

SHORT TAKES

ASSAM DEPLOYS DRONES AT BORDER FOR SURVEILLANCE

MANOJ ANAND
GUWAHATI, NOV. 15

In the wake of growing inter-state border dispute among the north-eastern states, Assam government has augmented vigil along the inter-state border areas and deployed drones to keep surveillance on its forest areas along the border.

Informing that even the ministry of home affairs was keeping a close watch on the situation along the Assam-Mizoram border areas where conflict took place recently, authoritative security sources told this newspaper that more than 589 square kilometres of Assam's land was under encroachment by the neighbouring states.

Pointing out that it was highly challenging to retrieve the lands encroached by neighbouring states long back, security sources said that Assam was determined to stop the fresh attempt of encroaching the land by neighbouring states.

Asserting that the Assam government was committed to protect its constitutional boundaries, security sources said that efforts are on to improve vigil along the inter-state border areas. However, because of the length of the inter-state borders and difficult terrain, it is not easy to deploy police to guard every inch of the border with the people of neighbouring states taking advantage of the situation.

GUPKAR ALLIANCE FAILS TO FINALISE SEAT-SHARING

Srinagar, Nov. 15: The People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration members failed to finalise their seat-sharing arrangement for the District Development Council polls yet again despite holding a marathon meeting on Saturday, the third one in two days, on the issue.

The seat-sharing issue defying a resolution appeared to be exasperating for the two key constituents of the PAGD with its vice-chairperson and PDP president Mehbooba Mufti reminding the alliance that it "has a bigger cause to fight for than to bicker over the DDC elections."

JKPC chairman Sajad Lone too rued that "the statesmanship and magnanimity is still a missing trait in our polity". In a related development earlier during the day, as per the sources, PDP founder member Muzaaffar Hussain Baig resigned from the party following disagreement over seat-sharing for the upcoming DDC elections in Jammu and Kashmir.

The PAGD meeting which lasted for several hours at the National Conference (NC) headquarters 'Nawa-i-Subah' here concluded late on Saturday night, a PAGD leader said.

He said the meeting was part of the consultations between the parties of the alliance for the upcoming DDC polls.

NOW, JAIL-MADE FOOTWEAR TO HIT KERALA MARKETS

Thiruvananthapuram, Nov. 15: 'Jail-made' hawai chappal will be available in your next-door shop or market in Kerala as a central prison here has started manufacturing the rubber slippers now.

After dishing out a variety of products, including delicious but cost-effective food items, and successfully venturing into organic farming and beauty parlour business to running a petrol pump, the inmates of the Poojappura central prison here are now making footwear.

As part of a series of welfare measures for the prisoners to bring them to the forefront of society, the Kerala Prisons and Correctional Services Department recently established a manual footwear manufacturing unit at the jail premises.

The jail authorities released photos of inmates, in their conventional attire, engaged in chappal making and the colourful footwear they made. "Each pair of slipper will be sold at ₹80 and it will be marketed under the brand name, Freedom Walk," Superintendent of the prison and correction home Nirmalanandan Nair said.

Director General of Prisons and Correctional services Rishi Raj Singh, DGP, on Saturday launched the sale of the slippers at a function in the jail premises adhering to Covid-19 protocols.

DELHI STUDENTS TO GET LESSONS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

New Delhi, Nov. 15: From how much information to share online to how to deal with cyber threats, over seven lakh students in schools under the Delhi government, the city's cantonment board and NDMC will soon get lessons on the "responsible use of social media".

The month-long series of online sessions, which will be conducted for 1,040 schools, is scheduled to begin from November 23. The lessons are being conducted against the backdrop of increased usage of gadgets and exposure to social media during the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Threat through the unknown and anonymous cyber world is a harsh reality nowadays. Ease of access and unmonitored reach has exposed the children to unscrupulous elements on the net," deputy director of education Mohinder Pal said.

"The series on 'responsible use of social media' will create awareness about the various kinds of threats on the internet and also ways to secure oneself from these threats. The children will also be sensitised about responsible use of social media," he said.

—PTI

Gangotri temple closes for winter



A large number of pilgrims attend the door closing ceremony of Gangotri Dham for winter in Uttarkashi on Sunday. After the closure of the temple gates, an idol of god-deity Ganga was carried in a palanquin decorated with flowers to Mukhba village where she will be worshipped during winters.

—PTI

95 more die of Covid, positivity rate over 15%

AGE CORRESPONDENT
with agency inputs
NEW DELHI, NOV. 15

Delhi recorded 3,235 fresh Covid cases Sunday after 21,098 tests in the previous 24 hours, leading to an increased positivity rate of 15.33 per cent, as the infection tally in the national capital rose to over 4.85 lakh.

Ninety-five more fatalities pushed the death toll to 7,614, authorities said.

The number of tests conducted on Saturday was the lowest since August 14, when 14,389 tests were done. A Health department official said the low number of tests was due to the Diwali holiday.

"However, most of the testing centres/dispensaries in the city remained opened," he

said. Of the total tests conducted, 11,877 were rapid-antigen tests, and 9,221 RT-PCR tests, the bulletin said. Delhi recorded a positivity rate of 15.33 per cent amid the festive season and rising pollution in the city, according to the bulletin issued by the health department.

At 3,235, it was also the lowest number of fresh cases since October 26, when 2,832 cases were reported. The national capital had recorded its highest single-day spike of 8,593 Covid cases on Wednesday.

On Thursday, 104 fatalities, the highest in a day in over five months, were recorded. The city had registered 93 deaths on June 16. On Sunday, 95 more fatalities were recorded.

SABARIMALA TEMPLE OPENS FOR DEVOTEES

Sabarimala (Kerala), Nov. 15: The hill shrine of Lord Ayyappa here opened on Sunday evening for the annual two-month long Mandala-Makaravillakku season, adhering to strict Covid-19 protocol.

Devotees would be allowed inside the temple only from Monday morning, temple sources said. No special pujas were held on Sunday.

Melshanti A.K. Sudheer Namboothiri opened the doors of the sanctum sanctorum and lit the lamps at 5 pm in the presence of Tantri Kandararu Rajeevaru, heralding the start of the 62-day long pilgrim season.

The newly elected Sabarimala melsanthi V.K. Jayaraj Potti and Malikkapuram Melsanthi M.N. Raj Kumar, were the first to climb the holy 18 steps and offer prayers.

They took charge this evening. Each day, only 1,000 pilgrims, who have booked through the virtual queue system, would be allowed to offer prayers.

They have to carry Covid-19 negative certificate taken 24 hours before they reach Nilakkal and Pamba, base camps.

—PTI

60-year-old man strangled to death by son

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 15

A 60-year-old man was allegedly strangled to death by his son following a fight between them, police said on Sunday.

The deceased Dilip, a resident of Om Vihar, worked as a vegetable vendor, they said.

Police said the incident

took place on Saturday afternoon in west Delhi's Uttam Nagar area on Diwali.

According to the police, the man was strangled to death by his 24-year-old son Avdesh with a help of "dupatta" following a fight between them.

It is suspected that Avdesh was upset with his father as he suspected that

▶ **ACCORDING TO the police, the man was strangled to death by his 24-year-old son Avdesh with a help of 'dupatta' following a fight between them**

he was having an illicit relationship with his wife.

Police, however, said, the matter is still under inves-

tigation.

After killing his father, he fled from the house but was nabbed from the vicinity soon, a senior police officer said.

The officer said the deceased's younger son Ankit, who was some where else during the incident, returned home and informed the police.

DCP (Dwarka) Santosh

Cong: Delay in seat sharing affected Bihar grand alliance

Party serious about introspection, thorough analysis of election results

New Delhi, Nov. 15: Delay in finalising seat sharing for the Bihar election adversely impacted the Mahagathbandhan's poll performance, senior Congress leader Tariq Anwar said on Sunday, asserting that the Congress must learn from it and complete alliance formalities well in advance for upcoming assembly polls.

Anwar, party's general secretary and a veteran leader from Bihar, acknowledged that there were shortcomings due to which the party performed worse than other 'Mahagathbandhan' constituents and asserted that the high command was serious about an introspection as well as a thorough analysis of the results.

Anwar said the Bihar poll results were "definitely below" the Congress' expectations and it was a setback to bag only 19 out of the 70 seats it contested. "There was an environment of change with enthusiasm among the common people for it, but we could not exploit that. We had the expectation that with the Congress fighting on 70 seats, it would win at least 50 per cent of the seats," the former union minister said.

"Our government was not formed and we (the Congress) also have a responsibility in that. Going forward, our efforts will be aimed at strengthening the Congress and the Mahagathbandhan and we will make a strategy for it," he said.

Nearly 160 tonnes of biomedical waste generated during election

New Delhi, Nov. 15: Nearly 160 tonne of biomedical waste in the form of gloves, face masks and empty sanitiser bottles used by polling personnel and voters was generated during the Bihar Assembly polls held amid the Covid-19 pandemic, poll authorities in the state have said.

The poll authorities also relied on an inexpensive but effective technology used to track EVMs to ensure that the waste reached public health centres for its onward journey to the incinerator.

To ensure safety of voters, polling staff and security personnel in the first-ever polls held amid the pandemic, the Election Commission had procured 18 lakh face shields, 70 lakh face

masks, 5.4 lakh single use rubber gloves for polling and security personnel and 7.21 crore 'one hand' single use polythene gloves for voters to press the EVM button and sign the register at the polling stations.

It had also bought a total of 29 lakh hand sanitiser bottles of 100 and 500 ml. As per the guidelines issued by the Election Commission and poll authorities in Bihar, the polling stations were sanitised a day before election and three times on the day of the election.

The office of the Chief Electoral Officer of Bihar had sought the help of the state health department to decide on "Covid safety material" for the three phase elections.

His remarks assume significance as several poll analysts have stated that the Congress dragged the Mahagathbandhan down as it fell short of the majority mark, with the NDA under Nitish Kumar's leadership emerging victorious in the polls by a narrow margin.

