

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

VISAKHAPATNAM | SATURDAY | 21 NOVEMBER 2020

## WEATHER



Max: 31.8°C  
Min: 22.2°C  
RH: 94%  
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Mist.  
Max/Min temp.  
31/22 °C



## WORLD | 5

Trump, allies try to bypass poll mandate



## BUSINESS | 7

RBI lets bizmen own higher stake in banks



CORONA COUNT  
CASES (+45,564)  
90,49,609

DEATHS (+549)  
1,32,750

STATE GOVT BULLETINS  
TELANGANA (+894)  
2,61,728

ANDHRA PRADESH (+1,221)  
8,59,932  
1,423 (+10)  
6,920

WORLD CONFIRMED CASES  
5,76,27,674  
DEATHS  
13,72,099  
COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES 217

## SHORT TAKE

Local body poll duel at flashpoint

**Vijayawada:** The war of words between ministers and members of the TD over State Election Commissioner Nimmagadda Ra-mesh Kumar's decision to conduct local body elections in February is nearing a flash-point.

■ Full report on Page 2

## Greens: Coringa, Pulicat in Ramsar

**Kakinada:** Despite eligibility for declaring Ramsar status to the Coringa Wildlife Sanctuary and the Pulicat Lake in AP, such a declaration has not been done so far. Environmentalists are demanding that the Centre and AP government declare these sites as Ramsar sites.

■ Full report on Page 3

## Input subsidy given to farmers

**Vijayawada:** In a first of its kind, the state government released input subsidy worth of ₹366 crore and credited a major share of it directly into bank accounts of nearly 4.91 lakh farmers even for crop damages suffered during October due to natural calamities in AP.

■ Full report on Page 2

## Modi reviews terror threat

DC CORRESPONDENT  
with agency inputs

NEW DELHI, NOV. 20



on the 12th anniversary of the 26/11 Mumbai terror attack next week.

After the meeting, Mr. Modi said in a tweet: "Our security forces have once again displayed utmost bravery and professionalism. Thanks to their alertness, they have defeated a nefarious plot to target grassroots level democratic exercises in J&K."

In another tweet, he added: "Neutralising of four terrorists belonging to Pakistan-based terrorist organisation Jaish-e-Mohammed and the presence of a large cache of weapons and explosives with them indicate that their efforts to wreak major havoc and destruction have once again been thwarted."

The four suspected Jaish terrorists, who were hiding in a truck, were killed after a four-hour-long encounter early on Thursday.

Government sources said the terrorists were planning "something big"

## STATE WILL DECIDE CAPITAL LOCATION, COURT INFORMED

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 20

Special counsel representing the police, S.S. Prasad, informed the division bench of AP High Court that it was the prerogative of the state government to decide the location for setting up its capital city on administrative grounds and ruled out any role for the judiciary to intervene.

Arguing before the division bench, comprising Justice Rakesh Kumar and Justice J. Uma Devi, the special counsel asserted that it was the responsibility of the state government to decide which was good and bad keeping in mind the interests of the people and made it clear that there was no role for the judiciary in such issues. He also said that such decisions were not even in the domain of the judiciary.

Moreover, he said, as the issue of setting up three capitals was before the three-member division bench, it was inappropriate to argue on the issue in the court. He also suggested to the court not to make any statements on the capitals issue.

Deputy chief minister S.B. Amzad Basha, district in-charge minister P. Anil Kumar Yadav, ministers Buggana Rajendranath Reddy, Gummurajayaram, Vellampalli Sreenivash, M. Shankara Narayana, district collector G. Veera Pandian, MPs T.G. Venkatesh, Dr S. Saniv Kumar and Gorantla Madav, and MLAs accompanied the Chief Minister.

■ Page 2: PILs filed in court with political

## CM launches Pushkaralu

Once in 12-year event starts amid vedic mantras at Tungabhadra

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KURNool, NOV. 20



Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy offers prayers while performing rituals to open Tungabhadra Pushkaralu in Kurnool city on Friday.

— DECCAN CHRONICLE

Tungabhadra Pushkarans got-off to a tepid start amid chanting of vedic mantras as Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy formally opened the once in 12-year-event at Sankal Bagh pushkar ghat around 1.40 pm here on Friday.

On arrival, he offered prayers to River Tungabhadra and gave Ganga Haarathi to the river besides silk saris.

Later, in traditional attire, he participated in a special *yagam* performed in the newly constructed *yagasaala* near the pushkar ghat where *Ayush Homams* would be performed and offered *purna phalam* amid spiritual music and rendition of mantras.

However, the absence of his family members did not go well with the onlookers.

Deputy chief minister S.B. Amzad Basha, district in-charge minister P. Anil Kumar Yadav, ministers Buggana Rajendranath Reddy, Gummurajayaram, Vellampalli Sreenivash, M. Shankara Narayana, district collector G. Veera Pandian, MPs T.G. Venkatesh, Dr S. Saniv Kumar and Gorantla Madav, and MLAs accompanied the Chief Minister.

Before leaving for Amaravati, Jagan Mohan Reddy interacted with family members of Nandyal Abdul Salam, who committed suicide along with his wife, daughter and son unable to bear alleged police torture.

He assured financial help and protection to the victim's kin. Mabunne Sha, mother-in-law of Abdul Salam, wanted the Chief Minister to take stern action against the accused policemen.

Meanwhile, as a preventive measure Kurnool police detained several prominent political leaders belonging to the BJP, CPM and CPI and also various delegates of different social organizations.

They were demanding approval for the holy dip in Tungabhadra waters during the pushkaralu.

# WORLD FISHERIES DAY

8 Fishing Harbours with an outlay of Rs. 3,000 crores ... An Aqua Hub in each constituency, wherever required, with an outlay of Rs. 225 crores ...

Foundation stone for 4 Fishing Harbours and 25 Aqua Hubs to be built in the first phase, Today...



**Sri Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy,**  
Hon'ble Chief Minister, Andhra Pradesh,  
to lay foundation stone today

Foundation stone laying today for 4 Fishing Harbours with an estimated cost of Rs.1,150 crores at Juvvaladinne in Nellore district, Uppada in East Godavari district, Nizampatnam in Guntur district and Machilipatnam in Krishna district... 4 more Fishing Harbours to be established shortly at Budagatlapalem in Srikakulam district, Pudimadaka in Visakhapatnam, Biyyaputtipa in West Godavari district and Kothapatnam in Prakasam district...

To ensure supply of quality fish and prawn to consumers so as to improve domestic consumption and nutritional security in the State and to provide remunerative prices to aqua farmers and fishermen.. Aqua Hubs will be set up in all constituencies, wherever necessary and will be linked to Janata Bazaars, at a cost of Rs. 225 crores ... Foundation stone to be laid for 25 Aqua Hubs in first phase today...

For the first time in the entire country, AP Fish Feed Ordinance was brought in to supply quality fish/prawn feed for aqua farmers and to effectively check spurious feed in the market ! Aquaculture Seed Quality Control Ordinance issued to ensure supply of quality fish/prawn seed ! Aquaculture Development Authority set up to develop aquaculture sector !

Web Application eMatsyakar launched to provide advice and suggestions to pisciculture / aquaculture farmers... Dial Toll-free No. 155251 for assistance & complaints

Rs. 720 crores per annum to supply power at just Rs.1.50 per unit to benefit Aqua farmers.. 35 Aqua labs established across the State with an expenditure of Rs. 50.30 Crores for quality aqua products ! 725 Fisheries Assistants appointed at Rythu Bharosa Kendras (RBKs)... RBK services made available for pisciculture / aquaculture farmers... Quality certified feed, seed and medicine supply for aqua farmers through RBKs !

Subsidy on diesel increased from Rs. 6.03 paise to Rs. 9 per Litre.. Facility to fill oil at discounted rate after subsidy, at 8 petrol bunks recognised by Fisheries Department and 79 other Government recognised private bunks !

In the past financial assistance to fisherman families during fishing ban period was only Rs. 4,000 and the payments were done irregularly, that too only for a few people... Our Government has increased the assistance to Rs. 10,000 under Matsyakara Bharosa and is giving to all eligible... Matsyakara Bharosa assistance extended to those engaged in fishing with mechanised boats and rafts also... Rs.102.47 crores paid to 1.02 lakh fishermen in 2019-20... Financial assistance amounting to Rs.109 crores paid to 1.09 lakh fishermen in 2020-21 !

Ordinance issued for establishment of Andhra Pradesh Fisheries University in West Godavari district to develop experts in pisciculture/aquaculture ! Ex-gratia amount enhanced from Rs. 5 lakhs to Rs. 10 lakhs to families of fishermen, who lost their lives during fishing !

## OTHER STORIES

## CM TO VISIT MACHILIPATNAM TODAY

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 20

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy will visit Machilipatnam on Saturday to console minister Perni Venkaramaiah alias and his family members. Minister Nani's mother Nageswaramma (82) passed away on November 19, and her last rites were performed on Thursday. Mr Jagan Mohan Reddy expressed his heartfelt condolences over the sudden demise of Nageswaramma.

The CM will start for Machilipatnam in a helicopter from his residence in Tadepalli on Saturday at 11.35 am, will reach the helipad at Andhra National College in Machilipatnam at noon and further would go to the residence of minister Nani. CM Jagan will console minister Nani and other family members and would return to his residence at 1 pm.

## CM TO SET STONES FOR FOUR FISHING HARBOURS

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 20

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy will lay the foundation stones to four fishing harbours and 25 aqua hubs on November 21 on the occasion of World Fisheries Day.

The Chief Minister will virtually lay the foundation stones for fishing harbours in Nellore, Guntur, Krishna and East Godavari districts that cost ₹1,510 crore.

The state government proposes to bring up eight fishing harbours and four fish landing centers costing ₹3,000 crore, to put the maritime wealth of the state in optimum use.

In the first phase tenders have been called for four fishing harbours at Juvvaladinne, Nizampatnam, Machilipatnam and Uppada costing around ₹1,510 crore, aiming to complete in the next two years. The tenders will be finalised in the second week of December.

Although Andhra Pradesh has the second-longest coastline of about 974 km in the country, the previous government neglected the maritime activity and only established small fishing harbours.

The state government laid proposals for constructing a good number of fishing harbours and fish landing centres to benefit the 6.3 lakh fisherman population in the state who are depending on fishing and allied marine activities.



Physiotherapist Dr Gurumurthy

## JAGAN'S DOC IS TIRUPATI LS CANDIDATE

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 20

Ruling YSR Congress has finalised physiotherapist Dr Gurumurthy as its candidate for Tirupati Lok Sabha by-election. An MLC's post has been promised to Balli Kalyan Charavarthy, son of late MP Durga Prasad Rao, for giving up his father's Tirupati MP seat to another party candidate.

Durga Prasad, sitting MP of YSRC, died due to Covid-19. Party leaders and politicians expected allotment of the bypoll ticket to his son following the tradition. But Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy surprisingly selected Dr Gurumurthy, who was his personal physiotherapist during the padayatra. Dr Gurumurthy accompanied Reddy from November 2017 to January 2019.

