



Pages 12 | ₹5 | LC

KOLKATA | NEW DELHI | SILIGURI | BHUBANESWAR

The Statesman

PEOPLE'S PARLIAMENT, ALWAYS IN SESSION



RAJINIKANTH STILL
NOT SURE OF
POLITICAL PLUNGE

P4



MARYAM DARES
'PUPPET' PM TO
QUESTION ISI

P9



BIDEN ANNOUNCES
ALL-WOMEN
COMMUNICATION TEAM

P10



'HARD TO SUSS
OUT KOHLI'S
GAMEPLAN'

P12

WEATHER

Mainly clear sky. Mist in the morning. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 27 and 07 degrees Celsius respectively.

RAINFALL: Nil

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 92%	Min: 44%
TEMPERATURE	
Max: 26.8°C (+1)	Min: 06.9°C (-3)
SUN RISES	SUN SETS
06:57 hrs	17:24 hrs
MOON RISES	MOON SETS
18:10 hrs	08:30 hrs

THUMBNAILS



Fireworks light up the skies over the illuminated Golden Temple on Guru Nanak Jayanti. In Amritsar on Monday.

IANS

Utpal Singh appointed LS Secretary General: Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Monday appointed senior IAS officer Utpal Kumar Singh as Secretary General of the Lok Sabha, an official order said. Singh, a 1986 batch IAS officer of Ultrachand Cadre, will assume charge on 1 December. He will succeed incumbent Snehalata Shrivastav. At present, he is posted as Secretary in the Lok Sabha secretariat. Singh has also held important positions at the Centre, as Additional Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.

States asked to ensure fire safety in hospitals: The Centre on Monday asked all states to ensure proper fire safety in hospitals and nursing homes, saying utmost precautions must be taken at a time when the country is fighting the coronavirus pandemic. Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla wrote a letter to chief secretaries of all states and Union territories in the wake of recent fire incidents in two hospitals in Gujarat which killed 14 people.

Gap between recoveries & active cases increasing

SNS & PTI
NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER

A total of 45,333 new Covid-19 recoveries have been registered across the country in a span of 24 hours as against 38,772 new infections reported during the same period, leading to a net reduction of 6,561 cases from the active caseload, the Union Health Ministry said on Monday.

The total recoveries have surged to 88,47,600.

"The gap between Covid-19 recoveries and active cases, that is steadily increasing, presently stands at 84,00,648 i.e 19.8 times the active cases," the ministry said.

The contraction of India's active Covid-19

New guidelines for marketplaces: In a bid to contain the spread of Covid-19, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW) issued a new set of guidelines for marketplaces.

Markets in containment zones will remain closed and only those outside containment zones will be allowed to function.

These cases were detected from 50,670 tests in which the number of RT-PCR tests surpassed that of rapid antigen ones. The positivity rate was 7.35 per cent.

The city's Covid toll rose to 9,174. The caseload climbed to 5,70,374, of which 5,28,315 patients have recovered.

(SEE ALSO P2)

al recovery rate to 93.81 per cent as on date," the Ministry said, adding that India's coronavirus case fatality rate has further dipped to 1.45 per cent.

Delhi adds 108 more deaths, 3,726 cases: Delhi on Monday recorded 3,726 fresh Covid cases, but the fresh deaths tally crossed the 100-mark again to stand at 108.

These cases were detected from 50,670 tests in which the number of RT-PCR tests surpassed that of rapid antigen ones. The positivity rate was 7.35 per cent.

The city's Covid toll rose to 9,174. The caseload climbed to 5,70,374, of which 5,28,315 patients have recovered.



India highlights Pak's role in terror-financing at SCO meet

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER

Chairing the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation heads of government meeting attended, among others, by China and Pakistan, Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu today tore into Islamabad for using terrorism as an instrument of state policy and repeatedly raising bilateral Indo-Pak issues at multilateral forums.

Underlining that economic growth and trade could only operate in an environment of peace and security, he said, "Peace is the essential pre-requisite for progress. The most important challenge faced by us in the region is terrorism, particularly cross-border terrorism. Terrorism is truly the enemy of humanity."

It is a scourge we need to collectively combat."

With Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan opting out of the meeting, it was attended by Pakistan's parliamentary secretary for foreign affairs. Chinese Premier Li Keqiang and the prime ministers of other SCO countries—Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan—also attended the meeting.

Without directly naming Pakistan, Naidu condemned terrorism in all its manifestations, saying India was concerned about threats emerging from ungoverned spaces and the threat from countries that leverage terrorism as an instrument of state policy. "Such an approach is entirely against the spirit and charter of the SCO," he reminded.

The Nizam's grandson Nawab Najaf Ali Khan who heads the Nizam Family Welfare Association today issued a statement saying: "Whenever elections are held my grandfather H.E.H late Sir Nawab Mir Osman Ali Khan Nahadur Nizam VII's name is criticised and his immense services towards his subjects are blatantly disre-

garded." Khan told this paper that "the family was hurt over these statements." He went on to say that politicians should attract voters by their welfare schemes and by working for the people instead of resorting to such statements against the Nizam.

Although the statement does not name any politician or a political party, it was Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath who had spoken about renaming Hyderabad as Bhagyanagar in the lines of Allahabad which was changed to Prayagraj during his campaign for civic elections.

Yesterday, Union Home minister Amit Shah had also promised to free the city from its Nizam culture if BJP was voted to power in the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation elections slated for tomorrow.

"Renaming the city or promising to free our state of Nizam culture is nothing more than a gimmick to attract attention but these politicians cannot change the Ganga Jamni Tehzeeb which has been a part of the cul-

ture of the people of Hyderabad for centuries," said Khan ruing the new low touched by politicians who are lagging behind in their knowledge of history of their own nation.

He claimed that in the 1940s Hyderabad was better than most Western countries and his massive donations were unmatched by any other ruler in history.

He had built the prestigious Nizam Institute of Medical Sciences (NIMS) from his own private purse and tarring him as a "looter" is an attempt to damage his image, said his grandson.

In fact even today most buildings used by the state administration were built during his reign as were the institutions including Osmania Hospital, the High Court

and Osmania University, the first vernacular university in the state of Hyderabad.

The richest among the rulers in Pre-Independence India he is credited for building the modern Hyderabad.

His descendants wondered why the Centre had appointed him as Raj Prahmukh and accepted 5 tons of gold donated towards National Defence Fund if he was a fascist and why was his name and legacy being maligned even though secularism was the essential form of governance.

As the BJP national level leaders were roped in to campaign for the municipal election in the city, the narrative tended to be on religious lines with BJP leaders even promising to launch surgical strikes in old city area.

Moderna said it would ask US and the European regulators Monday to allow emergency use of its Covid-19 vaccine as new study results confirm the shots offer strong protection ramping up the race to begin limited vaccinations as the coronavirus rampages worsens.

Multiple vaccine candidates must succeed for the world to stamp out the pandemic, which has been on the upswing in the US and Europe. US hospitals have been stretched to the limit as the nation has seen more than 1,60,000 new cases per day and more than 1,400 daily deaths.

Since first emerging nearly a year ago in China, the virus has killed more than 1.4 million people worldwide.

Moderna is just behind Pfizer and its German partner BioNTech in seeking to begin vaccinations in the US in December.

Across the Atlantic, British regulators also are assessing the Pfizer shot and another from AstraZeneca.

Moderna created its shots with the U.S. National Institutes of Health and already had a hint they were working, but said it got the final needed results over the weekend that suggest the vaccine is more than 94% effective.

Moderna said the shots effectiveness and a good safety record so far with only temporary, flu-like side effects mean they meet requirements set by US FDA. (AP)

Amit Shah's remark upsets Nizam's family

ANINDITA CHOWDHURY
HYDERABAD, 30 NOVEMBER

The family of the last Nizam Mir Osman Ali Khan VII (photo) has objected to the remark made by Union Home minister Amit Shah who promised to free Hyderabad of its "Nizam culture" pointing out that the last sovereign ruler's image was being tarnished for political gain.

The Nizam's grandson Nawab Najaf Ali Khan who heads the Nizam Family Welfare Association today issued a statement saying: "Whenever elections are held my grandfather H.E.H late Sir Nawab Mir Osman Ali Khan Nahadur Nizam VII's name is criticised and his immense services towards his subjects are blatantly disre-

garded." Khan told this paper that "the family was hurt over these statements." He went on to say that politicians should attract voters by their welfare schemes and by working for the people instead of resorting to such statements against the Nizam.

Although the statement does not name any politician or a political party, it was Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath who had spoken about renaming Hyderabad as Bhagyanagar in the lines of Allahabad which was changed to Prayagraj during his campaign for civic elections.

Yesterday, Union Home minister Amit Shah had also promised to free the city from its Nizam culture if BJP was voted to power in the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation elections slated for tomorrow.

"Renaming the city or promising to free our state of Nizam culture is nothing more than a gimmick to attract attention but these politicians cannot change the Ganga Jamni Tehzeeb which has been a part of the cul-

ture of the people of Hyderabad for centuries," said Khan ruing the new low touched by politicians who are lagging behind in their knowledge of history of their own nation.

He claimed that in the 1940s Hyderabad was better than most Western countries and his massive donations were unmatched by any other ruler in history.

He had built the prestigious Nizam Institute of Medical Sciences (NIMS) from his own private purse and tarring him as a "looter" is an attempt to damage his image, said his grandson.

In fact even today most buildings used by the state administration were built during his reign as were the institutions including Osmania Hospital, the High Court

and Osmania University, the first vernacular university in the state of Hyderabad.

The richest among the rulers in Pre-Independence India he is credited for building the modern Hyderabad.

His descendants wondered why the Centre had appointed him as Raj Prahmukh and accepted 5 tons of gold donated towards National Defence Fund if he was a fascist and why was his name and legacy being maligned even though secularism was the essential form of governance.

As the BJP national level leaders were roped in to campaign for the municipal election in the city, the narrative tended to be on religious lines with BJP leaders even promising to launch surgical strikes in old city area.

Moderna said the shots effectiveness and a good safety record so far with only temporary, flu-like side effects mean they meet requirements set by US FDA. (AP)



The Karnataka Learning Management System is implemented at an estimated cost of Rs 34.14 crore in two ways - LMS-based digital learning and establishing 2500 ICT enabled classes.

B.S. YEDIYURAPPA
KARNATAKA CHIEF MINISTER

Delhi govt orders pvt labs to cut RT-PCR test rates

The Kejriwal govt has directed the city's private labs to charge Rs 800 for testing samples collected from collection sites; testing of samples collected through home visit will however cost Rs 1,200

SNS & PTI
NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER

The Arvind Kejriwal-led AAP government today ordered all private laboratories in Delhi to reduce the rates of RT-PCR coronavirus tests to Rs 800 from the existing Rs 2,400.

According to an order issued by the Delhi health department, private laboratories have been asked to charge Rs 800 for testing samples collected by government teams and collected from collection sites by private sector labs as requisitioned by districts and hospitals. However, the testing of samples collected through home visit will cost Rs 1,200.

All labs and hospitals in the national capital have also been asked to display the revised rates at a prominent place within 24 hours.

The private laboratories have also been asked to process samples, share the reports with the client (government or individual) and update all reports on the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) portal within 24 hours of collection of samples.

Delhi health minister Satyendar Jain had said that



labs were finding it difficult to release results of all tests within a day.

Today, chief minister Kejriwal said that he had issued directives to reduce the price of the RT-PCR test in the national capital, saying it will help those going to private labs for Covid-19 tests.

"I have directed that the rates of RT PCR tests be reduced in Delhi. Whereas tests are being conducted free of cost

in govt establishments, however this will help those who get their tests done in pvt labs," Kejriwal tweeted.

Tagging the CM's tweet, Jain said that orders for this will be issued immediately.

On their part, some private laboratories said they supported the move.

"In this hour of crisis, every step to facilitate the citizens in the fight against COVID-19 is a welcome step. We fully sup-

port this step and are working closely with all stakeholders including the government to provide the best possible diagnostics care," Dr Lal PathLabs said.

The national capital yesterday reported 4,906 positive cases of Covid-19, which took the cumulative count of such patients to 5,66,648, according to the Delhi government's health bulletin.

These coronavirus cases

were detected from 64,186 tests. The positivity rate was 7.64 per cent. This was then the second consecutive day when less than 5,000 cases of the deadly virus infection were identified.

Delhi had on Saturday logged 4,998 coronavirus cases detected from a record 69,051 tests. The Covid positivity rate had then dropped to 7.24 per cent - the lowest since 23 October. The city yesterday recorded 68 Covid-linked fatalities, which pushed its toll to 9,066. The death rate based on the last 10 days' figures was 1.83 per cent. The count of those who lost their lives owing to the coronavirus infection on Saturday was 89.

Yesterday's health bulletin stated that there were 35,091 active Covid cases in the city, with 21,337 patients remaining under home isolation. As many as 8,848 patients were reported to have been hospitalised.

Jain then said that the positivity rate in the case of Covid-19 patients in the city was down to less than half after the situation that existed on 7 November. He claimed that this was a pointer that the coronavirus pandemic was on the decline in Delhi.

Delhi Police ups security at border as farmers threaten to block entry points

PTI
NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER

A day after the agitating farmers threatened to block all entry points to the national capital, the Delhi Police on Monday enhanced security deployment at all the borders points connecting the city with neighbouring states of Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.

Rejecting the Centre's offer to hold talks once they move to the Burari ground, the farmers protesting against the new agricultural reform laws have been staying put at Tikri, Singhu and Ghazipur borders.

"Delhi Police has strengthened its presence at various border points in the wake of the farmers protest. All internal and outside forces have been mobilised to the maximum," a senior police officer said.

Delhi Police Commissioner S N Shrivastava visited Singhu border to take stock of the security arrangements.

"They (farmers) have been given an offer and the arrangements are better at the Burari instead on the road. On the road, there are issues for commuting. Here, there is no toilet or water, whereas the arrangements in Burari are better. The police have made good arrangements and we are ready for any situation," he said.

Addressing a press conference at Singhu border on Monday, a representative of protesting farmers said they want Prime Minister Narendra Modi to listen to their "mann ki baat".



"Our demands are non-negotiable," he said and claimed that the ruling party "will have to pay a heavy price" if it does not heed to their concerns.

"We have come here to fight a decisive battle," he added.

On the other hand, a small fraction of agitating farmers at Tikri border moved to Burari ground in north Delhi, the place allotted to them by the Centre to protest peacefully.

Another senior police officer from outer district of Delhi Police, who has been overseeing the security arrangements at the Tikri border, said the situation remains peaceful at the border and the protesters have not yet entered the national capital.

There is heavy security deployment with multi-layered barricades as a precautionary measure.

"The situation remains peaceful, but the protesters have refused to proceed to Burari ground. Multi-layered barricades are in place at the border.

But the farmers are still at the border and have not entered Delhi. They said they will decide on their further course of action on December 3 as a delegation of the farmers has been invited for discussion, the officer said.

Cemented barriers and multi-layered barricades have also been put up at Ghazipur border near UP gate where many farmers have been protesting since Saturday.

"The protesters do not wish to go to Burari ground and want to carry out their protest at Jantar Mantar. If not, they will not move from here and continue to protest at UP Gate," a senior police officer from east district said.

The security deployment has also been enhanced on the Delhi-Gurgaon border in view of Delhi Chalo's march call given by various farmer groups.

As a preventative measure, the Delhi Police has also intensified checking of vehicles at the border points, leading to heavy traffic snarls.

Classified

LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE COURT OF
SH. AASHISH GUPTA
ACJ/CCJ/ARC-(South East)
Saket Courts,
New Delhi
SS-50/2020

In the matter of:
Ashwani Shiroff, s/o Late
Sh. I.N. Shiroff, /o C-6/10, Vas-
ant Vihar-I, New Delhi-110057.
Petitioner

Versus
The State & Ors.

1. State
GNT of Delhi Through
S.D.M. Old College Building
Lajpat Nagar, IV, New Delhi-
110024.

2. M/s. Reliance Industries
Ltd. Maker Chamber IV, Nariman
Point, Mumbai-400021.

Whereas, an application
U/s 372 of the Indian Succession
Act, 1925 has been made by
Ashwani Shiroff, successor
of Late Vijay Bajaj for
grant of Succession Certificate
in respect of debts/securities
of deceased.

And whereas the said applica-
tant shall come for hearing on
01-02-2021 at 10:00 a.m.

The therefore, the public at
large is hereby given notice if
any person has objection to
the grant of Succession Cer-
tificate in favour of the said
applicant, he may appear and
file objections in writing, in
person or through duly

appointed pleader, on the
said date and time.
Given under my hand and
Seal on 27-11-2020.

ACJ/CCJ/ARC-(South East)
Saket Courts,
New Delhi
Seal of the Court

FMG

SITUATION VACANT

WALK-IN INTERVIEW

Any Masters in Social
Sciences / Social Work /
MCA / MBA within 23 to
40 years of age, resident of
Malda District, having
management, computer, soft
skill and flair to conduct training
as an Assistant Training
Coordinator can appear in
the walk-in interview on
15.12.2020 between 10 a.m.
sharp with all necessary
documents and ID proof at
District Training Centre,
Rajadighi Community
Health Service Society,
Eklakhi P.O.: Rajadighi,
District: Malda, PIN-
732102. Preferences will
be given to the candidate
having experience in
ASHA training as a dis-
trict trainer. CTC for this
temporary engagement is
Rs. 11,000 per month.

Whereas, an application
U/s 372 of the Indian Succession
Act, 1925 has been made by
Ashwani Shiroff, successor
of Late Vijay Bajaj for
grant of Succession Certificate
in respect of debts/securities
of deceased.

And whereas the said applica-
tant shall come for hearing on
01-02-2021 at 10:00 a.m.

The therefore, the public at
large is hereby given notice if
any person has objection to
the grant of Succession Cer-
tificate in favour of the said
applicant, he may appear and
file objections in writing, in
person or through duly

PUBLIC NOTIFICATIONS

SOMA

Chattopadhyay pur-
chased Flat No. 8 at 11/021, B.T.
Road, Lake Villa, Kolkata-
700108 measuring about 525
sq.ft. by Registered Deed dated
28.03.2001 being No. 6566 of
2001 from Barun Kumar Das.
The mother deed dated
26.03.1996 being No. 1375
regarding the said flat has
been lost from her custody and
G.D. has been lodged with
Baranagar Police Station being
G.D.E. No. 1784 dated 24.11.2020.
The present owner declares
that the property is free from
all encumbrances. If any person
having objection / claim in
the said property should contact
the undermentioned with valid
legal documents within a
period of 10 days from the date
of publication failing which any
claim whatsoever shall not be
entertained.

Rita Mallick
Advocate
10, Old Post Office Street
Room No. 26
Kolkata-700001

OFFERS invited for one 3-
bedroom (3rd floor) flat at
90/1/1, Chowinghee Road,
Kolkata-700020 owned by

Rita Mallick
Advocate
10, Old Post Office Street
Room No. 26
Kolkata-700001

PROPERTIES

RAJADIGHI

Community Health Service
Society, Eklakhi, P.O.:
Rajadighi, District: Malda,
PIN-732102 — Expression
of Interest — RCHSS invites
offers from local Self Help Group
and others for execution of its
internal canteen service within
16.12.2020. For further details,
please visit the Society's notice
board in above address.