Anwar, who was a member of the party's poll management committee, said there should be an introspection and "we have also demanded that it should happen".

He said the high command was ready for an introspection and stressed the top leadership had given all possible support during the polls with former party chief Rahul Gandhi also holding many public meetings in the state.

"But there have been shortcomings on our part otherwise we should have won 35-40 seats. So whether there were shortcomings in organisation or campaign, all of that will be discussed and

The safety material which included face masks, face shields, gloves and personal sanitiser bottles were put in a bag meant for a polling party of six persons.

"They were trained for disposal of the safety material also. It could be littered anywhere," Bihar Chief Electoral Officer H.R. Srinivas said.

He said roughly, 160 tonne of biomedical waste was generated. All districts have its biomedical waste (BMW) disposal agency.

"The challenge was the agency would lift BMW from health centres, hospitals but not lift from polling stations. The districts then appointed BMW workers," Srinivas said.

—PTI

LJP CLAIMS IT PROVED ITS WORTH IN BIHAR

New Delhi, Nov. 15: With questions being raised about the Lok Janshakti Party's prospects after it won only one seat in the Bihar Assembly polls, party sources on Sunday cited its "influence" in "changing" results in over 40 seats to assert that it will continue to have a key presence in the state politics.

The LJP was instrumental in the defeat of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar-led JD(U) in at least 36 seats which is evident from its vote share, and the BJP would also have been hit hard if the regional party had gone all out against it in a similar manner, the sources claimed. The LJP might have won only one seat, but it has underscored its presence by fetching 5.7 per cent votes, the party sources said.

They noted that the party put up candidates in only six seats where the BJP was in the fray while contesting on almost each of the 115 seats where the JD(U) contested in the elections to the 243-seat Bihar Assembly polls. With the JD(U), hit hard by the LJP in the elections, likely to oppose any friendly vibes to the party by its ally BJP, the sources in party claimed that it was offered only 15 seats to contest in the polls.

—PTI

BHAGWAN PARAB
MUMBAI, NOV. 15

Maharashtra government's decision of reopening of religious places has resulted in the game of political oneupmanship with the BJP calling it a win for Hindutva. However, the Shiv sena has countered it saying it was neither a victory nor a defeat of anybody.

"The government was forced to reopen the places of religious worship due to the protests by Hindutva organizations and the support extended to them by the BJP," said Praveen Darekar, the leader of opposition in the Vidhan Parishad.

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Saturday announced that places of religious worship in Maharashtra, which have been shut from March due to coronavirus-induced lockdown, will reopen from Monday. The state government has also issued guidelines under which religious places located out of Covid-19 containment zones will be allowed to remain open as per the timings decided by the authorities and devotees will be allowed inside in a staggered manner.

"The state government was against the reopening of religious places. But it relented as the BJP stood firmly behind the Hindutva organisations who demanded reopening of temples," said Darekar.

However, senior Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut has said that there was no

ONLY 100 TO GET DARSHAN AT SIDDHIVINAYAK

SONU SHRIVASTAVA
MUMBAI, NOV. 15

Though the Maharashtra government has allowed to reopen the places of worship from Monday, Shri Siddhivinayak Trust has decided to allow only 100 people to seek the blessing of lord Ganesha to its temple in Dadar.

Mumbai's Iconic Siddhivinayak Temple is one of the most revered places in Mumbai for devotees. The trust has come out with a list of SOPs (Standard Operation Procedure) for the safety of devotees.

Addressing a pressure conference in Mumbai on Sunday, Aadesh Bhandekar, Chairman of Shree Siddhivinayak Temple Trust, which is controlled by Maharashtra government, said that the temple will be reopened for the devotees from Monday.

As lakhs of devotees are eager to take 'darshan' of Siddhivinayak, therefore, crowding should be avoided in the temple.

question of taking credit for reopening of places of worship. "Not just temples, but all places of worship will reopen. It was God's will that people stay at home and now it is God's will that places of worship reopen with precautions," he added.

LEGENDARY | LIFE

RAJIB CHOWDHURI
KOLKATA, NOV. 15

Legendary actor Soumitra Chatterjee, who successfully carried forward the golden period of Bengali cinema with his epic roles beyond the era of screen icons like Uttam Kumar and Utpal Dutt, died on Sunday afternoon at a private hospital in Kolkata while fighting prolonged illness from Covid-19. He was 85.

The versatile thespian is survived by his wife Deepa, son Sougata and daughter Poulomi. Chatterjee had won the national film awards thrice and was a recipient of the Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 2012

Feluda is no more. Apu said goodbye. Farewell, Soumitra (Da) Chatterjee, tweets Mamata

Bengal breaks down as Soumitra Chatterjee passes away

before being conferred with the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, France's highest award for artists, in 2017.

He worked with a league of famous film directors like Satyajit Ray, Mrinal Sen, Tapan Sinha, Goutam Ghose, Aparna Sen and Rituparno Ghosh. Chatterjee has also contributed to drama and poetry during his six-decade career.

Admitted at Belle Vue Clinic in October 6 with Covid-19, Chatterjee beat the infection in a week but he needed ventilator support twice as his condition weakened due to Covid encephalopathy besides age-related ailments.



The film veteran's condition turned grave since late on Saturday night. He stopped responding to treatment early on Sunday. Chatterjee breathed his last at 12.15 pm.

Eulogising his famous

Shri Soumitra Chatterjee's death is a colossal loss to the world of cinema, cultural life of West Bengal and India. Through his works, he came to embody Bengali sensibilities, emotions and ethos. Anguished by his demise. Condolences to his family and admirers. Om Shanti."

NARENDRA MODI
Prime Minister

roles in popular Bengali films *Joybaba Felunath* and *Apur Sansar*, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said on Twitter, "Feluda" is no more. 'Apu' said goodbye. Farewell, Soumitra

(Da) Chatterjee. He has been a legend in his lifetime. International, Indian and Bengali cinema has lost a giant. We will miss him dearly. The film world in Bengal has been orphaned. Best known for his films with Satyajit Ray, Soumitra Da was conferred with Legion of Honor, Dadasaheb Phalke Award, Banga Bibhushan, Padma Bhushan & several National Awards. A great loss. Saddened. Condolences to his family, the film fraternity & his admirers across the world."

Visiting the hospital Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee later along with her ministerial colleagues

and a host of film personalities, walked with a sea of Soumitra Chatterjee's fans in his last journey which covered his Golf Green residence, Artists Forum and Rabindra Sadan.

His funeral was performed at Keoratala Crematorium with a gun salute by the Kolkata police.

Mourning Soumitra Chatterjee's demise, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, "Shri Soumitra Chatterjee's death is a colossal loss to the world of cinema, cultural life of West Bengal and India. Through his works, he came to embody Bengali sensibilities, emotions and ethos.

Anguished by his demise. Condolences to his family and admirers. Om Shanti."

French Ambassador to India Emmanuel Lenain tweeted, "Deeply saddened to learn legendary actor Soumitra Chatterjee has passed away. A versatile artist, he earned the world's admiration and many awards, including Order of Arts and Letters & Legion of Honour. My heartfelt condolences to his family and fans."

Union home minister Amit Shah, West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar and several actors including Sharmila Tagore condoned Chatterjee's death.

SHORT TAKES

55-YEAR-OLD WOMAN JUDGE FOUND HANGING

Mungeli (C'garh), Nov. 15: In a suspected suicide case, a 55-year-old woman district judge was found hanging at her official residence in Chhattisgarh's Mungeli district on Sunday, police said.

Mungeli District and Sessions Judge Kanta Martin was found hanging from the ceiling fan with a saree inside a room at her official residence in Karhi area here this morning, Mungeli Superintendent of Police Arvind Kujur said. As per the preliminary information, after having food early in the evening on Saturday, the judge asked her cook and other staff to leave the house, he said.

"When the cook returned on Sunday morning, he found the door of her residence locked from inside. He saw from the window that the judge was hanging from the ceiling fan, following which, he alerted the police," Kujur said. A police team broke the door open and the body was later sent for post-mortem, he said. "No suicide note was recovered from the spot," he added. According to the judge's staff members, she was apparently under depression following the death of her husband last year.

BODY OF WOMAN HANDED OVER TO WRONG FAMILY

Ahmedabad, Nov. 15: In a major goof-up, the body of an elderly woman kept in the mortuary of a civic-run hospital in Ahmedabad was handed over to another family, who even performed her last rites.

When the family members of Lekhaben Chand (65) went to the VS Hospital on Sunday, they were shocked to find the body 'missing' from the hospital's mortuary where it was kept till her son arrived from Canada to perform her last rites.

When contacted, a senior official of the hospital said, that the "body got exchanged" and the police were conducting an investigation into the matter. The woman's family members had kept the body in the hospital's mortuary here on the morning of November 11 as they were waiting for her NRI son to come from Canada to perform her last rites. When they went to the hospital to claim the body on Sunday, they found it 'missing'.

Later, it came to light that the body was claimed by another family who even performed her last rites, Chand's distraught family members said.

REPUBLIC TV'S CEO GRILLED IN TRP SCAM CASE

SAURABH JOSHI | DC MUMBAI, NOV. 15

The Mumbai crime branch has summoned Republic TV's chief operating officer Priya Mukherjee for questioning in connection with the TRP scam case, on Tuesday.

The officials have summoned Mukherjee for the second time in the case. The Mumbai police said that her name cropped up during the questioning of her colleague Ghanshyam Singh.

The officials said that the probe has also allegedly revealed that the accused persons also allegedly bribed the cable operators to relay the channel on more than one channel to their subscribers in a bid to boost the channel's TRPs. This was done after the channel's senior officials approved the same, police has claimed.

Singh has also revealed the intricacies of the channel's operation, based on which the police sought his further custody for interrogation. He has been sent to extended police custody till November 16. The channel however refuted allegations of any wrongdoings.

