely to attend include John Chambers, Sir Ronnie Kohan, Jessy Draper, Gautam Adani, NR Narayana Murthy, Indra Nooyi, Mohandas Pai, Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Swati Piramal, Rohini Nilekani, Vineet Nayar, Tim Draper, Vijay Sekhar Sharma, Ritesh Agarwal, Kiran Majumdar Shaw, Sheryl Sandberg, Indra Nooyi.

Other speakers include Presidents of Mauritius and Costa Rica, Nobel laureates Abhijit Banerjee and Mohammad Yunus, besides Sri Sri Ravishankar, Sadguru, Sridharan, Daji Kamlesh Patel, and actor Kunal Kapoor.



Hyderabad

IMAGES AND MEMORIES

We wrapped up our celebrations to mark the 75th anniversary of Deccan Chronicle on May 15, by bringing a special compilation of seventy-five stories filled with intrigue and delight from the final days of the Nizamshahi, titled *Hyderabad: Images & Memories*

From the palace mysteries and murder plots to the Nizam's 3,000 wives and how the ruler faced allegations of kidnapping his bride, all under the watchful eyes of the British, it is all there.

We scoured the archives and collected anecdotal evidence from several actors of that era to discover delightful asides like how the motichur laddus got their name, how an aide saved the Nizam's legendary treasures for the royal family and how Indira Gandhi floored the Nizam.

There are more than 75 pictures, a few of them rare and perhaps being published for the first time.

**NOW
AVAILABLE**

HYDERABAD: IMAGES AND MEMORIES
 The hard-bound : ₹2,000, Soft cover : ₹1,500.
 at all Deccan Chronicle & The Asian Age offices across the cities

SHORT TAKES

COPS READY TO STOP UNTOWARD INCIDENTS

From page 1

Telangana police have made elaborate security arrangements to prevent any untoward incidents in the state. Hyderabad and Cyberabad police have imposed restrictions on traffic on Tuesday in several parts of Hyderabad.

Ministers and elected representatives of TRS have called for a Rasta Roko agitation across the state. TRS working president K. T. Rama Rao will participate in this programme at Burgula Gate in Shadnagar. Finance minister T. Harish Rao will do so at Toopran Y Junction. MLC K. Kavitha will participate in the blockade at Tekrial on NH 44. Similarly, all ministers will take part in the bandh in various parts of the state. The ruling party will also organise rallies in twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad.

Congress Legislature Party leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka will participate in the Bharat Bandh at Shamirpet and working president A. Revanth Reddy at the Market Committee in Shadnagar on Hyderabad-Bengaluru Highway. "Telangana non-gazetted officers have also resolve to participate in the bandh on Tuesday in protest against the "anti-farmer enactments" of the central government, TNGOs central union president M. Rajender and general secretary R. Pratap Reddy have announced.

In a letter addressed to Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar, they maintained that employees will be conducting various programmes in support of the bandh from mandal to state headquarters level in line with the call given by Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao to extend his support for the bandh.

Meanwhile, agriculture minister Singireddy Niranjan Reddy said that Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao's government is working for the welfare of farmers of the state since it came into power. He demanded that the Centre withdraw the conditions imposed for procurement of paddy through the Food Corporation of India on the state governments.

Farm Bills: Ponnala dares KCR to convene Assembly

Says TRS support is fiendish trick to gain farmers' confidence

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 7

Former minister Ponnala Lakshmaiah on Monday dared Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao to convene Assembly Session on Tuesday if he was courageous enough to take a stand against the Centre on Farm Bills.

Addressing a press conference, the former president of the Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee said that Rao and the TRS's demonstration of support for farmers must be looked at as a fiendish trick to gain farmers' confidence because he has always been loyal to the Central government and supported it in all its wrongdoings.

Alleging that the Rao has deceived the farmers in the name of loan waiver, he asked Rao if he has the right right to talk about farmers' welfare. He reminded that the Congress always opposed policies that were against farmers' welfare.

Dasoju: Will cops arrest TRS men?

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 7

AICC spokesperson Dr Sravan Dasoju questioned the Telangana state police especially the DGP whether they are ready to take into preventive custody or place under house arrest TRS party ministers, MLAs and other leaders who will be protesting against the Central Government's "anti-farmer" Acts on Tuesday.

He said whenever opposition parties including the Congress protest against any anti-people decision in TS, the police used to place leaders under house arrest or stop them right at their residences.

Maintaining that he doubts whether it can be applied to the TRS leaders, he tweeted, "Curious to know if the

Telangana police tomorrow restrict TRS ministers, MLAs, MPs and leaders through house arrests which was a usual undemocratic practice whenever opposition conducted or be selective in their policing (sic)".

Dr Sravan on his twitter handle also criticised the stand taken by Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao who Had "crippled" the farmers in TS for the last six years by forcibly introducing controlled farming in the state.

He alleged, "Despite the farmers producing crops dictated by you, the state government isn't buying their produce in time. However, you are now coming out in support of farmers to make a new drama."

COPS TO ENSURE FREE PASSAGE TO AMBULANCES

NAVEEN KUMAR | DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 7

Free passage for emergency services and ambulances will be ensured on all roads during the bharat bandh on Tuesday, said the Rachakonda police who issued a traffic advisory.

Flight passengers are requested to take the Outer Ring Road to reach the RGI Airport and plan their travel accordingly and other commuters are advised to contact Rachakonda Police Control Room at 040-2785 3030, 040-2785 4040, 8333993353, 9494721100 and Traffic Control Room at 040-27853355 and 8333993348 if they face any difficulty or obstruction enroute under the limits of Rachakonda Commissionerate for assistance.

CM okays ₹4,800cr for palm oil

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 7

Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao has approved an Oil Palm Crop Extension Project at a cost of Rs 4,800 crore while expressing desire that a brand image be built for high quality of cotton produced in Telangana.

Reviewing the functioning of Agriculture Department with senior officers at Pragathi Bhavan on Monday, Rao said oil palm could be currently cultivated over eight lakh acres in

the state as it can grown only in areas where continuous supply of water is available. He disclosed for extension of oil palm crops, the National Reassessment Committee of Government of India has identified 25 districts in Telangana as being suitable for cultivating oil palm.

The CM said, "Our country needs 22 million tonnes of edible oil but can produce only seven million tonnes. This is the reason we have made a major grant for cultivating oil palm in Telangana," he

stated. Rao also instructed officials to acquire a brand image for high-quality cotton grown in Telangana. He pointed out that the state's cotton staple is lengthiest. It is also hard when compared to cotton produced elsewhere in the country. He wanted a strategy for publicising the special qualities of cotton grown in the state not only within India but abroad.

The Chief Minister said, "Telangana is second highest cotton grower in the country.

Before formation of Telangana there were only 60 ginning mills; now, their number is 300."

Meanwhile, the CMO has announced that Indian Council for Agriculture Research (ICAR) has selected TS for two awards. TS Seed Certification Authority has been adjudged as best in the country. Agriculture Policy Award has been given to Telangana Seeds Corporation MD Keshavulu. CM congratulated the two organisations over their achievement.

OU, JNTU POSTPONE TODAY'S EXAMS

HYDERABAD, DEC. 7: In view of the nationwide bandh called by various organizations in support of farmers on Tuesday, JNTU and Osmania University have postponed their exams scheduled for the day. Osmania University will conduct the examinations slated

for Wednesday as per the original schedule, according to a press release from the Controller of Examinations. JNTU registrar stated that the test scheduled for Tuesday would now be held on Thursday. The timing of the examinations remains unchanged.

KTR launches projects

RAVINDRA SESHU | DC
KHAMMAM, DEC. 7

Minister for Information Technology, Municipal Administration and Urban Development K. T. Rama Rao said that with the completion of various development projects, the Khammam Municipal Corporation stands as a model in Telangana.

Rama Rao inaugurated various projects in Khammam on Monday. He said, "Members of the governing bodies of other corporations in Telangana, will be sent to Khammam to study how the town is reshaped in a short time with the new projects."

The IT sector which was limited to Hyderabad, in united

Andhra Pradesh, is now expanding to other towns in Telangana, due to the push by the state government.

"CM K. Chandrasekhar Rao, increased the number of police commissionerate offices in Telangana, sanctioned new buildings for them. The Khammam Police Commissionerate building is the first one", he said.

WHO, AIIMS, NIN try to identify Eluru illness

VADREU SRINIVAS | DC
ELURU, DEC 7

Mysterious illness continued to spread panic in Eluru in West Godavari district, with the number of cases increasing to nearly 450 on Monday. Out of this, 263 patients were discharged after recovery, while 171 are being treated at local government hospitals. Seventeen critically-ill patients were sent to Vijayawada for better medical care.

A constable — P Kiran Kumar of Eluru Three

town — who was on duty during the Chief Minister's visit to the city has suddenly collapsed on the road and gone unconscious with fits. He was immediately shifted to a hospital. Another employee of the irrigation department has suddenly fallen sick while sitting on his chair in his office. A driver of an ambulance belonging to a government hospital fell ill with the same symptoms. The mysterious disease has caught the attention of national and international medical experts. A team of experts from the All India Institute of Medical and Sciences (AIIMS) came to the hospital and took samples from five patients. Expert teams from Pune-based National Institute of Virology and Hyderabad-based Indian Institute of Chemical Laboratory and National Institute of Nutrition are also coming to Eluru to find out about the disease through their experiments. An expert team from the WHO will also come to Eluru.

Eminent educationist Arifuddin passes away

ATHER MOIN | DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 7

Eminent educationist and founder of Madina and Global Groups of Educational Institutions, K.M. Arifuddin passed away. According to family members he was unwell for the past few weeks and was admitted in a private hospital.

He is survived by his wife, two sons and a daughter. His body was kept for the people in Madina Public School,

Himayatnagar, to pay their homage.

Arifuddin was known for his contribution for the uplift of minorities through his educational initiatives and philanthropic works. He focused on education for girls from minority communities. He was a supporter of statehood for Telangana and actively participated in the 1969 movement.

The salat-e-Janazah (funeral prayer) was performed at Shahi Masjid, Public Garden and he was buried in

Osmanpura graveyard at Chaderghat.

Former minister Mohammed Ali Shabbir Ali condoled the demise and said his services for the Muslim community, especially in the field of education, were highly appreciable. "He was a great visionary. He was a pioneer in imparting modern education to poor Muslims of Hyderabad. He turned Madina Public School into an educational hub and started several world-class institutions," he said.

HC says not inclined to interfere in SEC circular on GHMC polls

VUJJINI VAMSHIDHARA | DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 7

The Telangana High Court on Monday expressed its disinclination in interfering with the circular issued by Telangana State Election Commission (SEC) with regard to elections held for Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) council, whose overall results have already been announced.

Justice A. Abhishek Reddy of Telangana High Court made it clear that SEC has the power to issue necessary directions for smooth conduct of elections in a fair and impartial manner. He, however, modified the court's inter-

● **IN HIS** modified order on Monday, Justice Abhishek Reddy directed the Returning Officer of Neredmet ward to take a call on declaring votes valid or invalid as per the procedure contemplated in Rule 51 (2) of the Telangana Municipal Corporation Rules.

im order dated December 4 and directed the State Election Commission to go ahead with counting of votes in ward No. 136 — Neredmet.

However, the court acknowledged that SEC's circular had led to confusion on which distinguished marks could be

entertained while votes are being stamped.

Had there been clarity, there would have been no apprehensions about usage of distinguished marks, the court observed.

In his modified order on Monday, Justice Abhishek Reddy directed the Returning Officer of Neredmet ward to take a call on declaring votes valid or invalid as per the procedure contemplated in Rule 51 (2) of the Telangana Municipal Corporation Rules.

However, he clarified that if the petitioner is aggrieved by this modified interim order, he is not precluded from approaching the Election Tribunal.

INTEQAL

It is with great sadness that we declare the sad demise of

Janab K M Arifuddin Sahab

Founder Secretary of

• Madina Education and Welfare Society.

• Global Institute of Engineering and Technology,

• Global College of Pharmacy and

• Global Education Center

Namaz-e-Janaza was offered at Royal Mosque, Public Gardens, and was laid to rest in Osmanpura Graveyard. May Allah exalt his ranks in Jannat-ul-Firdous.

Condolences from STAFF AND FAMILY.

Mediaplusgroup.in

2nd DEATH ANNIVERSARY



DUNDOO RAMESHWAR RAO

DOB : 06-Mar-1948 DOD : 08-Dec-2018

It's been two years since you left us. Not a day goes by without thinking about you and all the fond memories. Love is eternal, You are always in our thoughts and in our prayers!

Inserted by:

DUNDOO NAINI (Wife)

DUNDOO PREETAM (Son) SANGEETHA DEVI (Daughter-in-law)

DUNDOO YOGESH (Son)

NAKKANA SHALINI (Daughter), NAKKANA MAHESH (Son-in-law)

1st Death Anniversary



S. VIJAY KUMAR

General Manager - Delhi Syndicate Bank

DOD: 08.12.2019

From Sunrise to Sunset every moment would have been more Wonderful if you were with us. Your Memory is stored in our Hearts & Minds.

Inserted by: Wife: Smt. Sukeshini

Sons: Abhishek & Anurag

Mob.: 9966402523

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

I will dwell in the House of the Lord forever Psalms 23:6



VATTIPROLU LILLY PUSHPAM

W/o Mr. Vattiprolu Immanuel

Inserted by: Mr. V. IMMANUEL (Husband) AND FAMILY MEMBERS

9th ANNIVERSARY



R.SREEDHARAN

DOD: 08-12-2011

Inserted by:

Wife: Kamala Devi T.