Registrar

TENDERS

JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY

Sealed tenders are invited for
Tender No.:
1. JU / NIT / EQUIP / 03 / 2nd
Call / 20-21 for Pharmaceutical
Technology.
2. JU / NIT / EQUIP / 04 / 20-21
for Bengal.
3. JU / NIT / COMP / 03 / 20-21
for Physical Chemistry.
4. JU / NIT / HARD / 01 / 20-21
for General Maintenance.

Details are available on the
website at www.jaduniv.edu.in
under tender link.

Registrar

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)'s
national convener and Delhi
chief minister Arvind Kejriwal
on Monday said that the
AAP volunteers, MLAs and
other leaders were serving
the protesting farmers on the
Delhi-Haryana and Delhi-
UP borders.

He said he had directed
AAP leaders and volunteers
to provide farmers with food,
water, medical facilities,
toilets and other things
to ensure that all the requirements
of the protesting farmers were
fulfilled.

Kejriwal said that farmers
of the nation have been

in "distress". "They are sitting
on the Delhi-Haryana and
Delhi-UP borders and are
waiting for the Central
government to address their
concerns for the last five-six
days. It is hoped that the
Central government will soon
talk to the farmers and resolve
their issues."

He said, "I want to con-
gratulate the people across
Delhi, across India and
across the world on the
occasion of Guru Nanak Ji's
birthday. The biggest message
of Guru Nanak Ji has been
only one — Manav Seva,
which is to serve people
wholeheartedly. That
throughout our life we should
be committed to serving
people. Today, the farmers

of our nation are in
distress; they are sitting on
the borders with Haryana and
UP and are waiting for the
Central government to
address their concerns. How
are our farmers surviving and
sleeping at night under these
severe cold conditions? They
are going through a lot of
difficulties. I hope the
Central government will soon
talk to the farmers and resolve
their issues."

The Delhi CM also said,

"All the AAP volunteers,
MLAs and other leaders are
serving the farmers. I have
directed them to support the
farmers and provide them
food, water, medical facilities
and toilets and fulfil all
their requirements."

The minimum tempera-
ture was 6.9 degrees Celsius
on Sunday and the maxi-
mum is expected to settle
around 26 degrees Celsius, the
weather department said.

Calm winds and low tem-
peratures trap pollutants
close to the ground, while
favourable wind speed helps

AAP MLAs, volunteers serving protesting farmers: Kejriwal



Farmers from Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh sitting on a dharna during a protest against the Centre's farm laws, at Gaziupur-Delhi border on Monday.

SNS

in "distress". "They are sitting
on the Delhi-Haryana and
Delhi-UP borders and are
waiting for the Central
government to address their
concerns for the last five-six
days. It is hoped that the
Central government will soon
talk to the farmers and resolve
their issues."

He said, "I want to con-
gratulate the people across
Delhi, across India and
across the world on the
occasion of Guru Nanak Ji's
birthday. The biggest message
of Guru Nanak Ji has been
only one — Manav Seva,
which is to serve people
wholeheartedly. That
throughout our life we should
be committed to serving
people. Today, the farmers

of our nation are in
distress; they are sitting on
the borders with Haryana and
UP and are waiting for the
Central government to
address their concerns. How
are our farmers surviving and
sleeping at night under these
severe cold conditions? They
are going through a lot of
difficulties. I hope the
Central government will soon
talk to the farmers and resolve
their issues."

The Delhi CM also said,

"All the AAP volunteers,
MLAs and other leaders are
serving the farmers. I have
directed them to support the
farmers and provide them
food, water, medical facilities
and toilets and fulfil all
their requirements."

The minimum tempera-
ture was 6.9 degrees Celsius
on Sunday and the maxi-
mum is expected to settle
around 26 degrees Celsius, the
weather department said.

Calm winds and low tem-
peratures trap pollutants
close to the ground, while
favourable wind speed helps



The farmers are being deceived on these historic agriculture reform laws by the same people who have misled them for decades

NARENDRA MODI
PRIME MINISTER

NEW DELHI, TUESDAY 01 DECEMBER 2020

03

THUMBNAILS



Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath during a road project inauguration in Varanasi on Monday. SNS

455 more people test positive for Covid in Uttarakhand: Uttarakhand's COVID-19 tally rose to 74,795 on Monday with 455 more persons testing positive for the disease, while nine more infected patients died in the state, a health department bulletin said. Dehradun district reported the highest number of 185 cases, followed by Nainital (57), Pithoragarh (49), Udham Singh Nagar (24), Almora (24), Haridwar (23), Pauri (19), Chamoli (17), Tehri (14), Bageshwar (13), Uttarkashi (11), Champawat (11) and Rudraprayag (8), the bulletin said. PTI

Elderly woman killed in bear attack in Chhattisgarh: A 65-year-old woman has been mauled to death by a bear in Chhattisgarh's Korba district, a forest official said on Monday. The incident took place on Sunday evening when the victim, Phulkunwar Gond, a native of Fulsar village, was attacked by the animal in Kendai forest range, he said. PTI

HP health minister visits Covid patients in hospital



HP health minister Dr Rajeev Saizal interacting with Covid patients at IGMC Shimla on Monday. SNS

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 30 NOVEMBER

Himachal Pradesh health minister Dr Rajeev Saizal on Monday became the first minister to don PPE kit and meet patients in all four Covid-19 patients' wards at Indira Gandhi Medical College and Hospital (IGMC) in Shimla.

Dr Saizal interacted with all the patients in the hospital and enquired about their well-being and also about the conditions and facilities at the hospital.

Dr Saizal said the patients' feedback was quite positive about hospital administration in IGMC Shimla and appreciated the efforts of Corona warriors.

"The patients told that the health workers are visiting them even at midnight and enquired about their health besides, ensuring cleanliness in the Covid wards round the clock," he added.

He further stated the state government and the health department was doing a commendable job amidst the pandemic and compared the services of Corona warriors

Capital continues to reel under traffic woes amid farmers' stir

The supply of vegetables & fruits to Delhi from other states has been impacted and has reduced by half at Azadpur Mandi following farmers' continuing protests at Singhu and Tikri border points

SNS & PTI
NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER

Long queues of vehicles choked the roads in parts of the national capital on Monday as the Delhi Police kept the Singhu and Tikri borders closed and heightened checking at other places in the wake of the ongoing protests by farmers.

Both the border points at Singhu and Tikri remained closed with the farmers rejecting the Centre's offer to hold talks over the new farm laws opposed by them.

The closure of borders has also resulted in heavy traffic on other alternate routes between Delhi and Haryana.

The Delhi Traffic Police tweeted, "Singhu Border is still closed from both sides. Please take alternate route. Traffic has been diverted from Mukarba Chowk & GTK road. Traffic is very very heavy. Please avoid outer ring road from signature bridge to Rohini & vice versa, GTK road, NH 44 & Singhu borders."

In another tweet, it said Tikri Border is also closed for traffic movement while Jharoda, Dhsana, Daurala, Jhatikara, Badusari, Kapasera, Rajokri NH 8, Bijwasan-Bajghera, Palam Vihar and Dundahera borders were open and available to Haryana.

Policemen in large numbers were deployed on the Delhi-



A view of Azadpur 'sabzi mandi' or wholesale market in Delhi on Monday. DEEPAK

Gurgaon border and vehicle checking was intensified.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Southwest) Ingit Pratap Singh said, "We have not received any inputs on farmers coming here but as a precautionary measure, we have deployed our forces."

The Gurugram Traffic Police also alerted commuters about the congestion.

"Traffic congestion has been reported on NH-48 near Sarhol Toll towards Delhi due to slow entry of vehicles into Delhi. @TrafficGGM is on the spot to facilitate the traffic. Inconvenience caused is highly regretted," it tweeted from its official handle.

The agitating farmers demanding scrapping of the new farm laws have also

warned to close all five entry points to the national capital. After a meeting of over 30 farmer groups on Sunday, their representatives said they will not move to the Burari ground for their protest as suggested by the Centre. They said the farmers will not accept any conditional dialogue and will block all five entry points to Delhi.

The supply of vegetables and fruits to the national capital from other states has been impacted and has reduced by half at Azadpur Mandi, Delhi's largest wholesale market, due to the protest by farmers at the Singhu and Tikri border points of the city for the last five days.

Vendors in other parts of Delhi said due to curtailed supply, the wholesale rates of seasonal vegetables have gone up by Rs 50- Rs 100 due to the short supply.

They said due to obstructions at the border, the trucks are finding it difficult to reach Delhi and those somehow managing to do so are getting delayed by several hours.

"The supply and rates will have further impact if the borders are not opened and traffic is brought back to normal," they said.

They said the roadblock at Singhu and Tikri border points has impacted the supply of vegetables and fruits from Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir. The arrival of vegetables and fruits to Delhi's largest wholesale market at Azadpur has been reduced by half due to the closed borders, said Adil Khan, chairman Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee at Azadpur.

"During normal days, around 2,500 trucks of vegetables and fruits used to arrive at Azadpur Mandi from other states. The number has come down to around 1,000 trucks now and if the borders remained closed for a few more days, the situation will worsen," Khan said.

He, however, said the rates have not registered any significant rise so far because local produce and stocks are being sold. Some other vendors said

the wholesale rates of seasonal vegetables has already gone up by Rs 50- Rs 100 due to the short supply.

They said due to obstructions at the border, the trucks are finding it difficult to reach Delhi and those somehow managing to do so are getting delayed by several hours.

"The supply and rates will have further impact if the borders are not opened and traffic is brought back to normal," they said.

Gopal, a wholesale commission agent of green pea at Azadpur market, said supplies have drastically reduced.

Normally 40-45 trucks of peas from Punjab's Amritsar-Hoshiarpur belt would arrive on a given day in winters but it has reduced to 15-20 trucks now, he said.

"The rates have gone up due to reduced supply and hike in transport charges that have increased by around Rs 10,000 per truck," he said.

The trucks from Punjab carrying fruits and vegetables that would normally take around 9-10 hours for a trip to Delhi, now takes 12-14 hours due to closure of Singhu border, said another wholesaler.

The reduced supply has also pushed retail rates in the markets of the city. The rates of potatoes, tomatoes and onion that were already high, have relatively been less affected, said the wholesalers.

The major supply of potatoes and onions to Delhi are from states like Maharashtra, Karnataka and MP and the routes to these states are not affected by the farmers' stir.

"However, supply of vegetables and fruits from Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir has been affected," said Hakim Rahaman, a wholesaler at Okhla Mandi.

Some wholesalers said the supply was badly impacted for two days of the farmers' protest but now it has been restored as the trucks were using alternate entry points and routes to enter the city from other states.

"The supply had reduced initially for two-three days as the farmers blocked the Singhu and Tikri borders. But, now, the trucks are using other roads and avoiding highways although it has resulted in longer hours of travel and increased transportation charges," said a vegetable commission agent Srikanth Mishra at Azadpur Mandi.

He said the supply of new crop of potatoes has also been hit. A fruit wholesaler at Azadpur Mandi, R.K. Bhatia, said the supply of fruits like apple and Kinnow was hit but rates were more or less the same. Apple in Kashmir was not good this season, so rates were already high and demand was less, he said.

Centre must accept protesting farmers' demands: Rathore

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 30 NOVEMBER

Himachal Pradesh Congress chief Kuldeep Singh Rathore on Monday criticised the Narendra Modi-led central government for ignoring farmers' interests in its farm laws, saying that the Centre should accept all the farmers' demands without any condition.

After donating medical equipment at Ner Chowk Medical College in Mandi district, Rathore said at a time when the country was grappling with Covid crisis, the Modi government had forced the country into a big crisis by imposing new farm laws.

"The Central government is provoking farmers to take the route of agitation to get their demands fulfilled and seek repeal of draconian farm laws by not interacting



HP Congress chief Kuldeep Singh Rathore and party workers donate medical equipment to Ner Chowk Medical College in Mandi district on Monday. SNS

with them.

The government should interact with farmers without any conditions otherwise it may lead to foodgrains

crisis in the country," he said while urging the Union government to accept all their demands at the earliest.

Rathore further stated

that the Congress party wouldn't tolerate any injustice with the farming community and the attitude of the Modi government towards

protesting farmers was unjustifiable.

"The new farm laws introduced by the Indian government have badly affected the agriculture produce marketing system in the country and it seems that the government has sold farmers' rights at the hands of businessmen to benefit few corporate houses," he said.

He expressed concern over rising cases of Covid in Himachal and said the state government since the beginning of the pandemic took the situation lightly which had resulted in its spread across the state.

Congress party has demanded effective screening of all persons entering the state since the beginning of the crisis but these suggestions weren't followed, resulting in a steep spike in Covid cases and fatalities in Himachal," he added.

Air quality turns 'very poor' in Noida, Ghaziabad

PTI
NOIDA, 30 NOVEMBER

The air quality was recorded in the 'poor' category in Faridabad and Gurgaon, and 'very poor' category across Noida, Greater Noida and Ghaziabad, a government agency said on Monday.

The presence of pollutant PM 2.5 and PM 10 also remained high in the five neighbouring cities of Delhi, according to the air quality index (AQI) maintained by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

According to the index, an AQI between zero and 50 is considered 'good', 51 and 100 'satisfactory', 101 and 200 'moderate', 201 and 300 'poor', 301 and 400 'very poor', and 401 and 500 'severe'.

HP CM asks officials to strictly enforce Covid guidelines

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 30 NOVEMBER

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur on Monday directed the administrative officials as well as the public representatives to ensure strict compliance of Covid guidelines in the state to curb the spread of infectious disease.

After virtually unveiling the bust of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in Kullu, Thakur said that the state government had decided to impose a fine of Rs 1000 on persons not using face masks in public places.



"The increase in the number of Covid patients has forced the state government to take some stringent steps which include imposition of restriction of maximum 50 persons in any social, religious or cultural gatherings," he added.

He directed the administration to ensure that the restrictions imposed by the government to check the spread of this virus are not violated.

He further stated that as

many as ten nurses on out-source basis upto 31st March 2021 and four doctors will be provided immediately to Regional Hospital Kullu to facilitate proper treatment of Covid-19 as well as general patients.

After laying the foundation of various development works in Kullu district, the Chief Minister said that he would have personally visited Kullu to dedicate these projects to the people of the area but it could not be possible due to the Covid pandemic.

"The new administrative block inaugurated today would ensure additional bed capacity.

State Education Minister Govind Singh Thakur thanked

the Chief Minister for inau-

gurating the Administra-

tive Block at Regional Hospital Kullu and said that this would

thereby facilitate the people of the district.

Additional bed capacity

would also ensure that Covid

patients would not have to

be shifted to Medical Colle-

ge Ner Chowk in Mandi for

treatment," he said.

Thakur added the unveili-

ng of the statue of Atal Bihari

Vajpayee was a gesture of

respect to the great leader who

had special love and affection

towards the state in general

and Kullu Manali in partic-

ular.

State Education Minister

Govind Singh Thakur thanked

'Vaccine warriors' brave tough terrains to ensure immunisation in remote belts

ISHWAR NATH JHA
NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER

Najeeta Begum, an ANM worker in Karnataka's Lingsugur taluk, walked home-to-home following the coronavirus-induced lockdown to ensure that children, who were not vaccinated for preventable infections due to the lockdown, are covered under the routine immunisation services.

Sixty-year-old Rameshwari Prasad, an alternate vaccine delivery person in Bihar's Gaya district, had to wade across the river during monsoon to ensure that vaccines reach their des-

Begum traveled to remote villages and visited the homes on foot to request families not to miss their children's vaccination schedule and to visit the sub-centre to get vaccinated.

Twenty-six-year-old Begum said that she managed to cover every child and mother who could have missed their vaccination schedule.

Prasad, on the other hand, cycled, walked and even waded through rivers to deliver vaccines to remote villages of his cracks.

"We have been asked by villagers not to venture. I had to answer and convince them to vaccinate their children and pregnant women," said Begum.

"When I have to go to Benbanawadi village, I have to park my cycle in a neighbouring village. Then I had to walk two kilometres during the lockdown period to reach there as there is no proper road. During rainy season, I wade across the river to ensure that vaccines reach on time."

Women and men spearheading the Alternate Vaccine Delivery (AVD) system, are given specific training. The UNICEF supported training of 674 cold chain handlers, 36 cold chain technicians and almost 45,000 AVD personnel before the reintroduction of outreach immunisation sessions as soon as immunisation was put under essential services during the Covid-19 lockdown.

A senior government official from the ministry of health said: "There were some gaps in coverage because of the pandemic due to restriction in movement of man and material to contain the spread. However, the government came up with guidelines to ensure access to essential services in mid-April that resulted in guiding the states on how to conduct vaccination sessions by taking due precautions. The states too worked on innovative ideas and the services have now been restored."

Elaborating on the process of the AVD systems, the UNICEF said the states have different vaccine delivery mechanisms depending on the topography of the state, ranging from motorcycle, cycle, boats and by foot. During and after the lockdown, when the regular road transport mechanism was affected, the AVD system was functional and it supported in vaccine delivery and resumption of routine immunisation services. The AVDs are based on local need and depending upon local support and means for transport," the official said.

The government along with partners ensured supportive supervision visits to the out-reach sessions and hand holding of the ANM and ASHA workers for house-to-house surveys to identify children who may have missed routine immunisation. Luigi d'Aquino, chief of health, UNICEF India, said vaccination is one of the most effective and cost-effective ways to protect children's lives and futures,

I hope that the Centre holds talks with the farmers as soon as possible and agrees to their demands



DELHI CHIEF MINISTER ARVIND KEJRIWAL

India

THUMBNAILS



Farmers express solidarity with fellow farmers protesting against Centre's new farm laws; in Bengaluru on Monday.

Pak shelling: Pakistani Army on Monday violated ceasefire and resorted to heavy firing and mortar shelling targeting forward posts along LoC in J&K's Poonch district, drawing retaliation from Indian troops, officials said.

Nagaland gears up for 58th statehood day: Nagaland is all set to celebrate its 58th statehood day on Tuesday and mark the beginning of its popular Hornbill Festival with strict adherence to the Covid-19 safety norms, officials said.

Leopard strays into girls' hostel: A leopard strayed into a girls' hostel in Guwahati on Monday, triggering panic among the people, officials said. Mousumi Bora who owns the hostel in Hengrabari, said she had mistaken the leopard that was trapped under a sofa to be a piece of cloth and was about to pick it up when she realised it was a wild animal.