"The COO of the channel will be questioned on the lines of the facts that have come forward in the probe. The teams are also questioning other related people who were in contact with the channel operators," said an officer.

The probe began following a complaint by the BARC to the Mumbai police claiming the scam in TRP of Republic TV, Fakt Marathi, Maha Movie and Box Cinema. The allegations involved bribing viewers to watch Republic TV to help boost the TRP.

The same allegedly helped these channels earn huge money via advertisements, cheating the advertisers.

The police have arrested at least six persons and the probe is underway to ascertain involvement of other channel authorities including chief editor Arnab Mukherjee.



Border Security Force (BSF) personnel carry the coffin of their colleague Sub Inspector Rakesh Dobhal, who was killed on November 13, during ceasefire violations by Pakistan near LoC in Nowgam Sector of North Kashmir, after his wreath-laying ceremony at STC Humhama on the outskirts of Srinagar, on Sunday. Four army personnel, a Border Security Force sub-inspector, and six civilians were killed while four security forces personnel and eight civilians were injured in the firing by Pakistan during the multiple ceasefire violations between Uri, Gurez, and Poonch sectors in Jammu and Kashmir.

— PTI

TN continues its debate over ban on firecrackers

Chennai, Nov. 15: The raging debate over the ban on firecrackers in several states continued with BJP national general secretary C. T. Ravi on Sunday questioning the rationale and flagging concerns about other pollutants.

Tamil Nadu police said over 1,000 cases have been booked across the state against those who burst crackers beyond the permitted two-hours on Diwali day. The social media was abuzz with many, including Ravi and Congress MP Manickam Tagore, highlighting the plight of lakhs of workers employed in the fireworks industry's national hub of Sivakasi in Virudhunagar district of southern Tamil Nadu.

The Left parties underscored that stocks worth crores have been left unsold in view of the ban and urged financial assistance to the industry. Several states had banned sale and use of firecrackers this year citing the coronavirus pandemic and environment concerns with the decision coming as a blow to the industry.

A day after the nation celebrated the festival

● **TAMIL NADU** police said over 1,000 cases have been booked across the state against those who burst crackers beyond the permitted two-hours on Diwali day. The social media was abuzz with many, including Ravi and Congress MP Manickam Tagore, highlighting the plight of lakhs of workers employed in the fireworks industry's national hub of Sivakasi in Virudhunagar district of southern Tamil Nadu

amid the ban, Ravi, party in-charge for Tamil Nadu, said about ten lakh people were dependent on the cracker industry. "Sivakasi in Tamil Nadu is where crackers are manufactured & nearly 10 lakh people are employed. If activist, Govts or tribunals want to ban crackers for #Deepavali, they should ban for all purposes now. No pontificating cricketer or actor should celebrate weddings with Crackers," he tweeted.

To a twitter user, who pointed to the plight of workers and the need for

alternative employment for them in view of ban and curbs vis-a-vis firecrackers, the Saffron party leader said he agreed with that view. "I agree. Those in Sivakasi dependent on crackers industry should be provided with alternate jobs. Only then should crackers be banned across Bharat. Also, other activities that involve mass killing of animals, cutting trees & causing damage to environment should also be banned," Ravi, who was here days ago to lead a 'Vetrivel yatra,' that was not allowed by the government citing the Coronavirus pandemic, said.

In another tweet response, Ravi said he was not for banning crackers at all. "As a Hindu, I don't want anyone interfering or lecturing us about how to celebrate Our Festivals. I am against arbitrary ban on crackers that affects the livelihood of lakhs of Tamil Makkal (people) dependent on crackers industry in Sivakasi".

Tagore, Congress MP from Virudhunagar, shared a report on cause of pollution in Delhi which did not feature

firecrackers as a contributory factor. Sarcastically, he said on his twitter handle, "Kindly find Sivakasi #Firecrackers in the list of Pollutants in Delhi but blame it for all others mistakes, is it fair ???", "Sivakasi only have the talent and knowledge to compete China on #Fireworks industry but Ministers of Modi Sarkar never supports Sivakasi but ran hashtag #Local4Vocal." "Japan skies lit up with fireworks to brighten mood amid Coronavirus...but in our India where Our Sivakasi manufactures Fireworks We have fight to stop lies and spread truth," the Congress MP said. Also, on his twitter handle he dismissed claims of child labour in Sivakasi as completely false, baseless and unfounded.

CPI's state secretary R. Mutharasan said approximately ₹500 crore worth firecrackers dispatched by Sivakasi-based small manufacturers have got stuck with dealers in various parts of the country in view of the ban which is 'threatening' the livelihood of lakhs of workers.

— PTI

Our response will be fierce: Modi

■ **Continued from Page 1** Irrespective of advances in global cooperation and changes in equations, "we simply can't afford to forget that vigilance is the key to security, alertness is the basis of happiness, and strength is the confidence of victory".

"If anyone casts an evil eye on us, our soldiers reply to them befittingly. This establishes the



credibility of the Indian Army in the world. Today, the country's Army is engaged in military exercises with other

big countries. We are engaged in strategic partnerships to fight against terrorism. The Indian armed forces have shown that they can strike at terrorist havens anywhere, anytime," said Mr Modi. Mr Modi said today's India believes in understanding and explaining, but "if there is an attempt to test us, the response will be equally

fierce".

Longewala was the site of a historic battle during the 1971 India-Pakistan war where 120 Indian soldiers, supported by four Hunter fighter aircraft, successfully repulsed an attack by 2,000-3,000 Pakistani soldiers who were supported by over 40 tanks. It was one of the major engagements in the early days of that war.

House checks, rise in tests to control Covid across Delhi

■ **Continued from Page 1** shortage of medical staff in Delhi, it was decided to provide additional doctors and paramedical staff from the Central armed police forces, and they will soon be airlifted to Delhi. The ITBP has already set up the country's biggest Covid hospital in Delhi's Chhattarpur area.

The Delhi government authorities and the commissioner of police has been asked to strictly enforce the necessary measures, especially wearing of face masks, so that there is no laxity in observing Covid-19 protocols. During the meeting, it was discussed to focus on improving the recovery rate and bringing down the death rate. Delhi's present death rate ranges between 1.5 to 1.8 per cent. The high



Amit Shah

positivity rate in the city was also a matter of concern, though officials were hopeful that the situation would come under control within the next eight to 10 days.

Delhi is facing a peculiar problem as despite a complete ban on bursting of crackers till November 30, the city and its neighbouring area defied the ban on Diwali, pushing pollution levels to the "severe" category. The experts feel the poor air

quality can trigger more Covid-19 cases. The total number of Covid-19 cases in India so far has been 88.22 lakhs, with close to 1.30 lakh deaths. There are now 4.74 lakh active cases. Apart from Delhi, Kerala and West Bengal are also seeing a high number of cases while Maharashtra has a respite.

The Maharashtra government has said it will reopen places of worship from Monday.

Delhi to double RT-PCR tests, says Amit Shah

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, NOV. 15

In view of rising the Covid-19 cases in Delhi, Union home minister Amit Shah on Sunday ordered doubling up of RT-PCR testing in the national capital, increase in hospital beds and ventilators, better tracking and management of home isolation patients and review of containment measures.

These decisions were taken following an emergency meeting between Shah, officials of the Union health ministry and the Delhi government to see what best can be done to check the spread of infection. Delhi Lt Governor Anil Bajjal, Union health minister Dr Harshvardhan, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Delhi minister

Satendra Jain were among those who attended the meeting as Delhi recorded the highest Covid-19 cases on Saturday among all states at 7,340 with 96 deaths. On Sunday the new cases were 3,235 due to fewer testing on holidays. The deaths on Sunday were 95.

"We need to save as many lives as possible and for that the Central government is making available additional oxygen cylinders, high flow nasal cannulas, and other important medical equipment to the Delhi government," Shah said.

The home ministry has decided to further increase health and medical facilities in the capital. It was decided to go in for a much more aggressive testing, tracing and isolation in the entire NCR region.

MANIPUR CM TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

Imphal, Nov. 15: Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh on Sunday said that he has tested positive for Covid-19. The chief minister requested all who came in close contact with him in the last few days to get themselves tested.

Taking to Facebook, the chief minister said, "Friends, I have tested Covid positive today after having some symptoms. ... I am fine at the moment."

The chief minister is undergoing home isolation, a health department official said.