Sons: K.S.Anoop & K.S.Anumodh

Daughters-in-law: A.Asha & V. Thejya

Grand Kids: A.Abhinad, A.Ashirvad & A.Anwita

Ph: 27057627/ 9848734541

1st Death Anniversary



Shri T Rajender Singh

Retired Officer Intelligence Bureau

DOB: 13.08.1948 DOD: 08.12.2019

We miss you every moment in our life, your presence continues to surround us, in our hearts, you are always there.

Inserted by:

Smt. T. Kiran Rekha & Family Members

Mob.: 9701449312

3rd Death Anniversary

So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an Imperishable body. 1 Corinthians 15:42



Smt. FRANCINA

ENT Employee

DOB: 03.04.1936 - DOD: 08.12.2017

Inserted by: Joseph & Family Children,

Grand Children & Great Grand Children

Jilliguda. Ph.: 99084 58747

3rd Death Anniversary



Sri Keshavlal M. Kotecha

(Keshu Bhai)

Expired on : 8th December 2017

We love you beyond words and we miss you beyond measures.

Inserted by: KOTECHA FAMILY

ANAND STORE

Ramgopalpet, Secunderabad Ph.: 9848155726

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that we are investigating the title of **Sundew Properties Limited ("Owner")**, a public limited company incorporated and registered under the provisions of Companies Act, 1956 and deemed existing under Companies Act, 2013 having its registered office at Mindspace, Cyberabad, Survey No.64(Part), Next to VSNL Building, Hitech City, Madhapur, Hyderabad, Telangana 500 081 in respect of the land and building described in the Schedule hereunder written ("**Property**").

All persons having any claim and/or demand against / upon / in respect of the right, title, and interest of the Owner in the Property by way of inheritance, mortgage, sale, agreement for sale, grant of development rights, transfer, assignment, lease, sub-lease, license, share, lien, charge, trust, inheritance, maintenance, easement, right of way, gift, lis-pendens, exchange, possession, power of attorney, allotment or any other encumbrance howsoever or otherwise ("**Claims**"), are hereby required to make the same known in writing to the undersigned at Khaitan & Co, Advocates, One World Centre, 13th Floor, Tower 1, 841 Senapati Bapat Marg, Mumbai - 400 013 also with a copy addressed over email at mumbai@khaitanco.com (marked to the attention of the undersigned), along with copies of necessary supporting documents, within 14 (fourteen) days from the date of publication hereof, failing which it shall be deemed that the claimant(s) has / have relinquished such Claims and/or waived the right to exercise such Claims, and the same shall be treated as not binding on the Owner.

SCHEDULE

(Description of the Property)

All that piece and parcel of demarcated land admeasuring about 17,414.77 square meters forming part of larger piece of land bearing Survey No 64 (part) admeasuring 1,62,903.52 square meters owned by the Owner, lying, being and situate at Madhapur Village, Serilingampally Mandal, Ranga Reddy District, Hyderabad together with the building thereon known as Building '12D' comprising of 3 (three) basements, Ground Floor, First Floor and 14 upper floors along with a terrace having a built-up area of 100,955.77 square meters, which land is bounded as follows:

On or towards the North :	By Silpa Enclave
On or towards the South :	By 30mts International Road and Vanenberg ITPark.
On or towards the East :	By Keshav Enclave and Silpa Enclave
On or towards the West :	By Building No 12C

Dated this 8th day of December 2020.

For Khaitan & Co

Sd/- Devendra Deshmukh, Partner

SHORT TAKES

PoK SISTERS WHO
CROSSED LoC SENT
HOME WITH GIFTSYUSUF JAMEEL | DC
SRINAGAR, DEC. 7

Two PoK sisters who had crossed over to Jammu and Kashmir inadvertently early Sunday morning were on Monday sent home with several gifts. The siblings were seen off by senior officers of the J&K civilian authorities and local commander of the Army at the Chakan Da Bagh crossing point along the Line of Control in Poonch district.

"The sisters Laiba Zabair (17) and Sana Zabair (13) were handed over to the Pakistani authorities this morning," said an official. They are residents of Abbasspur village of Kahuta tehsil of PoK and, as per a defence spokesman, were apprehended by the Indian Army after noticing them moving in Sarla sector along the LoC in Poonch on Sunday. "Own troops deployed along the LoC, having detected the crossing, exercised complete restraint to prevent any harm to the teenagers," the spokesman said. Soon messages were exchanged between the facing armies and a meeting was arranged at the Chakan Da Bagh in which officials from Pakistan and India were present. Poonch's SSP, Ramesh Angral, said that the girls were handed over to the PoK officials who expressed their gratitude to the Indian Army, the J&K police and civil administration for taking care of the siblings and sending them home within a day.

According to reports from PoK, the orphan girls had crossed the LoC from Abbaspur sector reportedly after some domestic squabble. They were received by the PoK authorities through Tetrinote crossing at 10.30 am (Pakistan standard time), the reports said.

LOVE JIHAD LAW
DURING NEXT
SESSION: BSY

Bengaluru, Dec. 7: The Karnataka government on Monday made it clear that the anti-cow slaughter bill will be introduced during the ongoing winter session of the Karnataka legislature, while a law against "love jihad" will be taken up in the next session.

"Anti-cow slaughter, we had earlier (previous tenure) tabled it, but it was not given assent. I have asked the law minister to table it once again.. it will be tabled by tomorrow or the day after and we will get it approved," Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa said.

Speaking to reporters at Sagara, he said "Love Jihad, we will think about it in the next assembly session. We will not be tabling it in this session. Anti-cow slaughter, we will do it now."

The BJP's Karnataka state executive on Saturday had adopted resolutions for the passage and implementation of the two legislations. Stating that it has been decided at the government level to enact anti-cow slaughter legislation during this session, revenue minister R. Ashoka too said, the bill against "love jihad" will be taken up during the next session.

Speaking to reporters here, he said, "Cow is worshiped as god by farmers..there is a special place for cows in Indian culture, so to stop its killing we are beginning this law in Karnataka. No love jihad during this session, in the next session we will remove love jihad."

J&K DDC polls 4th phase held peacefully



Villagers stand in a queue to cast their votes for the fourth phase of District Development Council (DDC) elections, at Bain Bajalta on the outskirts in Jammu on Monday. State Election Commissioner K.K.O Sharma said the fourth phase of the DDC elections has been conducted successfully with a 50.08 per cent voter turnout

— PTI

SC pulls up Centre for going
ahead with its Central Vista

Allows PM to lay foundation stone for new Parliament building on Dec. 10

PARMOD KUMAR | DC
NEW DELHI, DEC. 7

The Supreme Court on Monday pulled up the Centre for going ahead with its Central Vista project despite the challenge to the ₹20,000-crore project pending before it, but allowed the foundation-laying of a new Parliament building by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Thursday, December 10, after the Centre assured the court that no construction or demolition work would be done till the case is finally decided.

"We have shown deference to you and expected

that you will act in a prudent manner. The same deference should be shown to the court and there should be no demolition, nor construction nor any felling of trees," said Justice A.M. Khanwilkar, who headed a bench that also comprised Justices Dinesh Maheshwari and Sanjiv Khanna.

The court took suo motu cognisance of the activities linked to the Central Vista project, including the construction of a new Parliament building, saying: "We have listed this matter because of certain developments we came across in the public

● **THE APEX** Court took suo motu cognisance of the activities linked to the Central Vista project.

We never thought you will go ahead so aggressively with the construction. The fact that there is no stay does not mean you can go ahead with everything," the bench told solicitor-general Tushar Mehta as the matter was taken up for hearing Monday morning.

Mehta sought a day's time to take instructions in the matter, but the court insisted on the Centre's views being con-

veyed in just five minutes, and adjourned the hearing until then.

Taking on record a statement by the solicitor-general that "there will be no construction activity of any nature on the concerned site(s) nor demolition of any structure will be done, including the further trans-location of tree(s) will be kept in abeyance, until the pronouncement of the judgment in all these cases", the court said, but permitted the authorities to "continue with procedural processes without altering the status of the site(s) in question in any manner, including to con-

tinue with the scheduled programme of foundation stone-laying on December 10, 2020."

The Central Vista area in Lutyens' Delhi houses iconic buildings like North and South Blocks of the Central Secretariat, Parliament House, Rashtrapati Bhavan and India Gate.

The petitioners before the Supreme Court have challenged a notification issued by the Delhi Development Authority on December 21, 2019 on the changes in land use for the area's redevelopment. The court had reserved its ruling on November 5.

Bharat Biotech joins
emergency nod queue

New Delhi, Dec. 7: After Pfizer and Serum Institute, Hyderabad-based pharmaceutical firm Bharat Biotech on Monday applied to the central drug regulator seeking emergency use authorisation for its Covid-19 vaccine Covaxin, official sources said. Covaxin is being indigenously developed by Bharat Biotech in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

The Hyderabad-based firm is conducting phase-3 clinical trial of its vaccine in around 25 places, including Delhi, Mumbai, Patna and Lucknow.

The firm, while applying for the phase-3 trial, had stated that the vaccine was well-tolerated in all dose groups and no serious adverse events have been reported.

The most common adverse event was transient pain at the injection site, a source said.

The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) had on October 23 granted permission to the firm for conducting phase-3 clinical trial of Covaxin after assessing the safety and immunogenicity data of phase 1 and 2 trials.

An expert committee of the Central Drugs Standard Organisation (CDSCO) will meet on Wednesday to review applications of Pfizer, Serum Institute of India and Bharat Biotech seeking emergency use authorisation for their Covid-19 vaccine candidates.

At an all-party meeting on December 4, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had expressed hope that a Covid-19 vaccine may be ready in a few weeks.

— PTI

Serum seeks emergency use
authorisation for vaccine

New Delhi, Dec. 7: Vaccine major Serum Institute of India (SII) on Monday said it has applied to the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) for emergency use authorisation for AstraZeneca-Oxford Covid-19 vaccine in the country.

Earlier, the Indian arm of US pharmaceutical giant Pfizer became the first company to seek a similar approval from India's drug regulator for Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine against Covid-19 in the country, after securing such clearance in the UK and Bahrain.

Pune-based SII has collaborated with AstraZeneca and Oxford University for manufacturing the vaccine and is conducting phase-three clinical trials of the Covishield vaccine in India.

"As promised, before the end of 2020, @SerumInstIndia has applied for emergency use authorisation for the first made-in-India vaccine, COVISHIELD," Serum Institute of India (SII) CEO Adar Poonawalla said in a tweet.

He further added, "This will save countless lives, and I thank the Government of India and Sri @narendramodi ji for their invaluable support".

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), SII has already manufactured 40 million doses of the vaccine under the at-risk manufacturing license it obtained from the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI).

Official sources, citing

the Serum Institute of India (SII) application, said the firm has stated that data from four clinical studies, two in the UK and one each in Brazil and India, shows that Covishield is highly efficacious against symptomatic and most importantly against severe Covid-19 infections.

According to sources, this vaccine is logistically feasible for distribution in the country's both urban and rural parts as it can be stored at two to eight degrees celsius.

Earlier on November 29, Poonawalla in a virtual press conference had said that the company was in the process of applying in the next two weeks for an emergency use licensure for Covishield.

— PTI

BJP-POLICE CLASH KILLS WORKER,
12-HOUR NORTH BENGAL BANDH TODAYRAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC
KOLKATA, DEC. 7

A BJP worker died and several others injured after the police lathicharged and teargassed the saffron party workers in face of their violent attack during their rally to Uttar Kanya, the North Bengal state secretariat of the Mamata Banerjee government, in Siliguri on Monday afternoon. Blaming the police for its worker's death the BJP has called a 12-hour North Bengal bandh on Tuesday.

It's leaders also complained to Governor Jagdeep Thakur about police brutality. The deceased BJP worker, Ulen Roy, was a resident of Gajoldoba near Siliguri. Led by its national president Tejaswi Surya, the BJYM had organised the Uttar Kanya Abhijan to protest anarchy, unemployment, misrule by the Trinamul Congress.

BJP national general secretary Kailash Vijayarvagiya and state president Dilip Ghosh also participated in the rally.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
O/o Superintending Engineer, PR Region, Karimnagar

"e" PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE
NIT No. 94 to 98/SE/Tenders/2020-21 Dt: 04.12.2020
No. of Works (06), Name of the work Construction of Gram Panchayat Building at Ashanapalli (V) M.P. Srirampur of Peddapalli District and other all Civil works in undersigned. Total ECV 90.40 Lakhs. Bid uploading starting date 07-12-2020 to closing date 14-12-2020. Further details can be obtained from e-procurement market place on www.tenderz.telangana.gov.in.
sd/- Superintending Engineer, PR Region, Karimnagar
R.O.No.771-DP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2020-21

GREATER WARANGAL SMART CITY CORPORATION LIMITED
"e" Procurement Notice
Tender Notice No.EE/Circle-III/GWMC/CTN/09/e-proc/2020-21, Dt: 03.12.2020
Abstract of works: Under Mpl. General Funds:- Reserved for ST-3 Nos. of works: Rs. 60.00 Lakhs. Reserved for SC-7 Nos. of works: Rs. 153.6 Lakhs. Reserved for Waddera/Sagara-2 Nos. of work: Rs. 30.00 Lakhs. General- 26 Nos. of Works : Rs. 755.4 Lakhs. Total 38 Nos. works : Rs. 999.00 Lakhs. Last date / time for submission of bids online 14-12-2020 up to 4.00 p.m. Opening of bids: 14-12-2020 at 4.30 p.m. Contact Details : E.E. Circle - III, Nakkalagutta, GWMC. Call No. 9701999037, email: ee3gwmc@gmail.com
Further details can be seen @ "e" procurement market place at www.eprocurement.gov.in
Downloading of works starts from 08-12-2020, 10.30 A.M. onwards. Commissioner,
R.O.NO.1201-PP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2020-21 Greater Warangal Municipal Corporation.