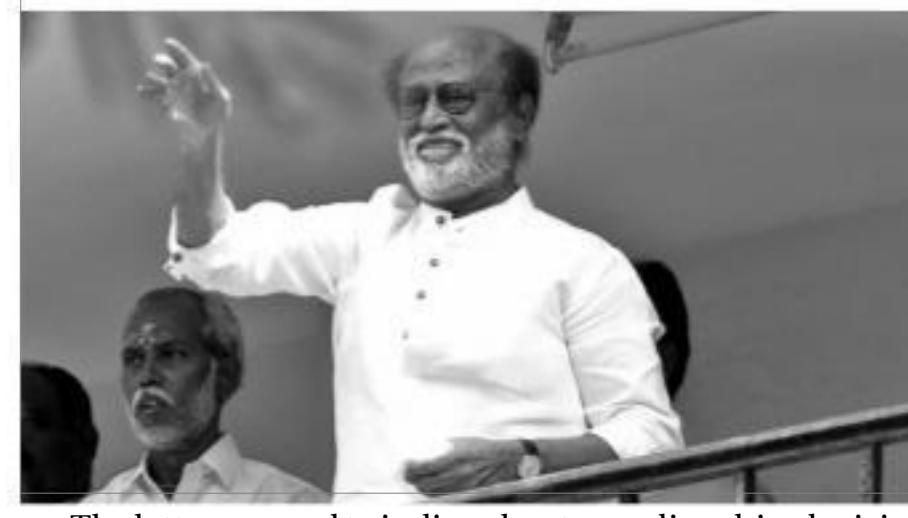
TMC's Arambagh MP upset with Kalyan: The Serampore Trinamul M.P Kalyan Banerjee who is all out to supposedly expose the hypocrisy of BJP leaders and even Trinamul leaders and workers who are allegedly keeping secret understanding with the BJP has this time managed to hurt the sentiment of Arambagh's Trinamul M.P Aparupa Poddar by raking up the Sarada and Narda scams. Last Sunday at a workers' meeting at Serampore, Banerjee remarked that all those involved in Sardha and Narda scam would join the BJP to get a clean chit. The Arambagh M.P Aparupa Poddar, who has been summoned by the central agency for interrogation, felt insulted over Banerjee's remarks.

Three killed in motorcycle-car collision: Three persons were killed when a motorcycle they were travelling on was hit by a four-wheeler on National Highway-512 in Malda district, a police said on Monday. All three of them, in the age group of 18-20 years, were drunk, he said. According to the officer, the motorcycle collided with the SUV, which was on its way to Balurghat, around 11 pm on Sunday in Gajoi police station area. The occupants of the SUV, abandoned the vehicle and fled the scene.

Will declare decision as soon as possible: Rajini

Discusses future course of action with district secretaries of fan club RMIM

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHENNAI, 30 NOVEMBER



Superstar-turned politician (reluctant) Rajinikanth once again put the fans and others on speculation on his political plunge as the actor chose to say he would do it soon after a crucial meeting with his fans club district secretaries in Chennai.

Rajinikanth today met district secretaries of his fans club, Rajini Makkal Mandram (RMM) and held a detailed discussion at his Raghavendra Kalyana Mandapam in Kodambakkam on the future course of action.

Later speaking to reporters at his Poos Garden residence, Rajinikanth, said: "I met the district secretaries. They expressed their views, I shared mine. They assured me that they will be on my side with whatever decision I make. I will announce my decision as soon as possible".

His announcement came in the backdrop of doctors advising him against entering politics. Last month, the actor had hinted that his long-awaited entry to electoral politics may be delayed.

A letter attributed to him cited doctors' concern over campaigning during the pandemic and the potential impact on Rajinikanth's health went viral. The actor denied the letter was not written by him, but said that the contents in it were true.

Since then, his fans and political observers were eagerly waiting for it, but the "reluctant politician" in Rajinikanth

kept pending his decision again and again. In December last year, RMM members were directed not to contest local body elections in Tamil Nadu and also not to campaign for any party or individual.

Recently, a letter, purportedly written by him created a buzz in the social media. The actor then said the letter in his name, which claimed that he might not enter politics as promised on the 2018 New Year eve due to the Covid-19 pandemic and due to his health condition was not written by him. But he confirmed that the contents in it about his health condition were true.

"As far as my political plans are concerned, a decision will be taken after consulting the RMM members," he had said recently.

Rajinikanth in March 2020 said he will not be the chief minister face of the party. He had said then: "I have never wanted to be chief minister. In fact, I can't even think of sitting in the Assembly and going through those pro-

ceedings! I will be the party chief, and the CM will be someone who is educated, who is farsighted.

"He will be a person who can govern. And the party chief will be like an Opposition leader and will be the first to question if anything wrong happens. We will not interfere with the governance and there will not be two parallel power centres," he said.

Assembly elections are due in Tamil Nadu during April-May 2021.

Lockdown relaxations:

Easing curbs further, Tamil Nadu chief minister K Palaniswami on Monday said social, political and entertainment events would be allowed in auditoriums and announced opening of colleges for final year undergraduate students from 7 December, adds PTI.

Beaches, including the Marina here and tourist places, shall be opened for public and swimming pools would be allowed to operate for training purposes, he said listing out fresh relaxations effective 1 December.

Undergraduate final year classes for all colleges and universities, including arts, science, technology, engineering, agriculture, fisheries and veterinary and hostels for them are permitted to start 7 December, the chief minister said adding from the same day, classes for UG and postgraduate medical and para-medical courses shall begin.

MiG-29K crash: Navy's search for missing pilot continues

MUMBAI, 30 NOVEMBER

Indian Navy's operation to locate the second pilot of the MiG-29K trainer aircraft which ditched off Goa on 26 November continued with extensive deployment of ships and aircraft, a Naval spokesperson said on Monday.

Intensive aerial, coastal and surface search by Indian Navy ships and aircraft is in progress to locate the second pilot Cdr Nishant Singh, a defence release said.

"Underwater search by divers and sea bed mapping using specialised equipment in vicinity of primary wreckage of MiG-29K is being undertaken," it said.

The Navy on Sunday said some debris of the aircraft, including landing gear, turbo charger, fuel tank engine and wing engine cowling, had been located.

The Russian-origin jet had taken off from aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya, and went down around 5 PM on Thursday, officials had said, adding that one pilot of the aircraft had been rescued.

The MiG-29K is an all-weather carrier-based multirole fighter aircraft developed by Russian aerospace company Mikoyan (MiG).

The Indian Navy had procured a fleet of 45 MiG-29Ks from Russia over a decade back at a cost of around \$2 billion to operate from INS Vikramaditya.

Chandrababu, 12 TDP MLAs suspended for storming podium

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD, 30 NOVEMBER

bench then introduced the motion to suspend the 13 MLAs, including Naidu. First the Speaker requested them to leave and after it went unheeded the marshalls were called in.

After being suspended, the TDP MLAs led by Naidu sat on the steps outside the Assembly in protest against the state government. The party's MLAs and MLCs also participated in a protest rally demanding compensation for the flood affected and alleged that the state was being run by cheats.

Battle for Hyderabad: The stage is set for polling on Tuesday in the Hyderabad civic polls which witnessed a high decibel campaign resembling an Assembly or parliamentary election with top leaders from different parties participating in the electioneering, adds PTI.

As many as 74,44,260 voters would exercise their franchise using ballot papers to elect their representatives in the 150-ward Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC), according to official data. The polling would begin at 7 AM and come to an end at 6 PM.

The total number of contesting candidates is 1,122.

The Telangana State Election Commission (SEC) has made elaborate arrangements for the balloting process by deploying 48,000 (including reserve) polling personnel and 52,500 strong police force.

ED raids ULCCS headquarters

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
30 NOVEMBER

The Enforcement Directorate (ED), probing the money laundering angle in the Kerala gold smuggling case, conducted a raid at the headquarters of Uralangal Labour Contract Cooperative Society (ULCCS) at Madappally near Vadakara in Kozhikode district for more than two hours on Monday morning.

The raid is related to the probe into the role of the chief minister's additional private secretary CM Raveendran in sanctioning projects for ULCCS. Opposition parties had been alleging that Raveendran was the key person in providing projects to ULCCS for a period of two years.

Meanwhile, the Left Front government in Kerala has banned PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) Private Limited from participating in any project of the Electronics and Information Technology Department for a period of two years.

The ban was imposed citing appointment of an unqualified individual and severe lapses in following the contract conditions.

It was PwC that cleared the appointment of Kerala gold smuggling case prime accused Swapna Suresh as Operations Manager of the Space Park based on the alleged recommendation of M Sivasankar, the chief minister's then principal secretary. Sivasankar is also arrested in the case. During investigation, it was found that Swapna's graduation certificate was fake.

The agency reportedly found the deals involving Raveen-

dran in its preliminary inspection conducted at the firms in the past two days.

ULCCS chairman Paleri Rameshan has, however, dismissed media reports which stated that the society was raided by the ED. He said it was only a visit by ED enquiring some information.

In a statement, Rameshan said while it was true that the ED came to the society's office, but only one officer came in and examined the records.

Meanwhile, the Left Front government in Kerala has banned PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) Private Limited from participating in any project of the Electronics and Information Technology Department for a period of two years.

The ban was imposed citing appointment of an unqualified individual and severe lapses in following the contract conditions.

It was PwC that cleared the appointment of Kerala gold smuggling case prime accused Swapna Suresh as Operations Manager of the Space Park based on the alleged recommendation of M Sivasankar, the chief minister's then principal secretary. Sivasankar is also arrested in the case. During investigation, it was found that Swapna's graduation certificate was fake.

The agency reportedly found the deals involving Raveen-

Another cyclonic storm brewing in Bay of Bengal

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER

east of Trincomalee (Sri Lanka) and 1,150 km east-southeast of Kanyakumari (India).

The IMD said it is going to intensify further into a Deep Depression during next 24 hours and convert into a cyclonic storm. It would then move west-northwestwards and cross Sri Lanka coast around evening of 2 December.

It would then move north-westwards thereafter and emerge into Comorin area on 3 December morning, the IMD forecasted.

It said sea condition would be rough to very rough over southeast and adjoining southwest Bay of Bengal from the night of 1 December in southwest Bay of Bengal, along and off east Sri Lanka coast, over Comorin Area, Gulf of Mannar, Tamil Nadu-Kerala coasts.

It said the latest satellite and ship observations indicate that the well-marked low-pressure area is forming over southeast Bay of Bengal and neighbourhood concentrated into a Depression and lay centered at southeast Bay of Bengal about 750 km east-south-

Tamil Nadu-Kerala coasts.

The government has advised fishermen not to venture into southeast and adjoining southwest Bay of Bengal from the night of 1 December over southwest Bay of Bengal, along and off east Sri Lanka coast, over Comorin Area, Gulf of Mannar and Tamil Nadu-Kerala coasts.

The government has advised fishermen not to venture into southeast and adjoining southwest Bay of Bengal from the night of 1 December over southwest Bay of Bengal, along and off east Sri Lanka coast, over Comorin Area, Gulf of Mannar and Tamil Nadu-Kerala coasts.

It alleged that the govern-

SITE VISIT



Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar at the inauguration of the first-of-its-kind 12.47 km-long AIIMS-Digha elevated road in Patna on Monday.

KSFE has turned into money laundering firm during Left Front rule: Chennithala

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
30 NOVEMBER

Opposition leader Ramesh Chennithala on Monday said during the past four-and-a-half years of Left Front rule, the Kerala State Financial Enterprise (KSFE) has turned into a money laundering firm.

Speaking to the media in Palakkad, Chennithala said serious discrepancies in chitties were found by Vigilance during raids on various branches of the institution.

Even as the raids snowballed into a political contro-

versy, it has come out that the raids were conducted based on a report from the state intelligence.

Finance minister has openly criticised the home department. Why is the CM silent even then?" he asked.

The Vigilance had raided 40 branches of the KSFE on Saturday and found serious irregularities in 35 of them.

State finance minister Thomas Isaac came out against the raid saying those who had conducted the raid are 'mentally unsound.'

Man Bahadur was in the left flank of the assaulting troops which came under intense artillery fire, stopping their advance.

Bahadur crawled up to one of the enemy bunkers and neutralised it with his rocket launcher but received a burst from a light machine gun.

He continued crawling towards another bunker and fired his rocket launcher for the second time, destroying another machine-gun post but taking a second hit. He soon succumbed to his wounds.

Bengal CM to kickstart 'door-to-door govt drive'

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 30 NOVEMBER

Twenty thousand camps will be organised across the state from tomorrow onwards till 30 January under the newly introduced 'Duare Sarkar' outreach programme at gram panchayat and municipal ward levels to provide government services at the doorsteps of the people.

Along with receiving applications and addressing queries or grievances on any government-sponsored scheme, the state government would hand over job cards under MGNREGS, caste certificates and rectify names or addresses in ration cards at these camps.

Inclusion of around 2.50 crore beneficiaries under the 'Sasthya Sathi' health scheme, which has recently been made

1971 war: Indian Army pays tribute to 2 bravehearts

SOUMYADIP MULLICK
KOLKATA, 30 NOVEMBER

On 30 November 1971, two Riflemen of Indian Army's Gorkha Rifles Battalion, tasked with capturing enemy bunkers in the Eastern Sector, showed exemplary courage in single-handedly destroying the adversary's machine-gun posts that were inflicting heavy casualties on the advancing infantrymen of Indian troops.

Ahead of Vijay Diwas next month, the Indian Army recalled the gallantry of the Riflemen who valiantly fought against Pakistani Army in the Liberation War, earning the Vir Chakra.

The victory and the sacrifices of Indian soldiers are commemorated during Vijay Diwas on 16 December, every year. Army sources remember-

ing the fateful day, recalled. Rifleman Moti Kumar Nawar was the leader of a light machine gun detachment of a Gorkha Rifles Battalion, ordered to capture a well-fortified enemy-held post on 30 November in the Eastern Sector. During the assault, the Indian troops came under effective small arms and artillery fire. Rifleman Nawar was seriously wounded in the thigh by a shell splinter but did not deter him from continuing with retaliatory fire using a light-machine gun from his hip which enabled the Indian troops to close-in on the enemy post but were subsequently caught in a heavy burst of machine gun fire, resulting in several casualties.

Realising the need to suppress the enemy artillery fire, he dropped his arms and charged towards the adversary's bunker with two hand grenades. He was grievously wounded by a machine gun fire-burst but managed to lob a grenade through a loophole and silenced the enemy's weapon.

He succumbed to his wounds thereafter. The braveheart was presented with a Vir Chakra posthumously for gallantry and determination of the highest order. Meanwhile, Rifleman Man Bahadur Pun was the commander of a rocket launcher team in Company of a



Waving a club

In 2015, the World Health Organisation's Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunisation characterised vaccine hesitancy as a "delay in acceptance or refusal of vaccination despite availability of vaccination services". Four years later, but before the coronavirus epidemic swept the world, WHO identified vaccine hesitancy as one of the top ten global health threats. But in 2020, with Covid-19 having emerged as a global scourge and with accelerated vaccine development programmes having brought the world within nodding distance of an antidote to the virus, concerns about the efficacy of vaccines are bound to dominate public discourse in the weeks and months ahead. This discourse was energised at the weekend with allegations that a 40-year-old participant from Chennai in a third phase clinical trial of one of the vaccine front-runners suffered a virtual neurological breakdown and impairment of cognitive functions 10 days after administration. In the crosshairs of the legal action initiated by the man's family is the AstraZeneca vaccine candidate manufactured by the Pune-based Serum Institute of India. The family has sought compensation of Rs 5 crore, but beyond the money involved, the complaint has cast a fearful shadow over the vaccine's side-effects. While the Drugs Controller of India has announced an investigation into the complaint, the response of Serum Institute of India must raise some eyebrows. The manufacturer has dismissed the charges as "malicious and misconceived" and threatened to seek damages of more than Rs 100 crore from the afflicted person, a business consultant. While claiming sympathy with the complainant's medical condition, it has said there is "absolutely no correlation" with the vaccine. It said, "The claim is malicious because the volunteer was specifically informed by the medical team that the complications he suffered were independent of the vaccine trial he underwent." This is in contrast to AstraZeneca's response to a report of a woman volunteer in the United Kingdom reporting neurological distress in September, and another volunteer reporting a neurological problem in July. On both earlier occasions, clinical trials were halted. Later, it was claimed that one volunteer suffered from multiple sclerosis, and the other had a spinal inflammatory disorder called transverse myelitis. But in the Indian case, the vaccine manufacturer has strayed away chosen to go on the offensive, threatening the complainant with a countersuit and hefty damages. This seems both unfortunate and insensitive.

For there is no dispute on two critical facts. One, the man did participate in the AstraZeneca vaccine trial. And two, he did a few days later apparently suffer considerable neurological damage. Whether or not the two events are related is for an investigation to determine, and that cannot be preempted by waving a club at a person in obvious distress. On the contrary, the vaccine manufacturer must join the investigation and allay fears that people have. Certainly, the report from Chennai has caused huge consternation and will likely add to the vaccine hesitancy many already feel.

Dons indeed

It has become something of a fashion to mock political correctness in recent times. That's patently unfair, given what is termed politically correct terminology is usually a manifestation of the pushback against tropes around gender, class, ethnicity, race, faith and caste which aid the demolition of stereotypes. To that extent, it has been an important aspect of sensitising society to the harm inflicted upon those who have been typecast and calling out the privilege of those responsible for it. For example, popularising the use in public discourse of humankind in place of mankind or s/he instead of the masculine singular, Afro-Caribbean as opposed to Coloured, developing countries and not Third World.. the list is long and spreads across geographies. But it is important that individuals from all strata of society feel included, non-stigmatised and can identify with the narrative. With this caveat in place, it has to be said there is something called overdoing it. Worse still when it is not just over-enthusiasm but a concerted attempt by an intellectual cartel which speaks almost exclusively to and within its echo chamber to snuff out all diversity of thought and expression. This academic mafia with followers in politics, media, cinema and literature has set itself up as the final arbiter of what is deemed acceptable and can easily be recognised by the air of smug self-affirmation which surrounds it. Most, if not all, who prefer to think for themselves have caved to this new dogma, if only to save themselves from accusations of being insensitive, exclusionary and worse. Not so, Cambridge University dons. They have opposed the University's latest bout of illiberal political correctness reflected in a series of updates to free speech rules proposed by the authorities last week, arguing that the changes are authoritarian. "The University has no right to demand that we be respectful towards all beliefs and practices. On the contrary, we have a duty to satirise and to mock them," the Campaign for Cambridge Freedoms, a group of academics who oppose the changes, asserts. In particular, the rule proposed by the Council of the 800-year-old institution requiring academics to be "respectful" of the diverse identities of others - however misogynistic, bigoted or vile - is problematic. Tolerance of others' identities as long as their manifestations are in conformity with the law of the land is not an issue. Critics say the proposed changes, no doubt meant well, could be used to undermine academics' freedom of speech rather than protect it given the vague nature of their wording. Sacking those who, say, mock individuals and/or ideas they disagree with would be perfectly kosher if the proposals get through. While the academics' protest has forced the University to put its proposals to vote, one suspects the Orwellian nightmare could well be unfolding much closer home for the West.

Songs of Protest

Today, country after country in Latin America has been out on the streets against growing poverty, frustration with non-performing models of governance, unrest on campus and environmental depredations. Many protesters are using their bodies as a political act



Latin America enjoys a unique place in the world. It is a world where politics and prose are one and the same. While politics intersects with literature, society and economy, Latin American writers are keeping alive the tradition of the uncertain border between reality and imagination. Perhaps Percy B Shelley had Latin America in mind when he wrote, "poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world."