According to sources, Jagan had promised a good position to Dr Gurumurthy. Following this, the CM held a meeting with the kin of late MP at the CM's camp office in Tadepalli seeking their cooperation. The late MP's family members agreed to the proposal of Jagan. Municipal administration minister Botsa Satyanarayana, who accompanied the deceased MP's kin, told media that the CM promised MLC post to the son of late MP whenever the first seat falls vacant in the legislative council.

## Faith matters



Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy participating in special puja on the occasion of inauguration of Tungabhadra Pushkaralu in Kurnool city on Friday.

## War of words over local body polls echoes in RB

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 20

The war of words between ministers and members of Telugu Desam over State Election Commissioner Nimmagadda Ramesh Kumar's decision to conduct local body elections in February is nearing a flashpoint.

Even as they were launching scathing attacks against one another, Mr Ramesh Kumar lodged a complaint with Governor Biswa Bhushan Harichandan alleging verbal abuse by minister for civil supplies Kodali Venkateswara Rao (Nani).

The minister came down heavily against Mr Ramesh Kumar and alleged that the SEC was shunning his constitutional responsibility and dancing to the tune of TD chief N. Chandrababu Naidu.

He claimed that Mr Naidu appointed Mr Ramesh Kumar to get benefit from the SEC post and termed him as a mole of Mr Naidu. He demanded removal of Ramesh Kumar from the SEC post as he would not conduct free and fair elections.

Minister for endowments Velappalli Srinivas said that their government was unable to hire services of lawyers charging fees in crore whereas Ramesh Kumar hired

such high-profile advocates for his cases in High Court and Supreme Court which show his politically motivated relations.

Minister for education, Audimulapu Suresh alleged that Mr Ramesh Kumar wanted to conduct elections before his retirement, which without consent of the state government was unconstitutional.

Raja Sabha MP V. Vijayasai Reddy said that the State Election Commission was not following constitutional guidelines and was having private meetings with TD leaders.

He stated, "When the state was receiving less than 10 Covid cases a day, the SEC postponed elections without even discussing with the state government, but when hundreds of cases are being registered and the fear of a second wave is looming large, he is trying to conduct elections. Mr Ramesh Kumar might join TD after his retire-

ment and also usurp the party leadership."

The counters from TD leaders have been equally volatile.

Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Council, Yanamala Ramakrishnudu alleged that the YSRC government was undermining election related laws as well as the Constitution of India by challenging the autonomy of the State Election Commission, whose decision-making cannot be questioned.

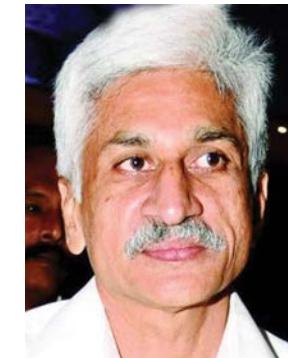
He claimed that the YSRC's non-cooperation amounted to violation of the Constitution itself.

The TD leader demanded that elections that were thrust by YSRC rulers should be cancelled and fresh elections be held to ensure a vibrant democracy.

Stating that nepotism and favouritism were ruling the roost, Mr Ramakrishnudu said that Jagan Mohan Reddy's rule was like that of Donald Trump in the US. He claimed that the Chief Secretary has no authority to tell the SEC that elections cannot be held.

TD organising secretary Nadendla Brahman and other leaders strongly objected to the manner in which minister Kodali Nani has been making unparliamentary comments against the SEC and Mr Naidu.

## AP WILL LAUNCH INDUSTRY RESTART PROGRAMME: KANNABABU

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VISAKHAPATNAM, NOV. 20

V. Vijayasai Reddy.

towards Polavaram and thus failed to keep his promise of completing the project by 2018.

Opposition TD role is completely absent and it has been working like an NRI party, residing in another state and politicising things in AP.

Speaking on Bhogapuram Airport, he said that the current airport in Visakhapatnam belonged to Indian Navy and once the commercial operations start in Bhogapuram, all the civil aviation in Visakhapatnam airports will be moved to Bhogapuram.

Minister for agriculture Kurasala Kannababu said SEC Ramesh was biased towards Opposition leaders and working under the direction of Mr Chandrababu Naidu.

The minister clarified that YSRC was not afraid of elections and there was no reason to fear seeking public mandate when Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy fulfilled 90 per cent of the poll promises within one year of forming the government.

"Our government implemented all the welfare schemes even during the Covid-19 pandemic," he said.

He said an important meeting has been scheduled for Saturday in which entrepreneurs, industrialists and representatives of public sector undertakings would participate. The meeting would discuss the post lockdown scenario of the industries, pollution problems in Visakhapatnam city and comprehensive development of the region. The PSU role in providing help to the unemployed through CSR programmes would also be discussed, the minister added.

Minister Muttamsetti Srinivasa Rao said the city has enough basic infrastructure facilities to develop as a major industrial hub of AP.

## AP credits input subsidy of ₹366cr to 4.91L farmers

## The input subsidy is directly credited to farmers' bank a/c

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 20

In a first of its kind, the state government has credited input subsidy of ₹366 crore into bank accounts of nearly 4.91 lakh farmers for crops damaged during the October rains in Andhra Pradesh.

Unlike the earlier practice, where it used to take a long time for assessing extent of damage to both agriculture and horticulture crops due to natural calamities, the state government has deposited the amount through Real-Time Gross Settlement into the farmers' accounts as input subsidy.

The move is aimed to benefit farmers to use the input subsidy for purchasing seeds, fertilisers and

pesticides to raise short-term crops and recoup their loss because of the natural calamity.

Due to the Pethai cyclone in 2018, 4,20,440 farmers suffered damage to their crops to an extent of 2,13,669.59 hectares.

Crops were similarly damaged due to floods and heavy rains in 2019-20 and also in 2020-21 during October. Based on the extent of crop loss, the state government estimated that input subsidy be

given to farmers to the tune of ₹30,692.05 lakh. The same amount was credited into the bank accounts of farmers.

Similarly, with regard to horticulture crops, authorities estimated the crop loss at 31,250 hectares due to heavy rains and floods from April to October 2020 affecting about 70,932 farmers. Out of an estimated input subsidy amount of ₹59.5 crore, the state government had already credited

₹30 crore into the bank accounts of farmers through RTGS. The remaining amount will be credited in a day or two.

Horticulture additional director K. Balaji Naik said, "It is for the first time that the state government has released input subsidy directly to farmers who suffered damages to their crops due to natural calamities in an expeditious manner, so that they can raise crops again to recoup their loss."

The state government fixed an input subsidy of ₹15,000 per hectare for paddy, cotton, sugarcane, for maize ₹12,500; for pulses, wheat and tobacco ₹10,000; for jowar and castor ₹6,800; for korra and mustard ₹5,000, for sand casting ₹12,200 and for soil erosion ₹37,500.

## 46k retail stores take-off under YSR Cheyutha

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 20

Aiming to establish 78,000 retail stores across the state under the YSR Cheyutha scheme, YSR Congress government has successfully set up close to 46,000 retail stores in the rural and urban areas.

The interiors boast of 32,341 stores, whereas, in the urban areas, the government has successfully set up 13,226 retail stores.

On August 12, Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy launched the YSR Cheyutha scheme, providing financial assistance of ₹18,750 to 23 lakh beneficiaries.

Within two months, the government launched the second phase of the scheme. It endeavoured to support women in 45 to 60 years age-group

and belonging to socially dis-

advantaged communities. Officials stated MNCs and FMCG giants like Amul, ITC, HUL, P&G, and Reliance had transformed these women into micro-entrepreneurs in rural areas. Now their outlets are on par with other retail brands, officials said.

Constant mentoring, exchange of business ideas, converting local resources into marketable commodities would empower women transforming them from a micro consumer to be micro-producers.

Society for eliminating rural poverty (SERP) CEO P. Rajababu, said that the average daily sales turnover comes to ₹5,000. The monthly net profit is around ₹13,500.

He stated that Mr Naidu has no commitment

## CAPITAL | RELOCATION The court observed that it 'felt pain' after witnessing stalling of all development works Is shifting of capital from Amaravati not a 'mindless act', asks HC

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 20

The Andhra Pradesh High Court on Friday asked whether the state government's move to relocate capital city Amaravati was not a "mindless act".

A division bench comprising justice Rakesh Kumar and justice J. Uma Devi, while hearing a batch of petitions, including a petition filed by former TD MLA Tenali Sravan Kumar, raising objection against police for not allowing former chief minister N. Chandrababu Naidu for his capricious attitude towards the police by seeking their help when he wanted and

raised objection over usage of the phrase "mindless act" of the government in handling such a case. In response to it, the court asked whether it was not a mindless act on part of the state government to relocate capital city Amaravati, after developing it by "spending thousands of crores of rupees of public money".

The court observed that it "felt pain" after witnessing stalling of all developmental works, including the construction of several buildings. The High Court bench further said that they were facing a series of problems like lack of water, less availability of tea or food as the court was located in a far

off place. He asked about the need for setting up the court in such a location with no proper amenities.

Referring to the PILs filed in the HC, he opined that they were not having any public interest except to serve political motives.

Prasad slammed former chief minister N. Chandrababu Naidu for his capricious attitude towards the police by seeking their help when he wanted and

cautioned that if not, criminals would grab power and rule the roost.

The court said that during the appointment of a peon in a government

office, his criminal antecedents are checked and wondered why the same was not the case with those entering politics. It must be done to safeguard

any sanctity for being heard in the court.

He also asked as to how far it could be justified to hold the Chief Minister and DGP responsible when a constable had committed a mistake.

As the petitioner's counsel S. Pranathi sought time to file a reply to the counter-affidavit filed by the police, the court adjourned the hearing to Monday.

into politics, they might become rulers and felt a need to safeguard democratic institutions from such persons.

The court also expressed

concern over how IAS and IPS officers were forced to follow diktats of ministers having criminal antecedents. It grieved over the way a top cop in Bihar was forced to listen to a person with a criminal background once he became a minister.

The court found fault with Visakhapatnam ACP for serving a notice under section 151 of the CrPC and even felt the need for his dismissal.

Petitioner Tenali Sravan Kumar's contention was that once police had given permission to Mr Naidu to conduct a road show in Vizag, how could they now stop him from leading the road show and instead served him a notice under section 151 of the CrPC.

## PILs filed in the High Court with political motives

From Page 1

Referring to Justice Rakesh Kumar, the special counsel said that as the judge came here from other state, he might not be knowing the problems pertaining to the location of the High Court and pointed out they were facing a series of problems like lack of water, less availability of tea or food as the court was located in a far

off place. His criminal antecedents are checked and wondered why the same was not the case with those entering politics. It must be done to safeguard

the democracy and constitutional rights of the citizens, the court observed.

The court opined that if persons with criminal antecedents were allowed

## ASTROGUIDE

**Sarvari:** Dakshinayana  
**Tithi:** Kartika Sudha Saptami till 9.52 pm  
**Star:** Shrawanam till 9.55 am  
**Varjyam:** 2.08 pm to 3.49 pm  
**Durmuhurtam:** 6.28 am to 7.57 am  
**Rahukalam:** 9 am to 10.30 am  
**HIJRI CALENDAR**  
**Rabbi-ul Akhir 5, 1442 AH**  
**PRAYERS**  
**Fajar:** 5.50 am  
**Zohar:** 1.30 pm  
**Asar:** 4.45 pm  
**Maghrab:** 6.15 pm  
**Isha:** 8.15 pm  
**SUNSET TODAY 5.20 PM**  
**SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.05 AM**  
**MOONSET TOMORROW 11.22 AM**  
**MOONRISE TODAY 11.50 PM**

## COUNTER POINT



How can you recover the money you spent on ticket, votes, campaign...?