HYDERABAD METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
7th Floor, Swarnajayanti Commercial Complex, Ammerpet, Hyderabad

Public Notification U/s. 15 (3) of HMDA Act, 2008
(G.O.Ms.No.154, dated 24.12.2020)
In exercise of powers conferred by Sub-Section (1) of Section 15 of Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority Act 2008 (Act No. 8 of 2008), the Government hereby makes the following variation to the land use envisaged in the Notified Revised Master Plan - 2021 vide G.O.Ms. No. 288, MA & UD Dt: 03-04-2008 as required in the sub-section (1) of the said section.
The site in Sy.No.: 119 & 121 situated at Neknampur (V), Gandepet (M) & Ranga Reddy Dist., to an extent of 5018.82 Sq. mtrs., which is presently earmarked for Residential use zone in the notified Master Plan Puggalagutta segment zone of Entwine HUDA - 2021 vide G.O. Ms. No. 288 MA & UD, Dt:30.04.2008 is now designated as Commercial use zone.
The details of the above are available in Web sites <https://gazette.telangana.gov.in/> and <http://hmda.gov.in/> Sd/-
R.O.No.1200-PP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2020-21 for Metropolitan Commissioner, HMDA

PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited
Regd. Office: PSEB, Head Office, The Mall, Patiala-147001
OFFICE OF CHIEF ENGINEER / METERING
C-3, SHAKTI VIHAR, PSPCL, PATIALA, PUNJAB 147001
Tel. No. 0175-2210871, Fax No. 0175-2200284, e-mail: semetringpatiala@gmail.com
Corporate Identification Number (CIN): U40109PB2010SC033813
Registration Number: 33813, website: <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>
e-tendering page: <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>

NOTICE INVITING TENDER
Tender Enquiry / Specification No. **MQP-169 /2020-21/PR**
Short Description **Procurement of 20-in-1 Meter Pillar Boxes for incorporating Single Phase Energy Meters**
Start date of downloading of tender documents/ Bid submission start date **08.12.2020 at 11.00 Hrs**
Last date of downloading / Bid submission **07.01.2021 till 11.00 Hrs**
Bid opening date (Part-I & II) **14.01.2021 at 11.30 Hrs**
Intending officer and Contact No. **SE/HMC, PSPCL, Patiala 96461-18774**
Detailed NIT and set of specification/ tender documents can only be downloaded from website <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>. Tender ID is 2020_POWER_56994_1
Note: Corrigendum, if any, after the publication of this tender enquiry shall only be uploaded on site and will not be published in any newspaper.
C-365/2020 RO / I/14018 SE/HMC PSPCL, Patiala

RAIL COACH FACTORY, KAPURTHALA
On-line bids are invited by PCMM, RCF on behalf of President of India for following items:-

S. No.	Tender No. & Due Date	Description	Qty. (NOS./ Sets)	EMD (₹)
1.	17201501 28/12/2020	Set of Side Wall Panels for LHB SCN coach with wider window and Honey Comb Partition Frames.	256 Set	8,07,600/-
2.	17201497 31/12/2020	Supply and Application of Set of SS luggage racks in LHB parcel van	150 Set	3,48,770/-
3.	17201496 31/12/2020	Door/ Arrangement (RH&LH) for LHB Coaches.	255 Set	3,29,300/-
4.	14201033A 31/12/2020	Water based sound deadening paint for LHB coaches	185 Nos	---
5.	14201087A 04/01/2021	Resin system for Glass FRP panels for interior for Alstom-LHB coaches	103693 Kg	3,42,850/-
6.	04201017 28/12/2020	Ferritic Steel Sheet/Coil (06 Types)	17,42,762 Kgs.	20,00,000/-
7.	02201334 28/12/2020	High Capacity Intervehical Coupler unit 500A	385 Sets	20,00,000/-

1. For details and making On-line tenders, visit Website <http://ireps.gov.in>. Drawings / specifications, wherever required can be downloaded from RCF website <http://www.rcf.indianrailways.gov.in>. Class IIIB digital signature certificate required for on-line biddings, can be obtained from licensed certifying agencies listed at <http://www.cce.gov.in>. 2. Tenders will close at 14.25 Hrs. on due date and will be opened at 14.30 Hrs. Tenders Sr. No. 1 to 5 will be opened at RCF Kapurthala and Sr. No. 6 & 7 will be opened at Tilak Bridge, New Delhi. 3. For queries, contact IREPS helpline at 011-24102855, 011-24105180 or RCF helpline at 011-23378658.
Note: GST Number of RCF is 03AAAGM0289C1ZT. All the suppliers are advised to quote this in dispatch documents for the supplies made by them. "All above mentioned tenders are e-tenders and bidders are requested to submit their bids on-line through the IREPS website at <https://www.ireps.gov.in>. For more details regarding the above mentioned tenders and other supply tenders please visit IREPS website. PCMM

CORRIGENDUM
The following amendment is authorized against 1. **Tender No. 05201416A** for Front part Due Date to be read as 09/12/2020 instead of 02/12/2020 2. **Tender No. 05201420** for Roof Arch (2 Types) Due Date to be read as 09/12/2020 instead of 04/12/2020 3. **Tender No. 05201445** for Set of cross members for parcel van LHB coaches Due Date to be read as 15/12/2020 instead of 02/12/2020. PCMM
T. No.: G-122-01/Store/094/2020-21 Dated: 07.12.2020

LAND | ACT

J&K govt asserts that a large number of people will suffer due to the Act

J&K seeks review of annulment of 'Roshni'

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC
SRINAGAR, DEC. 7

In what seems like a bizarre move but may well be an afterthought to protect its own, the Jammu and Kashmir government has sought a review of the annulment of a 2001 controversial land act by the high court, asserting that a large number of people, including landless cultivators and those residing in modest dwellings, will suffer.

On October 9, the court had in its judgment termed the Jammu and Kashmir state land (Vesting of Ownership to Occupants) Act, 2001, commonly known as "Roshni Act", which granted ownership of state land to occupants as "illegal, unconstitutional and

unsustainable". The court also ordered a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) investigation, asking that within one month identities of those who have derived benefit under the Roshni Act, including ministers, legislators, bureaucrats, government officials, police officers and businessmen, their relatives or persons holding benami for them, be made public.

Following the order, the Union Territory government had on November 3 declared all mutations taken under Roshni Act as "null and void" and released the first list of beneficiaries of alleged illegal mutations. But the move stirred a political controversy as several

Opposition leaders, including former chief minister Farooq Abdullah, were shown as land grabbers, a charge they vehemently denied.

The BJP had described the Roshni Act as "land jihad" and the government's decision declaring it null and void as a "surgical strike".

However, subsequent lists revealed several serving and former bureaucrats, police officers as well as political activists and businessmen owing allegiance to the BJP or supporting outfits as alleged beneficiaries of the act.

And now Nazir Ahmad Thakur, special secretary with the J&K revenue department, has in the review petition on behalf of

the J&K government pleaded for "modifying" the October 9 judgment. The petition says that a large number of common people, including landless cultivators and individuals "who are themselves residing in dwellings on small areas but are unfortunately clubbed along with rich and wealthy land grabbers, who have obtained a title over state land through the provisions of the now struck Act", will suffer.

The review petition calls on the court to distinguish between the two classes of people and also urged it to allow the government to formulate an appropriate mechanism to enable people like landless cultivators and single dwelling owners to continue to remain in

possession of their land, subject to appropriate ceiling and on payment at appropriate rates.

The review petition further says that there are apprehensions that the high court verdict may lead to an unintended roving inquiry by the CBI, which may go on endlessly without generating the results sought by it (court).

Many people on Monday took to social networking platforms to question the wisdom behind the government seeking review of the court verdict and some even doubted its intention.

The National Conference called the J&K government's review petition a U-turn aimed to save its own face.

ALI YAVAR JUNG NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF SPEECH & HEARING DISABILITIES (DIVYANGJAN),
(Under Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India)
Bandra Reclamation, Bandra (W), Mumbai-400050.

Adv. No. AYJNISHD (D)/1/2020

EMPLOYMENT NOTICE
AYJNISHD (D) invites applications for the following unreserved posts on Direct Recruitment basis at Mumbai.

Sl. No.	Posts	Max. Age	No. of Post	Scale of Pay
1	Reader (Speech Pathology)	45	01	Level - 11 (Rs. 67700 - Rs. 208700) of the Pay Matrix of 7th CPC (6th CPC Rs. 15600 - 39100 (PB-3) Grade Pay Rs. 6600/-)
2	Information and Documentation Officer	35	01	Level - 11 (Rs. 67700 - Rs. 208700) of the Pay Matrix of 7th CPC (6th CPC Rs. 15600 - 39100 (PB-3) Grade Pay Rs. 6600/-)
3	Rehabilitation Officer	30	01	Level - 10 (Rs. 56100 - Rs. 177500) of the Pay Matrix of 7th CPC (6th CPC Rs. 15600 - 39100 (PB-3) Grade Pay Rs. 5400/-)
4	Hindi Officer	35	01	Level - 7 (Rs. 44900 - Rs. 142400) of the Pay Matrix of 7th CPC (6th CPC Rs. 9300 - 34800 (PB-2) Grade Pay Rs. 4600/-)
5	Electrician	30	01	Level - 4 (Rs. 25500 - Rs. 81100) of the Pay Matrix of 7th CPC (6th CPC Rs. 5200 - 20200 (PB-1) Grade Pay Rs. 2400/-)

General Information:
1. The application duly completed in all respects and signed by the candidate in the prescribed format along with self attested photocopies of relevant enclosures and other testimonials in respect of qualifications, age proof, category, experience, salary drawn, etc., should reach to the Director, Ali Yavar Jung National Institute of Speech and Hearing Disabilities (Divyangjan), K.C. Marg, Bandra Reclamation, Bandra (W), Mumbai - 400050 within 30 days from the date of publication of advertisement in the Employment News.
2. The details of eligibility for each post i.e., Age limit, Educational Qualification, Experience and other requirement are available on AYJNISHD (D) website www.ayjnihh.nic.in.
3. The prescribed application format is also available & can be downloaded from the website www.ayjnihh.nic.in.
davp 38107/11/0006/2021 **DIRECTOR**

SHORT TAKES

CAN'T BUILD NEW CENTURY WITH OLD LAWS: PM

Lucknow, Dec. 7: Amid the row over laws meant to bring a major change in the agri-marketing sector, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said reforms are needed for development and some laws from the past century have become a burden now.

Launching the Agra metro rail project through video conference, Modi said the reforms carried out by his government are also getting reflected in election results. His pitch on the importance of reforms comes ahead of Tuesday's Bharat Bandh over the three new farm laws enacted at the Centre. But during his brief address, the Prime Minister made no direct reference to the new laws or the farmers' protests.

"Reforms are needed for development. Reforms are very much needed for a new order and to give new facilities. We cannot build the next century with the laws of the previous century," he said. "Some laws that used to be good in the past century have become a burden in the present century. Reforms should be a continuous process," he said. Modi said his government is carrying out "holistic reforms".

"Earlier, reforms used to happen in a piecemeal manner, or keeping in mind some sectors and departments," the Prime Minister said.

RAJINI IS A MAN OF HIS WORD, SAYS ELDER BROTHER

Bengaluru, Dec. 7: Ahead of launching his political party next month, Tamil superstar Rajinikanth paid a visit to his elder brother R. Sathyananarayana Rao in Bengaluru, where he grew up. "We hadn't met for quite some time. He came last night and left this morning for Chennai after spending some good time," 77-year-old Rao said on Monday.

Rajinikanth sought the blessings of his brother, who wished him good health and a long life. Rao declined to offer comments on the political innings of his brother.

"Didn't he say that he (Rajinikanth) will talk about that on December 31?" Rao said. Rao recalled that Rajinikanth spent his childhood in the city, where he was born, and lived here till the age of 22 before shifting to Chennai.

"He (Rajinikanth) has 'gurukripa' (grace of the guru)," he said. "He (Rajinikanth) is a man of his word. He definitely does what he says. He always keeps his word," Rao added.

Rajinikanth announced on Thursday he would launch a political party in January 2021 to contest in the Assembly elections in Tamil Nadu.

SC REFUSES TO QUASH FIR AGAINST ANCHOR

New Delhi, Dec. 7: The Supreme Court on Monday refused to quash FIRs lodged against TV anchor Amish Devgan for his alleged defamatory remarks on Sufi saint Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti during a show on June 15, but granted him protection from arrest till conclusion of probe if he continues to cooperate in the investigation.

The top court, however, agreed to the submission of the news anchor that all pending FIRs pertained to the same telecast and ordered transfer of all seven cases registered in Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Telangana and Madhya Pradesh to Ajmer where the first complaint was registered. A bench of Justices A.M. Khanwilkar and Sanjiv Khanna reproduced the relevant portions of the transcript of the debate anchored by Devgan on June 15 and said that it was "apparent that the petitioner (the journalist) was an equal co-participant, rather than a mere host".

"The transcript, including the offending portion, would form a part of the 'content', but any evaluation would require examination and consideration of the variable 'context' as well as the 'intent' and the 'harm/impact'.

These have to be evaluated before the court can form an opinion on whether an offence is made out.