Latin American writers like Pablo Neruda and Gabriel García Marquez had great influence on world writings. Latin America, as Marquez saw it, was born in a colonial mind thousands of miles across the Atlantic. And yet, it did sustain a vision of its own, a distinct memory, a different history enshrined in oral cultures, stories, legends and collective myth.

Latin American writers rejected Western aesthetics of "art for art's sake"; art for them is for life's sake. Literature is not just a mere string of words; it gives the writers a view of the world.

Mario Vargas Llosa campaigned for presidency in Peru, Gabriel García Marquez remained deeply involved in Colombian politics and Carlos Fuentes actively campaigned for democratic change in Mexico. Pablo Neruda was nominated for the Chilean presidency in 1970 but he gave his support to Salvador Allende who won. Some intellectuals and writers indeed became presidents.

Latin America's romance with football is no less spectacular. Football not just charms, it seduces. When the World Cup is on, in most Latin American homes organized religion and organized football can be seen vying for supremacy. When the going is not in their favour, many invoke the divine power - the religious ones their gods and football fanatics their heroes and stars for deliverance. Small wonder therefore that the French paper *L'Equipe* should frontpage Diego Maradona's demise, "God is dead".

In recent decades, Latin America has become a hotbed of political innovations. Ecuador and Bolivia have given Nature the "right to exist, persist, maintain and regenerate its vital cycles, structures, functions and its processes in evolution". Consulta previa (prior consultation) is

another significant legal framework that some countries in Latin America have institutionalized to deepen democracy. It is the right of the indigenous and ethnic groups to be consulted on matters affecting their culture and heritage.

Today, country after country has been out on the streets against growing poverty, frustration with non-performing models of governance, unrest on campus and environmental depredations. Many protesters are using their bodies as a political act. At a time when governments are taking away the rights that nations gave to their citizens, the protesters are claiming streets as belonging to people, not just for cars.

For instance, in New York one needs permission from local authorities if more than 20 people gather in a park. In many other cities in the US the street march is free only if it involves fewer than 100 people and if they occupy a single lane. In London political protests now are lumped with looters as threats to public order. The Indian government has taken a leaf from the US and the UK in restricting protests at India Gate, Jantar Mantar and the historic Ramleela Maidan..

Various organisations, indigenous and peasant groups in Latin America have created big movements which have captured the imagination of the world. The indigenous people in many countries are, today, well-organized at the grassroots, regional and national levels. They advocate for indigenous rights, access to land, autonomy, basic services, environmental protection and political representation.

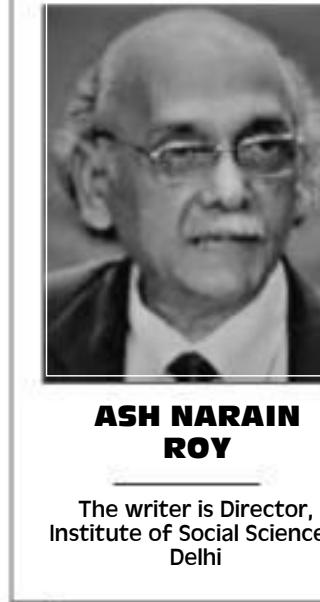
Street protests played an important role during the democratization process of the 1990s. Now these protests are for democratic consolidation and making politics accountable. These protests are also a way of asserting people power which has now acquired greater intensity. People are increasingly frustrated with the institutionalized road - voting, forming political parties, bargaining in parliament, funding political parties and think tanks.

They have now shifted towards what has been called "alternative

political technologies" like blocking roads, burning tires, picketing etc.

In recent years Rio's carnival has become a site for resistance and rebellion. This year, "long live resistance" was the theme of São Paulo's carnival. Earlier, it used to be a carnival of the oppressed. Now it is overly political. Art is now stoking the protest movements in Latin America. Demonstrators from Mexico to Argentina are relying on traditional art forms, dances, and music to hold their leaders accountable. The message is loud and clear. If elected leaders have made a mockery of politics, the masses too know how to mock them in public.

Music, dance and other forms



ASH NARAN ROY

The writer is Director, Institute of Social Sciences, Delhi

of art even at this time of pandemic have kept the heat on political leadership across the region.

In Brazil, supporters of former president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva have formed Free Lula Samba groups around the country. Anti-Bolsonaro groups too have proliferated.

Hundreds of indigenous women recently occupied the Ministry of Health, demanding the restoration of basic health and human services to their communities. Wearing their traditional outfits, women sang and danced inside the building to highlight their struggle.

The indigenous and marginalized groups in Latin America seem to have perfected the art of collective action. The region is witnessing the 'festivals of protest' or 'politics of crowd' like nowhere else. The indigenous people revel in feasting, costuming and dancing, which is long part of communal celebration of their culture.

Earlier, particularly during the military regimes, protesters met with brutal force of the police and the military. Artists and writers weren't spared either. When Salvador Allende was killed in a military coup in 1973, the notorious Pinochet regime took aim at 'nueva canción' (new music) by banning this kind of music and exiling many musicians of that genre. Today,

democracy has opened up spaces and the internet has provided various platforms which are not easy to crush.

Culture has now become a tool in the hands of protesters. People dance in the streets to the rhythms of cumbia and salsa music and march along to sounds of trumpets, trombones and horns. The indigenous and oppressed communities find healing in such cultural practices. Today these have been weaponised. Victor Jara's 1971 song "Derechos a la paz" (Right to peace) has become a resistance anthem for students and working-class protesters across the region.

The youth unrest is a ticking time bomb. Massive cuts in the education budgets, steep fee hike and unprecedented unemployment have led to the fear of the young generation being locked out of the economy. The millennials and Generation Z played a key role in forcing two presidents out in Peru within a week recently. Earlier the Chilean youth played no less important a role in forcing the government to dump the Pinochet-era constitution.

Earlier, it was believed that extremist forces on the left and the right were more politically committed and hence they participated in protests. Now almost every section of the people seems to be willing to take to the streets. In 2000, President Jamil Mahuad of Ecuador was forced to resign after a week of demonstrations by the indigenous people. Argentinian president Fernando de la Rúa fled office besieged by riots in 2001. A very powerful protest that opposed the tax system by President Sanchez de Lozada of Bolivia forced his ouster in 2003 after only 14 months in power.

Writers and intellectuals wield immense political influence in Latin America. Their writings are a source of respectability for the governments in power and provide, in equal measure, legitimacy to an array of revolts and movements. Peruvian novelist Mario Vargas once wondered why "being basically creators and artists", Latin American writers have ended up being "politicians, agitators, reformers, social publicists and moralists." Maybe, because "literature is fire", as he said way back in 1967 while receiving the Romano Gallegos Prize.

A MEMBER OF THE **ANN**
ASIAN VOICES

Suu Kyi's capabilities tested amid numerous issues

Efforts to weaken the military's involvement in politics are essential if Myanmar is to promote democratisation and achieve domestic stability. Aung San Suu Kyi's ability to take action is being called into question. In the Myanmar general election, the ruling National League for Democracy (NLD), led by State Counsellor Suu Kyi, the de facto leader of the government, won more than 80 per cent of the seats up for grabs, maintaining its sole majority. Suu Kyi's popularity has been demonstrated, but the future will be difficult. The NLD won a landslide in the previous election in 2015, marking a shift from the military-centred political rule that lasted more than half a century. However, the Constitution that was established under the military regime allocates one-fourth of the seats to military personnel, and the military still has a certain amount of influence.

The ruling party's victory over the main opposition party, which developed from the military regime, may reflect public wariness regarding a return to military-led politics. There has been little progress on revising the Constitution and ending the civil war between the military and ethnic minorities, issues that Suu Kyi included in her campaign pledges. Under these circumstances, she cannot avoid being criticised for a poor track record.

The Japan News

Ethnic minority parties dissatisfied with the government split with the ruling party and won seats independently. This should be interpreted as disappointment over the excessive consideration for the military. If Suu Kyi fails to achieve results in the future, her power to unify is certain to decline. The economy has also failed to grow. Problems including delays in infrastructure development and the corrupt nature of bureaucrats and others have hampered investment from abroad. The administration bears a heavy responsibility for failing to solve problems that have long been pointed out. Suu Kyi, who led the pro-democracy movement under military rule, faced oppression through such means as house arrest. Despite this, criticism of the government has become the target of crackdowns, even under the current administration. It betrays the expectations of the international community that supports Suu Kyi. Suu Kyi also has shown no presence regarding the issue of the persecuted Islamic minority Rohingya, about 700,000 of whom have become refugees and fled to neighbouring Bangladesh. The US and European countries are increasingly criticising Myanmar, calling the situation a grave humanitarian crisis. In Myanmar, where 90 per cent of the people are Buddhists, feelings of discrimination against the Rohingya are so strong that the issue did not surface as a point of contention in the election. However, the problem must not be allowed to be left unaddressed. Suu Kyi must accelerate such measures as granting nationality to the Rohingya that will lead to the return of refugees. Stability in Myanmar is extremely important for Japan, which advocates a "free and open Indo-Pacific." A large number of Japanese companies are also operating in Myanmar.

IN MEMORIAM

NATHANIEL JOHN — You will remain in our hearts forever.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

editor@thestatesman.com

Political role in NPAs

SIR, Non-performing Assets (NPA) are the single largest problem being faced by banks in India. The concept of categorization of assets as NPA began with the implementation of the Narasimha Committee Recommendations in 1992. Prior to that most banks were booking interest income on all loan accounts, without assessing whether the interest or principal amount due for repayment had been paid or not. It was foolishness. Once the recommendations were made operative, survival of three nationalized banks with headquarters in Kolkata and of Indian Bank was threatened.

Bank balance sheets are scrutinized by the chartered accounts at specified periods. The article 'The NPA Conundrum (November 30)' by Amarjit Chopra and Sabasachee Dash contains expert analysis of the NPA problem. The cause of the problems being faced by industries specified in the article is not lack of credit from the banks "for fear of business deci-

sions being subjected to subsequent scrutiny." The cited industries suffer from want of demand of their products on account of Covid-19. They are simply not in a position to absorb bank credit.

While discussing "principal factors for accumulating bad loans" the writers have omitted to mention the pressure exerted on

MUST ACT

SIR, The farmers' agitation has been going on for the past two months or so, but the situation has taken a grim turn with thousands of farmers and union activists on the march to Delhi. In a democracy, such a situation is unhealthy. We, as common citizens, can just sit with our fingers crossed. I hope that the Union Government will find a pragmatic political solution as the farmers are very significant stakeholders in the national economy.

Yours, etc., Chandan Kumar Nath, Guwahati, 30 November.

such advances were not repaid. Although the total amount of such advances was proportionately small, it eroded the culture of repayment of bank loans.

Yours, etc., Sanjiv Ghatak, Narendrapur, 30 November.

DIVISIVE LAWS

SIR, After Madhya Pradesh government's announcement that it would table a bill to prosecute 'love jihad', Uttar Pradesh has now passed the UP Prohibition of Unlawful Religious Conversion ordinance making forced religious conversions - whose meaning will include conversion for marriage - punishable by a tough jail term and fine.

The UP ordinance mandates that those willingly wanting to convert for marriage need to inform the district magistrate two months in advance. The law will cause great difficulty for interfaith couples.

Not only does it undermine personal liberty and free will, it also incentivises hooligans, who may take advantage of the advance notice to intimidate couples.

These draconian laws not only contradict BJP's long stated

view of ushering in a Uniform Civil Code, they also invert the principle of 'minimum government, maximum governance' enunciated by PM Narendra Modi by giving the state a veto on personal matters. If these laws are pushed through, New Delhi must prepare for likely unflattering portrayals in international media comparing India to South Africa under apartheid. Among other things it would be a blow to Indian diplomacy, which championed the anti-apartheid movement.

At a time when the country is facing multiple challenges from the Covid-19 pandemic and economic recession to the twin security threats posed by China and Pakistan, the people of this nation need to be united. Divisive and polarising 'love jihad' laws undermine such unity and aid our adversaries.

The BJP central leadership should tell its state governments to reverse course. A better path would be to simplify the provisions of the Special Marriage Act that allows interfaith couples to marry without converting.

Yours, etc., Vandana, Chandigarh, 26 November.



banks by politicians to make advances to dishonest borrowers. Glaring instances are those of Vijay Mallya, Nirav Modi and others. The writers' belief that lending to the priority sector is a reason for accumulation of NPA is not correct. In most cases, priority sector advances were made in the past under political pressure. Bulk of

The world vs China?

HARSHA KAKAR

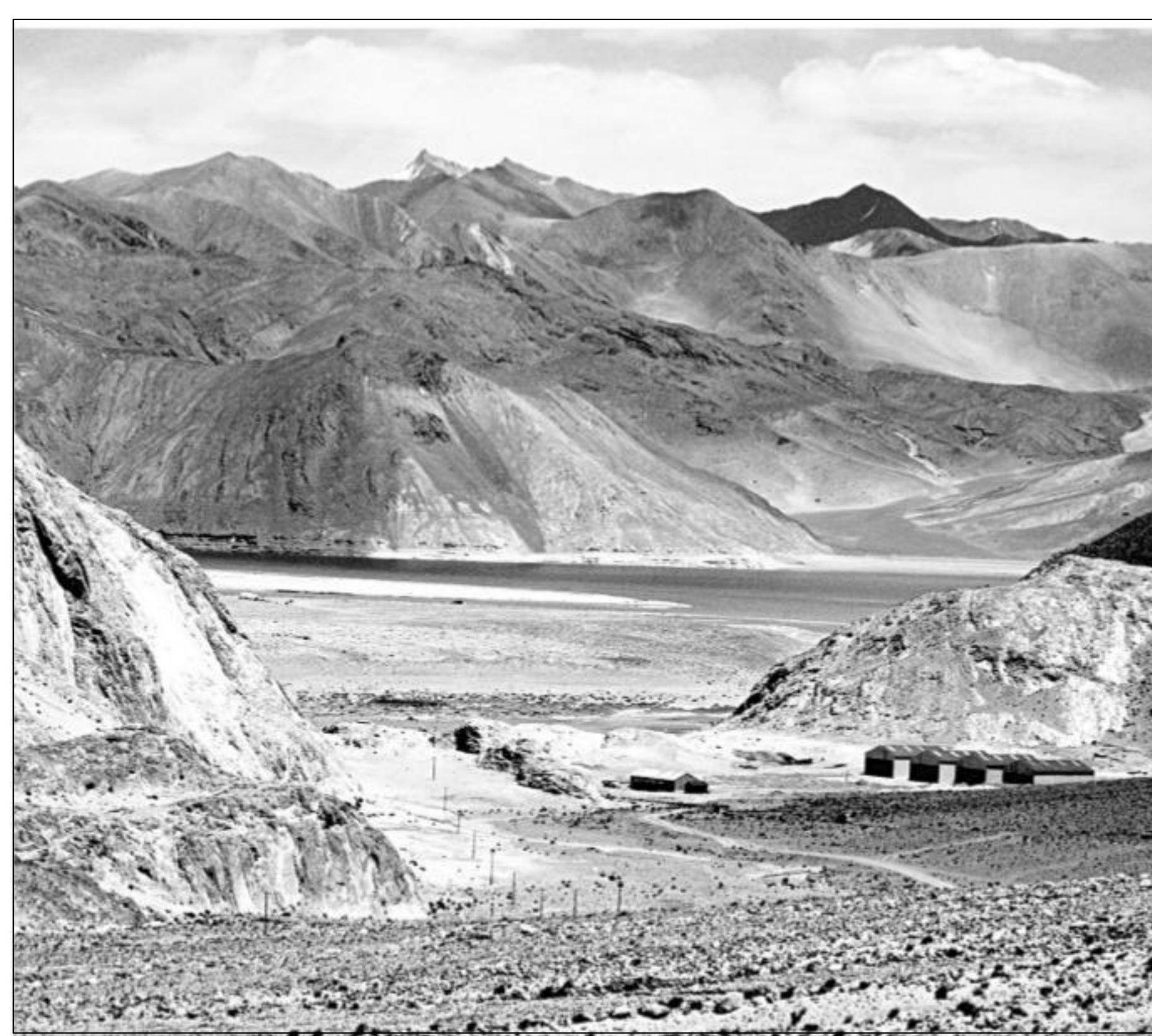
The India-China standoff is continuing through the winter. Despite eight rounds of talks, no end appears on the horizon. The dispute remains on the sequence and methodology of disengagement. While China insists on India disengaging and pulling back from the Kailash Heights, south of Pangong Tso, India demands a Chinese pullback from north of Pangong Tso and also desires to include Dapsang in the discussions. The Chinese defence spokesperson stated last week that India should meet China halfway to safeguard 'peace and stability with sincerity' in the border regions.

Simultaneously, China faces global criticism for hiding details of the pandemic, enabling travel from Wuhan to all parts of the globe leading to its global spread while blocking internal movement from affected areas, thus slowing domestic cases. Its claim that the virus existed in parts of the globe before emerging in China is ignored. Chinese offensive actions in the South China Sea against Taiwan and the crackdown in Hong Kong are being criticized.

Global challenges have led to European nations to join the US in enhancing naval presence in the Indo-Pacific. Chinese attempts to win over Europe have been rebuffed. European nations have turned down Chinese demands to permit Huawei to enter their markets. Europe, on the other hand, is enhancing trade ties with Indo-Pacific countries, bypassing China.

The RCEP may have been signed but that has not ended the creation of coalitions against China. The QUAD may currently be a grouping of likeminded democratic nations; however, Japan and Australia are discussing a bilateral defence pact against China. China pushing ASEAN nations to agree on a code of conduct on the South China Sea based on Chinese perceptions is unlikely to succeed.

China's Belt Road Initiative is not progressing as per plans. Most countries where China has invested are unable to repay loans due to economic impact on account of the pandemic. Chinese economy, despite all claims, is facing problems of unpaid loans. Currently Chinese total debt is 350 per cent of its GDP. Reports state



that China is slowing down investments in BRI projects. Even the CPEC, which is its pilot project, is behind schedule. Nations which had agreed to Chinese projects are now backing out. Myanmar, Thailand and Maldives are examples.

Companies are moving manufacturing out of China. Apple has moved its manufacturing to Vietnam while Samsung is moving to India. Other companies are exploring ASEAN and South Asian nations. The world is uniting to move supply chains away from China, despite the RCEP. Many nations, including India, are closely monitoring Chinese investments and blocking them in key sectors. All this is in response to Chinese handling of

the pandemic and its offensive diplomatic and military actions.

Nations are crossing Chinese red lines at will. Earlier diplomatic and military visits to Taiwan were avoided, but no longer. The recent visit by two US secretaries and a Rear Admiral to the island as also the visit by the Czech speaker are indicators. Lobsang Sangay, President of the Central Tibetan Administration, was invited to the White House to meet the newly appointed US Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues, Robert Destro. This was the first visit by a Tibetan leader to the White House in six decades.