## IN BRIEF

**2 held with 400 kg ganja**

**Visakhapatnam:** The Visakhapatnam police arrested two youth who were allegedly shifting about 400 kg ganja in a container lorry at Chodavaram area in Visakhapatnam district on Friday. The estimated worth of ganja seized is more than ₹40 lakh. According to police, the two youths had come to Paderu from Uttar Pradesh in a lorry and procured the ganja from interior parts and were trying to shift back the weed to Uttar Pradesh. Based on credible information, Chodavaram police intercepted the container lorry and seized the ganja. In order to escape from the police, the smugglers prepared a cabin in between the driver seat and the rear, where they stored the ganja packets. Chodavaram police has registered a case.

**TD'S V-P SATYAPRABHA PASSES AWAY**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
TIRUPATI, NOV. 20

Telugu Desam's national vice-president and former Chittoor MLA D.A. Satyaprabha, 70, passed away due to ill health at Vaidehi Institute of Medical Sciences in Bengaluru late on Thursday night.

The former TD MLA had tested positive for Covid-19 last month and had recovered after a few days. However, her condition turned critical on November 3 following complications from Covid-19, and after a heart attack last night, she breathed her last.

Satyaprabha was born at Sadum in Chittoor district and pursued her matriculation in Bengaluru.

She is an ardent devotee of Sathya Sai Baba, and with his blessings, she got married to D.K. Adikesavulu Naidu, who was then an assistant engineer at a sugar factory in Chittoor.

D.K. Adikesavulu Naidu got elected as the Telugu Desam MP from Chittoor in 2004, besides serving as the TTD chairman twice.

## ECO | VALUE

**India has a total of 41 Ramsar sites, including 3 more new sites this year**

## Environmentalists seek Coringa, Pulicat as Ramsar sites

VADREU SRINIVAS | DC  
KAKINADA, NOV. 20

Despite eligibility for declaring Ramsar status to the Coringa Wildlife Sanctuary and the Pulicat Lake in Andhra Pradesh, such a declaration has not been done so far.

Given the ecological value of the sites, environmentalists are demanding that the Centre as well as Andhra Pradesh government declare these environmental sites as Ramsar sites.

Environmentalists who have studied these two sites recommend that the government make the declaration as these two sites are eligible.

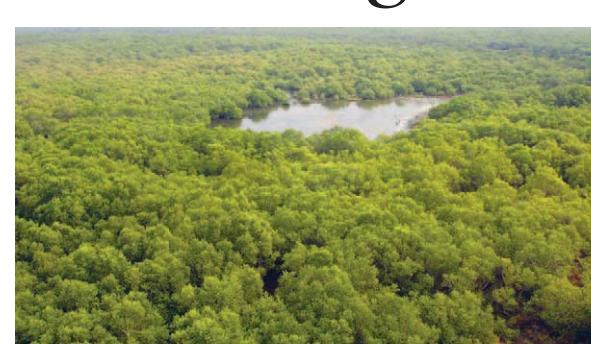
Though India has numerous wetlands of various types, there are certain criteria of selection of a site

for Ramsar designation, environmentalists said.

As per Article 2.2 of Ramsar convention, wetlands are broadly categorised under two groups. The Coringa wetland satisfies all criteria and is eligible for a Ramsar declaration. The Kolleru lake was already identified as a Ramsar site on August 19, 2002.

Birds lover and environmentalist K. Mritunjaya Rao said that India has a total of 41 Ramsar sites, including three more new sites identified this year. In July, the Kabarta wetland in Bihar, the Lonar lake of Maharashtra (the only crater lake in India) and the Keetham Lake in Agra (called as Sur Sarovar) were added.

He said that despite their



Coringa Wildlife sanctuary near Kakinada in East Godavari

potential, the Coringa WildLife Sanctuary and the AP Pulicat Lake have not been selected. He said these two sites should be declared as Ramsar sites due to their importance.

He said that despite their

biodiversity and mangrove management specialist Dr Ravishankar Thupalli said that he has submitted a report on Coringa WildLife Sanctuary to the Ramsar site cell last year on behalf of EGREE Foundation, a

UNDP and Central government project with the Andhra Pradesh Forest Department. He said if wetlands are declared as Ramsar sites, they get global recognition and give a boost to tourism. He expressed hope Coringa would get Ramsar recognition soon.

Environmentalists say even if governments make no efforts for declaration as Ramsar sites, it should take steps to not destroy it. They said though Kolleru lake has been declared as a Ramsar site, the destruction of the lake was going on.

Coringa qualifies to be included as an internationally important one, which contains a representative, rare, or unique example of a natural wetland type

found within the bio-geographic. Mangroves with most productive and natural ecosystem, tidal flats with exposing during low-tides utilized by large number of shorebirds, gulls, egrets and others feeding grounds, Lagoon within sanctuary which support large number of fish and bird species.

Coringa is surrounded by about two kilometres of stretch of mainland beach, which attract tourists and support for shoreline organisms of three major rivers, Gowthami, and its tributaries Gaderu and Corangi besides 32 canals traversing the mangroves, flood plain, natural levees, Kakinada bay, sand pits and conserving biological diversity and meets Ramsar criteria.

## MP violates Covid-19 norms

Masks, social distancing ignored, people scuffle for free helmets

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VISHAKHAPATNAM, NOV. 20

Covid-19 safety norms were blown to the winds when thousands of people gathered on the RK Beach Road in Vishakhapatnam in the early hours of Friday to participate in a rally to create awareness on the use of life-saving helmets. The rally was flagged off by none other than Rajya Sabha member and north coastal in-charge of YSRC Mr V. Vijaya Sai Reddy.

Anakapalle MLA Mr Gudivada Amarnadh rode a bike leading the rally and Mr Reddy was the pilot rider.

Surprisingly both of them were seen without masks.

So were hundreds of bike riders seen close to the top leadership of the government.

Later, actor and well-known comedian of Telugu movie industry Ali addressed a meeting with the mask hanging from his ears and minister Muttasetti Srinivasa Rao and others wore no masks surprising the health-conscious people who had a glimpse at the meeting.

Little people saw commotion and scuffle on the beach where free helmets were distributed to the motorists.

Mr Reddy himself distributed the helmets standing next to minister Mr Srinivasa Rao and hundreds of people rubbed against each other without masks and at one stage fought for it



Rajya Sabha member V. Vijaya Sai Reddy sits as a pillion rider with Anakapalle MLA, Gudivada Amarnadh and takes part in a bike rally to create awareness on safe driving in Vishakhapatnam on Friday. — DC

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 20

AP registered 1,221 new Covid cases scaling up the tally to 8,59,932 and 10 deaths raising toll to 6,920.

The state health authorities issued Covid-19 bulletin on Friday reporting that out of 66,002 samples tested, 1,221 persons were found infected with Covid-19. Out of a total 94,7870 samples tested so far in the state, 8,37,630

patients were discharged after recovery while 15,382 patients are still active with the virus.

Among the daily Covid-19 cases, East Godavari registered 202 followed by 198 in Krishna, 175 in Chittoor, 145 in West Godavari, 69 in Visakhapatnam, 65 in Kadapa, 50 in Prakasam, 47 in Nellore, 41 in Anantapur, 34 in Srikrishna, 32 in Kurnool. The rate of recovery among infected patients has been good in East Godavari.

With regard to the total

## AP lorry owners demand toll tax cancellation

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 20

The AP Lorry Owners Association (ALPOA) appealed to Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy to cancel the new proposal of collecting toll tax in double roads. ALPOA wrote a letter to Mr Jagan on Friday and lamented that the transport sector had been badly affected due to the Corona crisis for the past eight months.

ALPOA general secretary Y.V. Eswar Rao said that due to Corona the transport sector was pushed into a deep crisis and not to levy any burden on the transport sector. He said that they have been paying taxes for four-line and six-line roads across the state. He lamented that for the last two years

the transport sector is in deep crisis and the corona pandemic has shattered the crisis further. He stated that in this juncture collecting toll for two-line roads will be a heavy burden on the transport sector.

Mr Eswara Rao that at the time of vehicle purchasing they are paying 28 per cent GST and 14 per cent road tax, we have been paying toll at National highways. He said that the government planning to collect toll for two-line roads would be a big setback to the lorry owners and the transport sector, we strongly oppose the government's move.

Mr Eswara Rao further recalled that in 1997 toll notification was issued and later on from 2004 they have been paying toll.

## 5 MEMBERS OF A FAMILY TRACED BY POLICE

DC CORRESPONDENT  
TIRUPATI, NOV. 20

The Venkatagiri police have successfully traced the five members of a family including two women and three children, who had gone missing under mysterious circumstances from the G.K. Palli in Venkatagiri mandal of Nellore district on Nov. 16.

Disclosing the case details to media persons, Gudur DSP Mr B. Rajagopal Reddy said that they have received a missing complaint from Polipaka Krishniah on Nov. 17. The complainant stated that his wife Polipaka Vijaya along with his two daughters and his brother's wife Polipaka Supriya and their daughter, who went out saying that they were going to hospital.

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## NEW DISTRICT IN MEMORY OF EMPIRE

DC CORRESPONDENT  
ANANTAPUR, NOV. 20

With the Karnataka government announcing a new district called Vijayanagar in memory of Vijayanagar Empire's main capital, there is a similar demand from AP historians seeking Penukonda, the summer capital of Vijayanagar, as one among the new districts, which are in the process of being formed in Andhra Pradesh.

The erstwhile ceded area of Rayalaseema region – Bellary district, located closer to Anantapur district, was divided into two districts.

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FAIR SLIM, B.Tech, MBA, 5'3", 26, working in ADP, seeks Protestant born-again believer, Post Graduate with good job. WhatsApp Photo Biode 9490166468. (S/2021/C01386)



National archery player K. Jyothi taking charge as one day AP State women's commission chairperson under "Kids Takeover" programme in Guntur on Friday. — DC

for Ramsar designation, environmentalists said.

As per Article 2.2 of Ramsar convention, wetlands are broadly categorised under two groups. The Coringa wetland satisfies all criteria and is eligible for a Ramsar declaration. The Kolleru lake was already identified as a Ramsar site on August 19, 2002.

Birds lover and environmentalist K. Mritunjaya Rao said that India has a total of 41 Ramsar sites, including three more new sites identified this year. In July, the Kabarta wetland in Bihar, the Lonar lake of Maharashtra (the only crater lake in India) and the Keetham Lake in Agra (called as Sur Sarovar) were added.

He said that despite their

UNDP and Central government project with the

## SHORT TAKES

## 14 PEOPLE DEAD AS CAR COLLIDES WITH TRUCK IN UP

Lucknow/Pratapgarh, Nov. 20: As many as 14 people, including seven children, died when their car collided with a stationary truck on the Lucknow-Allahabad highway, around 70 km from Pratapgarh district headquarters, an official said on Friday.