— PTI

CANCELLATION / PARTIAL CANCELLATION /SHORT TERMINATION/ SHORT ORIGATION /DIVERSION OF TRAINS

It is notified for the information of all concerned that Railways have decided to Cancel/Partially Cancel/Short Terminate/Short Originate/Divert following Passengers Special Trains/Festival Special Trains/Parcel Express Trains in view of the Kisan Agitation at Punjab:-

CANCELLATION OF MAIL / EXPRESS TRAINS	
Train No. & Name	Date of cancellation (from the Originating Station)
02425/02426 New Delhi-Jammu Tawi-New Delhi Rajdhani Special	16.11.2020
02053/02054 Haridwar-Amritsar Jn.-Haridwar Express	16 & 17.11.2020
22439/22440 New Delhi-Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra-New Delhi Vande Bharat	16.11.2020
02462 Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra-New Delhi Express	16.11.2020
02461 New Delhi-Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Express	16 & 17.11.2020
02011/02012 New Delhi-Kalka-New Delhi Shatabdi Express	16.11.2020
02029/02030 Amritsar Jn.-New Delhi-Amritsar Jn. Swarna Shatabdi Express	16.11.2020
05211 Darbhanga Jn.-Amritsar Jn. Express	16.11.2020
05212 Amritsar Jn.-Darbhanga Jn. Express	17 & 18.11.2020

CANCELLATION OF FESTIVAL SPECIAL TRAINS	
Train No. & Name	Date of cancellation (from the Originating Station)
02422 Jammu Tawi-Ajmer Express	16.11.2020
02421 Ajmer-Jammu Tawi Express	16 & 17.11.2020
02231 Lucknow - Chandigarh Express	16.11.2020
02232 Chandigarh-Lucknow Express	16 & 17.11.2020
04888 Barmer - Rishikesh Express	upto 20.11.2020
04887 Rishikesh - Barmer Express	upto 21.11.2020
04519 Delhi Jn.-Bhatinda Express	upto 20.11.2020
04520 Bhatinda-Delhi Jn. Express	upto 20.11.2020
04401 New Delhi-Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Express	upto 19.11.2020
04402 Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra - New Delhi Express	upto 20.11.2020
02471/02472 Shri Ganganagar - Delhi Jn. - Shri Ganganagar Express	upto 20.11.2020
09611 Ajmer - Amritsar Jn. Express	19.11.2020
09614 Amritsar Jn. - Ajmer Express	20.11.2020
09613 Ajmer - Amritsar Jn. Express	16 & 18.11.2020
09612 Amritsar Jn. - Ajmer Express	17 & 19.11.2020
02587 Gorakhpur - Jammu Tawi Express	16.11.2020
05098 Jammu Tawi - Bhagalpur Express	17.11.2020
02919 Dr. Ambedkar Nagar - Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Express	16.11.2020
02920 Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra - Dr. Ambedkar Nagar Express	18.11.2020
04997 Varanasi - Bhatinda Jn. Express	16.11.2020
04611 Varanasi - Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Express	17.11.2020
03256 Chandigarh - Patliputra Express	16.11.2020
05532 Amritsar Jn. - Saharsa Jn. Express	16.11.2020

PARTIAL CANCELLATION OF SPECIAL TRAINS			
Train No. & Name	Short Terminate at/ Short originate from	Partially Cancelled between Stations	Date of cancellation (from the Originating Station)
02903 Golden Temple Mail	at Ambala Cantt.	Ambala Cantt.-Amritsar	of 15.11.2020
02904 Golden Temple Mail	from Ambala Cantt.	Amritsar-Ambala Cantt.	16.11.2020
02925 Bandra Termins-Amritsar Special Express	at Ambala Cantt.	Ambala Cantt.-Amritsar	of 15.11.2020
02926 Amritsar-Bandra Termins Special Exp.	from Ambala Cantt.	Amritsar-Ambala Cantt.	16 & 17.11.2020
02715 Sachkhand Express	at New Delhi	New Delhi-Amritsar	of 15.11.2020
02716 Sachkhand Express	from New Delhi	Amritsar-New Delhi	16 & 17.11.2020
03307 Dhanbad-Firozpur Exp.	at Ambala Cantt.	Ambala Cantt.-Firozpur	of 15.11.2020
03308 Firozpur-Dhanbad Exp.	from Ambala Cantt.	Firozpur-Ambala Cantt.	16 & 17.11.2020
04649/73 Jaynagar-Amritsar Saryu Yamuna Exp.	at Ambala Cantt.	Ambala Cantt.-Amritsar	of 15.11.2020
04650/74 Amritsar-Jaynagar Saryu Yamuna Exp.	from Ambala Cantt.	Amritsar-Ambala Cantt.	16 & 17.11.2020
02057 New Delhi - Una Himachal Janshatabdi	at Ambala Cantt.	Ambala Cantt. - Una Himachal	16.11.2020
02058 Una Himachal - New Delhi Janshatabdi	from Ambala Cantt.	Una Himachal - Ambala Cantt.	16 & 17.11.2020
02237 Varanasi-Jammu Tawi Festival Special	at Saharanpur	Saharanpur-Jammu Tawi	16.11.2020
02238 Jammu Tawi-Varanasi Festival Special	from Saharanpur	Jammu Tawi-Saharanpur	16 & 17.11.2020
09025 Bandra T.-Amritsar Jn. Special Clone Train	at Ambala Cantt.	Ambala Cantt. - Amritsar Jn.	16.11.2020
09026 Amritsar Jn.-Bandra T. Special Clone Train	from Ambala Cantt.	Amritsar Jn.-Ambala Cantt.	18.11.2020
09717 Jaipur-Daulatpur Chouk Express	at Ambala Cantt.	Ambala Cantt. - Daulatpur Chouk	of 15.11.2020
09718 Daulatpur Chouk-Jaipur Express	from Ambala Cantt.	Daulatpur Chouk-Ambala Cantt.	16.11.2020

PARTIAL CANCELLATION OF PARCEL SPECIAL TRAINS			
Train No. & Name	Short Terminate at/ Short originate from	Partially Cancelled between Stations	Date of cancellation (from the Originating Station)
00901 Bandra(T)-Jammu Tawi	At Ambala Cantt.	Ambala Cantt.-Jammu Tawi	of 15.11.2020
00902 Jammu Tawi-Bandra(T)	From Ambala Cantt.	Jammu Tawi-Ambala Cantt.	17.11.2020
00468 Amritsar Jn.-Howrah	From Delhi	Amritsar Jn.-Delhi	16.11.2020

DIVERSION OF SPECIAL TRAINS		
Train No. & Name	Diverted Via	Date (from the Originating Station)
05909 Dibrugarh-Lalgarh Spl.	Rohtak-Bhiwani-Hisar-Hanumangarh	of 14.11.2020
05910 Lalgarh-Dibrugarh Spl.	Hanumangarh-Hisar-Bhiwani-Rohtak	16.11.2020

Note : For any kind of information passengers are requested to contact Railway Enquiry No. 139 or visit Indian Railways website www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in

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INDICATORS		%
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Nifty 50	12,780.25	0.47
S&P 500*	3,566.86	0.84
Dollar (₹)	74.61	0.04
Pound Sterling (₹)	98.19	0.21
Euro (₹)	88.11	0.049
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	50,425*241	0.47
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	42.87	-0.66
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.878	-0.024
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.893	0.007

* As of Friday/Saturday

FPIs invest over ₹35K cr in stocks, debt this month

Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have invested a massive Rs 35,109 crore in Indian markets in November so far, as corporate earnings and reforms measures undertaken by the government to revive investment activities kept the investors' sentiment upbeat. According to the depositories data, FPIs invested a net sum of Rs 29,436 crore into equities and Rs 5,673 crore into debt segment during Nov. 2-13.

UAE 'golden' visa allows 10-year residency to pros



The UAE has approved granting "golden" visas allowing 10-year residency to certain professionals and others. All holders of doctorate degrees, medical doctors and also computer, electronics, programming, electrical and biotechnology engineers are eligible. Also eligible are those with specialised degrees in artificial intelligence, big data and epidemiology, as well as school students living in the UAE who rank top in studies.

Ministry seeks opinion on social security code

The Ministry of Labour and Employment has sought feedback from stakeholders on draft rules under the Code on Social Security, 2020. The feedback has to be given within 45 days from Nov. 13. The draft rules provide for operationalisation of provisions in the Code on Social Security, 2020 relating to EPFO, ESIC, gratuity, maternity benefit, social security and cess in respect of construction workers, gig workers and the like.

Muhurat trading: Sensex, Nifty soar new highs

Equity benchmarks surged to lifetime highs on Saturday as investors built up fresh positions in the special Muhurat trading session to mark the beginning of Hindu Samvat year 2077. The Sensex soared 194.98 points or 0.45 per cent to close at a record 43,637.98. Intra-day, it hit its all-time high of 43,830.93. The Nifty advanced 60.30 points, or 0.47 per cent, to finish at its lifetime high of 12,780.25.

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World's biggest trade agreement floats 15-country bloc Asia-Pacific nations sign RCEP pact without India

GURDIP SINGH SINGAPORE, NOV. 15

Fifteen Asia-Pacific nations, including China, on Sunday signed the world's biggest trade agreement, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), sans India with hopes that it will help recover from the shocks of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The RCEP was signed after eight years of negotiations at the annual summit of Southeast Asian leaders and their regional partners, held virtually this year.

The agreement, which covers almost a third of the world economy, will progressively lower tariffs across many areas in the coming years, reported Channel News Asia.

After the signing, all countries would have to ratify the RCEP within two years before it becomes effective.

India, a leading consumer-driven market in the region, pulled out of talks last year, concerned that the elimination of tariffs would open its markets to a flood of imports.

But other nations have said in the past that the door remains open for India's participation in the RCEP, influenced by China.

The RCEP was first proposed in 2012 and loops in 10 Asean economies—Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia—along



SIGNATORIES WAIT FOR INDIA

New Delhi, Nov. 15:

Countries that have signed the RCEP agreement can start negotiations with India for joining the pact once New Delhi submits a written request stating its intention for the same, according to a declaration. On November 4 last year, India walked out of mega free trade agreement as negotiations failed to address New Delhi's outstanding issues and concerns. The remaining 15 member countries have signed the RCEP agreement and have stated that the pact would

remain open to India.

"The RCEP signatory states will commence negotiations with India at any time after the signing of RCEP agreement once India submits a request in writing of its intention to accede to RCEP agreement to the depository of the RCEP agreement, taking into consideration the latest status of India's participation in RCEP negotiations and any new development thereafter," according to the Ministers' Declaration on India's Participation in RCEP. The declaration is dated November 11. —PTI

with China, Japan, South Korea, New Zealand and Australia.

Host country Vietnam's prime minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc said the pandemic has harmed global and regional trade and investment flows, including the countries partici-

pating in the RCEP talks.

The global and regional economies are facing huge obstacles and challenges caused by not only Covid-19 but also decreased global trade, he was quoted as saying by the Vietnam News Agency (VNA). The conclusion of the

negotiations of the RCEP, the largest free trade agreement in the world, will send a strong message of Asean's leading role in supporting the multilateral trade system, helping to create a new trading structure in the region, VNA quoted Phuc as saying.