The evaluative judgment on these aspects would be based upon facts, which have to be inquired into and ascertained by police investigation," the bench said.

CONGRESS BACKS BHARAT BANDH IN MP, C'GARH

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC BHOPAL, DEC. 7

Former chief minister and Madhya Pradesh Congress unit president Kamal Nath on Monday declared his party's support to the December 8 "Bharat Bandh" call given by different farmers' bodies in protest against the 3 farm laws by the Centre.

In a statement issued here, Nath said all the district units of the party in the state have been asked to stage demonstrations in district headquarters and submit memorandum to the local district collectors seeking withdrawal of the 3 'controversial' farm bill passed in the parliament recently, on the day. Nath also slammed the Centre for bringing the laws without consulting the farmers' bodies.

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Tuesday said the ruling Congress would support "Bharat Bandh."

He described the 3 farm laws as 'anti-farmer' and demanded the Centre to repeal them.



Farmers distribute eatables during their agitation against the new farm laws at Singhu border in New Delhi on Monday.

— PTI

Oppn support irresponsible: BJP

Alleges Opposition parties are trying to save their existence through farmers protests

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, DEC. 7

Insisting that a section of farmers have fallen in the grip of a few vested interests, the BJP on Monday said Opposition parties are supporting the protests by some farmers' groups against the recently passed legislations "to save their existence after being repeatedly rejected by people in different elections across the country."

The ruling party said Opposition parties jumping in to support the protest and the 'Bharat Bandh' called by some farmers unions are "irresponsibly and unwarrantedly trying to give protests a wrong direction in order to serve their political interests."

The BJP asserted that the reforms will benefit the small and marginal farmers, which are 86 per cent of the total farming community.

MORTAL REMAINS FOUND AT CRASH SITE, SAYS NAVY

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, DEC. 7

Indian Navy said on Monday that mortal remains of a human body have been recovered in the vicinity of the wreckage site of crashed fighter aircraft MiG-29K.

"The samples are being sent for DNA testing for confirmation of identity," said Indian Navy.

Indian Navy's two-seater, trainer aircraft MiG-29K flying over Arabian Sea had crashed on Nov. 26. One of the pilot of the MiG-29K was rescued. However, the second pilot Cdr Nishant Singh has been missing. "Due to salt water the body could not be physically identified," said sources.

QUACK | CHARGE

New Delhi, Dec. 7: The AIIMS Resident Doctors' Association (RDA) on Monday demanded withdrawal of a Central Council of Indian Medicine notification authorising post-graduate Ayurveda practitioners to be trained in general surgical procedures, saying it would "encourage quackery" and "pose hazardous risk" to the health of the population.

The Indian Medical Association (IMA) has given a call to all doctors practising modern medicine to withdraw non-essential and non-Covid services on

Pointing out that the earlier Congress-led UPA government, the then agriculture minister and NCP supremo Sharad Pawar and the Congress' Rahul Gandhi had supported reforms in the APMC Act, senior BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad said whether it is CAA or Shaheen Bagh or any reform, Opposition opposes the Modi government for the sake of opposition forgetting their own work on the same issue in the past, exposing their "double standards."

Reading from the Congress' 2019 Lok Sabha poll manifesto and citing a meeting of Congress chief ministers called by Gandhi in 2013, a policy document of the erstwhile Planning Commission and letters by the then agriculture minister Pawar to chief ministers of all states, Prasad said all had suggested and supported amendment in the APMC

Act, which the Modi government has done. On the issue of contract farming, Prasad pointed that during the UPA rule, states like Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chattisgarh, Odisha, Haryana, Goa, Maharashtra, MP, Mizoram had implemented model contract farming.

"I will reiterate again that farmers' land can neither be leased nor sold nor mortgaged in contract farming as it is not the land but produce that will be the collateral," he asserted. On allegations that the government wants to shut down mandis, he said since the implementation of reforms laws, the minimum support price of six Kharif and Rabi crops have been hiked and by the end of November, 318 lakh tonnes of rice worth ₹60,000 crore has been procured out of which 202 lakh tonnes of paddy has been procured from Punjab.

India hosts fewer foreign defence firms despite largest importer tag

PAWAN BALI | DC NEW DELHI, DEC. 7

India hosts a relatively low number of large foreign defence manufacturers considering that it has been among the world's largest arms importers for decades and has a policy of domestic arms — industrial development, according to a report by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

The report looked at the international presence of the 15 largest arms companies in 2019. These companies are present in a total of 49 countries, through majority-owned subsidiaries, joint ventures and research facilities.

The report said that it identified 13 foreign entities in India. However, only two are involved in manufacturing activities. Airbus, BAE Systems, Boeing, General Dynamics, L3Harris Technologies, Leonardo, Lockheed Martin and Thales all have foreign entities in India.

UK hosts the most entities about 14 per cent of the total for the 15 largest arms companies. This was followed by Australia (9.5 per cent), the USA (9.0 per cent), Canada (7.5 per cent), Germany (7.3 per cent), Saudi Arabia (6.0 per cent), Italy (3.8 per cent) and India (3.3 per cent).

With a global presence spanning 24 countries each, Thales and Airbus

are the two most internationalised companies — followed closely by Boeing (21 countries), Leonardo (21 countries) and Lockheed Martin (19 countries).

The report said that low presence of foreign companies could be explained by its Indian rules on foreign investment in its domestic arms industry, which have evolved over time. As India developed its arms procurement policy, it introduced offset requirements to leverage foreign technologies in support of its arms industry. However, between 2006 and 2014 the offset rules capped foreign direct investment in Indian arms companies at 26 per cent; this rose to 49 per cent

after 2014. In September 2020 the cap was revised again, to 74 per cent. "This higher threshold may raise the interest of major arms companies in partnering with India's domestic firms or setting up local subsidiaries," it said.

In August, India announced a negative list of 101 defence platforms and weapons whose import will be progressively banned starting December 2020 to boost indigenisation of defence production under Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative. India hopes with this embargo, contracts worth ₹4 lakh crore will be placed with the domestic industry within the next five to seven years.

AIIMS RDA said.

In the letter, it stated that Ayurveda is a strong system to uphold its dignity and do wonders on its very own without any illegitimate support or encroachment into any separate stream of medicine. Bachelors of Ayurveda must be given entirely separate degrees and titles such as 'Vaidya' and not similar to the doctors learning and practising modern medicine. Bachelor and Masters degree in allopathy and all other streams of medicine must be distinct in order to avoid "crosspathy" in

disguise, the RDA said.

"Thus, standing in solidarity with all the practitioners and learners of modern medicine in India we oppose these new regulations which would encourage quackery and demote its immediate withdrawal in order to preserve the sanctitude and uphold the virtues of both Ayurveda and Modern Medicine and above all to safeguard the health of the patients and population. If no immediate action is taken against the same, we shall be forced to take strict, further steps," the RDA warned. — PTI

KEJRIWAL REVIEWS ARRANGEMENTS AT BORDER

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, DEC. 7

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday visited the Singhu border, where thousands of farmers are protesting against the Centre's new farm laws, and checked arrangements made for them by the city government.

The visit comes a day after the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) extended its support to the 'Bharat Bandh' called by farmers' organisations on December 8. Kejriwal was accompanied by his cabinet ministers and some party MLAs during the brief visit to the protest venue on the Delhi-Haryana border.

"I checked the arrangements. We received a lot of pressure to allow the use of stadiums as temporary prisons but we did not give permission and I feel this helped the movement. Since then our party MLAs and ministers have been involved in ensuring that farmers do not face any discomfort," he said.

"We are working like 'sewadaar'. Here I have not come as a Chief Minister but as a 'sewadaar' to serve the farmers. It is our responsibility to support the farmers," he told reporters.

On Sunday, Kejriwal had said that all AAP workers across the country will support the nationwide strike and appealed to all citizens to support the farmers. Thousands of farmers, mostly from Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, are protesting at various border points of Delhi against the new farm laws.

The Centre's offer to amend the contentious laws failed to cut ice with farmer groups during the fifth round of talks on Saturday.

● THE VISIT comes a day after the AAP extended its support to the 'Bharat Bandh' called by farmers' organisations on December 8. Kejriwal was accompanied by his cabinet ministers and some party MLAs during the brief visit to the protest venue on the Delhi-Haryana border.

Polling to be held in five districts of Kerala today

DC CORRESPONDENT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DEC. 7

Five of the 14 districts in Kerala will go to polls on Tuesday in the first phase of local body elections, considered the semifinals ahead of the Assembly polls in 2021.

The voters of Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Pathanamthitta, Alappuzha and Idukki districts, will go out to vote in polling booths amid Covid-19 safety protocol. The polls are crucial for the ruling CPM led LDF, opposition Congress led UDF and the BJP which is making desperate attempts to make inroads into the red bastion.

All eyes are set on the prestigious Thiruvananthapuram corporation. The BJP buoyed by the massive surge in GHMC elections in Hyderabad believes that the corporation is within their striking range.

In 2015 polls it won 34 seats becoming the main opposition. This time it is targeting 70 of the 100 wards. The LDF on the other hand is confident of retaining the corporation on the strength of its development work and pro-poor welfare programmes.

There are 88,25,620 registered voters across these districts who will elect representatives to 318 grama panchayats, 50 block panchayats, five district panchayats, 20 munic-

ipalities and 2 corporations. Though the main fight is between the ruling CPM led LDF and opposition Congress led UDF, with the BJP too putting up a strong fight the local body polls are expected to witness triangular contests in many local bodies.

The LDF which has traditionally maintained an upper hand in local body polls, is facing a tough challenge this time in the wake of sensational gold smuggling case involving chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan's former principal secretary M. and some other functionaries of the CMO.

Though the local issues usually gain precedence over state or national issues in the local body polls, the gold smuggling, corruption and the arrest of CPM's former state secretary Kodiyeri Balakrishnan's son in a money trail related to drug racket are being used widely in opposition campaigns.

Almost all major central investigation agencies including National Investigation Agency (NIA), CBI, Enforcement Directorate, Customs are probing cases related to gold smuggling and alleged corruption in government's major schemes. The LDF on its part has tried to build a counter attack accusing the central agencies of implementing the political agenda of the BJP led government at the Centre.



SHORT TAKES

ACTING U.S. DEFENCE SECY IN INDONESIA

Jakarta, Dec. 7: The acting US secretary of defence met with his counterpart in Indonesia on Monday as part of a visit to Asia in which he will push Washington's free and open Indo-Pacific policy.

Christopher Miller met Indonesian Minister of Defence Prabowo Subianto on Monday, according to Prabowo's office. The Pentagon has said during his trip Miller will meet with his counterparts and other senior officials to discuss the importance of the bilateral defence relationships and securing a free and open Indo-Pacific.

After Indonesia, Miller will head to the Philippines. Miller was installed by President Donald Trump on November 9 after he fired Mark Esper.

POPE TO MAKE PILGRIMAGE TO IRAQ IN MARCH

Vatican City, Dec. 7: Pope Francis will make a pilgrimage to Iraq in March, pandemic conditions permitting, the Vatican said on Monday, in announcing what would be the pontiff's first trip aboard in more than a year.

Vatican spokesman Matteo Brunetti on Monday said Francis will make the March 5-8 visit, with stops in Baghdad, and the "plains of Ur, linked to the memory of Abraham," the Biblical patriarch, as well as to the cities of Irbil, Mosul and Qaraqosh.

Brunetti said the trip's schedule will be announced later and will take into consideration "the evolution of the worldwide health emergency" that is the Covid-19 pandemic. It would be the first trip abroad for Francis since November 2019, when he visited Thailand and Japan. Francis turns 84 on December 17. The Vatican said Francis had accepted invitations from the Iraqi government from the local Catholic church.

INDIAN EXPAT CHARGED IN UAE FOR MURDER

Dubai, Dec. 7: A UAE-based Indian expat has been charged with beating a compatriot to death after a heated argument over illegal rented accommodation, according to a media report.

The Dubai Court of First Instance on Sunday heard the case and charged the 31-year-old accused for assaulting and leaving his compatriot in unconscious condition following an argument after he went to collect rent from the victim, the *Gulf News* reported on Sunday.

According to records, the incident happened in August when the victim's mother was worried as her repeated calls to her son went unanswered. She then called his friend, who went to his rented apartment to check after breaking open the door with the security guard and found him lying dead on the bed.

Dubai Police were alerted and investigations revealed that the victim had died three days before the body was discovered, the report, which does not identify both the victim and defendant, said.

MINERS' DEATH: CHINA CITY CRACKS WHIP

Beijing, Dec. 7: China's southwestern megacity of Chongqing has ordered a crackdown on breaches of mine safety following last week's deaths of 23 workers in one of the country's worst recent mining disasters.

State media reported Monday that officials were called to a video conference Sunday and told to undertake thorough reforms after the deaths at the Diaoshuidong mine, which was caused by the buildup of deadly levels of carbon monoxide in the shaft. There have been no reports of arrests, although a full investigation has been launched into Friday's disaster.

One miner was rescued from the mine, where the death toll had originally been put at at least 18. Miners were reportedly dismantling equipment in the mine, which had been closed two months earlier and may have lacked the ventilation systems needed to clear the gas that leaks from the coal seam. China's coal mining industry used to be the world's deadliest, suffering more than 5,000 fatalities a year from explosions, floods and gas leaks. Safety improved dramatically after authorities overhauled the industry starting about 15 years ago.

Sinovac aims 600 mn capacity

Chinese company gets \$500 mn investment in a boost to its vaccine development efforts

Taipei, Dec. 7: Chinese vaccine company Sinovac announced Monday that it is planning to complete a new facility to double its annual vaccine production capacity to 600 million doses by the end of the year, while also securing a \$500 million investment in a boost to its Covid-19 vaccine development efforts.