The road accident took place late on Thursday night when the victims were returning from a wedding function in the Nawabganj area of Pratapgarh, Additional Chief Secretary, Home, Awanish Awasthi said.

Pratapgarh Superintendent of Police (SP) Anurag Arya said the speeding SUV dashed into the truck parked by the road in the Manikpur police station area after one of its rear tyres got punctured near Deshraj Inara.

While five bodies could be taken out initially, a JCB machine had to be used to pull out the SUV from under the truck to retrieve the remaining bodies, he said, adding the bodies have been shifted to CHC Kunda and will be sent for autopsy later in the day.

It took almost two hours to pull the car out from under the truck, the SP said.

Arya, who visited the spot, said the police have spoken to the family members of the victims and assured all possible help.

Awasthi said Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath directed senior officials to reach the spot and extend all possible help. The Chief Minister has extended ex gratia of ₹2 lakhs to each of those killed in the crash, he added.

## ED FILES MONEY LAUNDERING CASE IN TRP SCAM

SAURABH JOSHI | DC  
MUMBAI, NOV. 20

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Friday filed a money laundering complaint in connection with the alleged TRP (television rating points) rigging scam case that is being investigated by Mumbai police. The ED officials said that the case was filed by them on the basis of the Mumbai police's FIR.

The officials said that they would summon all those named accused in the case for questioning in the fresh case. The Mumbai crime branch is currently probing the case that was filed in October naming Republic TV, two Marathi channels accused of rigging the TRP ratings for their channels with help of some other persons, who are also named in the case.

The Mumbai police's probe revealed that apart from the named accused, two former employees of Hansa research agency were in cahoots with the accused persons. These persons will be summoned by the ED for recording their statement and the prime focus of the probe will be to ascertain if there was any laundering of ill-gotten money in the case.

"ED will probe if fake TRPs were generated and if the money earned through this was used to generate illegal funds and create illegitimate assets. TRP is the parameter to ascertain programmes with highest viewership and hence it becomes crucial for the channels to earn advertising and other revenue," said officials.

Mumbai police filed a case after ratings agency Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) filed a complaint through Hansa Research Group pertaining to the alleged rigging. Several people including Republic TV's Arnab Goswami were arrested in the case that has attracted several eyeballs and has become bone of contention between the state and central governments.

## TAX | FRAUD

## The farmer alleges that photocopies of his ID cards were misused

## Odisha farmer gets ₹10cr GST evasion notice

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC  
BHUBANESWAR, NOV. 20

A farmer in Sonepur district, who ekes out a living by toiling day in and out in his one-acre farmland, has received a notice for alleged Goods and Services Tax (GST) evasion to the tune of a whopping ₹10 crore.

Naveen Bag, the farmer, on Friday said he came to know how his name has been used by some unknown, dishonest businessmen to evade GST

when some departmental officials recently raided his humble accommodation on charges of tax evasion. The poor farmer learnt that a firm — Bag & Bag — had been set up using his name.

According to Naveen, he had shared the photocopies of his Aadhar card, voter identity card and other documents with one Dilip Meher of his district around eight months ago to avail loans from a bank. He now suspects that his identification documents had been misused, leading to the

**FOLLOWING THE** detection of the fraud, Naveen Bag has lodged a complaint with the Odisha police.

**THIS IS** not the first time such massive irregularities and instances of GST evasion have come to the light in Odisha.

Fraud. Following the detection of the fraud, Naveen has lodged a complaint at the Rampur police station.

"The agricultural land is registered in the name of

my father. We are completely dependent on farming and we are completely ignorant how the company was set up in my name," Naveen said.

However, this is not the first time such massive irregularities and instances of GST evasion have come to the light in Odisha. On November 11, a delivery boy working with a private company in Rourkela had received a notice for ₹10 lakh GST evasion.

Preliminary investigations had revealed that a

fake company by the name of 'Manorama Trading' was set up using the name of the delivery boy and fraudulent transactions of over ₹70 lakh had been carried out.

Similarly, a man residing in Sector-20 area of Rourkela was also charged with gross tax liability under Section 74(5) for allegedly receiving taxable goods amounting to ₹23.96 crore and further awaiting ₹4.31 crore under CGST and SGST on the basis of fake invoices.

that no relief can be provided against inflated electricity bills, had claimed that the state is not in a position to waive off electricity bills because three companies which are providing electricity to state are running into losses due to non-payment of bills.

Fadnavis said, "during our regime, energy minister Chandrakant Bawankule had done excellent work. We provided electricity at the cheaper rate. We purchased power at a very cheap rate and we gave a concession to the poor and farmers during our rule. If this government has the courage, they should also do it," he said.

The BJP has been target-

## TMC MANTRI COMPARES DIDI WITH NETAJI

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC  
KOLKATA, NOV. 20

Trinamul Congress minister Bratya Basu on Friday compared his party supremo and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee with Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose to fan an eternal "Bengali" sentiment about the legendary freedom fighter against the Bharatiya Janata Party ahead of the next year's Assembly election. He also branded her party as her own "Azad Hind Fauj" in what may trigger a controversy.

The state science and technology minister alleged, "it is a fact Bose had to go away from the politics of Bengal and India as the freedom movement was against a colonial power. Exactly the same thing happened after 50 years with Mamata Banerjee. But she did not have to go since her fight was not against any colonial rule for freedom. Mamata Banerjee's battle was on parliamentary democracy for which she formed a separate party."

The border-dwellers were also unanimous in demanding early construction of community and individual bunkers in shelling prone areas to minimise the casualties in such eventualities.

## Locals call for 'end to hostility'

Flare up along LoC last week left at least four civilians and an equal number of jawans dead

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC  
BALKOT (LoC), NOV. 20

"I was away when I received a phone call from my wife saying intense artillery shelling is underway. She asked me what she and other family members should do, stay at home or leave", recalled Abdul Haleem, a resident of Balkot, a sleepy village comprising scattered traditional houses at the foothills just a stone's throw from the Line of Control (LoC) in Baramulla district.

Alarmed by the grimness of his spouse's voice, Haleem quickly headed for home but, before he could reach there, his wife called up again to inform him that two houses including their's have caught fire due to the artillery fire. "I was shocked and merely asked her if all the family members were safe. I felt relief when told everyone at home has escaped unhurt," Haleem told this newspaper.

Standing beside the debris of his house and that of his uncle's, Haleem said, "You can yourself see everything has been reduced into rubble. What was our fault? Indians and

Pakistanis may do to each other whatever they want to but why should we suffer?"

Farooqa Begum was not as lucky as her neighbour Haleem's family. An artillery shell pierced through a wall of her house killing the 35-year-old housewife on the spot. "Hum par qayamat guzai hai (we've gone through doomsday)", lamented her husband Bashir Ahmed Dar.

Tahir Ahmed Mir, an employee of J&K's department of consumer affairs and public distribution, was distributing ration at a depot in Kamalkote area when a mortar shell fell and exploded a couple of metres away. Mir suffered multiple splinter injuries and died on the way to the hospital. Back in his native village Sultan Daki, the world of his aged parents and siblings lies completely shattered after the tragedy.

Raveel Ahmed, his brother, said, "We were six brothers and one of them has been snatched from us. Our hearts are bleeding". The rage in Ahmed's eyes was clearly evident as he repeatedly asked 'Why was he snatched from



Last week's flare up left behind a trail of destruction in villages close to the LoC in Hajipir and Kamalkote sectors of Baramulla district.

— DC

us...what was his fault?"

The interminable hostility between India and Pakistan troops along the LoC flared up again last week, leaving at least four civilians and an equal number of Indian Army and one Border Security Force (BSF) jawans dead and more than a dozen civilians and three Army personnel injured. Pakistan reported the death of four civilians and one Army soldier and injuries to 12 civilians in cross-LoC firing and shelling on November 12 and 13.

However, Indian Army claimed to have killed, at least, 11 Pakistani soldiers and caused "substantial damage" to its infrastructure including ammunition and FOL (Forward Operating Location) dumps and "terrorist launch-pads" across the LoC "in retaliation to unprovoked ceasefire violations".

In their counterclaim, the Pakistan Army claimed inflicting "substantial losses" both in terms of men and material to the Indian troops "in response to their provocative act of engaging innocent civilians".

In J&K, many houses in villages falling in close

proximity of the LoC including Balkote, Gowlahan, Sarai Bandi, Nambla and Gwala (Baramulla district), Dawar (Bandipore district), Keran (Kupwara district) and Sawjian (Poonch district) were damaged in artillery shelling, forcing the residents to flee to safer locations.

As reported by Pakistan media, 15 residential houses, a few multi-storey buildings and one shop were gutted and 24 residential houses and a guesthouse suffered partial damage and 20 cattle and eight goats perished in the Indian shelling.

The guns fell silent on the evening of November 13. Next day when residents returned to the affected villages on the Indian side of the LoC they found their homes burnt or damaged extensively and the household goods strewn and wrecked apart.

The two countries' armies accused each other of initiating firing and it was not the first time that the exchanges caused deaths among both facing troops and civilians besides leaving a trail of

destruction in villages.

As per official statistics, 32 Indian Army and Border Security Force (BSF) personnel, 26 militants and infiltrators, 16 civilians and three civilian porters working for the Army or the BSF (total number of casualties was 77) were killed in the incidents of cross-border firing and shelling, clashes and sneak attacks carried out by militants or Pakistan's Border Action Teams (BATs) along the LoC and the IB, so far, this year.

As the civilians have routinely fallen prey to such exchanges, Nazir Ahmed, a resident of Balkote asked,

"When an artillery shell lands in a house, a cowshed or courtyard we can't immediately say who fired it. But the fact is that it is mainly the civilians on both sides who suffer whenever India and Pakistan troops clash. This has to be brought to a close".

The border-dwellers were also unanimous in demanding early construction of community and individual bunkers in shelling prone areas to minimise the casualties in such eventualities.

## Night curfew in three more Guj cities to contain Covid-19

DC CORRESPONDENT  
with agency inputs  
NEW DELHI, NOV. 20

The Union government has rushed four high level teams to Haryana, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Manipur to help the states deal with surging cases of Coronavirus.

The Union health ministry said on Friday that the teams will visit the districts reporting a high number of Covid-19 cases and support the state efforts towards strengthening containment, surveillance, testing, infection prevention and control measures, and efficient clinical management of the positive cases.

India on Friday crossed 90 lakh cases with 45,882 new detections. The total deaths so far is 1.32 lakh out of which 584 are in the last 24 hours.

India has tested a total of 12,95,91,786 samples, as on date. Close to 11 lakh tests were conducted in the past 24 hours.

"High levels of widespread testing have ensured that the cumulative positivity rate is sustained at low levels and is presently following a downward trajectory. The cumulative national positivity rate stands at 6.95% today, less than the 7% mark. Higher volumes of testing eventually lead to low positivity rate," health ministry said.

The National Recovery Rate has reached 93.60%.