Simultaneously, China is facing criticism for Xinjiang, Tibet and Hong Kong. When Wang Yi, the Chinese foreign

minister visited Europe earlier this year, he was questioned on Xinjiang and Hong Kong. Chinese attempts to warn the global community on its red lines is being ignored. The world is uniting to demand the admission of Taiwan into the WHO, despite Chinese objections.

China is facing a united globe, challenging its actions and questioning its behaviour. It needs allies, apart from Pakistan and North Korea, which it currently lacks. Russia is amongst the few nations which avoids criticizing China as long as China does not comment on Russian actions. China is almost alone.

India was always careful in its relations with China. Despite having

moved closer to the US and becoming an active member of the QUAD, it avoided taking any action which was detrimental to China. It strictly adhered to its One-China policy, avoided criticising China on internal matters and refused to give major diplomatic space to the Dalai Lama despite China not adhering to the One-China policy. It overlooked China-Pakistan proximity and construction of the CPEC through disputed Gilgit Baltistan. India even ignored its growing trade deficit in the belief that trade coupling would maintain sanctity of the LAC.

India refused to join the BRI and RCEP as these would be detrimental to the country. However, it never objected to others joining. India enhanced ties with China to ensure sanctity of borders. The Chinese intrusion in Ladakh stabbed India in the back, compelling it to counter the aggression by employing every avenue. India blocking Chinese investments, its mobile apps and restricting imports, alongside an unofficial national call to boycott Chinese products, have reduced trade deficit and opened doors for decoupling, especially in the case of IT and smaller products.

An article in The Financial Times of 27 November, covered the impact of India banning Chinese Apps, specifically on companies based in Hangzhou. It covered examples of companies such as Club Factory, Alibaba, Tencent and TikTok, and detailed their financial losses compelling them to lay off employees. It is evident that many more companies would have been impacted. Money Control, in an article of 30 June quotes Global Times as stating that Indo-China trade has dropped by 50 per cent since the standoff.

China, by its offensive actions, has awoken a sleeping and friendly India, compelling it to take measures, in addition to military, to hit back. It has pushed India into joining global groupings against it, while defending itself vigorously in Ladakh. Simultaneously, with visits by the Foreign Minister, foreign secretary and NSA to Seychelles, Nepal and Sri Lanka, India is pushing back against Chinese influence in South Asia.

China should know that India is no pushover, and the decision on whether it needs India as an ally, enemy or competitor is in its hands. India is comfortable with either choice.

The writer is a retired Major-General of the Indian Army.

100 YEARS AGO

OCCASIONAL NOTE

A valedictory address to the American Society of Naturalists by Professor E.M. East, of Harvard, contains some interesting forecasts and speculations about the results of the increasing pressure of the world's population in the near future. For, in spite of everything, the population of the globe is increasing. Professor East estimates the world's population at present at about 1,700 millions, increasing at the rate of 14 to 16 millions every year. Most of the increase is in the white races. China's population of 300 millions is practically stationary, not so much on account of the periodical famines and floods but because the soil is incapable of carrying an increased number of persons. Domestic animals have almost disappeared and infanticide is practiced. Although the birth-rate in most civilised lands is steadily decreasing, preventive medicine by lowering the death-rate has maintained an increase in population. If the rate of increase in the population of the United States is maintained the inhabitants within the lifetime of the grandchildren of persons still living will number more than a billion. America has to face a special problem in the fact that the birth-rate of the foreign population now coming largely from eastern and southern Europe is much greater than the birth-rate of the Anglo-Saxon stock, so much so that within a century that stock will form only a small fraction of the whole. Probably the United States will severely restrict immigration.

NEWS ITEMS

SERIOUS FIRE IN PESHAWAR

Delhi, Nov 30
A serious fire causing damage to the extent of over two-and-a-half lakhs of rupees and razing to the ground nearly seventy houses occurred in Peshawar on Friday. It originated in the house of a sick man named Amir Chand in Ram-pura Mohalla, and presumably, either the lamp which was burning near his overturned, or a spark escaped from his hukka. The room caught fire at 9 o'clock and Amir Chand was burnt to death. His two relatives also received very serious injuries which may prove fatal. There was some delay in informing the fire brigade which arrived at 11 PM. Several houses were demolished to prevent the fire spreading. The local Seva Samiti also rendered great aid, but it was not till nine o'clock in the morning that the fire was completely under control.

TROUBLE AT PORT SAID

Allahabad, Nov 30
There appears to have been industrial trouble again at Port Said, but for the moment things are quiet there. The cause has ostensibly been an economic one, says the Pioneer correspondent. Workers of certain firms handling the shipping passing through the Suez Canal have struck for higher wages, but there is every reason to believe that discontent has been fomented by Bolshevik agents, and, in view of an abortive attempt made to bring out the Canal Company's employees, who having recently received substantial increases in pay had no cause to complain, it would look as if a serious attempt was being made to paralyse shipping through the Suez Canal. Troops have now been drafted into the Port Said area, and the authorities appear to have the situation well in hand.

ST. ANDREW'S DAY IN BOMBAY

St Andrew's Church was crowded yesterday evening with a large and distinguished company on the occasion of the St Andrew's day service and the unveiling of a memorial by his Excellency the Governor. The service was conducted by the Rev. A.M. Neilson, who preached a sermon explaining the life and character of St. Andrew. At the conclusion of the service his Excellency the Governor unveiled the memorial which has been placed on the wall behind the pulpit. This memorial is placed here to the Glory of God and in honour of nursing sisters, naval and military officers, and men belonging to the Church of Scotland and other Presbyterian churches, who died in Bombay in the service of the Empire.

PLEASANT CEREMONY

Nagpur, Nov 30
On Saturday evening a pleasant function took place on the Bishop Cotton School play-ground, Nagpur, when the friends of the Rev. Edward R. Day assembled to bid him farewell and Good-speed. Mr. Day has been in Nagpur for three and a half years, and has taken a very keen interest in all matters generally and in the Bishop Cotton School particularly, where, in addition to his arduous duties connected with the parish, he has often taken the classes for two or three hours daily during the absence of the teachers. He is now proceeding to England under the instructions of his medical adviser.

Welcome reset in India-Nepal ties

ATUL K THAKUR

While diplomacy can't be sentimental, essentially it should be courteous. Harsh Vardhan Shringla, India's foreign secretary, was in Kathmandu, and it is indeed heart-warming how India's top diplomatic envoy can speak fluent Nepali and understands the norms that safeguard India-Nepal relations. Shringla's visit to Nepal followed two recent high-level visits from India - by Indian Army Chief General Manoj Mukund Naravane earlier this month and Samant Goel, chief of India's external intelligence agency Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW) in the third week of October.

Without linking the visits to a common cause, the rapprochement from both sides should be welcomed. During the last three high-profile visits from India, Prime Minister KP Oli made himself available to meet the visiting officials, giving the required impetus to the partnership. What does it suggest? India is keeping business as usual and working on the projects undertaken before the China-originated coronavirus flattened the world, and the boundary issue suddenly found extra prominence. It would be too naive to say anything else of a significant nature has taken place in the partnership. Apparently, a choice makes a big difference either way.

The Oli government had completely misunderstood a very crucial stage in history and abstained from pursuing 'enlightened self-interest' when China did everything possible to alter the boundaries of its neighbours. Reportedly, the Tourism Min-



istry has once again proposed resuming flight services to India more than one and a half months after its first proposal was rejected outright by the government amid soured relations with the southern neighbour over a boundary dispute. To keep an independent and balanced worldview, the most important virtue to be relied on is a 'sense of proportion'.

Prithvi Narayan Shah called Nepal a 'yam between two boulders' referring to India and China. For British India, Nepal was a buffer zone between China and India. In the present time and context, by not aligning domestic policies with international affairs, Nepal has a better chance to practise a serious non-alignment policy. Remarkably, Nepal

has a long history of sovereignty and independent status. Even nonconformists will not forget that the Gorkha Kingdom appealed to the British Empire for protection from a Chinese attack through Tibet. The first British mission came to Nepal in 1793 followed by the next one in 1802.

The collaboration didn't last long, however, and the Anglo-Nepal War or Gorkha War (1814-16) was fought between the Gorkha Kingdom and the British East India Company. A British victory and the 1816 Sugauli Treaty ended the war. With the treaty, Nepal renounced its territorial claims on the Tarai, and parted with its conquests west of the Kali River that reached up to the Sutlej River. Nepal could retain its independence, though

it had to be under the supervision of a British resident sent to look after the protectorate. Nepal succeeded in not letting the British resident be a 'controlling agent' of the British East India Company that ruled its immediate neighbour India.

In 2020, it is still worthwhile to look back and know well about the choices exercised by Nepal, and the glorious journey of overcoming the challenges. With hindsight, a saner act would be self-introspection rather than blaming the neighbours. The neighbours are not the 'boulders', Nepal is not a 'yam'. In fact, it should not be a conduit for 'bridge diplomacy'. As a country with immense possibilities and aspirations, Nepal should think of a free-spirited move in its foreign affairs. It should give 'realism' well-deserved traction. However, this should not be confused as a new system bound to overlook the conventional wisdom that helps in knowing friends and adversaries in difficult times.

As a matter of fact, Nepal can do without seeing India and China in comparison. This will be particularly helpful in avoiding any impending consequences, especially avoiding the risk of turning into a 'geopolitical hotspot' in South Asia. Nepal, a modern republic, should strengthen its democracy and democratise its institutions. It should underline a development strategy that has an inclusive nature. To bring it into action, a participatory model should be followed. For managing its affairs in the world with new vigour and progressive thinking, Nepal has to bring the home in order. Realising it will be a true diplomatic nicety.

The visit of the Indian foreign

secretary will help India's development partnership assistance to Nepal. It is expected that with the ongoing and potential infrastructure projects, connectivity between the two countries will see promising times ahead. Timing is particularly crucial for cooperation in coping with the existential challenges with Covid-19. As the first vaccine is about to be launched in India, Nepal can stay assured of all assistance from the southern neighbour.

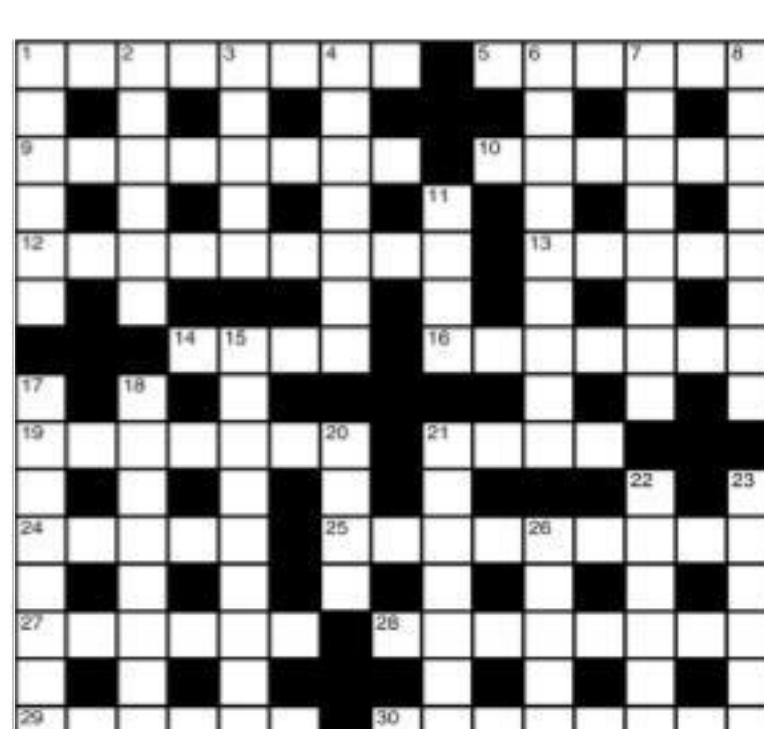
Also, it is high time that economic cooperation was given its due to ensure a post-pandemic economic rebound. The bilateral engagement has to be proactive. Long-pending matters related to treaties and territories should get an official mechanism so they can be tabled and sorted out with a trust-based approach. Such matters should not stop Nepal's top leadership from engaging with India and resuming flight operations with the required pandemic-related caution. The policies should have humane consideration. The unprecedented crisis merits a brave counter-response. In testing times like this, there is need to work together to save lives and livelihoods. Nepal should reciprocate, and this will positively support millions of people across the border.

Without prefixing, the Indian envoy termed Nepal a 'friend' of India. In essence, a friend for all seasons. He said that not in the Queen's language, but in chaste Nepali. He has reset the tone for benign diplomacy. This is the need of the hour and should be taken seriously. In equal measure, decision-makers of both countries should work on it and clear the fog. We all should rise to the occasion.

The Kathmandu Post/ANN

NO 28151

CROSSWORD



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

- 1 Piece of furniture having unpleasant smell? Fine when in church (8)
- 5 Hot priest shows wit (6)
- 9 Normal People full of sex appeal? That's cheesy! (8)
- 10 Case of Marianne disrupting class, abandoning school - some spirit! (6)
- 12 I relation to 'heat': time woman's getting male partner (9)
- 13 Flower girl found at Platform 25 (5)
- 14 Connell regularly meets Peggy, at last alone (4)
- 16 Porter perhaps keeps on offering student accommodation? (7)
- 19 Meat: food rejected in German city (7)
- 21 It's nonsense to be quiet (4)
- 24 Correct answer will reveal body parts (5)
- 25 26 unhappy about smooth melodic

- 27 Here in Ireland, couple's without love (largely what love is, they say) (6)
- 28 Split vote in Parliament (8)
- 29 Required: E, N and D, sorted in various quantities (6)
- 30 I listened to Fado performance, end of July, in the sun (3,2,3)

DOWN

- 1 Somewhere off the beaten track, young person starts to visit Roman city (6)
- 2 Writer of ordinary book's nothing to Lorraine (6)
- 3 The best thing that goes with strawberries (5)
- 4 Johnson's occasionally in blue during visit (7)
- 6 People wasting money stop eating chips? On the contrary (9)

- 7 Suddenly moved back from playground that's greasy (8)
- 8 They keep records of unbelievable husband leaving Maidenhead (8)
- 11 Time together to become less intense, they say (4)
- 15 Deranged Etonian securing university grant without bombast? Sweet! (9)
- 17 Playwright's woman managed to steal papers (8)
- 18 Friendly guy supporting Jamie after dropping clothes (8)
- 20 Musical performance on island (4)
- 21 Taking part in attempt to create threesome (7)
- 22 Louis XIV discovered Germany's cruel (6)
- 23 Footballer, one given welcome by coach Hodgson (6)
- 26 County should look into golden opportunities for starters (5)

NOTE: Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required. (By arrangement with The Independent, London)



The amalgamation of LVB has enabled us to provide stability to LVB's depositors and employees

SUROJIT SHOME
CEO, DBS BANK INDIA

THUMBNAILS

Ola appointment: Ola on Monday said it has appointed former General Motors executive Jose Pinheiro as head of global manufacturing and operations for its electric business. In this role, Pinheiro will spearhead Ola's ambitions to build world-class manufacturing facilities, starting with the world's largest scooter factory, and then expanding to multiple such facilities across India, a statement said. These manufacturing facilities will enable Ola to rapidly bring to market its wide range of two-wheeler products currently under development, it added.

PTI

PhonePe: Leading digital payments platform PhonePe, in a media statement, announced that it has emerged as the largest platform for buying digital gold with over 35 per cent market share. The company also said that it has seen a more than six-fold jump in the volume of gold sold in the festival season this year (21 days starting from Dussehra till Diwali).

SNS

BMW launch: BMW India has announced the launch of the all-new BMW X5 M Competition in India. The supremely powerful sports activity vehicle (SAV) is designed and engineered to offer unrivalled performance and signature attributes of BMW M, said a Press release from the company. The all-new BMW X5 M is now available across BMW dealerships in the country as a completely built-up unit, it added.

SNS

Plum cash chase: Employee insurance provider Plum has announced fundraising of \$4.1 million, led by Sequoia Capital India's Surge and Tantling Venture Partners. Existing investors, including Incubate Fund, also participated in the round. The funding will be used to expand into new markets, build new distribution channels, hire top talent and further develop product and tech, said a release.

SNS

S&P retains growth forecast at (-)9%

It projected the economy to grow at 10 percent in the next financial year

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER

S&P Global Ratings today retained its forecast of 9 per cent contraction in the Indian economy for the current fiscal, saying even though there are now upside risks to growth but it will wait for more signs that Covid infections have stabilised or fallen.

S&P in its report on Asia Pacific, projected the Indian economy to grow at 10 percent in the next fiscal.

"We retain our growth forecast of negative 9 per cent in fiscal 2020-2021 and 10 per cent in fiscal 2021-2022. While there are now upside risks to growth due to a faster recovery in population mobility and household spending, the pandemic is not fully under control. We will wait for more signs that infections have stabilised or fallen, together with high-frequency activity data for the fiscal year third quarter, before changing our forecasts," S&P said.

According to the official

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK



I We retain our growth forecast of negative 9 per cent in fiscal 2020-2021 and 10 per cent in fiscal 2021-2022. While there are now upside risks to growth due to a faster recovery in population mobility and household spending, the pandemic is not fully under control. We will wait for more signs that infections have stabilised or fallen, together with high-frequency activity data for the fiscal year third quarter, before changing our forecasts.

data released last week, Indian economy recovered faster than expected in the September quarter as a pick-up in manufacturing helped GDP clock a lower contraction of 7.5 per cent. Indian economy had contracted 23.9 per cent in April-June quarter of this fiscal.

The Reserve Bank of India in October projected India's economy to contract by 9.5

per cent this fiscal. It said the industrial sector is leading and the output is now above levels from a year ago, helped by rising demand for consumer goods.

Investment recovered faster than consumption in the second quarter, partly due to resumption of stalled projects. The private sector drove the recovery as spending resumed and households

and firms moved more toward normalised activity.

S&P said inflation should ease from recent highs, albeit gradually.

"We project that headline consumer price inflation just above the mid-point of the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) forecast a range of 2 to 6 per cent through 2021. One-off factors should ease, including food-supply disruptions and supply constraints related to earlier lockdowns. But the pass-through to core inflation, currently near 6 per cent, suggests that inflation persistence remains a challenge," it said.

S&P said it does not expect much fiscal easing in its projections.

"Past action has targeted low-income households, with substantial welfare effects, but a broader fiscal effort has been lacking. We do not see this changing. At the same time, the Reserve Bank of India will be constrained from cutting rates and we anticipate rates will start normalising upward from 2021 onwards," it added.

AI pilot unions seek minister's intervention on wage cut issue

MUMBAI, 30 NOVEMBER

Air India pilot unions IPG and ICPA today sought the civil aviation minister's intervention on the wage cut issue and also requested for an "urgent" meeting with him on several other issues.

"In our meetings in September, you had given us an assurance to look into our grievances positively. While other airlines are rolling back the austerity pay cuts for their pilots, the wage cut for Air India pilots further increased from October.

"This is completely divorced from market reality and equally unfair to pilots of Air India and its subsidiaries," the pilot unions stated in the joint letter addressed to civil aviation minister Hardeep Singh Puri.