Singapore prime minister Lee Hsien Loong said he joins fellow RCEP countries "in hoping that India too, will be able to come on board at some point so that the participation in the RCEP will fully reflect the emerging patterns of integration and regional cooperation in Asia."

They make up nearly a third of the world's population and account for 29 per cent of global gross domestic product, he said.

"We have reached a major milestone of signing this agreement today. It has taken us eight years, 46 negotiating meetings and 19 ministerial meetings to get here," he said.

Malaysia's trade minister Mohamed Azmin Ali, ahead of the summit, had said, "after eight years of negotiating with blood, sweat and tears, we have finally come to the moment where we will seal the RCEP Agreement this Sunday."

The four-day Asean summit included meetings between Southeast Asian leaders and their counterparts from China, Japan and South Korea in the Asean Plus Three Summit, as well as the East Asia Summit and RCEP Summit. —PTI

Infosys says 63% of US ops no longer tied to visas

New Delhi, Nov. 15: Infosys has been "intensely focused" on skilling and generating local employment in markets like the US, which has helped the IT services major become about 63 per cent visa-independent in the US and over 50 per cent in Europe and Australia-New Zealand, its chief operating officer Pravin Rao said.

Infosys, which counts the US as its biggest market, said it is still early to comment on the approach the new US administration could take towards work visas but it expects to continue benefiting from its localisation efforts.

"We continue to see challenges to mobility of talent. New proposed immigration regulations in USA could impact onsite wage costs, granting of visas, tenure of visas, and overall costs of compliance."

"Our localisation programme across USA, Europe and Australia, launched three years ago, mitigates many of these," said at a recent analyst meet.

He said Infosys has eight innovation hubs across the US and the EU, nine global Digital Studios (including a 5G lab in Melbourne) and seven global cyber defence centres.

"We are close to 63 per cent visa-independent in the US and over 50 per cent in Europe and ANZ," he said. —PTI

RIL acquires 96% in Urban Ladder



New Delhi, Nov. 15: Reliance Industries' retail arm has picked up a 96 per cent stake in online furniture retailer Urban Ladder for over Rs 182 crore.

In August, RIL had acquired a majority stake in digital pharma marketplace Netmeds for around Rs 620 crore.

Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd (RRVL), a subsidiary of Reliance Industries (RIL), has acquired equity shares of Urban Ladder Home Decor Solutions Pvt Ltd for a cash consideration of Rs 182.12 crore, RIL said on Saturday.

The investment represents 96 per cent holding in the equity share capital of Urban Ladder; it added.

RRVL has an option of acquiring the balance stake, taking its shareholding to 100 per cent.

Besides, RRVL has proposed to make a further investment of up to Rs 75 crore in Urban Ladder.

The further investment is expected to be completed by December 2023, it said.

This acquisition will help RIL in bolstering its presence in the fast-growing e-commerce segment and widening the bouquet of consumer products provided by it as it looks to compete with e-commerce majors as Amazon and Flipkart.

The investment will further enable the group's digital and new commerce initiatives and widen the bouquet of consumer products provided by the group, while enhancing user engagement and experience across its retail offerings, it said.

According to RIL, no governmental or regulatory approvals were required for the investment. RIL, which has been on a fund raising spree by selling stakes in RRVL, had earlier this month announced a Rs 9,555 crore investment from Public Investment Fund of Saudi Arabia, taking total fundraise in the last two months to Rs 47,265 crore.

The investment had valued RRVL at a pre-money equity value of Rs 4,587 lakh crore. Reliance Retail Ltd, a subsidiary of RRVL, operates India's largest retail business with 12,000 stores.

The booming e-commerce market in India will be worth \$86 billion by 2024, according to research firm Forrester. —PTI

Drug firms recall products in US

New Delhi, Nov. 15: Indian drug firms like Marksans Pharma, Aurobindo Pharma, Zydus and Jubilant are recalling products in the US market, as per the latest enforcement report by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

While Marksans Pharma is recalling a diabetes drug, Zydus Pharmaceuticals (USA) is recalling a drug used to reduce stomach acid. Similarly, Aurobindo Pharma (USA) is recalling a pain relieving drug while Jubilant Cadista is recalling a medication used to treat schizophrenia.

Marksans is recalling close to six lakh bottles of diabetes drug metformin hydrochloride extended-release tablets in strengths of 500 mg and 750 mg in the US market. The medication lot has been manufactured at the firm's Goa-based facility.

As per the FDA, the company is recalling the product due to deviation from

the current good manufacturing practices (CGMP). "FDA analysis detected N-Nitrosodimethylamine (NDMA) impurity above the acceptable intake level," it noted.

NDMA has been defined as a probable carcinogen. The FDA said Zydus Pharmaceuticals (USA) is recalling 14,748 cartons of lansoprazole delayed-release orally disintegrating tablets due to failed dissolution specification. The product has been manufactured by Ahmedabad-based Cadila Healthcare.

The FDA has classified the initiatives taken by Marksans and Zydus as class II recalls.

Further, Aurobindo Pharma USA is recalling 7,440 bottles of ibuprofen oral suspension drug for labelling error.

Jubilant Cadista Pharmaceuticals, Inc is recalling 23,616 blister packs of olanzapine orally disintegrating tablets for being "subpotent." —PTI

INDIA RECOVERING FASTER: OXFORD ECONOMICS

New Delhi, Nov 15: The Indian economy is seen recovering faster than expected and the Reserve Bank is likely to have come to an end of the rate easing cycle, according to global forecasting firm Oxford Economics.

It further said inflation is expected to average significantly above 6 per cent in the fourth quarter and the RBI may hold policy rates in the December monetary policy review.

"While Q4 is likely to mark the peak for inflation, we have turned more cautious on the trajectory over 2021," it said.

Costlier vegetables and eggs pushed up retail inflation to a nearly six-and-a-half year high of 7.61 per cent in October.

"At the same time, robust bottom-up activity data suggest that the economy may be recovering faster than we anticipated. As such, we see an increasing possibility that the RBI's easing cycle has ended," it said. —PTI

Minimum broadband speed needs to be 2 Mbps: Forum

New Delhi, Nov. 15: Industry think-tank BIF has said a revision of broadband definition and speeds in India are long overdue and that it should be reviewed and upgraded to 2 Mbps from current 512 kbps, which is "dismally low".

The Broadband India Forum (BIF) has said communications technology has transformed radically over the past years and entirely new markets for data services have emerged across the nation. Numerous modern internet applications and use cases now require higher speeds than prescribed by the current definition.

"It is our view that since the current definition of broadband captures neither the development of the technology nor the Indian consumers' appetite for high speed broadband services, it must be reviewed and



redefined," the BIF said in its submission to Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai). The submissions form part of BIF's response to the regulator's consultation paper on 'road map to promote broadband connectivity and enhanced broadband speed'.

Trai had floated the discussion paper to seek stakeholder views on various issues, including whether existing definition of broadband need to be reviewed along with threshold download and upload speeds; possibility of defining different cate-

gories of broadband depending on speeds; need for speed measurement programmes in the country, amongst others.

When contacted, BIF president T. V. Ramachandran said the current definition of broadband in India at 512 kbps is dismally low, and the upgrade to 2 Mbps for the same is long overdue, even by the national policy mandates.

According to the BIF, the broadband speeds in India, even post the introduction of 4G, are less than half of the global good practices.

It suggested that a network must provide 2 Mbps download and upload speeds to be considered a broadband.

Different categories of broadband such as 'Basic, Fast, and Ultra-Fast' would help set optional thresholds that can serve distinct use cases, it said. —PTI

ONGC NET PROFIT DOWN 55% IN Q2

New Delhi, Nov. 15: Top oil and gas producer ONGC booked a Rs 1,238-crore impairment loss, which together with a fall in prices led to a 55 per cent drop in the company's September quarter net profit.

Standalone net profit at Rs 2,878 crore in July-September was 54.6 per cent lower than Rs 6,336 crore net profit a year ago, the company said.

Revenue dropped 31 per cent to Rs 16,917 crore.

The company got \$41.38 for every barrel of crude oil it produced and sold in the second quarter of the current fiscal. This was 31.4 per cent lower than \$60.33 per barrel price it had got in July-September 2019. Gas price was also down by more than one-third to \$2.39 per million British thermal unit. —PTI

KEEPING | COUNT

Out of touch with finances? Here are steps to help you level the playing field with your partner

Wives, stop leaving money management to your spouse

FARNOOSH TORABI NOV. 15

Another day, another study suggesting women are bad with money.

A UBS Global Wealth Management survey of over 1,800 married men and women recently found that nearly half of the women-led by Millennials-defer major financial and investment decisions to their spouses.

The wives cited reasons for this such as not wanting to argue, having "no idea where to begin" and believing their spouses are better with money. Close to 60 per cent said simply that they wanted to be "taken care of."

While the sample of women in the study is narrow (the people surveyed were wealthy), the financial imbalance in marriage that the findings underscore is hardly an

anomaly. I speak to hundreds of women each year about their money. Financial avoidance is a recurring narrative among women and wives, often passed down from previous generations.

Now in the pandemic, with more women losing their jobs or dropping out of the workforce than men, traditional gender roles in marriage are increasingly at play, including deferring significant financial decisions to husbands.

We already know the risks inherent to burying your head in the sand: things like getting a false sense of security, scrambling to piece together your finances when a spouse is no longer around or worse, and feeling financially trapped in a bad relationship. So let's discuss tangible solutions.

If you find yourself out



of touch with your finances, here are steps to help you level the playing field with your partner. In the end, the goal is to arrive at a place where you feel like an active participant in the decisions that impact your financial life together.

Go to the dark place. For just a moment imagine yourself suddenly left alone needing to manage your finances independently after years of being

in the dark. Or consider wanting out of your relationship, with no idea about the current balances in your joint brokerage account, or even how to access them, to ensure assets get divided fairly.