Meanwhile, vaccine maker Serum Institute of India's CEO Adar Poonawalla has said the Oxford Covid-19 vaccine should be available for healthcare workers and elderly people by February 2021 and by April for the general public, and will be priced at a maximum of 1,000 for two necessary doses for the public, depending on the final trial results and regulatory

## Schools to remain closed in Mumbai till December 31

DC CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI, NOV. 20

Amid the rising numbers of Covid-19 positive patients in Mumbai, the Shiv Sena ruled Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) on Friday announced that schools will remain closed in the city till December 31. Earlier, the Maharashtra government had planned to open schools from November 23.

According to the circular issued by BMC's education department, although pandemic is under control in Mumbai, other countries are witnessing the second wave and considering the situation of the infection of the other states, the possibility of the second wave cannot be ignored in Maharashtra. "The next four to six months are very crucial for containing the

pandemic. Hence, the schools in BMC's jurisdiction cannot be started from November 23rd. All the schools will remain closed till December 31, 2020.

Maharashtra reported a single day rise of 5,640 Covid-19 new cases on Friday taking its overall tally to 17,68,695 cases while 155 new deaths were reported which pushed the fatality count to 46,511.

Gaikwad said that the online classes will continue at the schools that remain closed. "Even if the schools do not reopen, the students can still attend the online classes and learn. I have given necessary instructions to the officials concerned," the minister added.

Gaikwad said that the education department has approved the BMC's proposal.

Meanwhile, to curb the spike in coronavirus cases, the Gujarat government decided to impose night curfew in Surat, Vadodara and Rajkot cities from November 21. The announcement came as a 57-hour-long weekend curfew came into effect from 9 pm in Ahmedabad city, which will end at 6 am on November 23. The government has already announced a night curfew in Ahmedabad from November 23. Deputy CM Nitin Patel announced curfew between 9:00 pm and 6:00 am in Surat, Rajkot and Vadodara.

## Thackeray govt can only launch inquiries: Fadnavis

DC CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI, NOV. 20

As the Maharashtra government blamed the previous BJP-led regime for the rise in the electricity bill arrears and announcing a probe into the dues, senior BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis on Friday attacked the Uddhav Thackeray-led dispensation, saying that it can't do anything except launching inquiries.

Similarly, a man residing in Sector-20 area of Rourkela was also charged with gross tax liability under Section 74(5) for allegedly receiving taxable goods amounting to ₹23.96 crore and further awaiting ₹4.31 crore under CGST and SGST on the basis of fake invoices.

Earlier, state energy minister Nitin Raut, after coming under attack for saying

that no relief can be provided against inflated electricity bills, had claimed that the state is not in a position to waive off electricity bills because three companies which are providing electricity to state are running into losses due to non-payment of bills.

Fadnavis said, "during our regime, energy minister Chandrakant Bawankule had done excellent work. We provided electricity at the cheaper rate. We purchased power at a very cheap rate and we gave a concession to the poor and farmers during our rule. If this government has the courage, they should also do it," he said.

The BJP has been target-

ing the MVA government over consumers' complaint of getting inflated electricity bills during the pandemic. Earlier this month, Nitin Raut had hinted at a major relief to the consumers facing the issue of inflated power bills, saying that a Diwali gift was in the offing.

However, a few days back, the minister had said that the government will not be able to provide any relaxation in the inflated electricity bills that consumers received and that they will have to make full payment of the bills.

Raut said that Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has ordered an inquiry into the dues of the state-run power company.

## IN BRIEF

## Truck hits funeral mourners, kills 9

**Beijing:** A truck crashed into a funeral procession in central China on Friday, killing nine people and injuring four others, the state media reported. The accident happened on a national highway in Henan province's Huablin county. Nine people were killed in the incident, Xinhua news agency reported. Four people were injured and hospitalised, it said. The Ministry of Public Security has sent a team to investigate the case, the report said.

## 'Cannibal' arrested after bones found

**Berlin:** German prosecutors said Friday there is evidence of "cannibalism" in the killing of a 44-year-old man whose remains were found on the northern edge of Berlin earlier this month. A 41-year-old man was arrested on

Thursday on suspicion of murder with sexual motives at his home close to the site where the victim's bones were found. "The suspect had an interest in cannibalism," Berlin prosecutors' office spokesman Martin Steltner said.

## Pak: Ancient Hindu temple discovered

**Peshawar:** A Hindu temple, believed to have been constructed 1,300 years ago, has been discovered by Pakistani and Italian archaeological experts at a mountain in northwest Pakistan's Swat district. The discovery was made during an excavation at Barkot Ghundai. Announcing the discovery on

Thursday, Fazle Khaliq of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Department of Archaeology said that the temple discovered is of Lord Vishnu. It was built by the Hindus 1,300 years ago during the Hindu Shahi period, he said. The Hindu Shahis or Kabul Shahis (850–1026 CE) was a Hindu dynasty that ruled the Kabul Valley (eastern Afghanistan), Gandhara (modern-day Pakistan), and present-day northwestern India.

## Pfizer, BioNTech seek emergency nod from FDA for virus vaccine

## Serbian Church leader dies due to Covid at 90

**Washington, Nov. 20:** Pfizer and its partner BioNTech confirmed they will apply on Friday for emergency use authorisation for their Coronavirus vaccine, becoming the first to do so in the US or Europe as the pandemic rages around the world.

The vaccine has been developed with breathtaking speed—just 10 months after the genetic code of the Coronavirus was first sequenced. The announcement had been expected for several days, after the companies said that a completed study of trials of the product showed it was 95 percent effective in protecting people from infection. The announcement also confirms what BioNTech's CEO said.

"Filing in the US represents a critical milestone

in our journey to deliver a Covid-19 vaccine to the world and we now have a more complete picture of both the efficacy and safety profile of our vaccine, giving us confidence in its potential," Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla said.

The vaccine has been under evaluation for weeks in the European Union, Australia, Canada, Japan and the United Kingdom, the companies said. "The companies will be ready to distribute the vaccine quickly within hours after authorisation," their statement said. The Food and Drug Administration has not said how long it will take to study the vaccine data, but the government expects to give the green light for the vaccine in the first two weeks of December. —AP

black and white photo of the patriarch. "People like you are never gone." At that funeral, thousands of mourners, most of them with no masks or keeping any distance between each other, gathered at the funeral in the Montenegrin capital of Podgorica on Nov. 1, in violation of coronavirus-fighting measures proclaimed by the small Adriatic state's authorities.

Since Amfilohije's death, and the hospitalization of the patriarch, Serbian priests have been appealing for their parishioners to take the deadly virus seriously. —AP

## Book Shuggie Bain was rejected by 30 editors

## Douglas Stuart wins Booker Prize



Douglas Stuart

"absolutely stunned" to win the coveted prize. "I always wanted to be a writer so this is fulfilling a dream. This has changed my entire life," he said in his acceptance speech on Thursday.

Stuart has worked for various brands, including Calvin Klein, Ralph Lauren and Gap. He started writing in his spare time a decade ago. Dubai-based Indian-origin writer Doshi, who was shortlisted among the final six authors for her

debut novel 'Burnt Sugar', lost out on the top prize. She was in the running for this year's prize alongside Zimbabwean writer Tsitsi Dangarembga for the third novel in her trilogy 'This Mourning Body' on a shortlist otherwise dominated by US authors — Diane Cook for 'The New Wilderness', Maaza Mengiste for 'The Shadow King' and Brandon Taylor for 'Real Life'.

The 2020 Booker Prize judging panel was chaired by Margaret Busby, editor, literary critic and former publisher, and consists of author Lee Child; author and critic Sameer Rahim; writer and broadcaster Lenn Sissay; and classicist and translator Emily Wilson.

"We bonded across Zoom meetings. It was a wonderful experience... please read all the books on the short-

## Trump team cries foul over Joe's win

## Take frantic steps to subvert poll results

## Don is damaging democracy: Biden

## BIDEN: CHINA MUST PLAY BY RULES, U.S. TO BE BACK IN WHO

**Willmington, United States, Nov. 20:** US President-elect Joe Biden

on Thursday accused Donald Trump of brazenly damaging democracy, as the incumbent's campaign

to reverse his election loss through fraud claims was

dealt another blow with a

Biden's victory.

Among other last-ditch tactics: personally calling local election officials who are trying to rescind their certification votes in Michigan, suggesting in a legal challenge that Pennsylvania set aside the popular vote there and pressuring county officials in Arizona to delay certifying vote tallies.

Election law experts see it as the last, dying gasps of the Trump campaign and say Biden is certain to walk into the Oval Office come January. But there is great concern that Trump's effort is doing real damage to public faith in the integrity of US elections. Sen. Mitt Romney, R-Utah, one of Trump's most vocal GOP critics, accused Trump of resorting to "overt pressure on state and local officials to subvert the will of the people and overturn the election."

Romney added, "It is difficult to imagine a worse, more undemocratic action by a sitting American President." Trump's own election security agency has declared the 2020 presidential election to have been the most secure in history. Days after that statement was issued, Trump fired the agency's leader.

The increasingly desperate and erratic moves have no reasonable chance of changing the outcome of the 2020 election. —AP

**Washington, Nov. 20:** US President-elect Joe Biden has said that he wants to make sure that China plays by the rules and announced that his administration will rejoin the World Health Organisation.

Trump was behind "incredibly damaging messages being sent to the rest of the world about how democracy functions," Biden told reporters in his home state of Delaware.

"It's hard to fathom how this man thinks," said Biden. "I'm confident he knows he hasn't won, is not going to be able to win and we're going to be sworn in January 20th." Trump has refused to accept his loss on November 3, despite his opponent getting over six million more votes.

Biden won the state-by-state Electoral College votes that ultimately decide who takes the White House by 306 to 232, flipping five states that went to Trump four years ago.

That includes Georgia, where a hand recount of its five million ballots confirmed Thursday that Biden is the first Democratic presidential candidate to win the southern state in almost three decades.

The recount showed Biden had won by 12,284 votes, according to figures posted on Georgia secretary of state Brad Raffensperger's website —

slightly fewer than the approximately 14,000 he originally led by. —AFP



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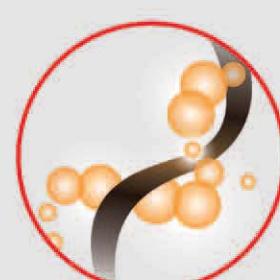
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# DECCAN Chronicle

21 NOVEMBER 2020

## SC fails if it can't protect fundamental rights of all

The Constitution is the guarantee of the individual against the state. For, it lists his fundamental rights, which are non-negotiable except through the process of law, and denies state a chance to be arbitrary. These rights are not pious declarations without remedies; the Constitution has provided for mechanisms to ensure that its writ runs. The Supreme Court of India is that supreme institution the Constitution has envisaged to perform the noblest job of protecting the fundamental rights.