The unions lamented that pilots of Air India and its two subsidiary airlines continue to get 70 per cent less wages. "Through our representations and meetings, we have shown you how Air India management's cost cutting (move) is malafide and disproportionate and does not have any semblance to the aviation industry standards," according to the letter.

Bank credit growth to remain slower in near term: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI, 30 NOVEMBER

od as compared with a growth of 3.4 per cent in October 2019.

Home loans, which have a large share in retail credit, registered a growth of 8.2 per cent in October 2020 (lowest in last five years).

"This indicates though banks are offering various festive offers on home loans, individuals are not taking fresh loans (e.g. Kotak Mahindra Bank, Bank of Baroda, Axis Bank, HDFC Bank reduced interest rate by 10-15 bps on home loans)," the report said.

The rating agency said the bank credit growth from May 2020 (Rs 91.08 lakh crore) to October 2020 (Rs 92.13 lakh crore) has been mainly supported by disbursements in the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) scheme which is extended further till 31 March 2021.

In October 2020, disbursements under Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme were Rs 1.52 lakh crore, which is higher than gross bank credit growth of Rs 1 lakh crore (in absolute terms from May 2020 to October 2020), it said.

Airtel, Nokia join hands for 5G network in Kenya

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER

Bharti Airtel's Africa arm and telecom gear maker Nokia today announced a three-year deal to modernise network in Nairobi with high-speed 4G, and deploy 5G-ready equipment.

The deployment of 5G-ready network started in June and will cover hundreds of sites, the statement said.

It will include upgrading existing 2G, 3G and 4G radio access network (RAN) coverage in urban, semi-urban, highways, tourist spots and central business districts in Nairobi and the rest of Kenya, it added.

Nokia's network infrastructure will also offer Airtel Kenya the option to smoothly transition to 5G when necessary.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER

The upgraded network will deliver enhanced connectivity to customers of Airtel Kenya and access to new, high-speed data services.

Airtel Kenya chief executive officer P D Sarma in the statement said: "We are in the midst of rolling out our network to enhance coverage along with modernisation of our data network that will help us deliver improved, high-speed data services to our customers."

He added that this will allow customers seamless coverage enhancing their browsing experience further. "We are excited to partner with Nokia on this project. Its technology portfolio improves our network quality considerably and also allows us to move to 5G services in the future."

LVB customers can access all services, says DBS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER

on LVB was lifted from 27 November, and the banking services were restored immediately with all branches, digital channels and ATMs functioning as usual.

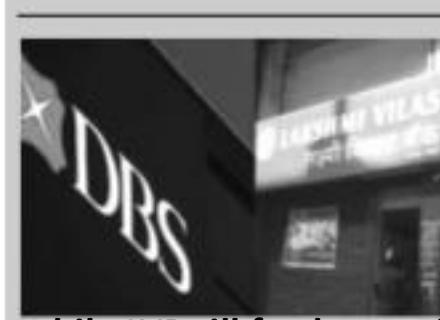
"LVB customers can continue to access all banking services. The interest rates on savings bank accounts and fixed deposits are governed by the rates offered by the erstwhile LVB till further notice," DBS Bank said.

All LVB employees will continue to be in service and are now employees of DBIL on the same terms and conditions of service as under LVB, it added.

The Indian arm of Singapore's DBS said its team is working closely with LVB colleagues to integrate LVB's systems and network into DBS over the coming months.

Once the integration is complete, customers will be able to access a wider range of products and services, including

AMALGAMATION OF LVB & DBS



► LVB customers can continue to access all banking services. The interest rates on savings bank accounts and fixed deposits are governed by the rates offered by the erstwhile LVB till further notice, DBS Bank said.

► All LVB employees will continue to be in service and are now employees of DBIL on the same terms and conditions of service as under LVB, it added.

► The Indian arm of Singapore's DBS said its team is working closely with LVB colleagues to integrate LVB's systems and network into DBS over the coming months.

The bank said it is well capitalised and its capital adequacy ratio (CAR) will remain above regulatory requirements even after the amalgamation.

Additionally, DBS Group will inject Rs 2,500 crore (Singapore \$463 million) into DBIL to support the amalgamation and for future growth. This will be fully funded from DBS Group's existing resources.

DBS has been in India since 1994 and converted its India operations to a wholly-owned subsidiary, DBIL, in March 2019. On 17 November, a 30-day moratorium was imposed on the crisis-ridden LVB restricting cash withdrawal at Rs 25,000 per depositor.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) simultaneously placed in public domain a draft scheme of amalgamation of LVB with DBIL, a banking company incorporated in India under the Companies Act, 2013, and having its registered office at New Delhi.

PUBLIC SECTOR ROUNDUP

ITPO holds 43rd AGM



The 43rd Annual Meeting of India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO) was organised on 24 November, through video conferencing at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.

'SAMVIDHAN DIWAS'



NSIC CMD Vijayendra read the Preamble to the Constitution with all the NSIC employees to commemorate the 'Samvidhan Diwas' on 26 November.

NBCC bags 'great place to work' recognition

NBCC won the coveted status of 'Great Place to Work'. This is the second consecutive year when NBCC has received this celebrated and distinguished status. Every year, 'The Great Place to Work' Institute, a global benchmarking authority on workplace cultures after their extensive assessment on quality of employees experience (Trust Index) and cultural audit of more than 10,000 organisations from over 60 countries certifies organisations as 'Great Place-to-Work'.

Even during the global pandemic, HRM team managed to provide healthy and safe working environment to their employees engaged across various locations.

SAIL's 'jan-andolan' to fight Covid pandemic



Steel Authority of India (SAIL) Limited intensified its involvement in 'jan-andolan' to fight against Covid pandemic. In a message to employees before the onset of the festive season, Dharmendra Pradhan, Minister for Petroleum & Natural Gas and Steel, said, "The Covid pandemic has changed the way we live, work, think and what we imagine our future to be."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has rightly called for a

SCOPE organises virtual symposium on cyber security

Standing Conference of Public Enterprises (SCOPE) organised a webinar on 'Cyber Security in era of Work from Home (WFH)' in association with Deloitte. Partha Sarathy, Vishal Jain, partners, Deloitte India; Atul Sotgi, DG, SCOPE; Deepak Agarwal, ED, IOCL; Ashutosh Vasant, director, RailTel addressed the participants. Around 500 participants including Board Members from PSEs attended the webinar through SCOPE's various platforms.

factoring in the current and the future demand across the country. "We are establishing a new production plant to manufacture high-end cycles in India," said Onkar Singh Pahwa, CMD, Avon cycles.

BHEL's new record

Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL), the country's largest and oldest capital goods manufacturing company manufactured and tested (short circuit) India's highest rating Auto Transformer at the National High Power Test Laboratory (NHTPL) at Bina in Madhya Pradesh.

The intention behind establishing this state-of-the-art plant is to deliver mass premium and high-end cycles,

Avon Cycles to set up a new unit

Avon Cycles Ltd., one of the India's leading bicycle manufacturing companies plans to set up a new unit in Neelam, near Ludhiana, a city that upholds the spirit of Punjab.

This plant will manufacture aluminium frames, steel frames and complete bicycles. The intention behind establishing this state-of-the-art plant is to deliver mass premium and high-end cycles,

'Targeted therapy a boon for lung cancer patients'

Lung cancer is no longer only a smokers' disease and almost 30 per cent of the lung cancer patients are non-smokers. Lung cancer can happen at any age and hence warrants early detection to render a better quality of life to the patients. In case of non-smokers, passive smoking, pollution or

PFC & REC offer ₹8520 cr to STPL's Buxar thermal project



Thermal project is expected to be commissioned in FY 2023-24 and generate approximately 9828 Million Units of energy to meet the future power requirement of Bihar and other States.

TRIFED scales up Goa tribal plan

With Van Dhan gaining traction on Mann ki Baat, and changing tribal lives all over the country, TRIFED is taking its plan of Tribal Empowerment and drawing up plans to launch 200 TRIFOOD projects, 3000 Van Dhan Clusters to get almost 25 lakh tribals on the road to entrepreneurship.

A virtual meeting held on 26 November to finalise the Goa Tribal Development Plan.

The main agenda of the meeting was to finalise

the Tribal Development Plan for the state of Goa for the establishment of 25 Van Dhan Vikas Kendras, 1 Tribal food park, 2 showrooms in North and South Goa.

PFC wins Gold Award

Power Finance Corporation (PFC), India's leading NBFC, has won the Gold Award for Best Performing PSU for Covid Activities at the prestigious SKOCH Awards. The award was bestowed for consistent performance by PFC across verticals. The award was presented on 28 November on a virtual platform to PFC.



The image is deeply offensive to every Australian... The Chinese government should be totally ashamed of this post

AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER SCOTT MORRISON

DEMANDING APOLOGY FROM CHINA FOR TWEETING 'FALSIFIED' IMAGE ON WAR CRIMES

NEW DELHI, TUESDAY 01 DECEMBER 2020

09

Stop the madness: Tigray leader

Gebremichael urges Ethiopia PM to withdraw troops from the region, asserts that fighting continues 'on every front'

ASSOCIATED PRESS
NAIROBI, 30 NOVEMBER

The fugitive leader of Ethiopia's defiant Tigray region on Monday called on Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed to "stop the madness" and withdraw troops from the region as he asserted that fighting continues "on every front" two days after Abiy declared victory.

Debretekin Gebremichael, in a phone interview, said he remains near the Tigray capital, Mekelle, which the Ethiopian army on Saturday said it now controlled. Far from accepting Abiy's declaration of victory, the Tigray leader asserted that "we are sure we'll win."

He also accused the Ethiopi-



an forces of carrying out a "genocidal campaign" against the Tigray people. With the Tigray region still cut off a month after the fighting began, no one knows how many people have been killed, and it's difficult to verify the warring sides' claims.

Each government regards the other as illegal after Abiy sidelined the once-dominant Tigray People's Liberation

Front after taking office in early 2018.

The fight is about self-determination of the region of some 6 million people, the Tigray leader said, and it "will continue until the invaders are out." He asserted that his forces held an undetermined number of "captives" among the Ethiopian forces, including the pilot of a fighter jet that his side claims to have shot

down over the weekend. The Tigray leader also asserted that his forces still have several missiles and "we can use them whenever we want," though he rejected a question about striking at the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, saying the primary aim is to "clear Tigray from the invaders." He again accused Abiy of collaborating with neighboring Eritrea in the offensive in Tigray, something Abiy's government has denied.

As for the idea of talks with Abiy's government, something Abiy's government has repeatedly rejected, the Tigray leader said that "depends on the content" and Ethiopian forces would first have to leave the region.

"Civilian casualties are so

high," he said, though denied having any estimate of the toll. He accused Ethiopian forces of "looting wherever they go."

"The suffering is greater and greater every day," he said, calling it collective punishment against the Tigray people for their belief in their leaders.

Nearly a month of fighting between Ethiopian federal forces and Tigray regional ones has threatened to destabilize Ethiopia, the linchpin of the strategic Horn of Africa, and its neighbors.

Hospitals and health centers in the Tigray region are running "dangerously low" on supplies to care for the wounded, the International Committee of the Red Cross said Sunday. Food is also running low, the result of the region

being cut off from outside aid for almost a month.

In a rare report from inside Mekele, the ICRC also said a major hospital in northern Ethiopia, Ayder Referral Hospital, is lacking body bags and some 80% of its patients have trauma injuries.

Fears of a widespread humanitarian disaster are growing. The UN has been unable to access the Tigray region with aid. Human rights groups and others worry about the atrocities that might emerge once transport and other links are restored. Nearly 1 million people have been displaced, including about 44,000 who fled into Sudan. Camps in Tigray that are home to 96,000 Eritrean refugees have been in the line of fire.

Maryam dares 'puppet' PM to question ISI over phone tapping

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LAHORE, 30 NOVEMBER

Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Vice President Maryam Nawaz said on Monday that "puppet" Prime Minister Imran Khan should have "some courage" to question the country's top spy agency - Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) - as why it is tapping his telephone calls.

Her remarks came in response to Prime Minister Khan's recent disclosure that he was aware that the agencies tap his phone calls.

"This puppet and selected premier Imran even does not have the courage to ask the ISI as why it is tapping his calls. He should tell the ISI that it is not the work of the institution that comes under the prime minister," said Maryam, the daughter of deposed prime minister Nawaz Sharif.

"The ISI taps phone of the prime minister and others. This is not new news for me. If anyone left in this puppet (Imran Khan) he should take on the ISI on this matter, she said.

She is leading Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz in absence of her father Nawaz Sharif who has been living in London since November 2019. Sharif's younger brother and PML-N president Shehbaz Sharif is in custody of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB), leaving it to Maryam to lead the party.

Khan in a recent interview to a local TV channel had said: "The ISI and the IB (Intelligence Bureau) know whatever I do and with whom



I talk to on telephone."

When asked if he had no issue with the agencies tapping his phone, Khan said: "It happens all over the world. Even the CIA does the same in the US."

The prime minister was of the view that the agencies do such things as they are responsible for providing security to the heads.

"The ISI knows as to whom I will be calling and why I am calling. The ISI also knows as to who has taken money out of the country," he said. Khan said the Pakistan Army knows everything about him.

The ISI is Pakistan's powerful spy agency. In 1950, it was officially given the task of safeguarding Pakistani interests and national security, inside and outside the country.

Sharif, the 70-year-old supreme leader of the PML-N who was ousted from power in 2017 by the apex court on graft charges, had last month for the first time directly named Army chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa and ISI head Lt Gen Faiz Hameed for interfering in the general elections of 2018 to ensure victory of Khan.

However, the Army has denied meddling in the country's politics.

Eight killed, 37 injured in Lanka prison riot

COLOMBO, 30 NOVEMBER

At least eight prisoners were killed and 37 others injured when a riot broke out on Sunday at a prison on the outskirts of Sri Lanka's capital when some inmates tried to force open a door and escape, prompting the authorities to use force, police said on Monday.

Police spokesman Ajith Rohana said inmates created unrest at the Mahara prison located about 15 kilometers north of Colombo and prison officials took steps to control the situation.

The incident comes as pandemic-related unrest has been growing in Sri Lanka's overcrowded prisons. Inmates have staged protests in recent weeks in several prisons as the number of confirmed COVID-19 positive cases spiked in the country's overcrowded jails.

The incident was started by a set of remand prisoners when they tried to force open a door and escape following which the authorities had to use force, Rohana said.

He said during the entire incident at least 37 more, including two jailors, were injured and all of them were transferred to the nearby Ragama hospital.

The residents near the prison said smoke was coming out of the premises due to fire. Prisons authorities said the rioters had set fire to the kitchen and a record room of the prison. An attempt by the rioting inmates to take the jailors hostage was thwarted, officials said.



Israel remotely killed military nuke scientist: Iran

ASSOCIATED PRESS
TEHRAN, 30 NOVEMBER

A top Iranian security official on Monday accused Israel of using "electronic devices" to remotely kill a scientist who founded the Islamic Republic's military nuclear program in the 2000s.

All Shamkhani, the secretary of the country's Supreme National Security Council, made the comment at the funeral for Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, where Iran's defense minister separately vowed to continue the man's work "with more speed and more power."

Israel, long suspected of killing Iranian nuclear scientists over the last decade, has declined to comment on the attack.

Israel, long suspected of killing Iranian nuclear scientists over the last decade, has declined to comment on the attack

sile program and research into other technologies. Iran long has maintained its nuclear program is peaceful.

Shamkhani's remarks drastically change the story of Fakhrizadeh's killing Friday. Authorities initially said a truck exploded and then gunmen opened fire on the scientist, killing him.

State TV's English-language Press TV earlier reported a weapon recovered from the scene of the attack bore "the logo and specifications of the Israeli military industry."

State TV's Arabic-language channel, Al-Alam, claimed the weapons used were "controlled by satellite," a claim also made Sunday by the semi-official Fars news agency.

Navalny poisoning: Russia faces renewed pressure

ASSOCIATED PRESS
THE HAGUE (NETHERLANDS), 30 NOVEMBER

Russia came under renewed pressure Monday to explain the nerve agent attack on opposition figure Alexei Navalny as the annual meeting of the global chemical weapons watchdog got underway amid measures aimed at reining in the spread of coronavirus.

Navalny fell ill on August 20 during a domestic flight in Russia, and was flown to Germany for treatment two days later. His allies accused the Kremlin of poisoning its fiercest opponent.

Tests carried out by labs in Germany, France and Sweden and by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons established that Navalny was exposed to a Soviet-era Novichok nerve agent.



The organization's director-general, Fernando Arias, told Monday's meeting that according to the Chemical Weapons Convention, the poisoning of an individual through the use of a nerve agent is a use of a chemical weapon.

A group of 56 nations issued a statement as the start of the annual meeting of the OPCW's member states urging Moscow to disclose in a swift and transparent manner the circumstances of this chemical weapons attack.

In October, Moscow asked

for OPCW experts to visit Russia to provide technical assistance in its investigations. Arias said talks are underway to define all the legal, technical, operational and logistical parameters in order for this visit to take place.

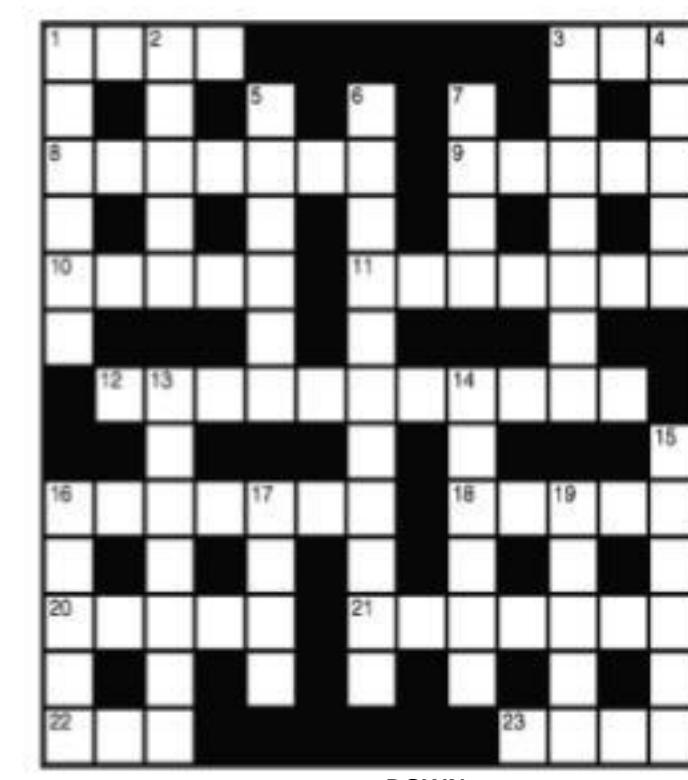
The European Union has imposed sanctions on six Russian officials and a state research institute over the poisoning.

Moscow responded earlier this month by announcing that it had adopted sanctions against a number of German and French officials.

The OPCW's annual meeting has been broken into two parts amid the coronavirus pandemic. Two days of talks this week will focus on approving the proposed 71.74 million euro (\$86 million) annual budget for 2021. The second half of the meeting will take place next year.