If, like some of the women in this study, you worry about not knowing where to begin today, think about how lost you'd be later if and when you really need to manage your investments, life insurance and will, with your partner out of the picture.

The facts are that women tend to live longer and are more likely to be alone in old age. We often face higher long-term care costs.

This exercise isn't meant to add anxiety to your life, but to provide the wakeup call necessary to understand the risk that comes with walking through your financial life blindfolded. Face the "what ifs"

and you might be motivated to embrace your finances.

Get back in the game. This will require a conversation with your partner; but it doesn't have to be hard. Try something to the effect of: "I've been thinking, and starting this week (or month), I'd like to be more in touch with our finances... It doesn't help you or me when I'm not knowledgeable about things." Your partner should understand and be open to it.

If not, explore why. In my experience, a spouse's resistance to financial transparency and co-piloting big decisions can be an indication of larger issues.

I hope this goes smoothly, but bottom line: You shouldn't feel like you need to get "permission" to know how money's getting managed.

Start with access and

transparency. Sharing a password-protected document that provides a list of all usernames and passwords to your financial accounts is an easy first step that promotes equal access to your shared financial life. From there, use an online tool that can help you see all account balances and cash flow in one place. On your own time you can log in to such apps and review balances and become more familiar with the numbers.

Make weekly strides. From here, expand your knowledge. Dedicate weekly time to touching base with your partner until you feel caught up. Your investments and long-term financial plan can be a lot to digest in one sitting, so pace yourself and commit to learning something new at each meeting. For example, the first can focus on retirement, specifically,

your contributions, investment breakdown and exposure to risk. Are you 100 per cent in stocks or just 60 per cent? Are you comfortable with that? Week two can be about life insurance, followed by your will and then long-term care planning.

Consider a pro. Working with a certified financial planner was instrumental in the beginning of my own marriage because it helped us create a financial road map, fill some insurance gaps and create an overall sense of accountability that we may not have had on our own. It was also helpful to have an objective individual in the room to give us highly qualified feedback and advice. If you're worried about disagreements, a good certified financial planner can help calm the waters.

—Bloomberg

THE ASIAN AGE

16 NOVEMBER 2020

No sign of a thaw yet at the LAC in Ladakh

India's official signalling to its own citizens on where the situation stands in eastern Ladakh, where China has positioned some 50,000 troops along with artillery and armour, obliging India to play the matching game, is confusing and far from reassuring.

In May this year Indians woke up to the nasty fact that the Chinese armed forces had crossed over into India's side of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) across eastern Ladakh, from north to south. The government was caught wholly unawares. It simply did not matter to China that the Doklam crisis in the eastern Himalayas had been just about defused in 2017, with the informal Wuhan summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping then offering hope of a mutual understanding toward a measure of stability in bilateral relations. Now we know better.

Although possessing no *locus standi*, China used the emasculation of Article 370 in respect of Jammu and Kashmir and declaring Ladakh as a Union territory in August 2019 as a supposed justification for its military forces to move into the Indian side across a vast swathe of land. Starting from then, the government has refused to take the people into confidence about the status of our borders in the Ladakh region. Indeed, its communication with the public appears to have been less than transparent.

In mid-June, the PM told the Opposition leaders in a virtual formal meeting that China had not intruded into Indian territory. This may have been designed to save face and to avoid political damage within the country, but this was no help to India's cause. The Chinese have continued to throw the PM's words back at us. Even so, the militaries of the two countries have so far held eight rounds of talks with the intention of "disengagement" at the "friction points", which will hopefully lead to a "de-escalation" in eastern Ladakh.

After the eighth round earlier this month, the Indian media, obviously fed by unnamed government or defence sources, communicated a sense of hope of reaching disengagement shortly. Central to this was the idea that the Chinese had agreed to pull back their forces from "Finger 4" (the "fingers" refers to mountainous spurs on the north bank of Pangong Lake) eastward to "Finger 8", where the LAC runs on the Indian side. The intervening space would be declared as a "no-patrol zone" by the troops of either side. Similarly, on the south bank of the lake and the Kailash Range area broadly, the Indians were to vacate the heights they had seized and these tactically sensitive points were also to be converted into no-patrol zones.

If the Indian government is amenable to such ideas, it will be pushed into a further disadvantageous position since the proposed "no-patrol" zones are within the LAC on the Indian side. Anyhow, for now the whole thing is academic. China's *Global Times* newspaper, an official propaganda sheet, has rejected the contents of the Indian media stories, claiming that India's understanding of the LAC itself is faulty.

Despite this, the PM said, addressing troops in Longewala on Diwali day, that those coveting Indian territory will be given a "prachand jawab", or fierce response. There has been little sign of that so far. First things first — let the government come out with a White Paper laying out the factual position.

Covid-19: Stick to protocol

The steady quantum of reports that comes out of the research laboratories all over the world about one vaccine candidate or the other clearing another step has been the only positive news on the Covid-19 front of late. As per the World Health Organisation, there are at present more than 100 Covid-19 vaccine candidates under development, with a number of them in the human trial phase.

Close on the heels Pfizer announcing that the vaccine it develops with BioNTech has proved 90 per cent effective in preventing Covid-19 has come the news Sputnik-V being developed by the Russians is 92 per cent effective. The phase-III trials of the vaccine being developed by Oxford University along with AstraZeneca are being undertaken all over the world including in India. It has also been reported that India will get 10 crore doses of the vaccine by December this year, which should come as a big relief for us. US manufacturer Moderna has reported major advancements in the trials. Covaxin, which is being developed by Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech International Limited along with Indian Council for Medical Research, has also entered the human trial phase. Ahmedabad-based Zyudus Cadila's vaccine candidate is expected to enter phase III clinical trials by December.

It could be for the first time that the search for a vaccine has covered such substantial distance in such a short time as in the case of Covid-19 vaccine. However, experts are worried over the timeline it could take for it to reach everyone who wanted it. The director of All-India Institute of Medical Sciences, who is a member of the Union government's Covid-19 task force, has said it could take at least two years for the vaccine to reach all.

The virus has not gone anywhere, and the vaccine is yet to come. Strict adherence to Covid-19 protocols is the only option people are left with for the time being.

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Anita Katyal
Political
Gup-Shup



Why Shah held back in Bihar; hunt for unhappy Trinamul men

When home minister Amit Shah tested positive for the coronavirus and was hospitalised twice, it was generally accepted that the BJP's chief election strategist would not be joining the poll campaign in Bihar because of medical reasons. But Mr Shah's recent two-day visit to West Bengal immediately set tongues wagging as people wondered that if Mr Shah had recovered sufficiently, why didn't he make it for the last phase of the campaign in neighbouring Bihar? While it is true that Mr Shah kept away from Bihar on doctor's orders, the home minister was also not happy with the fact that he would be constrained from propagating his hard Hindutva line in his speeches. The BJP had decided that it would play down the communal card in Bihar as identity politics usually takes precedence here. Since the home minister and Hindutva are inseparable, it would have been difficult for Mr Shah to contain himself and speak about issues that do not have a dash of

minority-bashing or Hindu nationalism. Though Yogi Adityanath did do his bit, he was promptly put down by Nitish Kumar.

In the Madhya Pradesh government's women and child department jinxed? How else can one explain why the incumbent minister, Imarti Devi, previously with the Congress and now with the BJP, was unable to hold her seat in the recently-concluded byelections. According to the grapevine in Bhopal, ministers who have headed this department have invariably failed to stage a comeback. The previous minister Maya Singh did not get a ticket in the last Assembly poll while an earlier minister Ranjana Baghel had also failed to make the grade. It was widely expected that Imarti Devi would come through with flying colours. Not only is she Jyotiraditya Scindia's camp follower but she was also in the news in the run-up to the election when former chief minister Kamal Nath used derogatory language and referred to her

as an "item". The BJP had launched an offensive against Kamal Nath for insulting a woman and had approached the Election Commission that withdrew the Congress leader's star campaigner status. But despite these efforts and the publicity, Imarti Devi was unable to break the jinx.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's emphatic declaration that Janata Dal (United) leader Nitish Kumar will remain Bihar chief minister has not gone down well with a section in the BJP that feels the top post rightfully belongs to their party since it has a higher tally in the Assembly. In fact, even before the election, the BJP's Bihar unit had been urging its Central leadership to stake claim to the chief minister's post since it has emerged as the dominant force in Bihar. However, Mr Modi is not pressing his party's claim as it would not like to give Nitish Kumar a reason to switch over to the other side. The BJP has decided it is better to forgo the

chief's minister's post rather than risk losing yet another ally. As it is, there is talk that regional parties, which are making tentative moves to form a joint front, would approach Nitish Kumar to join them and if he was at a loose end, the JD(U) could even be propped up as its prime ministerial candidate.

Now that Bihar is in the bag, the BJP has shifted focus to West Bengal, which goes to polls next year. Keen to expand its footprint in the East, the BJP is eyeing disgruntled leaders and workers of the Trinamul Congress, which can be persuaded to join the saffron party. West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee has reason to worry as the BJP is determined to dethrone her and will not stop at anything in its mission. It has deployed her former colleague Mukul Roy to identify the unhappy leaders in the Trinamul. In addition, the BJP plans to take a hard look at Trinamul leaders whose names figure in cases of financial impropriety. It will not be surprising if these

cases are suddenly activated in the coming months, only to disappear miraculously once the person concerned crosses over to the BJP.

Former Madhya Pradesh chief minister Kamal Nath faces an uncertain future after he failed to stop the BJP from picking up a substantial number of seats in the state byelections. Mr Nath currently holds two posts - he is leader of the Congress legislature party and the state unit president. With Congress insiders blaming Mr Nath for the party's poor performance, there is a growing demand that the party follow the principle of "one man, one post" and replace Mr Nath as state unit president. Mr Nath would ideally like to return to Delhi as he is used to playing on a larger stage but there is no role for him here. He may well be forced to stay on in Madhya Pradesh and focus on grooming his son, a first time MP from Chhindwara.