The company is currently conducting the last stage of clinical trials for its vaccine candidate in Brazil, Turkey and Indonesia and is among the frontrunners of China's vaccine efforts. China has at least five Covid-19 vaccine candidates running late stage clinical trials across more than a dozen countries. Sino Biopharmaceutical Ltd., a pharmaceutical conglomerate, bought a 15 per cent stake in Sinovac for an investment of \$500 million.

The funds will allow the company to "improve our vaccine sales capabilities, expand in Asia markets, develop and access new technologies, and most importantly, accelerate our efforts to help combat the global pandemic," Sinovac CEO Yin Weidong said in a statement. On Sunday, 1.2 million doses of its experimental vaccine arrived in Indonesia and are expected to be approved for use soon.

Sinovac's candidate is a two-dose inactivated vaccine, an old-school technology in which a live virus is killed and then purified. It can be stored at 2 to 8 C (36 to 46 F), within the range of a normal refrigerator, unlike some other vaccines candidates that require far lower temperatures. Sinovac's experimental vaccine is currently approved for emergency use in China, although it has not yet obtained final market approval.

Under emergency use, it has been distributed to groups the Chinese government deemed suitable, including front-line medical workers and border personnel. The latest public data from the company, published in the science journal *Lancet*, showed its candidate produced lower

Virus 'war zone', warns Korean min

Seoul, Dec. 7: South Korea's health minister said Monday that the Seoul metropolitan area is now a "Covid-19 war zone," as the country reported another 615 new infections and the virus appeared to be spreading faster. The president, meanwhile, issued a call to expand testing and contact tracing.

The country has recorded more than 5,300 new infections in the past 10 days and Monday was the 30th day in a row of triple-digit daily jumps. Most cases have come from the densely populated Seoul metropolitan area, where half of South Korea's 51 million people live.

With people increasingly venturing out in public and spending longer hours indoors amid cold temperatures, health workers have struggled to stem transmissions tied to

restaurants, saunas, schools, hospitals and long-term care facilities.

"The capital area is now a Covid-19 war zone," Health Minister Park Neung-hoo said, asking for citizen vigilance. He said the country may have to increase social distancing to prevent the resurgence in the capital area from "exploding into a major outbreak nationwide and collapsing the health-care system." Na Seong-woong, a senior official from the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency, said the country could be reporting around 900 new infections a day next week if it fails to slow the virus quickly. While South Korea managed to contain a major outbreak in spring, it's less clear where the reinforcements will come if the virus wreaks havoc in the Seoul area. — AP

TRUMP LAWYER RUDY GIULIANI TESTS POSITIVE

Washington, Dec. 7: Rudy Giuliani, the personal lawyer to Donald Trump, has tested positive for Covid-19, becoming the latest person in the US president's inner circle to be infected by the deadly virus.

Giuliani, 76, has been taken to the Medstar Georgetown University Hospital in Washington DC, according to US media reports.

The news of the former mayor of New York testing positive was first tweeted by President Trump on Sunday. The president and his team have been criticised for shunning Covid-19 safety guidance.

Trump, 74, was tested positive in October. — PTI

TECH PROVIDES RESULTS IN LESS THAN 30 MINS

Washington, Dec. 7: Scientists have developed a novel technology for a CRISPR-based Covid-19 diagnostic test that uses a smartphone camera to provide accurate results in under 30 minutes.

According to the research published in the journal *Cell*, the new diagnostic test can not only generate a positive or negative result, it also measures the viral load — the concentration of virus — in a given sample. All CRISPR diagnostics to date have required that the viral RNA be converted to DNA and amplified before it can be detected, adding time and complexity, the researchers said.

In contrast, the new approach skips all the conversion and amplification steps, using CRISPR to directly detect the viral RNA, they said. — PTI

Iran says US 'got the message' on tense exchanges in Gulf

Tehran, Dec. 7: Iran said on Monday it was glad the United States "got the message" and modified its behaviour in the Persian Gulf, after the top US Navy official in the region said his forces had reached a state of deterrence with Iran after months of regional attacks and seizures at sea.

"We are happy that the other party has got the message and made its behaviour more respectful," Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said. He said the US military is the "main source of tension" in the region and that Iranian forces have always acted professionally.

"Unfortunately, the US has often had an unprofessional approach toward Iran's navy," he said. He was responding to Vice Adm. Sam Paparo's remarks, delivered at a conference in Bahrain on Sunday. Paparo, who oversees the Navy's 5th Fleet based in Bahrain, said the two sides

HALEY OPPOSES BIDEN'S PLAN TO REJOIN IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL

Washington, Dec. 7: Nikki Haley, the former US envoy to the United Nations, on Monday opposed President-elect Joe Biden's plan to re-join the Iranian nuclear deal, saying the Trump administration's sanctions on Tehran deprived the regime of the money it needed to harm American military.

"The Iran deal is only as reliable & trustworthy as the partner who signs the agreement & Iran is nei-

ther of those. Iran continues to enrich uranium, sponsor terrorists & call for Israel & America's destruction. Members of the Iranian parliament recently chanted 'Death to America'," Haley tweeted.

In an interview to *The New York Times*, Biden had expressed his desire to rejoin the Iranian nuclear deal, one of the key foreign policy accomplishments of the Obama Administration. — PTI

had reached a state of "uneasy deterrence" and that he had a "healthy respect" for Iran's regular navy and the naval forces of its Revolutionary Guard.

Tensions remain high over the Islamic Republic's nuclear programme after President Donald

Trump withdrew the US from the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers and imposed heavy sanctions on Iran. The killing of Iran's top general in a US drone strike in Iraq in January pushed the two countries to the brink of war, with Iran

responding with a missile attack on US forces.

The US Navy routinely has tense encounters with the Revolutionary Guard, whose speed boats race alongside American warships in the Persian Gulf and sometimes conduct live-fire drills with machine guns and missile launches in their presence.

In recent years Iran has seized oil tankers and been blamed for a series of limpet mine explosions targeting tankers. Tehran denied involvement, but Revolutionary Guard members were filmed taking an unexploded mine away from one tanker.

In recent days, a mine struck an oil tanker off Saudi Arabia and a cargo ship near Yemen came under assault. Suspicion immediately fell on Iranian-backed rebels in Yemen, known as Houthis. The rebels have not commented on the attacks. — AP

Azerbaijan's war victory



A TV crew works on Baku's Azadiq square in front of a huge poster reading "Karabakh is Azerbaijan!" decorating the facade of a hotel on Monday, days ahead of December 10 military parade celebrating the country's victory in its armed conflict with Armenia over the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region. — AFP

Texas officer kills man suspected of hitting worker with his vehicle Shooting at eatery: Varsity campus shut

Mesquite, Dec. 7: An off-duty police officer shot and killed a 30-year-old man who refused to stop after striking a highway construction worker with his vehicle in Dallas, authorities said.

The Mesquite Police Department said off-duty officers from the East Texas cities of Jefferson and Seven Points were providing construction security in Dallas early Saturday when the construction worker was hit. The suspect refused to stop at the scene, and officers requested assistance as they pursued him on Interstate 635, police said Saturday in a statement.

The suspect finally stopped "after contact was made between the suspect's vehicle and the officer's vehicle" in the Dallas suburb of Mesquite, according to the statement. One of the officers then shot the suspect, police said.

The statement did not explain what prompted

● **THE SUSPECT** refused to stop at the scene, and officers requested assistance as they pursued him on Interstate 635, police said Saturday in a statement.

the shooting nor if the off-duty officers identified themselves to the suspect as police. Mesquite Lt. Stephen Biggs said Sunday that he couldn't say much more than what was included in the statement because the investigation is ongoing.

Biggs added Sunday that he was told the off-duty officers were in a vehicle owned by a private security company. It was not immediately clear who told him that. When Mesquite officers arrived, the suspect had been shot and the off-duty officers who pursued him were providing first aid.

Mesquite police then took over first aid until paramedics arrived. Police said the suspect

Kennesaw, Dec. 7: A university campus in Georgia briefly told students to lock their doors and turn off their lights Sunday after a shooting at a nearby Mexican restaurant.

Kennesaw State University sent an alert across its Marietta campus about 2:45 p.m. about an "armed intruder."

The alert was lifted about an hour later with the university saying on social media that the suspect had been apprehended. The university issued

the alert after a man fired a gun at the El Rancho restaurant just off campus and then ran, Marietta Police said in a statement.

Police did not release any additional information about the shooting, including the name of the man taken into custody or whether anyone was hurt.

Kennesaw State University's Marietta campus is about 20 miles (about 32 kilometres) north of Atlanta. — AP

died at a hospital. Biggs said the construction worker had been in stable condition but forwarded questions about updates to Dallas police, who responded to the shooting.

Dallas police Officer Tamika Dameron said Sunday that the department did not know the current condition of the construction worker. — AP

LIBRARY | UPDATE

PoC George Floyd's 'I can't breathe' also finds mention Fauci's 'Wear a mask' tops quotes list

New Haven (US), Dec. 7: A plea from Dr Anthony Fauci for people to "wear a mask" to slow the spread of the coronavirus tops a Yale Law School librarian's list of the most notable quotes of 2020.

The list assembled by Fred Shapiro, an associate director at the library, is an annual update to "The Yale Book of Quotations," which was first published in 2006. Also on the list is "I can't breathe," the plea George Floyd made repeatedly to police officers holding him down on a

Minneapolis street corner. Several quotes from the presidential campaign appear including Joe Biden telling a student: "You're a lying dog-faced pony soldier."

Shapiro said he picks quotes that are not necessarily admirable or eloquent, but rather because they are famous or particularly revealing of the spirit of the times.

THE LIST 1. "Wear a mask." — Dr. Anthony Fauci, CNN interview, May 21. 2. "I can't breathe." — George Floyd,

plea to police officer, Minneapolis, May 25. 3. "One day — it's like a miracle — it will disappear." President Donald Trump, referring to the coronavirus in remarks at an African American History Month reception at the White House, Feb. 27. 4. "I see the disinfectant that knocks it out in a minute, one minute. And is there a way we can do something like that by injection inside or almost a cleaning?" — Trump, in remarks at a White House Coronavirus Task Force news

briefing, April 23. 5. "I will never lie to you. You have my word on that." — White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany, at her first press briefing, May 1. 6. "My most fervent wish is that I will not be replaced until a new president is installed." — Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, statement dictated to granddaughter Clara Spera, September 7. "If you have a problem figuring out whether you're for me or Trump, then you ain't Black." — Joe Biden, in an

interview with "The Breakfast Club" radio programme, May 22. 8. "The science should not stand in the way of this." — McEnany, referring to school reopenings in a news briefing, July 16. 9. "You're a lying dog-faced pony soldier." — Biden, in a remark to student at campaign event, Hampton, N.H., Feb. 9. 10. "We are all Lakers today." — Los Angeles Clippers coach Doc Rivers, in a remark to reporters after the death of Kobe Bryant, Orlando, Fla., Jan. 26. — AP

6 cleric supporters killed in Indonesia

Jakarta, Dec. 7: Indonesian police Monday fatally shot six followers of a firebrand cleric who returned last month from a 3-year exile in Saudi Arabia after criminal charges against him were dropped, officials said, prompting fears of more violence. Jakarta Police Chief Muhammad Fadil Imran said police were following a car carrying 10 supporters of Rizieq Shihab, the leader of the Islamic Defenders Front. The followers attacked the police with guns and swords.

"The officers then took action so that six died from the group of 10 people," he said. An official of the Front, Ahmad Shabri Lubis, gave a different account, saying that Shihab and his family were heading to a place to deliver a sermon and that guards travelling with them had been shot. "On their way to the sermon location, the group was intercepted by unknown people that we strongly believed were part of an operational group to stalk and harm him," Lubis said. — AP

SHORT TAKES NEW MT EVEREST HEIGHT TODAY: NEPAL, CHINA

Kathmandu, Dec. 7: Nepal and China are set to jointly announce the revised height of Mount Everest, the world's highest peak. The Nepal government decided to measure the exact height of the mountain amid debates that there might have been a change in its height due to various reasons, including the devastating earthquake of 2015.

According to the measurement done in 1954 by Survey of India, the height of Mt. Everest is 8,848 metres. According to a spokesperson at the Ministry of Land Management, Cooperatives and Poverty Alleviation, Nepal will announce the new height of the Everest on Tuesday along with China.

"The Chinese side has also agreed to announce the height of the Everest jointly," the ministry official said. The department had started measuring the height of the Everest two years ago.

CHINA, PAK AIR FORCES TO HOLD JOINT DRILL

Beijing, Dec. 7: A batch of Chinese air force personnel left for Pakistan on Monday to participate in a joint exercises to deepen practical cooperation and improve the actual-combat training level of the two sides, the Chinese military said. The troops left for Pakistani Air Force's air base in Bholari at Thatta district in Sindh, north-east of Pakistan's port city of Karachi, to participate in the drills named "Shaheen (Eagle)-IX", a statement issued by China's defence ministry said.

The joint air force exercise, which will conclude in late December, is a project within the 2020 cooperation plan of the two militaries, it said. It will promote the development of China-Pakistan military-to-military relationships, deepen practical cooperation between the two air forces, and improve the actual-combat training level of the two sides, it said.

The first such drill was held in Pakistan in March 2011. All weather friends, China and Pakistan share close military ties. China helps Pakistan to jointly produce JF-17 fighter jets and other armaments.