Article 32 of the Constitution guarantees people the right to move the Supreme Court by appropriate proceedings for the enforcement of the fundamental rights. It also empowers the court to act appropriately to enforce them. The founding fathers who debated the Article in the Constituent Assembly were near unanimous on this unique power which made Supreme

Court of India a unique institution. And between Article 32 and the Supreme Court, they thought the fundamental rights of the people are in the safe hands. M. Ananthasayam Ayyangar, who later became the speaker of the first Lok Sabha, called the Supreme Court the supreme guardian of the citizen's rights in any democracy. "I would even go further and say that it is the soul of democracy," he said, and explained if the fundamental rights of the individual are left to the tender mercies of the government of the day, they cannot be called fundamental rights at all. Members called Article 32 "the most important article of the whole Constitution", "fundamental to all the fundamental rights guaranteed under this Constitution" which "makes all the fundamental rights become real". Dr B.R. Ambedkar who wound up the discussion in no uncertain terms made the importance of the Article clear. "If I was asked to name any particular article in this Constitution as the most important — an article without which this Constitution would be a nullity — I could not refer to any other article except this one (Article 32). It is the very soul of the Constitution and the very heart of it."

Now, cut to 2020. The Chief Justice of India, S.A. Bobde, while hearing a petition seeking the release of a journalist who was apprehended by the police while on his way to report the rape-murder of a teen, told his counsel that the court was "trying to discourage" individuals from filing petitions under Article 32. The policy statement is disappointing, unfortunate and unacceptable not only because it refused to repeat its act which ensured the personal liberty of another journalist a few days ago under Article 32 but also for its decision to totally abdicate itself from the solemn duty. The court had already started showing the signs of its fatigue with the Article when it chose to look the other way when the several people from Kashmir approached it with habeus corpus petitions, when lakhs of people were made to walk their way home which are thousands of miles away due to governmental apathy during the pandemic and when the government chose to introduce religion as a condition for citizenship. If the Supreme Court fails Article 32, it fails the fundamental rights of the people, and thereby, the Constitution itself.

## Trump to leave mess for Biden

By still not recognising Joe Biden to be the President-Elect a fortnight after polling for the US presidency was completed, outgoing President Donald Trump is causing America's reliability as a partner, and also as a democracy, to be brought into question. This is apt to makes it more difficult for Mr Biden to extricate US foreign policy from the mould in which Mr Trump placed it, although the President-Elect is acknowledged to be a seasoned foreign policy hand who leans in the direction of building democratic alliances, and finding the middle ground.

Across a wide range, President Trump has taken steps in the dying weeks of his presidency to place hurdles in the path of the incoming President, who turned 78 on Friday. Assuming that he goes quietly on January 20, Mr Biden's efforts in respect of Afghanistan and Iran will be watched in New Delhi. Mr Trump signed a so-called peace deal with the Taliban under whose terms US troops are to vacate Afghanistan by May 2021. In an extraordinary move, after the counting of votes in the presidential election the US leader decided to reduce US force levels to only 2000 from 4,500 by Christmas. (At its peak, a few years ago, the US had 13,500 soldiers in Afghanistan.)

This appears precipitous since violence in Afghanistan has gone up alarmingly after the inkling of the US-Taliban deal last February. Can Mr Biden make troops withdrawal more gradual? In fact, US force strength needs to be a lot higher to ensure that the non-Taliban factions are not disadvantaged in the talks with the Taliban as violence rages. In his fading hour, and attempting to bind his successor's hands, Mr Trump has imposed further sanctions against Iranian entities and even prepared nuclear attack scenarios against Iran. Mr. Biden has to scale back comprehensively from the dangerous Trump era path of "maximum pressure" against Tehran and seek to return to some practical version of the Obama-period Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action that curbed Iran's nuclear plans. Normalising US-Iran ties creates better conditions for a healthy Iran-India relationship.

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*I drive, therefore I am  
Stuck in this F...ing traffic jam!  
If you want some change, be the  
change  
I don't go for chiller, dollars — the  
whole range!  
I've done unto others as they would do  
unto me  
Now not the best F...ing lawyers can  
set me free..."*

— From Namkeen Pumpkeen by Bachchoo

## Vaccines on the way... amid talk of conspiracies, Bill Gates' role

**E**very boy and even some girls I knew in Pune in my boyhood had two marks like little wrinkled lips on the top of their left arms. My two scars stood out for years and then age eroded them and now they are gone. Those were the marks of vaccination that Doctor Frenchman (yes, I know, but he was a Parsi and we inherited all manner of surnames through our subservience to European colonialism) dispensed, against various possible diseases, including rabies, because we lived amongst mad dogs.

Now every year in London I go down

to my local surgery and get a free "flu jab" on the UK's National Health Service. It's rendered by a needle injection and, apart from a bit of discomfort in the same location below the left shoulder, leaves no mark. As I was a mere infant when Doc Frenchman inoculated me, I don't know how the scares came about, but using my renowned forensic skills, I deduce that it was a cut with a sharp blade into which the vaccine was introduced.

I am sure the anti-Covid-19 vaccine, promised by the end of the year to the most vulnerable and then to the general population, will be delivered by a female injection.

The announcement that these anti-Covid vaccines are in the stages of testing and perfection is welcome news. I look forward to a time when, with the aid of the vaccine, the population is shielded against this contemporary plague and we can mingle and live our lives as dharma and karma dictate. I will line up for the vaccine as soon as my generous and caring local medical practice indicates its availability. I shall even advise all the illegal immigrants I know, though they are mostly

wary of exposing their status, to register close to where they live and get a jab.

When the vaccine was announced, instead of praising Ahura Mazda and lining up for a shot, I read all manner of lunatic anti-vaccine propaganda. Some of it is reported on the news and some of it pops up on my mobile phone and my email as unsolicited, threatening information. Now I am sure, gentle reader, that some or all of you have been subjected to the same load of contentious contentions — I will suppress the stronger terms that come to mind. (Yes, keep it clean. — Ed.)

One persistent message on these platforms urged me to reject the vaccine because it said it was a ploy by Bill Gates and his wife to secretly inject billions of humans with microchip which would then make those supposedly vaccinated people slaves to Mr Gates who would control their lives and instruct them what to do. They would become the robot civilization of the Gates family!

"Destroy your Apple computer. Buy one of ours!"

The Gates family (not to be confused

with The Doors, and renowned inventors of Windows) are known to have saved millions of lives through their charitable endeavours through supplying medicines to the poor. It is ironical then that a survey in the United States among those who voted for Donald Trump found that 46 per cent believed that Covid-19 was a hoax and among them were believers in the Bill Gates conspiracy.

They were, of course, the same people who said they wouldn't have the vaccine when it became available. Other conspiracy theorists, including a taxi driver hired by the BBC to carry me to a recording, determinedly believe that the Covid-19 symptoms and deaths are not caused by a virus, but by the presence or proximity of 5G mobile phone towers.

*O Tempora O Mores!* This is the twenty-first century, and the human brain has evolved for billions of years. And yet, and yet...!

The fact that Pfizer, which was the first company to put forward an effective, tested and safe vaccine against Covid-19, has had its share price skyrocketing is not surprising. If I

announce the discovery of a diamond mine in my back garden, the price of my property will go up. Of course, the conspiracy-wallahs would say that this was what it was all about — set a disease loose on humanity and then sell the cure for billions. The reported facts are that Pfizer's vaccine, which has to be kept at minus 70 degrees Centigrade, will cost £30 for the two doses, fuels such crazy speculation. The second vaccine, developed by AstraZeneca and Oxford, expected soon, will stay healthy at home-refrigerated temperatures and will cost a mere £2.23 a dose.

When I was in Pune last, I was shown around the vaccine manufacturing plants of the Serum Institute of India, set up and owned by my friend and schoolmate Cyrus Poonawalla. His institute has manufactured and distributed, at loss-making, nominal costs, scores of vaccines as a humanitarian gesture and I am now told that the institute is working on an anti-Covid vaccine in partnership with the US Codagenix. I am confident that when it is tried and tested, Cyrus won't be charging £30 a go.



Subhani

## China's Ladakh chimera: India needs to stand firm



Syed Ata Hasnain

In June 2020 after the Galwan incident I responded to a television anchor's question on how long the Ladakh standoff might last by saying: "Till at least the end of the campaigning season". That in plain language meant the end of November 2020. My rationale was not too complex. First, China would not mobilise resources to coerce India and return without achieving any objectives a second time, the first being Doklam. These objectives and intent have been the subject of much debate without conclusion, a kind of Chinese chimera. Second, winter is a difficult period in Ladakh even on the Chinese side despite the flat open terrain. Whatever the Chinese would do, campaign style operations in such conditions may not be possible and they were not prepared. The Chinese would seek to withdraw or draw down by December and await the next summer or the one after to pursue their objectives, which weren't specific or cogent. Also, China would always wish to have some kind of agreement, knowing well that India as a rule-bound nation wouldn't not contravene it. An agreement with "advantage China" written all over is what it would seek. It would bargain to retain the most of what it had progressively transgressed upon. Most of these assessments are coming true. Obviously, India will not agree to any of this and the standoff will probably continue through winter; yet this is against my reckoning but it's too early to conclude a final stance. My understanding of China's intent, oft-repeated, continues to be that it is India's rising strategic confidence that worried China at the instance of Pakistan. The spate of strategic decisions

regarding national security that India has taken in the last four years or so include the surgical strikes, the Balakot strike, Doklam standoff, the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A, the publishing of new maps of J&K laying full claim to Gilgit Baltistan and Aksai Chin, and the long awaited creation of a Chief of Defence Staff in pursuit of eventual theatrisation. All this has perked up the adversaries to review their own security. The intent then was simply to puncture India's confidence about dealing with dual threats, by limited coercion at selected friction points that would leave the PLA in a position of tactical advantage in the continental domain and keep India imbalanced in the development of its capability. The latter is skewed against the maritime domain, where China's well recognised fragility lies.

What upset China's intent to a great extent and in fact virtually amounted to a strategic ambush was the Indian Army operation on the night of August 29-30, 2020 by which it progressively occupied seven tactical features on the Chhotta Kailash range south of Pangong Tso in the Chushul Bowl; all the features are on own side of the Line of Actual Control and were never occupied all these years for various reasons. It left the situation with the theoretical potential of the PLA advancing on Daulat Beg Oldi (DBO) from Depsang, but without the support of a Pakistani offensive which could only be made through the Siachen area. The Indian Army's Kailash Range operations upset everything for the PLA, with Indian domination over Moldo and Spanggur on the other side of the LAC which could balance any

adventurism at Depsang by a foray towards Highway 219, the crucial road link to Kashgar which had triggered the entire issue of Aksai Chin between India and China over 60 years ago. Now comes the floating, rumoured and unconfirmed information that the Chinese have proposed the PLA's withdrawal from Fingers 4 to 8 and the creation of a buffer zone for patrolling, with no patrolling rights for India. In addition, it proposed mutual withdrawal of all artillery and armoured vehicles in the vicinity of the LAC to suitable depth areas and, most important, all this to be preceded by the Indian Army's withdrawal from the Chushul Heights on Kailash range. Those in severe criticism of India's willingness to engage in the corps commander-level talks are unhappy at receiving such tripe as proposals for disengagement. Aggression must never come from a position of weakness because it will peter out even before it becomes effective. We did what we did at the Chushul Heights because we were "balanced in disparity" after having induced reserves to Ladakh. This term, which is often taught and discussed in the Army's schools of instruction, could not have seen better application. The basics of the Indian military leadership are clear, and it is the critics who need to revisit their basics.