LEISURE

10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



CROSSWORD
ACROSS
1 Soft French cheese (4)
3 US name for Z (3)
4 Feeler (7)
5 Turf (5)
10 Weird (5)
11 Giant tree (7)
12 Become definite and clear (11)
14 VEHICLE (7)
18 Adore (5)
20 Simple (5)
21 Savings (4,3)
22 Large deer (3)
23 Openly resist (4)

DOWN
1 Porcelain, 18 Alim,
19 Hydrophobic (6)
2 Entombed (5)
3 Ferent (7)
4 Finished (5)
5 Except when (6)
6 Terrifying (4-7)
7 Second-hand (4)
13 Plunder (7)
14 Generous (6)
15 Rugged (6)
16 Tree (5)
17 Musical group (4)
19 Irk (informal) (5)

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

BEETLE BAILEY/Mort Walker



RED EYE/Bill Yates & Mel Casson



DADDY DAZE/John Kovaleski



NEED TO KNOW

HOSPITALS

- AIIMS 26588500, 26588900
- Moolchand Medcity (formerly Hospital) 42000000 & 24-hour Chemist Shop 42000447
- Vidyasagar Institute for Mental and Neuro-Sciences 26924300, 26924304
- Bastra Hospital & Medical Research Centre 29051280, 29958747
- Deen Dayal Upadhyay 25496320, 25494403
- Guru Tegh Bahadur 23717473, 23325320

22586262, 22585007

RAILWAY INQUIRY

- General Inquiry 139
- Toll Free Nos. 1800112511
- SMS Inquiry Nos. 57886, 54959, 5676747

23860626, 23864470

• U.P. Railways 23868709

ROADWAYS INQUIRY

- ISBT (General Inquiry): 23868836, 23865181
- AIR INDIA Flight Inquiry and Reservation 180018038383
- Haryana Roadways 23861262, Call centre 09910383838, 18001803838, Reservation 43513186; Indigo Airlines Air

25656421/25656431 Reservation 41528181

• Air Canada Flight Inquiry and Reservation 41528181

• Kuwait Airways Flight Inquiry and Reservation 23466262 (City)

25652294 (Airport)

• Indian Railways 130031313133

• State Roadways 130031313133

• Bihar Roadways 130031313133

• Jharkhand Roadways 130031313133

• Odisha Roadways 130031313133

• West Bengal Roadways 130031313133

• Assam Roadways 130031313133

• Nagaland Roadways 130031313133

• Manipur Roadways 130031313133

• Arunachal Pradesh Roadways 130031313133

• Meghalaya Roadways 130031313133

• Sikkim Roadways 130031313133

• Jharkhand Roadways 130031313133

• Bihar Roadways 130031313133



China firmly supports Nepal to safeguard its sovereignty, territorial integrity

CHINA'S DEFENCE MINISTER GEN. WEI FENGHE

LAUDING NEPAL'S LEADERSHIP FOR RESOLUTELY PURSUING THE ONE-CHINA POLICY

WEATHER

CITY	MAX(°C)	MIN(°C)
SINGAPORE	31	25 H
HONG KONG	21	15 CL
TOKYO	15	5 H
LONDON	11	5 H
DUBAI	27	20 CL
SAN FRANCISCO	14	8 S
NEW YORK	17	7 R
MOSCOW	3	-1 H

S=sunny, CL= clear, H=hazy, R=rainy...

THUMBNAILS



People wearing face masks walk along a street in Hong Kong on Monday. AP

Biden fractures foot: US President-elect Joe Biden has hairline fractures in his mid-foot and will likely require a walking boot for several weeks, his doctor said, after the Democratic leader slipped while playing with his dog. Biden twisted his ankle on Saturday when he slipped while playing with Major, his German shepherd.

Talks on Syria's constitution: Delegations from Syria's government, opposition and civil society are meeting in Geneva for the latest round of talks toward revising the country's constitution. Several cases cropped up among the Syrian envoys during a previous round of talks. AP

China sanctions leaders of US groups: China said it is sanctioning leaders of US government-affiliated bodies that promote democracy around the world in response to what it calls practices that blatantly meddle in Hong Kong affairs. China has accused such groups of encouraging dissidents who built movements to push for greater direct democracy in Hong Kong. AP

Spain dismantles migrants' 'dock of shame' in Canary Islands

ARGUINEGUIN (SPAIN), 30 NOVEMBER

Spanish authorities have dismantled the bulk of a makeshift camp for migrant processing that for over three months was known as the dock of shame for holding in unfit conditions thousands of Africans who arrived recently in the Canary Islands.

The Spanish government's delegation in the Atlantic Ocean archipelago confirmed Monday that all the 830 people who were being held on Friday at the Arguineguin dock, on the southwestern coast of Gran Canaria island, had been moved out by Sunday night to other facilities.

The last to leave were 27 migrants who had tested positive for coronavirus and have been placed in isolation.

Under a dozen marques and assisted by Red Cross volunteers, most of the 14,000 migrants arriving since late August have spent time at the Arguineguin dock.

At its peak, in mid-November, nearly 2,600 people slept, ate and were tested in the makeshift facility, under police watch, upon arrival on maritime rescue boats. The facility has been criticised by human rights organisations and Spain's ombudsman for its poor conditions.

Many migrants were left to sleep with just a blanket and no showers. Potential asylum-seekers had no proper access to legal advice and some people were held for much longer than the three days that the law allows, critics said.

All migrants have been relocated to makeshift military facilities, Anselmo Pestana, the Spanish government delegate said.

Vaccine: Moderna seeks US, EU approval

New study results confirmed the shots offer strong protection, ramping up the race to begin limited vaccinations as virus rampage worsens

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, 30 NOVEMBER



Moderna Inc. said it would ask US and European regulators Monday to allow emergency use of its Covid-19 vaccine as new study results confirm the shots offer strong protection, ramping up the race to begin limited vaccinations as the coronavirus rampage worsens.

Multiple vaccine candidates must succeed for the world to stamp out the pandemic, which has been on the upswing in the US and Europe. US hospitals have been stretched to the limit as the nation has seen more than 160,000 new cases per day and more than 1,400 daily deaths. Since first emerging nearly a year ago in China, the virus has killed more than 1.4 million people worldwide.

Moderna is just behind Pfizer and its German partner BioNTech in seeking to begin vaccinations in the US. Across the Atlantic, British regulators also are

assessing the Pfizer shot and another from AstraZeneca.

Moderna created its shots with the US National Institutes of Health and already had a hint they were working, but said it got the final needed results over the weekend that suggest the vaccine is more than 94% effective.

Of 196 Covid-19 cases so far in its huge US study, 185 were trial participants who received the placebo and 11 who got the real vaccine. The only people who got severely ill, 30 participants, including one who died, had received dummy shots, said Dr Tal Zaks, the Cambridge, Massachusetts, company's chief medical officer.

When he learned the results, "I allowed myself to cry for the first time," Zaks said. "We have already, just in the trial, have already saved lives. Just imagine the impact then multiplied to the people who can get this vaccine."

Moderna said the shots' effectiveness and a good safety record so far, with only temporary, flu-like side effects, mean they meet requirements set by the US Food and Drug Administration for emergency use before the final-stage testing is complete. The European Medicines Agency, Europe's version of FDA, has signaled it also is open to faster, emer-

gency clearance.

The FDA has pledged that before it decides to roll out any Covid-19 vaccines, its scientific advisers will publicly debate whether there's enough evidence behind each candidate.

First up on December 10, Pfizer and BioNTech will present data suggesting their vaccine candidate is 95% effective. Moderna said its turn at this "science court" is expected exactly a week later, on December 17.

If the FDA allows emergency use, Moderna expects to have 20 million doses ready for the US by year's end. Recipients will need two doses, so that's enough for 10 million people.

Pfizer expects to have 50 million doses globally in December. Half of them, or enough for 12.5 million people, are earmarked for the US.

This week, a different panel of US experts, established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, will meet to decide how initial supplies will be given out. They're expected to reserve scarce

first doses for health care workers and, if the shots work well enough in the frail elderly, for residents of long-term care facilities. As more vaccine gradually becomes available in coming months, other essential workers and people at highest risk from the coronavirus will get in line. But enough for the general population isn't expected until at least spring.

Outside the US, Zaks said significant supplies from Moderna would be available later, in the first quarter of next year.

"Obviously we are doing everything in our power to increase the capacity and accelerate the timelines," he said.

Both Moderna's and Pfizer's vaccines are made with the same technology, using a piece of genetic code for the "spike" protein that studs the virus. That messenger RNA, or mRNA, instructs the body to make some harmless spike protein, training immune cells to recognise it if the real virus eventually comes along.

AstraZeneca last week announced confusing early results of its vaccine candidate from research in Britain and Brazil.

That vaccine appears 62% effective when tested as originally intended, with recipients given two full doses. But because of a manufacturing error, a small number of volunteers got a lower first dose, and AstraZeneca said in that group, the vaccine appeared to be 90% effective.

Experts say it's unclear why the lower-dose approach would work better and that it may just be a statistical quirk.

A larger US study of the AstraZeneca candidate still is underway that should eventually give the FDA a better picture of how well it works. The FDA has said any Covid-19 vaccine would have to be at least 50% effective.

Meanwhile Britain's government will have to decide whether its UK data is sufficient for an early rollout there.

Johnson & Johnson also is in final-stage testing in the US and several other countries to

see if its vaccine candidate could work with just one dose.

Both the J&J and AstraZeneca vaccines work by using harmless cold viruses to carry the spike protein gene into the body and prime the immune system.

The different technologies have ramifications for how easily different vaccines could be distributed globally. The AstraZeneca shots won't require freezer storage like the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines.

Candidates made with still other technologies are in late-stage testing, too. Another US company, Novavax Inc., announced Monday that it has finished enrolling 15,000 people in a late-stage study in Britain and plans to begin recruiting even more volunteers for final testing in the US and Mexico "in the coming weeks."

Vaccines made by three Chinese companies and a Russian candidate also are being tested in thousands of people in countries around the world.

'US may see surge upon surge of virus in weeks ahead'

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, 30 NOVEMBER

Cambodia shuts schools

PHNOM PENH, 30 NOVEMBER

The nation's top infectious disease expert said Sunday that the US may see "surge upon a surge" of the coronavirus in the weeks after Thanksgiving, and he does not expect current recommendations around social distancing to be relaxed before Christmas.

Meanwhile, in a major reversal, New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio said the nation's largest school system will reopen to in-person learning and increase the number of days a week many children attend class. The announcement came just 11 days after the Democratic mayor said schools would shut down because of rising Covid-19 cases.

"We feel confident that we can keep schools safe," he said.

Dr Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, told ABC's "This Week" that the level of infection in the US would not "all of a sudden turn around."

"So clearly in the next few weeks, we're going to have the same sort of thing. And perhaps even two or three weeks down the line... we may see a surge upon a surge," he said.

Fauci addressed the school issue, saying that spread "among children and from children is not really very big at all, not like one would have suspected. So let's try to get the kids back, but let's try to mitigate the things that maintain and just push the kind of community spread that we're trying to avoid," he said.

Fauci also appeared on NBC's "Meet the Press," where he made similar remarks, adding that it's "not too late" for people traveling home after Thanksgiving to help curb the virus by wearing masks, staying distant from others and avoiding large groups of people.

The number of new Covid-19 cases reported in the United States topped 200,000 for the first time Friday, according to data from Johns Hopkins University. Since January, when the first infections were reported in the US, the nation's total number of cases has surpassed 13 million. More than 265,000 people have died.

Fauci said the arrival of vaccines offers a "light at the end of the tunnel." This coming week, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices will meet with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to discuss a rollout of the vaccine, he said.

He added that President-elect Joe Biden should focus on distributing vaccines in an "efficient and equitable way." Fauci also said he planned to push the new administration for a rigorous testing program.

Health care workers will likely be among the first to get the vaccine, with the first vaccinations happening before the end of December, followed by many more in January, February and March, he said.

"So if we can hang together as a country and do these kinds of things to blunt these surges until we get a substantial proportion of the population vaccinated, we can get through this," Fauci said.

'Pandemic' top word of 2020

NEW YORK, 30 NOVEMBER

If you were to choose a word that rose above most in 2020, which word would it be? Ding, ding, ding: Merriam-Webster on Monday announced pandemic as its 2020 word of the year.

That probably isn't a big shock, Peter Sokolowski, editor at large for Merriam-Webster, said.

Often the big news story has a technical word that's associated with it and in this case, the word pandemic is not just technical but has become general. It's probably the word by which we'll refer to this period in the future, he said.

The word took on urgent specificity in March, when the coronavirus crisis was designated a pandemic, but it started to trend up on Merriam-Webster.com as early January and again in February when the first US deaths and outbreaks on cruise ships occurred.

On March 11, when the World Health Organization declared the novel coronavirus outbreak a global pandemic, lookups on the site for pandemic spiked hugely.

Site interest for the word has remained significantly high through the year, Sokolowski said. By huge, Sokolowski means searches for pandemic on March 11 were 115,806 per cent higher than lookups experienced on the same date last year.

Pandemic, with roots in Latin and Greek, is a combination of pan, for all, and demos, for people or population. The latter is the same root of democracy, Sokolowski noted.

The word pandemic dates to the mid-1600s, used broadly for universal and more specifically to disease in a medical text in the 1660s, he said.

That was after the plagues of the Middle Ages, Sokolowski said.

He attributes the lookup traffic for pandemic not entirely to searchers who didn't know what it meant but also to those on the hunt for more detail, or for inspiration or comfort.

AP

Wisconsin recount confirms Biden's victory

ASSOCIATED PRESS
MADISON (WI), 30 NOVEMBER

Wisconsin finished a recount of its presidential results on Sunday, confirming Democrat Joe Biden's victory over President Donald Trump in the key battleground state. Trump vowed to challenge the outcome in court even before the recount concluded.

Dane County was the second and last county to finish its recount, reporting a 45-vote gain for Trump. Milwaukee County, the state's other big and overwhelmingly liberal county targeted in a recount that Trump paid \$3 million for, reported its results Friday, a 132-vote gain for Biden.

Trump campaign spokeswoman Jenna Ellis said in a statement that the Wisconsin recounts have revealed serious issues about whether the ballots were legal, but she offered no specific details to validate her claim.

As we have said from the very beginning, we want every legal vote, and only legal votes to be counted, and we will continue to uphold our promise to the American people to fight for a free and fair election, Ellis said.

With no precedent for overturning a result as large as Biden's, Trump was widely expected to head to court once the recount was fin-

ished. His campaign challenged thousands of absentee ballots during the recount, and even before it was complete, Trump tweeted that he would sue.

The Wisconsin recount is not about finding mistakes in the count, it is about finding people who have voted illegally, and that case will be brought after the recount is over, on Monday or Tuesday, Trump tweeted on Saturday. We have found many illegal votes. Stay tuned! The deadline to certify the vote is Tuesday. Certification is done by the Wisconsin Election Commission, which is bipartisan.

The Wisconsin Voters Alliance, a conservative group, has already filed a lawsuit against state election officials seeking to block certification of the results.

It makes many of the claims Trump is expected to make.

Election officials in the two counties counted those ballots during the recount, but marked them as exhibits at the request of the Trump campaign.

Brexit trade talks enter crunch week

LONDON, 30 NOVEMBER



to the White House, Biden said.

I am proud to announce today the first senior White House communications team comprised entirely of women. These qualified, experienced communicators bring diverse perspectives to their work and a shared commitment to building this country back better, said the President-elect.

Vice President-elect Kamala Harris said the United States is facing unprecedented challenges, from the coronavirus pandemic to the economic crisis, and a long-overdue reckoning over racial injustice.

To overcome these challenges, we need to communicate clearly, honestly, and transparently with the American people, and this experienced, talented, and barrier-shattering team will help us do that. These communications professionals express our commitment to building a White House that reflects the very best of our nation, she said.

Communicating directly and truthfully to the American people is one of the most important duties of a President, and this team will be entrusted with the tremendous responsibility of connecting the American people

with the European Union.

Small businesses around the world are fighting for survival amid the economic fallout from the coronavirus pandemic. Whether they make it will affect not just local economies but the fabric of communities.

Many British businesses managed to survive the spring lockdown with generous aid from the government, including grants like the 10,000-pound (GBP 13,300) one Jones received and a program that pays a portion of wages to workers whose employers are struggling. The measures have helped keep the unemployment rate relatively low

Breath of fresh air

Teachers and parents must work as a cohesive unit to understand the obstacles and devise specific plans to reduce the burden on youngsters



PRAKRITI PODDAR

The society that we live in has high regard for academic excellence. Those who fail to live up to the expectations often face harsh criticism, which creates self-doubts about their abilities and intelligence. With a cut-throat competitive world out there, students are constantly pushed to the edge by their parents to build a bright future and succeed in life. However, this brings along an enormous pressure, which not only hinders their growth and learning but leads to increased stress and anxiety.

The situation is further aggravated by the educational system of India, where instead of facilitating a child's growth and development, the entire focus remains on performance in exams. Growing expectations of parents coupled with academic pressure has led to increased stress levels in today's students, leaving them vulnerable to severe depression and suicidal tendencies.

The future of a child is the biggest concern to a parent. Since the educational institutes in our country are always on the lookout for the brightest and best students to maintain their reputation, parents feel compelled to raise the bar too high for their children to match up to the standards. Parents nowadays are too concerned about how the world would perceive their children, which in turn results in parental pressure.

The idea of excellence and success is often generalised by parents based on how others are performing. Apart from academics, children are also bogged down by rising expectations in various areas where they have their own interests like sports, music, arts, etc. Hence, without giving care to the wholesome development of a student, parents keep on pushing the boundaries that ultimately leads to stress, disappointment, anxiety and suicides. In a study conducted on 190 students from class XI and above in three private schools in Kolkata and

three government-aided schools, it was found that almost two-thirds of the students experienced pressure from their parents to perform better academically.

The school education system in the country is textbook oriented where the focus remains on systematic long hours of study every day and rote memorisation. The elaborate study routines leave little time for recreation and socialisation. On top of that, there is high competition against peers to perform better and outscore. From school-level to high school life to getting admission to tertiary institutions, students experience academic stress every step of their way. Undeniably, the constant academic stress takes a toll on their mental health. In 2018, there were 1.3 lakh suicides in the country out of which eight per cent were accounted for students.

To change this negative picture, teachers can play a useful role in mitigating the stress affecting students as

they spend a considerable time inside classrooms. Teachers can educate their students about the importance of time management that can considerably reduce stress. They should allow flexible due dates to submit the assignments. Not only will this reduce stress but also keep them motivated to deliver their work.

They should acknowledge the effort of every student instead of discouraging them. Laughter and humour should be encouraged in the classroom. At times, teachers can share incidences related to their own childhood with the students to strengthen the bond.

Lessons should aim to create a deeper level of understanding instead of burdening students with figures and facts.

Similar to teachers, parents too have a key role to play in reducing the stress among the students. They should instigate positive thinking and good lifestyle habits in their children.