UNIVERSITY PROTEST IN HK: EIGHT ARRESTED

Hong Kong, Dec. 7: Hong Kong authorities on Monday arrested eight people in connection with an unauthorised protest at a university campus last month, police and local media said, amid a widening crackdown on dissent in the semi-autonomous Chinese territory.

The arrests were reportedly made in relation to a demonstration at the Chinese University of Hong Kong in which over 100 people protested a decision to hold graduation ceremonies online.

Such ceremonies are often used as a way for students to express political views.

Some protesters had called for Hong Kong's independence, and held up signs that read "Liberate Hong Kong, Revolution of our times," which are considered to have secessionist notions and are outlawed under the city's national security law. Police said they arrested eight people for an unauthorised protest and inciting secession, but did not specify who they were or whether the arrests were related to the university protest.

Arthur Yeung, a graduate from the university who also ran in the city's district council elections last year, is suspected to be among those arrested.

A post on Yeung's Facebook page said he was arrested at his home on Monday morning. Two district councillors, Isaac Lee and Eason Chan, were also arrested, according to posts on their respective Facebook pages. The eight arrested are currently being investigated by national security officers, according to local newspaper *South China Morning Post*, which cited unnamed sources.

The arrests come as Hong Kong and Beijing have increasingly clamped down on dissent in the city, following Beijing's imposition of a national security law in Hong Kong in June aimed at curbing months of political unrest and anti-government protests last year.

The crackdown has prompted accusations that Beijing is violating the autonomy it promised when the former British colony was returned to China in 1997.

It also has triggered warnings that the ruling Communist Party is damaging Hong Kong's appeal as a global business center and one of Asia's most dynamic cities.

Becerra named health secy, Murthy is surgeon general

Fauci Chief Medical Adviser to Prez on Covid-19, Walensky CDC Director

Washington, Dec. 7: US President-elect Joe Biden unveiled his health team on Monday, naming Xavier Becerra as Secretary of Health and Human Services, and Indian-American Dr Vivek Murthy as his Surgeon General.

Dr Anthony Fauci has been named as Chief Medical Adviser to the President on Covid-19, while Dr Rochelle Walensky has been named as Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and Dr Marcella Nunez-Smith as Covid-19 Equity Task Force Chair. "This trusted and accomplished team of leaders will bring the highest level of integrity, scientific rigor, and crisis-management experience to one of the toughest challenges America has ever faced — getting the pandemic under control so that the American people can get back to work, back to their lives, and back to their loved ones," Biden said. This team of world-class medical experts and public servants will be ready on day one to mobilise every resource of the federal government to expand testing and masking, oversee the safe, equitable, and

free distribution of treatments and vaccines, reopen schools and businesses safely, lower prescription drug and other health costs and expand affordable health care to all Americans, and rally the country and restore the belief that there is nothing beyond America's capacity if we do it together, he said.

"Containing this Coronavirus pandemic and opening our economy responsibly require listening to experts and leaders like the ones we are bringing together on this health care team," Vice President-elect Kamala Harris said, adding that they are some of America's top physicians, public health experts, and crisis-tested public servants, and they reflect the very best of the nation.

This is the team that the American people need and deserve to make quality, affordable health care available to all and to help make sure safe and effective vaccines — as well as testing and treatment — are free and equitably distributed, Harris said.

Becerra is currently the Attorney General of California and a former member of Congress. —PTI

Trump cementing death penalty legacy

Chicago, Dec. 7: As Donald Trump's presidency winds down, his administration is throttling the pace of federal executions despite a surge of Coronavirus cases in prisons, announcing plans for five starting Thursday and concluding just days before the Jan 20 inauguration of President-elect Joe Biden.

If the five go off as planned, it will make 13 executions since July when the Republican administration resumed putting inmates to death after a 17-year hiatus and will cement Trump's legacy as the most prolific execution president in over 130 years.

He'll leave office having executed about a quarter of all federal death-row prisoners, despite waning support for capital punishment among both Democrats and Republicans.

In a recent interview with *The Associated Press*, Attorney General William Barr defended the extension of executions into the post-election period, saying he'll likely schedule more before he departs the Justice Department. A Biden administration, he said, should keep it up.

"I think the way to stop the death penalty is to repeal the death penalty," Barr said. "But if you ask juries to impose and juries impose it, then it should be carried out." The plan breaks a tradition of lame-duck presidents deferring to incoming presidents on policy about which they differ so starkly, said Robert Durham, director of the non-partisan Death Penalty Information Center.

Biden, a Democrat, is a death penalty foe, and his spokesman said that he'd work to end the death penalty when he is in office. "It's hard to understand why anybody at this stage of a presidency feels compelled to kill this many people," Durham said.

—AP

EU WEIGHS NEW DAWN FOR TIES UNDER BIDEN

Brussels, Dec. 7: European Union foreign ministers were debating Monday ways to work together more closely with the United States on global diplomacy, with the bloc hopeful that the arrival of President-elect Joe Biden will breathe new life into trans-Atlantic relations.

"With Joe Biden's election as the new American president, there are a lot of major opportunities that we as Europe want to take," said German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas, whose country holds the EU's rotating presidency until the end of the month. "Not everything will be different, but a lot will be better, and we must be clear what part of our responsibility we will take, and where we will cooperate with the United States — be it in our direct or indirect neighbourhood, in the western Balkans, in eastern Europe, but also in Africa," he said. —AP

ACTIVISTS FUME OVER EL-SISSI'S FRANCE VISIT

Paris, Dec. 7: Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi is paying a state visit to France for talks on fighting terrorism, the conflict in Libya and other regional issues, amid criticism from human rights groups over the Egyptian leader's crackdown on dissent.

French President Emmanuel Macron will host el-Sissi at the Elysee Palace on Monday, and is expected to raise human rights concerns among the other topics on the agenda, according to Macron's office. El-Sissi has overseen the largest crackdown on critics in Egypt in living memory, jailing thousands of Islamists along with pro-democracy activists, reversing freedoms won in the 2011 Arab Spring uprising, silencing critics and placing draconian rules on rights groups.

Days before his arrival in France, amid pressure from UN and Western activists, Egyptian authorities released three workers at one of the last rights groups still functioning in Egypt. The three staffers of the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights, detained in November, were released Thursday. —AP

China for reset of troubled US ties

Beijing, Dec. 7: China on Monday called for a reset of its troubled ties with the US under the incoming administration of President-elect Joe Biden to rebuild mutual trust and end months of hostility between the world's two largest economies.

President Donald Trump's four-years in power is regarded as the worst phase in US-China relations as the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC) headed by President Xi Jinping struggled to deal with Washington under an unpredictable American leader.

"The top priority is that both sides should work together to remove all kinds of disruptions and obstacles, and achieve a smooth transition in China-US relations," Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said during a video meeting with business leaders from the US-China Business Council.

"At the same time, based on the direction of mutual benefits for our two peoples and countries, we need to strive to restart dialogue, return to the

right track and rebuild trust in this next phase of relations," he was quoted as saying by the Hong Kong-based *South China Morning Post*.

Trump, a Republican, pushed aggressively on all aspects of US-China ties, including with his relentless trade war, challenging China's military hold on the disputed South China Sea, its constant threats to Taiwan and branding Coronavirus as 'China virus' after it emerged from Wuhan in December last year.

The Trump administration also lobbied hard with allies against Chinese telecoms giant Huawei, sanctioning Chinese officials over human rights abuses in Muslim-majority Xinjiang. Earlier this month, Biden, a Democrat, confirmed that he will not make any "immediate moves" to lift the punitive tariffs that the Trump administration has imposed on imports of Chinese goods before a full review of the existing phase one trade deal and consultations with US allies. —PTI

Stir over India farm laws: Many arrested

London, Dec. 7: Scotland Yard has reportedly made a number of arrests after it warned of enforcement action ahead of thousands of protesters from different parts of the UK gathering outside the Indian High Commission in central London on Sunday, as a show of support for farmers demonstrating against agricultural reforms in India.

Several police officers in face masks descended upon Aldwych to police the "We stand with farmers of Punjab" demonstration, having warned that strict regulations remain in place to help prevent the spread of Coronavirus and therefore demonstrations of larger than 30 risk arrests and fines.

The Metropolitan Police had said a "robust" policing plan will be in place throughout Sunday and officers will take action if they witness breaches of the regulations.

The Metropolitan Police said that 13 people in total were arrested for breach of Covid-19 regulations. Four of them were subsequently de-arrested after they provided their details to officers and were issued a fine. The other nine remain in custody. Three teenagers who were seen to set off a firework towards a crowd were spoken to by police and the fireworks were confiscated from them.

They were not arrested and police said that there had been no reported injuries from the demonstration. —PTI

Hectic day for EU negotiator to seal final Brexit trade deal

Brussels, Dec. 7: European Union chief negotiator Michel Barnier on Monday set off one of the most intense days in the long-running Brexit trade negotiations with a pre-dawn debriefing of the 27 member states to see if a deal is still possible with London ahead of the Jan. 1 deadline.

In the evening, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson will have his second phone call with EU Com-

mission chief Ursula von der Leyen in barely 48 hours, to decide whether to pull the plug on an agreement that could cost hundreds of thousands of jobs on both sides and disrupt cross-Channel trade for years to come.

Both sides acknowledge that "significant differences remain" on three essential points, although there are indications that the disagreements over EU fishing rights in UK waters

after Britain's departure from the bloc become a full reality on Dec. 31 have narrowed over the past few days. There remain major issues with legal oversight of any trade deal and standards of fair play that the UK needs to meet to be able to export in the EU. While the UK left the EU on Jan 31, it remains within the bloc's tariff-free single market and customs union through Dec 31. —AP

Snowman on summit



A snowman with mouth and nose protection stands on the snow-covered summit plateau of the Grosser Feldberg in the Taunus Mountains, Germany, on Monday.

—AP

Nawaz rues none of Pak PMs have been able to complete their terms

Islamabad, Dec. 7: Pakistan's former prime minister Nawaz Sharif on Sunday regretted that none of the country's elected premiers have been able to complete their terms, saying "Iqbal did not dream of this Pakistan".

Sharif, 70, the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) supreme, has been living in London since November last year after the Lahore High Court granted him permission to go abroad for four weeks for treatment. Speaking at the PML-N's social media convention, he said that "again and again, the constitution was violated... those who created the country were termed traitors, popular leaders were jailed and leaders were made out to be robbers."

Sharif said that the votes of the public had been "stolen", accusing the government led by Prime Minister Imran Khan of indulging in rigging in the 2018 elections. *Dawn* news reported. "Until now, none of the (elected) prime ministers have been allowed to complete their constitutional term. Every few years, democracy is attacked and martial law is imposed," Sharif was quoted as saying in the report.

"Tell me, hand on your

heart, is this Quaid-i-Azam's Pakistan?" he asked. Pakistan's powerful Army, which has ruled the country for more than half of its 70 plus years of existence, has hitherto wielded considerable power in the matters of security and foreign policy. Sharif, while referring to the criticism over his speeches critical of the military, said if it was "treason to expose those who have formed a state above a state".

"Undemocratic forces have started propaganda through social media that Nawaz Sharif's narrative is empowering enemies of the country. "These unde-

mocratic forces have choked freedom of expression in the country, choked the poor and unemployment, have crushed them with inflation... these are painful things but all they are worried about is how to stop Nawaz Sharif," he said. Sharif, living in London since November last year after he was allowed by the courts and the government to go there for medical treatment, has accused army chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa and spy agency ISI head Lt Gen Faiz Hameed for interfering in the 2018 polls and installing Imran Khan's "puppet government". —PTI

BIGGER | VERSION

It will mark the first time that the company will have two capsules aloft at the same time

Double Dragons: SpaceX launches space station supplies

Cape Canaveral, Dec 7: SpaceX launched a newer, bigger version of its Dragon supply ship to the International Space Station on Sunday, marking the first time the company has two capsules aloft at the same time.

The Dragon — packed with Christmas treats and presents — should reach the space station on Monday, joining the Dragon that delivered four astronauts last month. "Dragons

everywhere you look," said Kenny Todd, NASA's deputy space station program manager.

With NASA's commercial crew programme officially under way, SpaceX expects to always have at least one Dragon capsule at the space station. SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket blasted off with the latest Dragon from NASA's Kennedy Space Center, where Coronavirus precautions kept staff to a minimum.

● **SPACEX'S FALCON 9** rocket blasted off with the latest Dragon from NASA's Kennedy Space Center, where Coronavirus precautions kept staff to a minimum.

The first-stage booster — making its fourth flight — was aiming for a touchdown on an ocean platform several minutes after liftoff. It was first used

back in May for the first astronaut launch by Elon Musk's company.

The 6,400-pound (2,900-kilogram) shipment includes billions of microbes and crushed asteroid samples for a biomining study, a new medical device to provide rapid blood test results for astronauts in space, and a privately owned and operated chamber to move experiments as big as refrigerators outside the orbiting lab.

Forty mice also are flying for bone and eye studies, two areas of weaknesses for astronauts during long space stays. Todd said all this research is "the ultimate Christmas present" for NASA astronaut Kate Rubins, a virus hunter who performed the first DNA sequencing in space a few years ago.

As for more personal presents for the four Americans, two Russians and one Japanese on board, "I don't

like to get out in front of Santa Claus. I fear it might mess up my own Christmas." Todd said late last week. "Let's see what happens when they open the hatch ... I'm optimistic."

For the astronauts' Christmas feast, the Dragon is carrying roasted turkey, cornbread dressing, cranberry sauce, shortbread cookies and tubes of icing. This updated cargo-carrying model — as large as the SpaceX crew capsule —

will dock to the orbiting lab by itself.