The writer, a retired lieutenant-general, is a former GOC of the Srinagar-based 15 Corps

## LETTERS

### POLITICAL STANDARDS

AP rulers need to mind their standards and language when something unpalatable to the ruling party is done. A minister came to limelight for calling the SEC names and using unparliamentary words. Nehru quoted French philosopher Voltaire in Parliament when sharply criticised by his opponents and said, "I may not agree with what you said but I endorse to death your right to say it."

**Dr T. Ramadas**  
Visakhapatnam

### MALABAR CALLING

The ongoing Malabar exercise will hit affect China and weaken it. By welcoming Australia to the trilateral navy (India, US, Japan) after 13 years and calling it Quad 2, the countdown for China has started. There are chances that China will impose more restrictions on Australian exports to their country as it did in the past. Australia deserves applause for its bold move against China.

**N. Vanishi Krishna**  
Vizianagram

### GIVE DADS LIFE

In cricket, only privileged players like Rohit and Kohli can avail paternity leave and their place in team is secure (*Give dads family time*, DC, Nov. 20). Very few players will have a non-stop career for 10 to 15 years and Damocles sword will be hanging on their heads to either perform or perish.

**Parthasarathy Mandadi**  
Tirupati

### 50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

**Mass starvation feared in E. Pakistan**

DACCA, EAST PAKISTAN, Nov. 20.

Mass starvation fears in disaster shattered East Pakistan grew hour by hour here and top officials issued urgent orders to step up relief operations into full flow.

A high-level conference was held here last night to get international aid that was pouring into Dacca airport to the coastal area decimated a week ago by a cyclone and gigantic tidal wave.

President Yahya Khan declared a day of mourning and special prayers were being offered for the dead. Radio Pakistan reported. Hardly any of the food, medicines, blankets and other vital life-saving supplies donated has so far reached the disaster zone due to transport problems.

## quick BITES

### INDICATORS %

|                        | Sensex    | 43,882.25 | 0.65 |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|------|
| Nifty 50               | 12,859.05 | 0.68      |      |
| S&P 500*               | 3,570.89  | -0.31     |      |
| Dollar (₹)             | 74.14     | 0.18      |      |
| Pound Sterling (₹)     | 98.45     | -0.35     |      |
| Euro (₹)               | 87.92     | -0.09     |      |
| Gold (10gm)* (₹)       | 49,551▲65 | 0.13      |      |
| Brent crude (\$/bbl)*  | 44.36     | 0.36      |      |
| IN 10-Yr bond yield    | 5.877     | 0.017     |      |
| US 10-Yr T-bill yield* | 0.849     | -0.702    |      |

\* As of 8:30 PM IST

### CCI approves Reliance-Future Group deal

The Competition Commission has approved Reliance's proposed acquisition of Future Group businesses. The Rs 24,713-crore deal was announced in August. In a tweet on Friday, the regulator said it has approved "acquisition of retail, wholesale, logistics & warehousing businesses of Future Group by Reliance Retail Ventures Limited and Reliance Retail and Fashion Lifestyle Limited".

### Rabi sowing begins; wheat planted in 97L ha.



Sowing of winter crops has started in the country, with farmers planting wheat in about 97.27 lakh hectare so far in this rabi season, the agriculture ministry said. Wheat is the main winter or rabi crop. Rice and pulses, such as gram, urad, moong as well as oilseeds like groundnut and sunflower, are other rabi crops. Paddy has been sown in more area at 7.26 lakh hectare compared with 6.98 lakh hectare a year ago.

### Large IPOs may be allowed with 5% equity dilution

The Sebi proposed to reduce the minimum offer size in an initial share-sale, whereby companies with a post-issue capital of above Rs 10,000 crore would be required to offer at least 5 per cent stake in IPO. At present, all companies with a post-issue capital above Rs 4,000 crore have to dilute at least 10 per cent shareholding in an IPO. Sebi felt minimum public holding of 10 per cent may be achieved in 18 months.

### Forex reserves surge \$4.28 bn to record \$572.77 bn

The country's foreign exchange reserves swelled by \$4.27 billion to a record high of \$572.771 billion in the week ended Nov. 13, RBI data showed. In the previous week ended Nov. 6, the reserves had risen by a massive \$7.779 billion to \$568,494 billion. Foreign currency assets climbed by \$5.526 billion to \$530,268 billion. The gold reserves declined by \$1.233 billion to \$36,354 billion.



## RBI panel for 26% promoter stake Corp. houses set to get banking licence

FALAKNAAZ SYED  
MUMBAI, NOV. 20

In what could potentially change the landscape of the Indian banking sector, an internal working group of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has suggested that large companies and industrial houses may be allowed as promoters of banks with necessary legislative changes, and large, well-run NBFCs could convert into banks after 10 years of operations.

Interestingly, the panel also suggested that the cap on promoters' stake in the long run (15 years) banks may be raised from the current level of 15 per cent to 26 per cent of the paid-up voting equity share capital.

The views gain significance in the light of year-long legal battle between Uday Kotak, promoter of Kotak Mahindra Bank, and the RBI that ended in January this year. Under the current RBI norms, promoters of private banks have to reduce their stake to 40 per cent within three years of operations and then to 20 per cent within 10 years and to 15 per cent within 15 years.

The group headed by RBI executive director P.K. Mohanty was set up in June 2020 to review the extant ownership guidelines and corporate structure for Indian private sector banks with the terms of reference, including the review of the eligibility criteria for individuals/entities to apply for banking licence, examination of



preferred corporate structure for banks and harmonisation of norms in this regard, and review of norms for long-term shareholding in banks by the promoters and other shareholders.

The panel that submitted its report on Friday said, "Large corporate/industrial houses may be allowed as promoters of banks only after necessary amendments to the Banking Regulations Act, 1949 to deal with connected lending and exposures between the banks and other financial group entities; and strengthening of the supervisory mechanism for large conglomerates, including consolidated supervision. RBI may examine the necessary legal provisions that may be required to deal with all concerns in this regard."

Large non-banking finance companies with an asset size of Rs 50,000 crore, including those owned by large corporate houses, may be allowed to convert to private banks subject to completion of 10 years of operations and

other criteria. The working committee recommended minimum initial capital requirement for licensing new banks should be enhanced to Rs 1,000 crore from Rs 500 crore for universal banks and Rs 300 crore from Rs 200 crore for small finance banks.

"The cap on promoters' stake in long run of 15 years may be raised from the current levels of 15 per cent to 26 per cent of the paid-up voting equity share capital of the bank. This stipulation should be uniform for all types of promoters and would mean that promoters, who have already diluted their holdings to below 26 per cent, will be permitted to raise it to 26 per cent of the paid-up voting equity share capital of the bank. The promoter, if he/she so desires, can choose to bring down holding to even below 26 per cent, any time after the lock-in period of five years," said the report.

For non-promoter shareholding, a uniform cap of 15 per cent of the paid-up voting equity share capital of the bank may be prescribed, the report said.

## Gland now among top 10 pharma companies

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD  
MUMBAI, NOV. 20

Hyderabad-based Gland Pharma made a grand debut on the bourses, listing at Rs 1,710 on both NSE and BSE, a premium of 14 per cent over the public issue price of Rs 1,500 per share.

Gland is now among top 10 pharma companies in terms of market value, with a market capitalisation of Rs 29,848 crore at the close of trade on the NSE.

The stock touched an intraday high of Rs 1,850 on both NSE and BSE.

Earlier this month, Gland Pharma raised Rs 6,479.55 crore through an initial public offering priced at Rs 1,490 to Rs 1,500 per share with Re 1 face value. The issue was subscribed more than two times but had received very poor response from retail and high net worth investors, making its bourses debut quite a suspense till the last moment.

On the NSE, Gland Pharma shares finally closed at Rs 1,828 providing public shareholders a return of 21.8 per cent on their IPO investment. On the BSE the stock closed at Rs 1,820.45.

Since retail and high net worth investors had largely skipped the public offer, there was a rush to buy the shares after the initial listing gains and so the percentage of deliverable quantity of shares was high at 56.25 per cent on the NSE.



honchos, there is no relation between growth in profits and growth in wages. The two move completely independently. Corporate managers would minimise their wage bill to maximise their profits," says Mahesh Vyas, managing director, CMIE.

extraordinary profits earned by companies," says CMIE.

Manufacturing companies saw a 9.1 per cent fall in wages in the June 2020 quarter, which was the toughest quarter for them. Sales had shrunk by 42 per cent and net profits by 62 per cent. Then, in the September 2020 quarter, while sales fell again by 9.7 per cent, profits sprang a surprise by scaling up by a handsome 17.8 per cent. Yet, wages declined by one per cent. Evidently, companies do not apportion resources to labour in any proportion of profits.

In the services sector's case, except for banking and IT, the remaining sectors collectively saw a 9 per cent fall in wages in the June quarter and a 5 per cent fall in the second quarter.

"Shareholders are being awarded interim dividends or buy-backs. There is still very little interest in investing into new capacities... Employment in the corporate sector could recover if business picks up again," says Vyas.

## Profits zoom, but wages flat at listed companies

SANGEETHA G  
CHENNAI, NOV. 20

In business, there seems to be no relation between profits and wages. While listed companies made bumper profits in the September quarter, wages have grown in low single digits, much lower than in past several quarters, finds private think-tank CMIE.

The net profit of listed companies zoomed to record levels, as they grew 209 per cent in the September quarter. Even in the first half of the fiscal, which covered the entire period of the lock down of different intensities and associated uncertainties, the net profits of these companies grew 23.8 per cent. This growth was even higher than 11.8 per cent, the average growth in the past 60 quarters. The data is based on the financial statements of 1,897 companies available in CMIE's Prowess database as of November 11.

However, this profit growth seemingly has nothing to do with the wage growth. "In business and for corporate

Mills to get ₹12.5K-cr loan to make ethanol

New Delhi, Nov. 20: The food ministry on Friday said it has given in-principle approval to 185 sugar mills and standalone distilleries to avail Rs 12,500 crore of loans for capacity addition of 468 crore litre of ethanol per annum as part of its efforts to achieve 20 per cent blending with petrol.

In the last two years, 70 ethanol projects were sanctioned loans of Rs 3,600 crore.

Apart from promoting ethanol production from sugarcane, the ministry is making efforts to manufacture ethanol using surplus rice with state-owned FCI as well as maize.

The move is aimed at

boosting ethanol blending with petrol, which now stands near 5 per cent.

Under the ethanol interest subvention scheme for molasses-based distilleries, the government had opened a window September for 30 days, inviting sugar mills/ distilleries, to apply for the scheme, the ministry said.

—PTI

## JLR seeks to block imports of Audi, Porsche SUVs in US

CHRISTOPHER YASIEJKO & SUSAN DECKER  
NOV. 20

Roche Holding AG is working hard to rapidly boost supply of Covid-19 antibody treatments and will be able to make its first deliveries in the first quarter of next year, according to CEO Severin Schwan.

Roche has filed for emergency authorisation for an antibody cocktail it's working on with US biotech Regeneron Pharmaceuticals Inc and that could be granted "very soon," Schwan said on Friday in an interview.

"At Roche we'll be able to provide supply in the first quarter," he added, cautioning that availability will initially be limited and should be reserved for patients at high risk.