A healthy lifestyle coupled with good eating and sleeping habits can considerably reduce stress.

Be it in academics, sports or any other area, parents should always embrace their child's imperfections and mistakes. They need to teach their children that failure is part of success.

If their children are experiencing fear or anxiety, parents should take the time to talk and address the concerns. Parents should always make it a point to focus on the good aspects and positive attributes of the child.

In this age where a decimal point can be a deciding factor in one's life, there is a dire need to address the issues of parenting expectations and academic stress. We must work as a cohesive unit to conduct deeper analysis and wider studies to understand the obstacles and devise specific plans to reduce the burden on the youngsters.

The writer is global head for mental health, Roundclass

WINNING LAURELS

The tve GSFA, which rewards films, both on their creativity as well as on sustainability impact, received more than a hundred film submissions from 17 countries this year

Global Sustainability Film Awards 2020 (tve GSFA), in partnership with Difficult Dialogues, announced the winners of its eight competitive and two nominated award categories last week. The online awards presentation included four Difficult Dialogues panel discussions on crucial themes related to global sustainability as well as the finale of the Daring Debates, a debate competition aimed at engaging the youth from across the world in sustainability-related ideation. The tve GSFA which is in its ninth year and rewards films both on their creativity as well as on the sustainability impact received more than a hundred film submissions from 17 countries. A diverse and eminent international jury panel drawn from the fields of sustainability and filmmaking, adjudicated on the entries to first come up with three or four short-listed films for each category and then announced the final winners.

The five-day-long online event was focused on Global Sustainability, a key theme that crucially affects the entire planet. It was well attended by sustainability experts, filmmakers,



businesses, not-for-profit organizations, youth leaders and individuals concerned about sustainability. The agenda was to highlight the current environmental crisis and suggest solutions and actions we need to take today to ensure a better and more sustainable future. This was done through dialogues, debates and films, with about two hours of environment and sustainability content each day.

The five-day event concluded with the announcement of the winners of Daring Debates which featured the college finalists from India,

Nepal, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Africa, USA and Sri Lanka who debated the topic - Is Global Sustainability Profitable for Business? At the end of a keenly contested finale, Gloria Oziolu-Alonge from University of Lagos, Nigeria, Africa, was declared as the winner for the motion while Aditya Dhar from Harvard University, USA won against the motion.

The award category sponsors this year were United Living, Global Healthcare, Azad Ayub Ltd and Fondation BNP Paribas and the Eco Partner was EcoRight Bags.

Nick Nuttal, Chair of the jury for the tve GSFA 2020 and strategic communications director, Earthday.org, said, "What an exciting, thought-provoking, inspiring and above all motivating collection of films we have had the pleasure to view and award. Selecting the winners is always tough, but this year was even tougher with the quality, range of issues and creativity even higher in 2020."

Commenting at the conclusion of the Awards Week, Surina Narula, MBE, founder of Difficult

Dialogues and the tve GSFA said, "The last week has been a roller coaster ride showcasing the collection of shortlisted and winning films and incisive discussions on developing a more sustainable world including difficult dialogues with businesses because of the dilemma of profit over sustainability. This year going virtual over five days gave us more time to provide a better experience for filmmakers and the visibility to showcase our youth ambassadors and their work."

PLUS POINTS

Enlightening learners



KIIT College of Education organised an online workshop on "Leading Indian Education in a Global Context, A Policy Initiative" recently. The aim of it was to briefly discuss the new education policy. Professors, assistant professors, school teachers and students from different departments of different universities attended the workshop.

Dr Gagan Gupta, assistant professor, NCERT, State Council of Educational Research and Training Directorate of Education, Delhi chairman Dr Rajesh Kumar and Dr Chitrangada Goswami (retired subject specialist SCERT) were present at the event. Gupta presented the facts related to multilingualism and skill-based education in the new education policy. He explained about the field of education by connecting fashion, art, computers et al.

Orientation programme



Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras conducted virtual orientation programme recently, for the new batch of students for the academic year 2020-21. Parents also attended the event organised to welcome the first-year students of BTech, Dual Degree and MA.

The programme was webcast live on YouTube. A total of 938 BTech students, 175 Dual Degree students and 52 MA students have already been admitted. Students can make use of a tinkerlab called Centre for Innovation (CFI), run for and by students. The institute is also constructing a huge new hostel, which will be ready by June 2021 and upgrading existing hostels as well.

Merit speaks



113 students from Akash Institute qualified the Armed Forces Medical College (AFMC) MBBS 2020 entrance examination, registering one of the best results in the AFMC MBBS examination in the test preparation sector in India, an impressive feat that speaks volumes of the faculty, curriculum and training at Akash. Out of 113, 86 students are from the regular classroom course while 27 are from Distance Learning Programme (DLP) and Digital courses.

11 Aakshians make it to the Top 10, with seven securing ranks in Top 10 in girls merit list and four in Top 10 in boys merit list. Students are selected on basis of marks secured by them in the NEET entrance exam as well as in the screening test.

Of celebration



On the 110th birth anniversary of Lala Lakshmi Singhania - a chief architect of JK Organisation, JK Lakshmi Singhania University, Jaipur organised a virtual celebration to mark the founder's day recently. The event also coincided with the university's eighth convocation, which felicitated students of the graduating batch of 2020 for PhD, MTech, BTech, MBA, BBA, BCom and PGDAR. Sanjiv Mehta, chairman and managing director, Hindustan Unilever Limited, graced the dual celebrations as the chief guest.

Led by the chancellor Bharat Hari Singhania and vice-chancellor Dr RL Raina, the programme was attended by dignitaries including pro-chancellor Dr RP Singhania, pro-vice-chancellor Asheesh Gupta, member of the board of management HP Singhania, other members of the board of management and academic council, faculty, staff, graduating students and their parents.



MR DEPENDABLE

After Andrea Pirlo's Juventus had been held to a 1-1 draw by Benevento, the coach said his team needed to be less dependent on Cristiano Ronaldo (photo, left). Ronaldo, rested for the match, had missed two other Serie A games this season and they also ended 1-1, away to Crotone and Verona.

For more updates

www.thestatesman.com

THUMBNAILS

Positive test: Archer Kapil, included in the national camp at Army Sports Institute in Pune, has tested positive for the novel coronavirus, the Sports Authority of India said on Monday. He is asymptomatic and being monitored by a medical team, the SAI said.

Dlop dead: Former Senegal midfielder Papa Bouba Diop has died aged 42. Diop, who won 63 caps for Senegal, scored the goal which secured a historic 1-0 win over France in their opening World Cup match in 2002, a tournament where Senegal made the quarter-finals.

Barren draw: Tottenham Hotspur went back to the top of the Premier League on Sunday when they held Chelsea to a 0-0 draw that left honours even between visiting manager Jose Mourinho and his one-time medio Frank Lampard, now in charge of the Blues.

Mancunians win: Substitute Edinson Cavani, Uruguay stalwart, produced a second-half masterclass, scoring twice and creating another goal as Manchester United hit back from a two-goal deficit to beat Southampton 3-2 in a Premier League cracker on Sunday.

Nasty clash: Wolves striker Raul Jimenez was taken to hospital after coming off worst in a nasty clash of heads with Arsenal's David Luiz on Sunday. The Mexican was tended to on the floor by medics for 10 minutes before being stretchered from the field. Arsenal lost 1-2.

Pay-cut deal: Barcelona have reportedly gone close to securing an agreement on a 122 million euros cut in players' salaries this season to help offset the financial hole left by the coronavirus pandemic. The deal must now be ratified by the players "in the coming days."

Poll impasse: International Cricket Council executive board members not being able to meet in person because of Covid-19 restrictions led to a long impasse over them agreeing to the process of election of its chairman, new ICC boss Gregor John Barclay has said.

England win: Dawid Malan guided England to a series-clinching victory over South Africa in the second Twenty20 International in Paarl on Sunday. He made 55 off 40 balls to anchor a tricky chase. England reached a target of 147 with four wickets and one ball to spare.

Lesrel for HKJC Trophy

GAUTAM BANERJEE
KOLKATA, 30 NOVEMBER

A competitive card of seven events is framed for the second day of the racing season here. The Hong Kong Jockey Club Trophy, a 1,200m sprint for horses in Class I, is the feature. To be ridden by Suraj Narredu, Vijay Singh trained Lesrel gets the first call.

Selections:

1.00 p.m.: ROMANTIC ZEAL 1, Popcorn 2, Ghost 3.

1.30 p.m.: SUPREME LEGACY 1, Kimaya 2, Mr Gucci 3.

2.00 p.m.: ESSOS 1, Berluti 2, Guitar Star 3.

2.30 p.m.: CHEPHIRAH 1, Lumos 2, Across The Sea 3.

3.00 p.m.: JAIVANT 1, Izzy 2, Here And Now 3.

3.30 p.m.: LESREL 1, Brahmachari 2, Castlebridge 3.

4.00 p.m.: LAKMOS 1, Tasmania 2, Om Shanti 3.

Day's best: Supreme Legacy.

MR DEPENDABLE

After Andrea Pirlo's Juventus had been held to a 1-1 draw by Benevento, the coach said his team needed to be less dependent on Cristiano Ronaldo (photo, left). Ronaldo, rested for the match, had missed two other Serie A games this season and they also ended 1-1, away to Crotone and Verona.

For more updates

www.thestatesman.com

Warner could miss India Tests

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

SYDNEY, 30 NOVEMBER

Star opening batsman David Warner (in photo, centre) faces a battle to be fit for the India Test series after Cricket Australia said on Monday he would miss the last One-Day International and the three-match Twenty20 series next month.

Warner limped out of Sunday's ODI against India after straining his groin while fielding as Australia secured the series 2-0 in Sydney.

After a typically swash-buckling innings of 83 on Sunday, Warner fell awkwardly and had to be helped from the field.

Warner will miss Wednesday's final ODI and all three Twenty20 internationals beginning on Friday in Canberra to undergo rehab in an effort to be ready for the Test series which begins on 17 December in Adelaide.

Opening batsman D'Arcy Short has been called up to the Twenty20 International squad as a replacement.

Cricket Australia also announced that leading pace bowler Pat Cummins would be rested for the remainder of the white-ball matches against India, putting pressure on an out-of-form Mitchell Starc.

"Pat and Davie are critical to our plans for the Test Series," head coach Justin Langer said.

"Davie will work through his injury rehab and in Pat's case it is important all of our play-



ers are managed well to keep them mentally and physically fit throughout what is a challenging summer.

"The priority for both is being fully prepared for one of the biggest and most important home Test Series we have played in recent years, especially with World Test Championship points up for grabs."

While Warner played an important role in Australia's ODI series win, the hosts have no shortage of talented batters who can replace him.

Left-hander Short was the Twenty20 Big Bash League's leading run-scorer in 2017-18 and 2018-19.

Rising star Will Pucovski is also waiting in the wings, with Test greats such as Michael Clarke, Ian Chappell and Mark

Waugh all backing the 22-year-old's cause.

Marnus Labuschagne, who scored 70 in Sunday's ODI, said he was ready to move up the order into Warner's opening spot.

"Certainly, if I got asked to open the batting, absolutely it's an opportunity that I would enjoy doing," Labuschagne told reporters on Monday.

"But we'll have to wait and see how our team shape up and the balance of our side."

No replacement has been announced for Cummins, with Australia to rely on Josh Hazlewood, Starc and all-rounder Marcus Stoinis to provide the main seam bowling options.

Stoinis struggled for form in the first two ODIs, and was Australia's most expensive

bowler in the 51-run victory against India on Sunday, taking no wickets for 82 runs off nine overs.

Australia will play four Tests against India, with the other matches in Melbourne beginning on Boxing Day, Sydney (January 7-11) and Brisbane (January 15-19).

Labuschagne said the strong form of Warner and Steve Smith -- who scored back-to-back centuries in the first two ODIs -- was a promising sign for the Test series.

"100 percent Cricket's a massive confidence game and even though it's a different format it still gives you confidence when you score runs consistently," he said.

"The way Steve and Davie have been batting I've got no

doubt they'll be able to transfer that into the Test summer," he said.

Smith's revelation

Steve Smith has revealed he suffered a "bad dose of vertigo" ahead of the second one-dayer against India and was not sure of playing the game in which he struck a series-clinching hundred, adds ***IANS***

Smith's quick-fire 62-ball-100 propelled Australia to a mammoth 389 for four in the second ODI, which they defended easily to secure a decisive 2-0 lead in the ODI series on Sunday.

However, the former skipper said he "didn't look great there for a while."

I didn't know I was playing today. I had a really bad dose of vertigo this morning and I was struggling up there... I came down early to have a hit and a bit of arun around, Smith told ***cricket.com.au*** after receiving his second successive Man-of-the-Match award.

Smith said it was team doctor Leigh Golding, who relieved him of the symptoms by performing the Epley manoeuvre which involved a series of head movements used to treat benign paroxysmal positional vertigo, a condition caused by a problem in the inner ear.

"The doctor, I think he performed six Epley manoeuvres on me this morning and got the crystals out of my ears and I was struggling for a bit," he said.

Amul Milk.
Hamesha Fresh.

Amul Taaza
HOMEMADE & FRESH MILK

180 days shelf life

₹64* / 1L
500 mL: ₹33*, 200 mL: ₹14*

*MRP (incl. of all taxes). Conditions apply.

Can't understand Kohli's captaincy, says Gambhir

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER

"They could have given someone like Washington Sundar or Shivam Dube or whoever was there in the squad to play the next game and see how they go into the one-day format. But if you don't have anyone in Australia then it is a selection error as well," the former Indian opener said. "Unless and until you don't judge someone you will never be able to find how good he is at international level. India have not taken those options to Australia and those might come back to hurt them big time," he added.

Gambhir has not been a fan of Kohli's white-ball captaincy and has been rooting for Rohit Sharma to lead India in the limited-overs formats. India will now have an uphill task to avoid a clean sweep when they take on the Aaron Finch-led side in the third and final ODI at Manuka Oval in Canberra on Wednesday.

East Bengal look to step up attack, secure maiden win

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BAMBOOLIM, 30 NOVEMBER

SC East Bengal will look to beef up their attack and secure a maiden win in the Indian Super League when they face Mumbai City FC here on Tuesday.

Despite heavy odds, the Robbie Fowler-coached East Bengal put up a creditable show in their first outing of ISL, against ATK Mohun Bagan even though they lost 0-2.

Last to enter the ISL, Fowler had less than a month to build the squad and if that was not enough they were pitted against their formidable arch-rivals on debut.

But Fowler's side dominated possession and their former Norwich City winger Anthony Pilkington looked threatening in the midfield. It was lack of finishing prowess with Balwant Singh up front that proved costly for them.

Fowler named a defensive formation against the well-set ATK Mohun Bagan with Balwant as the sole striker, putting the experienced Jeje Lalpekhlua on the bench, something that did not work out.

Fowler's newly-built side would need to reorganise their forward and convert their chances when they clash against the Sergio Lobera-outfit that beat a 10-man FC Goa 1-0 with a late strike in their second round game.

From Pilkington, SCB's German midfielder

Matti Steinmann looked strong in passes and held possession for long, but their Indian contingent would need to buck up.

Fowler hoped their new team would turn it around quickly and move up from the bottom spot in the 11-team table.

"It's not been the most ideal preparation. For a team that has been together for two-and-a-half weeks, I think we put in a good performance," Fowler said of their 0-2 defeat to ATKMB.

"But we've accepted it, adapted to it. We're incredibly coming here, so we have not trained together. But the way we played, we proved we can get better and better."

The Islanders also had started off on a losing note, going down to North East United 0-1 in a match in which they looked wayward with their shots.

They opened their account against FC Goa but were far from convincing.

The combination of Adam Le Fondre and Bartholomew Ogbeche has not worked for Lobera while Mourtada Fall struggled to get going against FC Goa.

Against a team with weak finishing, Fowler would fancy his chances.

Ahead of their crucial game against SC East Bengal, Lobera said their Tuesday's opponents were new in the league but they have very experienced players.

WTC hasn't achieved what it intended to do: ICC chairman

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER

text and relevance around the Test matches," he said.

While it was good in theory but has probably flopped in practice.

"From an idealist's point of view, probably it had a lot of merit but practically, I do disagree, I am not sure whether it has achieved what it intended to do," he said.

In fact, Barclay dropped a hint that the inaugural WTC could well be the last one as smaller members can't afford Test cricket championship anymore.

"My personal view is let's get through with the little bit that we can in this COVID-19, with reallocation of points and all that."

"...but once we have done that, let's go back to the drawing board as I am not quite sure whether it (WTC) entirely fits the purpose and has achieved what it intended to after being conceptualised four to five years back."

The New Zealander feels that a lot of problems with the current cricketing calendar is due to the World Test Championship which was fitted in to popularise the format, something that didn't happen according to him.

"...the issues that we have already got, I wonder whether some of it was because of an attempt to develop a Test Championship, clearly designed to drive interest back into Test cricket, provide a bit of con-

Grosjean praises halo bar after surviving fiery crash

AGENCIES
MANAMA, 30 NOVEMBER

Romain Grosjean credited the halo protection bar with saving his life in a fiery crash that ripped his car in two on the opening lap of the Bahrain Formula One Grand Prix on Sunday.

The Frenchman's Haas speared through the barriers after careening off the track at high speed, with the force of the impact splitting the car in half and setting it alight.

Grosjean, who clambered out and limped away from the crash, miraculously escaped with only burns to his hands and was being treated overnight at a nearby hospital.

"Hello everyone, just wanted to say I am okay, well sort of okay," the 34-year-old, his hand swaddled in bandages but his face smiling, said from his hospital bed in a video posted to his social media.

"I wasn't for the halo some

sport Ross Brawn said.

"There was quite a lot of controversy at the time about introducing it and I don't think anyone would doubt the validity of that. It was a life-saver today. Undoubtedly we've got to do a very deep analysis of all the events that occurred because there were a number of things that shouldn't have happened," Brawn said.

"The fire was worrying, the split of the barrier was worrying. I think the positives are the safety of the car and that's what got us through today."

Brawn said barriers splitting was a problem from F1's more dangerous past, and normally it resulted in a fatality. He said the sport had not seen such a fire in many years, although the fuel cells were now built to be "incredibly strong" and he suspected it was more likely to be due to a ruptured connection.

"It looked a big fire but those cars are carrying 100kg of fuel at

that stage. I think if 100kg had gone up, we would have had a massive fire. For me, that was a fire of a few kilos of fuel."

Damon Hill, the 1996 world champion, said he was "flabbergasted" by what he had seen and it was a miracle that Grosjean, a father of three, was alive.

Seven-time world champion Lewis Hamilton, the race winner for Mercedes, was also thankful the halo had worked.

"I'm grateful that the barrier didn't slice his head up or something like that. It could have been so much worse," said the Briton.

Red Bull team boss Christian Horner agreed: "Horrendous. An incident like that, I couldn't see a driver coming out of that. All credit to the FIA. For a car to pierce a steel barrier like that and for the driver to survive, with the fire and everything else, it's all credit to the job that they're doing. And they're right to keep pushing."