Anita Katyal is a Delhi-based journalist

Subhani



Will apex court protect liberty for all citizens?



Pavan K. Varma

Chanakya's View

The Supreme Court of India upheld the principle of personal liberty by granting interim bail to Republic TV's chief Arnab Goswami in a 2018 case where he is accused of abetment of suicide. This is a good thing. There are some who do not like Goswami's views, or the abusive felicity with which he name-calls and verbally humiliates his ideological "opponents" or demeans those whom he does not like. However, anyone's personal likes and dislikes are not material to the protection of his or her constitutional rights. If his personal liberty has been unfairly violated, and he deserves to get bail, he should not be arbitrarily kept in prison by the law enforcement machinery of a state government with which he is at loggerheads.

It was heartening for citizens to hear the clarification call of Justice D.Y. Chandrachud: "If we as a constitutional court do not lay down the law and protect liberty, then who will?" The message was clear. The highest court in the land will intervene to protect personal liberty at any cost, list a case of this nature with lightning speed, overrule the standard judicial procedures like first pursuing a bail petition before the designated lower court, and hear the petition even if means working on the weekend. This is also a good thing.

However, such heartening news may not have bought much hope to Father Stan Swamy, who is languishing in Talaja jail in Navi Mumbai. The 83-year-old tribal rights activist has been incarcerated

since January 2018 for his alleged Maoist links in the Elgar Parishad case. On November 6 this year, Swamy moved a petition before the National Investigation Agency special court in which he asked for a straw or a sipper cup in jail. "I cannot hold a glass as my hands are unsteady due to Parkinson's (disease)", his petition said. He was asking not for big things like personal liberty and freedom. His only request was for a sipper cup or a paper straw so that he could drink water without spilling. A straw or a sipper are not dangerous items, nor are they luxury items which prisoners should not have. But that request does symbolise some things as important as personal liberty, which the Supreme Court so vigilantly defended. It symbolises a human being's legitimate craving for dignity; of his supplication for compassion; of his expectation of humane treatment; of his hope in a caring system for those in deep medical distress. The special court judge who heard this desperate petition simply asked the NIA to file its reply on the matter on November 26.

For 20 days Father Stan Swamy will continue to wait with his trem-

A straw or a sipper are not dangerous items, nor are they luxury items which prisoners should not have. And Fr Swamy's request does symbolise personal liberty, which the Court so vigilantly defended.

For 20 days Fr Stan Swamy will continue to wait with his trembling hands for a straw or a sipper to be provided to him... And there is no guarantee that... on Nov. 26, the court would accede to the request.

bling hands for a straw or a sipper to be provided to him. The NIA will get *twenty days* to consider whether such a request should be conceded to. And there is no guarantee that when it does file its reply on November 26, it would accede to the request. The legal position in the matter may require further deliberation. The rules need to be checked out for "dangerous" prisoners. If these don't provide for a straw to be given to prisoners, how can an exception be made? After all a sipper, that would enable an 83-year-old prisoner suffering from advanced Parkinson's disease to take a sip of water, could sabotage the interests of the state.

Perhaps the honourable Supreme Court could take suo motu cognisance of such matters as well. Travesty of justice has many forms. In some cases, the rule book is thrown at those deprived of personal liberty, who languish in prison for months without bail. In others, matters are fast tracked at incredible speed, and the judiciary makes public its unwavering commitment to protect personal liberty. Perhaps, the highest court of the land will also then take steps to ensure that the personal liberty of people like the octogenarian Varavara Rao, who has been repeatedly denied bail, and not given permission to be admitted to hospital. The 80-year-old poet, teacher and activist, who has been in jail without trial since 2018, again for alleged Maoist links in the Elgar Parishad case, "was

found lying on a soiled bed soaked in urine with no one to attend to him". His health is extremely precarious; he has suffered deliriums in jail, where he also contracted the Covid-19 virus. Perhaps the Supreme Court may also ask its judicial subordinates why bail in the case of a pregnant Safoora Zargar, arrested for participating in the protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act, took as much as 70 days to be processed.

The nation looks upon the Supreme Court, and the judiciary in general, as an agency of the last resort to get justice. When the Supreme Court declares that it will intervene proactively to ensure personal liberty, it raises, in the thousands of prisoners who are for untenable and inhumane reasons being denied personal liberty, the possibility of hope. Surely, the Government of India is not so vulnerable that it treats people above the age of 80 who are nearly disabled, as "enemies" who can destabilise the State. The administering of justice should never be selective, or so lacking in humanity that it revolts the human conscience. When Father Stan Swamy is given the freedom to drink water with a semblance of dignity, we will believe that the Supreme Court's concern for Arnab Goswami has a larger meaning and a message for the conduct of the judiciary as a whole.

The writer, an author and a former diplomat, is in politics

Travesty of justice has many forms. In some cases, the rule book is thrown at those deprived of personal liberty, who languish in prison for months without bail. In others, matters are fast tracked...

LETTERS

V-C A FRAUDSTER?

Caesar's wife should be above suspicion. But right from the day M.K. Surappa, an absolute outsider, was appointed as Vice-Chancellor of Anna University by the governor of Tamil Nadu, rumour mills began spinning. It was alleged that the governor has taken a unilateral decision to appoint him ignoring other deserving candidates recommended by the government. Now an inquiry by a retired judge of the Madras high court has been ordered against the V-C and charges of appointments fraud to the tune of ₹200 crores against him. That two teachers associations rushed to defend him confirms their collusion with him.

Tharcus S. Fernando
Chennai

LAST 'BHADROLOK'

THE PASSING AWAY of Soumitra Chatterjee marks the departure of the last bhadrollok icon of Bengali cinema. Chatterjee deconstructed glamour in a span of six decades and created a new idea for a matinee idol. He was not just a romantic hero but also with directors like Tapan Sinha, Mrinal Sen and, of course, Satyajit Ray. He also stuck to his guns as far as political belief is concerned and did not become a turncoat like many of his contemporaries.

Shovanlal Chakraborty
Kolkata

PAK THREAT

THE ECONOMY of our theocratic neighbour is in a shambles. A number of tribes are also raising a banner of revolt against the Imran Khan government. If the situation goes out of hands for the ruling coterie, then in order to divert public attention from pressing issues, the religious fanatic may risk a war with India, the land of the kafirs. And, if driven to the corner and facing an imminent defeat, the bigoted regime may not hesitate even to press the nuclear button.

Arun Malankar
Mumbai

₹500 for the best letter of the week goes to Kajal Chatterjee (Nov. 14). Email: asianage.letters@gmail.com.

IN BRIEF ISRAELI HOUSES TO COME UP IN EAST JERUSALEM

Jerusalem, Nov. 15: Israel is moving forward on the construction of hundreds of new homes for Jewish residents in a sensitive east Jerusalem neighbourhood, the country's Housing Ministry and a settlement watchdog group said Sunday.

The Housing Ministry on Sunday opened up tenders for more than 1,200 new homes in the Givat Hamatos area of Jerusalem. The settlement watchdog group Peace Now and other critics say construction there would seal off the Palestinian city of Bethlehem from east Jerusalem, further cutting off access for the Palestinians to the eastern sector of the city, which they claim as capital of their hoped-for state. The move may test ties with the incoming administration of President-elect Joe Biden, who is expected to take a firmer tack against Israeli settlement expansion after four years of a more lenient policy under President Donald Trump.

AZERBAIJAN TO PROTECT CHURCHES: PREZ

Moscow, Nov. 15: The president of Azerbaijan has promised that Churches will be protected when the strongly Muslim country takes possession of areas formerly controlled by Armenians.

President Ilham Aliyev's office said he made the promise in a telephone call with Russian President Vladimir Putin, who is deploying peacekeeping forces in the areas under an agreement that ended six weeks of fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the Nagorno-Karabakh region. Ethnic Armenian forces controlled Nagorno-Karabakh and sizeable adjacent territories since the 1994 end of a separatist war.

Fighting resumed in late September and ended with an agreement that calls for Azerbaijan to regain control of the outlying territories as well as allowing it to hold on to parts of Nagorno-Karabakh that it seized during the fighting. The first of the territories, Kalbajar, is being turned over on Sunday. Kalbajar is home to the well-known Dadivank monastery of the Armenian Apostolic Church. A day before the territory's handover, workers removed many of the monastery's sacred objects. Other residents in Kalbajar torched their own homes, fearing what will happen when Azerbaijani forces take over. Azerbaijan is about 95% Muslim and Armenians fear that churches would be damaged or closed when it takes control of the territories.

POLICE GRAFT: BALTIMORE TO PAY \$8 MN

Baltimore, Nov. 15: Baltimore officials are set to approve a roughly \$8 million settlement to two men who went to prison after drugs were planted on them a decade ago during an encounter with members of a rogue police unit that brutalised, robbed and falsely arrested residents.

The city's spending board is scheduled to take up the settlement Wednesday. The Board of Estimates has approved several settlements in recent weeks stemming from the misconduct of members of the Gun Trace Task Force, a once-lauded group that was supposed to take guns off the streets of Baltimore. The settlement for Umar Burley and Brent Matthews is the largest settlement in connection with the task force and surpasses the amount paid in 2015 to the family of Freddie Gray, a young Black man who died a week after he was critically injured in police custody and whose death led to civil unrest. The proposed payment includes \$6.3 million for Burley and Matthews as well as \$1.8 million to pay off a lien due to the estate of Elbert Davis, which sued Burley. Burley and Matthews encountered task force members in 2010 during an illegal traffic stop that led to a high-speed chase.

Burley crashed with another vehicle, killing Davis. Burley spent seven years in prison, while Matthews served two-and-half years behind bars. Their convictions were vacated in 2017 after officers cooperating in the federal investigation into the task force told authorities that a member of the unit had spoken of drugs being planted in the incident. "Mr. Burley and Mr. Matthews were overtly and undeniably framed by a conspiracy of at least four police officers," the men's attorneys, Steve Silverman, said in a statement. "It should not take an army of lawyers litigating for years to right wrongs like this."