"We're working hard to ramp up production as fast as we can," Schwan said. "No matter what, irrespective of other therapeutics, the demand for antibody cocktails will by far outstrip supply, so we have to make sure we target really the right patient groups."

—Bloomberg

diately respond to emails seeking comment on the complaint.

Jaguar Land Rover, a British carmaker owned by Tata Motors Ltd, said in its filing with the US International Trade Commission that the technology helps negotiate a "broad range of surfaces" and is a key feature in Jaguar's F-Pace and Land Rover Discovery vehicles.

"JLR seeks to protect itself and its United States operations from companies that have injected infringing products into the US market that incorporate without any licence from JLR, technology developed by JLR and protected by its patent," Jaguar's lawyer, Matthew Moore, said in the filing.

Representatives of Volkswagen didn't immediately respond to emails seeking comment on the complaint.

Jaguar wants to block imports of Porsche's Cayenne; Lamborghini's Urus; Audi's Q8, Q7, Q5, A6 Allroad and e-tron vehicles; and VW's Tiguan vehicles.

It said there are plenty of other luxury midsize SUV and compact crossover vehicles to meet buyer demand if the SUVs are banned from the US.

Still, the premium

Porsche and Audi lines provide much of the profit VW is using to fund its investments in technology for electric vehicles, autonomous vehicles and further innovations.

In addition to the four brands, Volkswagen Group owns other upscale nameplates, including Bentley and Bugatti.

The International Trade Commission is an independent, quasi-judicial agency that investigates complaints of unfair trade practices, like patent infringement. It can award damages but does not have the power to block products from entering the US.

—Bloomberg

Hyundai i20 sells 20,000 units in 20 days



MICHAEL GONZALVES  
PUNE, NOV. 20

Despite uncertainty in the market due to Covid pandemic, the all-new Hyundai i20 start from Rs 6.80 lakh, making the car significantly expensive than its main rival the Maruti Baleno.

The new i20 offers plenty of choice for buyers with multiple variants, engines and transmission options.

In fact, one in every four buyers has opted for automatic/semi-automatic variants of the car while one in three buyers has opted for the sunroof equipped, top-end trims. Even the diesel variant found one in five buyers.

—Bloomberg

## Job situation worsens for women in garment industry

SANGEETHA G  
CHENNAI, NOV. 20

The ILO study has included the garment industries of Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Indonesia and the Republic of Korea.

As many factories have furloughed and retrenched workers, many women and men, some of whom are still owed wages for completed work, have been unable to access basic necessities such as food, rent money or medical expenses for their households.

In factories which later rehire workers, women are more likely to be directly and indirectly discriminated against. Practices have been documented where women are offered short-term contracts to defer access to maternity benefits. In the case of dismissals due to the pandemic, this may lead to disproportionate dismissals of specific groups of women regardless of their actual skill level or years of service at a given factory.

Prior to the pandemic, women around the world

did an average of three times more care work than men. In Asia and the Pacific and in Arab states women did over four times more. Looking after children at home due to school and nursery closures during the lockdown, as well as caring for family members who fall ill due to the pandemic has increased the demands of unpaid care and household work for many women. This also risks delaying the return of women workers to work, and could lead to them dropping out of the labour force altogether.

"It is a reality that women have become more vulnerable as they are largely informal workers and their voices are generally not heard. In the garment sector, women work on a piece rate model and no order means no compensation," said Rituparna Chakrabarty, co-founder & executive VP of TeamLease Services.

She said women are unable to make use of the pockets of employment emerging as they have difficulties in travelling.

## RBI rejected DBS offer to buy 50% of LVB in 2018

ELISA MARTINUZZI  
NOV. 20

Speaking in October to his banking brethren at the world's biggest payments confab—the annual Sibos conference—Jamie Dimon didn't mince words. The rise of financial technology companies, warned JPMorgan Chase & Co's chief executive officer, will see some banks "go the way of the dinosaur."

In the world of finance, as in many other parts of the economy, Covid-19 has accelerated a shift to digital interactions that was already under way. And it hasn't gone unnoticed by regulators. In Asia, Europe, and the US, central banks and other regu-

lators are increasingly focused on how technology companies could come to dominate financial services, undermining the stability of the systems the watchdogs are entrusted to preserve.

One obvious sign of the growing importance of fintech companies is their surging market value.

The valuation of PayPal Holdings Inc, the US e-commerce payments giant, had exceeded \$225 billion as of early November—more than that of Europe's top four banks combined and higher than all US banks bar JPMorgan. In Europe, where lenders' stock prices have plummeted to record lows this year, only HSBC

Holdings Plc, with \$3 trillion in assets and a history dating to 1865, was worth more than Adyen NV, a 14-year-old Dutch payments processor.

And of course, none compare with Jack Ma's Ant Group Co, the Chinese financial giant that at the end of October was proceeding with an initial

public offering set to value it at \$315 billion—bigger than Dimon's JPMorgan. But then China's regulators stepped in to halt the IPO at the eleventh hour, demanding that Ant adhere to

## SHORT TAKES

## Women's T20 WC pushed to 2023

**Dubai:** The South African edition of the Women's T20 World Cup was on Thursday postponed by three months to February 2023 to avoid a cluster of big-ticket events in 2022 and manage players' workload.

International Cricket Council (ICC) announced on Thursday. The tournament was scheduled in November 2022 but will now be held in February 2023. In August this year, the ICC had postponed the 50 over

Women's World Cup slated in New Zealand from 2021 to 2022 owing to pandemic and women's T20 cricket is also set to make its debut in the 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games. "The Board confirmed that the ICC Women's T20 World Cup will move from its current slot at the end of 2022 to 9-26 February 2023. If not postponed, the year would have "three major events in 2022 with the Commonwealth Games in July 2022 and the ICC Women's T20 World Cup due to be held in November 2022," ICC said. The ICC said the decision was taken keeping in mind the workload of the players and also considering long term interest of women's cricket. — PTI

## Champ Rossi gears up for final race

**Portimao, Portugal:** Nine-time world champion Valentino Rossi says it will be a "special moment" when he brings the curtain down on his 15-year factory Yamaha MotoGP career in the final race of the season in Portugal on Sunday. Joan Mir's World Championship may already be secured but second place and the constructors' title will also be on the line in Portimao. Rossi, who has won seven of his world titles in the elite class, is among a number of riders bidding farewell, with Andrea Dovizioso heading off for a planned sabbatical and Cal Crutchlow exiting the series to become a Yamaha test rider next year.

Rossi will join Yamaha's satellite Petronas team, leaving the factory to go ahead with Fabio Quartararo alongside Maverick Vinales in 2021. "Sunday will be a special moment because it was a long journey together," said Rossi. Pol Espargaro, Jack Miller, Johann Zarco and Danilo Petrucci are also among those departing for pastures new. — AFP

## Task cut out for Spurs against City

**London:** Tottenham's title credentials face a thorough examination when they host Manchester City as the Premier League returns on Saturday after the international break. Spurs are just a point behind early pace setters Leicester, but only three points separate the top six, with Chelsea and Aston Villa also having the chance to claim top spot for a few hours at least when they face Newcastle and Brighton respectively.

With the final international fixtures of the year done and dusted, a grueling winter schedule of club football awaits for England's top-flight with nine rounds of league matches before January 2.

Defending champions Liverpool are already bearing the brunt of the hectic schedule as Jurgen Klopp's squad has been ravaged by injury ahead of Leicester's trip to Anfield. Tottenham enjoyed a couple of hours at the top of the table for the first time in over three years prior to Leicester's victory over Wolves before the international break. — AFP

## Live on TV

## CRICKET

**Big Bash League:** Hobart Hurricanes vs Perth Scorchers from 10.10 am; Sydney Sixers vs Melbourne Renegades from 1.35 pm; Perth Scorchers vs Adelaide Strikers from 4.50 am (Sunday) on Sony Six, HD

## TENNIS

**ATP Finals:** Semifinal-1 from 7.30 pm; Semifinal-2 from 1.30 am (Sunday) on Sony Six, HD

## FOOTBALL

**English Premier League:** Newcastle vs Chelsea from 6 pm; Aston Villa vs Brighton from 8.30 pm; Tottenham Hotspur vs Manchester City from 11 pm; Manchester United vs West Brom from 1.30 am (Sunday) on Star Sports Select 1

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

**Italian league:** Crotone vs Lazio from 7.30 pm; Spezia vs Atalanta from 10.30 pm; Juventus vs Cagliari from 1.15 am (Sunday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

## NADAL NAILS IT

## Djokovic also makes semifinals at season-ender

**London, Nov. 20:** Rafael Nadal kept alive his hopes of a first ATP Finals title on Thursday, beating defending champion Stefanos Tsitsipas 6-4, 4-6, 6-2 in London to qualify for the Last four.

Novak Djokovic too advanced to the semifinals after beating Alexander Zverev 6-3, 7-6 (4).

The top-ranked Djokovic set up a match against Dominic Thiem on Saturday as he goes for a record-tying sixth title at the season-ending event, and a first since 2015.

Rafael Nadal will take on Daniil Medvedev in the other semifinal match.

Bouncing back from a straight-set loss to Medvedev on Wednesday, Djokovic broke Zverev to take a 2-0 lead in the first set when his opponent double-faulted on the second break point.

Djokovic saved two break points at 4-2 before clinching the set with a backhand down the line as he closed in on the net following a serve out wide.

Zverev posed more problems for Djokovic in the second set, and led 2-0 in the tiebreaker. Djokovic then won five of six points and, on his first match point, sent a deep and penetrating forehand that Zverev could only slice into the net on the stretch.

Nadal, whose haul of 86 singles titles includes just one on indoor hard courts, is chasing the biggest prize missing from his resume at the eight-man elite event. The 34-year-old has qualified for the ATP Finals for a record 16 consecutive years but has been forced to withdraw on six occasions.

The second seed won his opening round-robin match against Andrey Rublev but defeat against Dominic Thiem meant he faced a shootout against 2019 champion Tsitsipas to reach the semifinals.

Both players were rock solid on serve until Nadal

To be in the semifinals here at the last tournament of the year is an important thing. Happy for that and looking forward to the semifinals against Daniil. — RAFAEL NADAL after defeating Stefanos Tsitsipas

earned the first two break points of the set in the seventh game, which he failed to convert.

Tsitsipas was again under pressure in his next service game and this time he cracked, double-faulting on break point. Nadal pressed home his

advantage, serving consecutive aces to take the set 6-4 against his 22-year-old opponent.

The Spaniard, twice a finalist at the tournament, had another chance to break in the first game of the second set but the Greek sixth seed dug him-

self out of danger with a searing backhand.

Tsitsipas did well to cling on against his illustrious opponent who was serving with metronomic efficiency and dominating the longer rallies.

But out of nowhere the Greek earned two set

points on Nadal's serve and levelled when the Spaniard double-faulted on the second of those.

The match took a bizarre twist at the start of the decider, with neither player able to hold serve until Nadal finally held to lead 3-1. — Agencies

Rafael Nadal of Spain reacts during the match against Greece's Stefanos Tsitsipas in their men's singles match of the ATP World Tour Finals tennis tournament at the O2 Arena in London on Thursday. — AFP

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