Previous SpaceX cargo ships needed the station's robot arm for anchoring. The capsule will remain at the space station for about a month as usual before undocking with experiments and old equipment, and splashing into the Atlantic. That's another change from SpaceX's older cargo ships, which parachuted into the Pacific. —AP



quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	45,426.97	0.77
Nifty 50	13,355.75	0.73
S&P 500*	3,695.77	-0.09
Dollar (₹)	73.90	-0.14
Pound Sterling (₹)	97.85	1.66
Euro (₹)	89.36	0.47
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	48,703▼104	0.21
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	49.16	-0.09
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.924	0.026
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.939	-0.030

* As of 8:30 PM IST

Hindalco to set up ₹730 cr plant in Silvassa

Aditya Birla group firm Hindalco Industries said it plans to set up a 34,000-tonne aluminium extrusion plant at Silvassa, in Dadra and Nagar Haveli, at an investment of Rs 730 crore. In a regulatory filing, it said the new plant will service the fast-growing market for extruded aluminium products in the western and southern regions. It said the project signals a big step forward in Hindalco's downstream strategy.

IndiGo to refund all passengers by January 31



IndiGo said it will refund all customer credit shells, which were created when flights were cancelled due to the coronavirus lockdown earlier this year, by January 31. The airline said it has processed close to Rs 1,000 crore of refunds, which is about 90 per cent of the total amount it owed to its customers. CEO Ronojoy Dutta said, "As our incoming cash flow dried up, we were unable to immediately process refunds."

NSE starts weekly F&O contracts in 3 currency pairs

The NSE launched weekly futures and options contracts on three currency pairs-- euro-rupee, yen-rupee and pound sterling-rupee. "NSE is launching a weekly futures contract for the first time, while we have already seen market acceptance in weekly options contracts across asset classes," the exchange's MD and CEO Vikram Limaye said. The weekly derivatives on currency pairs will reduce time-related costs, he said.

Nissan receives 5,000 bookings for Magnite

Nissan Motor India said it has received 5,000 bookings for its newly launched compact SUV, Magnite in five days. The firm also received over 50,000 enquiries for the vehicle launched on Dec. 2 at an introductory price of Rs 4.99 lakh, with over 20 variants. Over 60 per cent of the bookings have been received for the top 2 grades (XV and XV Premium), and more than 38 per cent are for CVT Automatic, Nissan said.

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■Growth in tier-I cities and metros came to 20% Online festive sales double in small cities

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, DEC. 7

Smaller cities played a key role in driving e-commerce festive season sales this year. Online sales almost doubled in volume terms in smaller cities this festive season.

The tier-II and III cities have been growing way faster than metropolitan cities and its impact is visible in the festive season sale as well, finds Unicommerce, e-commerce focused SaaS platform. Tier-II and beyond cities have witnessed a growth of 99 per cent as compared to last year's festive season. The growth in tier-I and metropolitan cities remained around 20 per cent.

According to Amazon, initial days of the festive season saw 91 per cent of new customers coming



from smaller cities.

However, states like Delhi, Maharashtra and Karnataka with metropolitan cities continued to dominate e-commerce sales. These three states contribute 55 per cent of India's e-commerce volume in the festive month.

Personal care category emerged as the biggest gainer, with 176 per cent

order volume growth over last year's festive month. Beauty and wellness reported 52 per cent order volume growth.

Fashion and accessories witnessed an order volume growth of 71 per cent. Electronics continued to be the highlight of festive sales, with all marketplaces extensively promoting discounts and offers on

electronic products. The segment saw a substantial growth of 65 per cent in order volume. RedSeer Consulting too found that mobiles and appliances remained strong this year driven by new launches, discounts, bank offers and smart upgrade plans of brands.

Returns remained a concern for e-tailers despite automation, though the industry overall observed a 35 per cent decrease in return orders this season compared to last year. Fashion and accessories remained the category with maximum return orders.

This year brands got serious about online selling by developing own websites. Brand websites witnessed 77 per cent order volume growth compared to 60 per cent for marketplaces.

PSU insurers go slow with crop insurance

MADHUSUDAN SAHOO NEW DELHI, DEC. 7

Major general insurers, especially public sector players, are learnt to be shying away from insuring their crops through the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, or PMFBY, scheme. They feel the current crop insurance scheme is not lucrative enough for them to focus on it.

However, a few private players have been looking at the scheme for widening their market reach. For

instance, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Company has increased its presence in the segment and has gone ahead of its peers. Its exposure to the sector currently stands at Rs 1,700 crore.

"All the major players, who are active on the non-life insurance space in the country, have reportedly reduced their exposure to the crop insurance, as they don't find the PMFBY scheme lucrative any more in its revised form. Therefore, they are slightly

pushing away from this scheme to avoid losses," a senior official of a public sector general insurance company told *Financial Chronicle* on condition of anonymity.

Data with sector regulator Irdai shows private insurer's exposure to crop insurance stands at Rs 1,615 crore for HDFC ERGO, Rs 1,605 crore for Reliance General Insurance, Rs 1,370 crore for SBI General Insurance and Rs 843 crore for Iffco Tokio. In contrast, the

exposure of the largest state-run non-life insurer, New India Assurance, is Rs 675 crore.

Ashish Agarwal, head-agri business & CSC, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance, said the firm has been participating in the PMFBY scheme from its launch in 2016. "We have been authorised to enrol farmers under the PMFBY by the governments of Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Rajasthan during the kharif 2020 season."

Dip in wages of informal workers: ILO

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, DEC. 7

While the pandemic saw workers' wages shrinking, informal workers in India experienced a sharper fall than formal workers, finds the International Labour Organisation. ILO also found that the gap between real and nominal minimum wages of unskilled workers in India has become significantly wider in the past 10 years.

Post-pandemic, formal workers' wages have been cut by 3.6 per cent in India, while informal workers have experienced a much sharper fall in wages of 22.6 per cent, finds ILO's Global Wage Report. Around two-thirds of countries whose short-term statistics are available showed



decreasing wages or slower average wage growth.

In India, delayed increase or freeze in minimum wages because of the Covid-19 crisis have taken place at the local or sectoral level. For example, in the Punjab region, the local government reversed its order announcing a minimum wage increase, says the report.

Further, the report also found that the gap between

CEO of fashion retailer quits to prioritise wife's career

Berlin, Dec. 7: The chief executive of online fashion retailer Zalando is stepping down to focus on his family, saying his wife's career should take priority in the coming years.

Rubin Ritter, one of three co-chief executives at Zalando, has been in the job since 2010.

Tasked with overseeing strategy and communications, the 38-year-old helped turn the Berlin-based start-up into one of the world's top online fashion retailers with 14,000 employees and net profit of almost 100 million euros (\$121 million) in 2019.

In a statement, Zalando said Ritter had informed



Rubin Ritter

the company on Sunday of his decision to step down in 2021, more than two years before his contract ends.

"I feel that it is time to give my life a new direction," Ritter was quoted as saying.

I want to devote more time to my growing family, he added.

My wife and I have

agreed that for the coming years, her professional ambitions should take priority.

The head of Zalando's supervisory board, Cristina Stenbeck, said the company regretted Ritter's decision but we have the highest respect for the underlying personal motivation.

Last month, Ritter published the company's first report on diversity and inclusion, saying these should be seen as an opportunity rather than a challenge.

The company has been criticised for currently having only men on its five-member management board.

—AP

HOTELS SEEK LOAN RESTRUCTURING

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, DEC. 7

Fearing a second wave of the pandemic, the hospitality sector, which is already weighed down by massive losses and mounting debt, is seeking a sector-specific loan restructuring plan.

The Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Associations of India said the sector suffered revenue loss of Rs 1.14 lakh crore this year.

Pradeep Shetty, honorary joint secretary, FHRAI, said if a favourable policy is not drawn for survival of the sector, at least 40 to 50 per cent restaurants and 30 to 40 per cent hotels in the country will shut down, resulting into millions of job losses.

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, DEC. 7

The Trustee of Franklin Templeton Mutual Fund in India has sought unitholders consent for the orderly winding up of the six fixed income schemes, abiding with the December 3 interim order of the Supreme Court.

"Voting 'Yes' will allow schemes to monetise assets without resorting to distress sales and will maximise value to Unitholders," the fund house said in a release. Voting will take place during December 26-28.

Santosh Kamath, CIO, Franklin Templeton Fixed

Income India, said, "From April 24, 2020 to November 27, 2020, the six schemes under winding up have received Rs 11,576 crore from maturities, pre-payments, and coupons. Four out of the six schemes are already cash positive and have close to Rs 7,226 crore available to return to unitholders, subject to fund running expenses. All of this cash has been received without any secondary market sale (active monetisation) of the securities in these six schemes."

He said of the Rs 11,576 crore received, nearly half has come from securities rated 'A'.

KOTAK LAUNCHES FIRST REIT MF

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, DEC. 7

Kotak Mahindra Asset Management Company has launched India's first diversified REIT Mutual Fund. Kotak International REIT Fund of Funds is an open-ended mutual fund scheme that will invest in units of SMAM Asia REIT Sub Trust Fund. This mutual fund scheme will have a diversified investment portfolio comprising listed REITs which will invest in real estate projects like residential, office, data centres, warehousing, retail and hospitality. The new fund offer (NFO) opens on December 7 and closes on December 21.

ICICI BANK LAUNCHES INTEROPERABLE APP

Mumbai, Dec. 7: ICICI Bank launched a new mobile payment app that is interoperable and allows payments and other services to customers of any other bank. Through iMobile Pay, customers of other banks can link their accounts to it.

DLF TO EQUIP OFFICES WITH AIR FILTRATION

New Delhi, Dec. 7: DLF will invest Rs 30 crore over the next six months to install new air-filtration technology, MERV-14, in all its office buildings to ensure safe re-entry of tenants and their employees in its office buildings, the company said.

LEAD SCHOOL TO HAVE AI-LED ASSESSMENT

Mumbai, Dec. 7: LEAD School, an EdTech player in K-12 education, has acquired QuizNext, an AI-powered gamified student assessment and practice platform. Commenting, LEAD School co-founder and COO Smita Deorah said, "Beyond online classes, students need a lot of support in a remote learning environment for a full schooling impact."

HIGH-TECH ASSISTANCE Pilot project running across 100 locations in MP, Maharashtra

Voda, Nokia team up for SmartAgri solution

New Delhi, Dec. 7: Vodafone India Foundation, the corporate social responsibility (CSR) arm of Vi, has, in partnership with Nokia, deployed a smart agriculture solution that aims to enhance farming practices and improve productivity of farmers.

Vodafone Idea CSR has deployed Nokia's World-wide IoT Network Grid (Wing) solution to equip farmers in the country with precise and practical data to help them achieve better yields.

"Deployment of the smart agriculture-as-a-service solution includes soil probes, weather stations, insect traps and crop cameras to help drive productivity of soy



and cotton crops," a press release said.

A pilot project, being implemented across 100 locations in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, aims to benefit over 50,000 farmers in the region by enhancing their productivity and income.

"The SmartAgri project aims to enhance the liveli-

hoods of small farmers through sustainable farming approaches, deployment of IoT (Internet of Things) solutions and by improving their access to information, using technology," it added.

Under the project, over 400 sensors have been deployed over 1,00,000

hectares of farmland to collect various data points, which are then analysed by a cloud-based and localised Smart Agriculture app.

The app offers local language support as well as weather forecast and irrigation management information.

"The sensors generate insights that is helping to improve soy and cotton crop yields. Crop management through Wing can include smart irrigation, smart pesticide control, and proactive information sharing frameworks on crops and weather, as well as a platform for commodity exchange," the release added.

The use case can also employ Remotely Piloted

Aircraft System (RPAS) technology, or drones, instead of traditional sensors for crop management.

"To demonstrate the impact of technology in transforming agricultural practices in India, Vi CSR chose the agri-heartlands of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, and on-boarded Nokia as the IoT solutions provider, and Solidaridad for field implementation," it said.

The CSR initiative will be showcased at the Voda Idea booth during India Mobile Congress 2020 from December 8 to 10. Telecom operator, Vodafone Idea, offers products and services to its customers under the brand name 'Vi'. —PTI

SHORT TAKES

Reds join Spurs at top of EPL

London: Liverpool turned on the style for their returning fans on Sunday, beating Wolves 4-0 to join Tottenham at the top of the Premier League after another episode of the Son Heung-min and Harry Kane show. Jurgen Klopp's men had not had the chance to play in front of their supporters since they ended their 30-year wait to be crowned English champions but made up for lost time.

"You'll Never Walk Alone" rang out around Anfield as 2,000 home fans — the maximum allowed under coronavirus rules — witnessed strikes from Mohamed Salah, Georginio Wijnaldum, Joel Matip and an own goal. Liverpool have now won 31 of their past 32 home league games, scoring 93 goals while conceding just 25. Earlier, Jose Mourinho's Spurs beat faltering Arsenal 2-0 at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium and Leicester, who ended the day in fourth spot, struck late to beat rock-bottom Sheffield United 2-1. — *AFP*

Milan pip Samp to maintain lead

Rome: AC Milan kept hold of their five-point lead at the top of Serie 'A' on Sunday after a hard-fought 2-1 win at Sampdoria, while Napoli moved third after strolling to victory over bottom side Crotone. Franck Kessie's penalty on the stroke of half-time and Samu Castillejo's 77th-minute strike were just enough for the seven-time European champions, who were without injured talisman Zlatan Ibrahimovic, to move up to 26 points and keep second-placed local rivals Inter Milan at arm's length. Napoli are six points back in third after goals from Lorenzo Insigne, Hirving Lozano, Diego Demme and Andrea Petagna earned the away side a 4-0 win at Crotone. Ivory Coast mid-fielder Kessie coolly struck home his spot-kick after Jakub Jankto unluckily handled while challenging for the ball with Theo Hernandez. — *AFP*

Sociedad held, cede La Liga lead

Madrid: Real Sociedad were unable to regain first place in La Liga on Sunday night when they were held to a goalless draw at Basque rivals Alaves. Deprived of injured captain Mikel Oyarzabal, top scorer in La Liga with seven goals, Sociedad were unable to breach the home defence. The draw dropped them one point behind Atletico, who on Saturday beat Valladolid 2-0 for a seventh straight Liga victory. Earlier on Sunday, Villarreal also lost ground with a 0-0 draw at home to Elche. Villarreal regained third place but fell five points behind Diego Simeone's league leaders. Sociedad and Villarreal have both played two games more than Atletico and one more than Real Madrid. Real Madrid reversed a recent slide with a 1-0 victory at Sevilla on Saturday. — *AFP*

Jamshedpur halt Mariners' sail

Goa: A fine brace from Nerijus Valskis ensured Jamshedpur FC bagged their first win in the Hero Indian Super League Season 7 as they beat early pace-setters ATK Mohun Bagan 2-1 at the Tilak Maidan Stadium, here on Monday. Valskis (30', 66') scored in either half for Owen Coyle's side, while Krishna pulled a late goal back for ATKMB. The result also meant ATKMB's perfect run in the campaign came to an end following the defeat. — *Agencies*

Live on TV

CRICKET

Australia vs India: Third T20 from 1.40 pm on Sony Six, Ten 1, HD

FOOTBALL

Indian Super League: Bengaluru vs NorthEast United from 7.20 pm on Star Sports 2, 3

Champions League: Zenit vs Dortmund from 11.25 pm on Sony Ten 2; Barcelona vs Juventus from 1.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 2; Chelsea vs Krasnodar from 1.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Six; Leipzig vs Manchester United from 1.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 1; PSG vs Istanbul Basaksehir from 1.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 3

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India eye clean sweep

Kohli's men look to extend unbeaten run in last T20 against Oz

Sydney, Dec. 7: The series pocketed and their confidence restored, India would eye nothing less than a clean sweep when they take on an Australian side significantly weakened by injury blows, in the third and final T20 International here on Tuesday.

Skipper Virat Kohli and his main protagonist of the white-ball leg, Hardik Pandya, will feel a sense of *deja vu* given that the script has panned out exactly like 2016 when the team got walloped in the ODIs but came back strongly to rout the Aussies 3-0 in the T20 International series.

After a couple of crushing defeats in the first two ODIs, the Indians have turned a corner starting with the final ODI in Canberra.

Even the absence of a white-ball pro like Ravindra Jadeja didn't have an impact during their convincing six-wicket win in the series-clinching second T20 on Sunday.

What will boost the Indian team's morale manifold is the fact that it had the confidence to rest both Mohammed Shami and Jasprit Bumrah, relying on a troika of pacers, who between them haven't played even 40 games collectively.

India's new white-ball sensation Thangarasu Natarajan has had a superb initiation in international cricket with Australian batsmen still finding it difficult to read him.

As Pandya so rightly put it, Natarajan's spell and the 10 runs that Australia failed to score became the difference between winning and losing on Sunday.

The difference between India and Australia during the last game was the batting of the two teams during the middle overs.

Australia lost a bit of momentum after stand-in skipper Matthew Wade was dismissed while his opposite number Kohli played some outrageous shots after the Powerplay to up the ante. — *PTI*



Members of the Indian team celebrate their T20 series victory over Australia at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Sunday. India are leading the three-match series 2-0. — *AFP*

Umesh, Ashwin impress in warm-up

Sydney, Dec. 7: Senior pros Umesh Yadav and Ravichandran Ashwin staked strong claims to be included in India's playing XI for the first Test with impressive performances against Australia A, who scored 286 for 8 on the second day, riding on Cameron Green's unbeaten century.

Australia now have a 39-run lead after India A declared their innings at 247 for 9 in the first hour of the second day, with

skipper Ajinkya Rahane remaining unbeaten on 117.

With Mohammed Shami and Jasprit Bumrah being automatic choices, Umesh (18-3-44-3), fighting for third pacer's slot, certainly looked more penetrative compared to Mohammed Siraj (19-4-71-2) with the new ball.

Yadav removed both rival Test team openers Will Pucovski (1) and Joe Burns (4) in his third and fourth over with the new

ball to make initial inroads.

Ashwin (19-2-58-2) also did his Test chances no harm as he reminded old timers of Australian off-spinner of 80's Greg Mathews (hero of 'Madras' tied Test) bowling with his cap on.

Only that Mathews was protecting himself from Chennai heat while Ashwin was reluctant to give it to fellow fielders.

For Australia A, the giant all-rounder Green

continued his rich vein of Sheffield Shield form with an unbeaten 114 off 173 that had 10 fours and a six. He showed good temperament against the Indian attack while adding 104 runs for the sixth wicket with his national skipper Tim Paine (44) after being reduced to 98 for 5. — *PTI*

Brief scores: Indian A 247/9 decl. (Rahane 117*, Pujara 54) vs Australia A 286/8 (Green 114*, Paine 44, Yadav 3/44, Ashwin 2/58).

PAK SQUAD CLEARS 5TH COVID TEST IN NZ

Christchurch, Dec. 7: The touring Pakistan squad has returned negative in a fifth round of Covid-19 tests and will now be able to leave their managed isolation on Tuesday, subject to clearance from the health ministry, New Zealand Cricket said on Monday.

The 53-member Pakistan team was denied the right to train while in managed isolation in New Zealand after eight members of the touring squad had tested positive for Covid-19.

"This is to advise the Pakistan squad's fifth and final day 12, Covid-19 tests have all been returned as negative," NZC said.

"As a consequence, and pending final Ministry of Health approval, the squad will leave managed isolation tomorrow and fly to Queenstown, where they will train ahead of the T20 and Test series against the BLACKCAPS."

Pakistan are scheduled to play three T20Is, beginning in Auckland on December 18 followed by two Tests starting December 26.

Six members of the Pakistan team had tested positive on arrival, while two more returned positive later and all eight are now in quarantine. — *PTI*

Anju won medals with one kidney

Kochi, Dec. 7: Olympian Anju Bobby George, who secured a historic bronze medal in the 2003 World Athletics Championship in Paris, on Monday said she achieved success and reached the top with a single kidney.

In a tweet, the ace athlete, a gold medalist in the IAAF World Athletics Finals (Monaco, 2005), said she had many limitations, including being allergic to even a painkiller, but still made it.

"Believe it or not, I'm one of the fortunate, among very few who reached the world top with a single KIDNEY, allergic with even a painkiller, with a dead takeoff leg... Many limitations...Still made it. Can we call, magic of a coach or his talent," Anju tweeted.

Her career blossomed under the coaching of husband Robert Bobby George. Anju said she chose the pandemic season to make this revelation to "motivate" all the sportspersons in the current generation, who are missing their practice and competitions due to the spread of the deadly virus.

"The general perception of the people is that I have a perfect body. But the fact is that I achieved all the success in my field by overcoming all difficulties. I hope that sharing of my experience will help motivate all aspiring sportspersons," she said.

She said she complained of fatigue while in Germany for a competition in 2003 and doctors there advised her rest for six months and not to even think about sports "It was just 20 days ahead of the Paris World Athletics Championship. I overcame all the issues and won a medal in Paris," she said.

Anju came to know she was living with a single kidney during an overall health check-up in Bengaluru 2001 due to some health issues before starting her international career. "It was shocking news for me. But Bobby (husband) motivated me to continue my career and achieve success. He even offered his kidney if I face any problem," she said.

Anju said she was now mature enough to handle



Anju Bobby George

● In a tweet, the ace athlete, a gold medalist in the IAAF World Athletics Finals (Monaco, 2005), said she had many limitations, including being allergic to even a painkiller, but still made it.

the situation brought about by her health issues.

"If I had gone public with my health then, the situation would have been different," Anju said.

Responding to her tweet, Union Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju said she brought laurels to India through her hard work, grit and determination. "Anju, it's your hard work, grit and determination to bring laurels for India, supported by the dedicated coaches and the whole technical backup team. We are so proud of you being the only Indian so far to win a medal in the World Athletic Championship!" the minister said in his response to her tweet.

The Athletics Federation of India said as India's only medalist at the IAAF World Championships (Paris, 2003), a gold medalist in the IAAF World Athletics Finals (Monaco, 2005) and a remarkably consistent performer, Anju is among the country's most inspirational track and field stars.

She finished sixth at the 2004 Olympics with a personal best leap of 6.83m, but was elevated to fifth place in 2007 when USA's Marion Jones was disqualified for a doping offence. — *PTI*

Jaddu may miss first Test

New Delhi, Dec. 7: Indian all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja is likely to miss the opening Test against Australia owing to the concussion and a hamstring injury that he sustained during the opening T20 International in Canberra.

The 32-year-old, who is on the cusp of his 50th Test, is likely to be out for at least three weeks which certainly rules him out of the first Day/Night Test in Adelaide starting December 17.

In case it turns out to be a hamstring tear, it could well rule him out of the second Boxing Day Test in Melbourne from December 26.

"As per ICC's concussion protocols, after any head injury, a player needs to be rested for 7 to 10 days, which effectively rules Jadeja out of the three-day day/night warm-up game at the SCG from December 11," a BCCI source said on



Ravindra Jadeja

conditions of anonymity.

"Therefore, it is next to impossible that the Indian team management would field Jadeja, without any warm-up game time ahead of the opening Test," the

source added.

However, more than concussion, it is understood that the hamstring injury is likely to keep Jadeja out of action for at least one Test if not two. — *PTI*

Jadeja absence throws conspiracy theories out of window



Hemant Kenkre
Silly Point

The Australians don't take defeat on their chin and move on. Their last setback, in the first Twenty20 match (T20) coming on the back of another loss in the final One Day International (ODI) at Canberra has put them in a bit of a spot. The reactions of their cricketers, both current and former, to the losses, shows that the confidence they had gained after wins in the first two ODIs has been shaken and that's good news for India.

The concussion substitute issue, which has

opened debates across platforms, where Yuzvendra Chahal replaced Ravindra Jadeja and bowled India to a win in the first T20 saw responses from the hosts which affirmed their discomfort. Coach Justin Langer's head-shaking argument with match referee David Boon during the innings break was followed by Aussie all-rounder Moises Henriques doubts whether Chahal's was a 'like-for-like' replacement for the injured Jadeja.

Former Aussie international Tom Moody commented that he had no

issues with the substitution but raised a question if the correct 'protocol' was followed since no physio or doctor came on to the middle when the Indian left-hander was struck on the helmet by a Mitchell Starc bouncer. Though these reactions were aimed at officials (match referee and umpires — as the decisions would ideally remain in their domains) they did lead to the perception that the replacement by India wasn't 'fair dinkum' to put it in Aussie slang.

The 'issue' unnecessarily raised by the Aussies was because Jadeja suffered a hamstring injury after he was hit on the head and their reactions were bordering on that fact. Coming back, the questions one could ask Moody will be about protocols that need to be followed.

Would coach Langer's act of arguing with match referee Boon, a veteran cricketer and an Australian to boot, in full public with cameras focussed on them be considered as correct protocol? Would Moody have done the same while coaching a team in the Indian Premier League?

As someone who has been a frontline coach Moody should know what is and isn't part of cricket's covenant. It just maybe that the former coach may have suffered a moment of 'brain fade' just the way former Aussie skipper Steve Smith did while touring India in the 2017 series.

Cricketers were always taught to respect the umpires decisions as final and any argument about the same was abhorred upon. In today's parlance, arguments with referees

and umpires are taken as part of cricket's changing scenario which makes for great viewing and juicy stories but is terrible if looked at from the point of view of the spirit of the game.

Looking back, Chahal replacing Jadeja wasn't exactly a major achievement by India but a mere opportunity for them to get a leg spinner in a game that was helping that genre of bowling. Calling it a masterstroke by India would be a misnomer. Indian captain Virat Kohli was honest enough to admit that there were no plans to play Chahal in the match and the decision they took worked for them this time and may not work in the future. Also, Jadeja being ruled out of the remainder of the T20 series and put under medical observation throws all

conspiracy theories out of the window.

The reactions from the Australians will now put Kohli and team India in a better frame of mind as they approach the crucial Test series. They know that the Aussies are riled after two consecutive losses and have given them a foot in the door. The host team's decision to rest their star bowler Pat Cummins and all-rounder Marcus Stoinis showed that they missed their opportunity for a clean sweep and gave the visitors a much needed lifeline.

The Aussies hate for anyone to get under their skin. We saw how former Indian skipper Sourav Ganguly irritated his counterpart Steve Waugh (by keeping him waiting for the toss) in 2001 taking Waugh away from his objective of beat-

ing India and conquering the last frontier. This time, they have inadvertently allowed the Indians to affect their psyche. Their adverse reactions to a superficial incident shows that they got complacent, effectively masking their failure to keep dominating over the visitors.

If India do keep up the momentum and win the T20 series (this is written before the second T20 match at Sydney) it will put them in a great position for the Test series. With Ajinkya Rahane's century and Cheteshwar Pujara's fifty for India A' against Australia A' in the ongoing practice match at the Drummoyne Oval in Sydney, the mood in the team India's camp will be upbeat and more positive than it was a week ago — a great build up for the Test series.