Violence erupts as Trump supporters, rivals clash

Don's supporters rally in Washington over his massive voter fraud claims

Washington, Nov. 15: Violence erupted on the streets of downtown Washington after thousands of supporters of US President Donald Trump held a protest rally to back his unproven claims of massive voter fraud and electoral malpractices during the 2020 presidential elections. The "Million MAGA March", held a week after Democrat Joe Biden was declared the winner of the November 3 election, was mainly peaceful throughout the day on Saturday, but by late in the night, clashes erupted between Trump's supporters and counterprotesters. A mass brawl broke out later on Saturday night just five blocks away from the White House as counterprotesters clashed with a group of Trump supporters.

According to reports, a man in his 20s, believed to be a Black Lives Matter protester, received serious injuries and was rushed to a hospital after being stabbed in the back during the altercation and two police officers were also injured. The clash lasted for several minutes as the two groups wielded batons and pushed and shoved each other until cops intervened, the reports said. Thronging to Washington DC from various parts of the US, participants of the Make America Great Again (MAGA) Rally asserted that Trump won the elections and that they were in the city to express their support to their leader.

Trump, who has not yet conceded the election to the projected winner, Biden, has repeatedly asserted, without evidence, that fraud and other irregularities deprived him of mil-



Supporters of President Donald Trump protest in front of the Clark County Election Department, in Las Vegas, Nevada on Saturday. — AP

lions of votes in key battleground states. According to Fox News, anti-Trump demonstrators allegedly hurled eggs at Trump supporters — or stole signs, hats and banners, and lit them on fire.

Videos posted on social media showed some demonstrators and counter-demonstrators trading shoves, punches and slaps. Anti-Trump protesters clashed with law enforcement in downtown DC as they tried to make their way to a hotel where Trump supporters were staying, the CNV reported.

President Trump on Saturday briefly drove by the protestors through Pennsylvania Avenue on his way to his golf course in a Virginia suburb and he waved at his supporters.

Later in the day, Trump

● **TRUMP IN A tweet alleged that news channels are not showing the massive gatherings in support of him, as he posted a picture of protestors of his MAGA rally.**

in a tweet alleged that news channels are not showing the massive gatherings in support of him, as he posted a picture of protestors of his MAGA rally.

"Instead they have their reporters standing in almost empty streets. We now have SUPPRESSION BY THE PRESS. MAGA!" he said. Participants of the rally, which started at Freedom Plaza, chanted "four more years" and "stop the steal."

Sporting the red MAGA cap, they displayed large

posters and banners in support of Trump. Washington DC Metropolitan Police Department, late Saturday said that at least 20 people were arrested. Trump in a tweet blasted counter protesters who turned up at the Million MAGA March as 'Antifa scum' as he joked that they ran for the hills after violent scenes erupted in Washington DC on Saturday night.

The president claimed 'Antifa' had waited until the end of the march to attack attendees as he praised his supporters who "aggressively fought back". "Antifa SCUM ran for the hills today when they tried attacking the people at the Trump Rally, because those people aggressively fought back," he tweeted. Later, in a series of tweets, Trump attacked media outlets.

Thousands attend protest against Bibi

Jerusalem, Nov. 15: Several thousand protesters gathered outside Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's official residence in Jerusalem on Saturday night in what has become a weekly demonstration calling for the Israeli leader to resign.

The protesters have been demonstrating for some five months, saying Netanyahu is unfit to lead while he is on trial for corruption charges and because of his handling of the Coronavirus crisis.

The pandemic has hit Israel's economy hard, and many of the protest-

ers are students and young Israelis who have lost their jobs.

Many protesters held Israeli flags or black or pink flags, which the grassroots movements behind the demonstrations have adopted as symbols. With the weather cooling down ahead of the rainy winter season, turnout Saturday appeared to be lower than in recent weeks. Smaller demonstrations also were reported in Tel Aviv, outside Netanyahu's vacation home in the upscale coastal town of Caesarea and locations across the country. — AP

Peru Prez faces calls to resign

Lima, Nov. 15: The head of Peru's Congress has called for the "immediate resignation" of interim president Manuel Merino after a violent crackdown on protests against his new government left at least three dead and more than 60 injured.

Thousands have taken to the streets in days of protests against Merino following the ouster of his popular predecessor Martin Vizcarra, who was impeached on corruption allegations on Monday.

"I ask Mr. Merino to evaluate his immediate resignation," Congress head Luis Valdez said in a statement Saturday night to Channel N television.

Lawmakers will meet in an emergency session on Sunday to discuss Merino's resignation, a statement released later on the Congress Twitter account said.

The ultimatum came after news of the death of three protesters during a massive and peaceful march in Lima, which was violently repressed by police firing shotgun pellets and tear gas.

Lima mayor Jorge Munoz, from the same center-right Popular Action party as Merino, also demanded the resignation of the president.

● **THOUSANDS HAVE taken to the streets in days of protests against Merino following the ouster of his popular predecessor Martin Vizcarra, who was impeached on corruption allegations on Monday. The ultimatum came after news of the death of three protesters during a massive and peaceful march in Lima.**

"I just found out about the third death" in the protests, said the Archbishop of Lima, Carlos Castillo, deploring the police crackdown in a statement to state television. Police reported two deaths, while the National Human Rights Coordinator indicated it was investigating whether there were four.

The Ombudsman's Office said the first fatality, a 25-year-old man, was killed by pellet shots to the head and face. At least 63 protesters were injured, the health ministry said.

The police tactics have been criticized by the UN and rights organizations such as Amnesty International since the protests began on Tuesday. — AFP

Gilgit-Baltistan assembly poll over, counting begins

Islamabad, Nov. 15: Wearing face masks, the people of Gilgit-Baltistan in northern Pakistan voted on Sunday in the third legislative assembly election amidst tight security. India has slammed Pakistan for its decision to hold election in Gilgit-Baltistan and said any action to alter the status of the militarily-occupied region has no legal basis.

The voting which commenced at 8.00 am (local time) ended peacefully without any break at 5.00 pm and no untoward incident was reported. The counting of votes has started and complete results are expected by tomorrow. Earlier, the polling officials said that the voters present inside the polling stations would be allowed to cast ballots even after the end of polling time. There are 24 seats for the contest but polling on one seat was postponed, leaving 23 seats up for grabs. As many as 330 candidates, including four women, are in the contest, they said. India has opposed Pakistan's plan to hold election in Gilgit-Baltistan. — PTI



People queue to cast their ballot at a polling station during the legislative assembly election in Skardu city in Gilgit-Baltistan region of Pakistan on Sunday. — AFP

Special courts for speedy rape trials

Islamabad, Nov. 15: Pakistan government is all set to promulgate next week an ordinance seeking establishment of special courts for speedy trial of rape cases, according to a media report.

Under the proposed law, rape cases would not be investigated by ordinary police officials and only a gazetted officer up to the level of DIG or SSP would monitor these cases, Adv-

BIDEN, HARRIS, TRUMP SEND DIWALI GREETINGS

Washington, Nov. 15: US President-elect Joe Biden, his deputy Kamala Harris and incumbent President Donald Trump have extended Diwali greetings to those celebrating the festival of lights. "To the millions of Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, and Buddhists celebrating the Festival of Lights, @DrBiden and I send our best wishes for a #HappyDiwali. May your new year be filled with hope, happiness, and prosperity. Sal Mubarak," Biden tweeted on Saturday. Harris, who scripted history by becoming the first Indian-American and Black woman vice president in the US, extended greetings on the occasion of Diwali. "Happy Diwali and Sal Mubarak! @DougEmhoff and I wish everyone celebrating around the world a safe, healthy, and joyous new year," Vice President-elect Harris tweeted. In a joint statement, Biden and Harris wished a happy Diwali to everyone celebrating the festival of lights across the US, India and the world.

Trump shared a picture of him lighting a lamp in the White House along with Indian American members of his administration. "Happy Diwali" was written on the photo. "During this Festival of Lights, friends, neighbours, and loved ones join in fellowship to commemorate the spiritual triumph of good over evil, light over darkness. — PTI

Virus curbs tighten in Europe as global deaths top 1.3 mn

Vienna, Nov. 15: A swathe of new restrictions to curtail a second wave of Coronavirus infections were announced or came into force from Austria to Greece, Italy to Portugal on Saturday as the global death toll climbed above 1.3 million. More than 53 million have been infected worldwide by Covid-19, which is running rampant throughout America and Europe, forcing governments to take more action despite the potential economic devastation.

Austria joined a growing trend announcing schools and non-essential shops would close from Tuesday, having imposed a partial lockdown two weeks ago. "There are still many who say that infections don't happen at school, in shops or services," said Chancellor Sebastian Kurtz.

"But the truth is the authorities can no longer trace 77 percent of new infections, which means they no longer know where contamination is happening." Greece, battling a saturated national health system, announced it

NEW COMPOUNDS TO TREAT NOVEL VIRUS IDENTIFIED

Washington, Nov. 15: Researchers have discovered new drug compounds that target a protein which enables the novel Coronavirus and other viruses with pandemic potential to replicate in human cells, an advance that may lead to new therapeutics for Covid-19.

According to the researchers, including those from the University of Maryland in the US, these compounds disrupt the functioning of a protein complex inside human cells that are critical for the replication and survival of coronaviruses, including the one that causes Covid-19. — PTI

would shut all schools after imposing a nationwide night curfew from Friday. — AFP

German ad hails couch potatoes

Berlin, Nov. 15: The German government has released a tongue-in-cheek ad hailing an unlikely hero in the fight against the Coronavirus pandemic: The humble couch potato.

The 90-second video posted online Saturday begins with an elderly man recalling his 'service' to the nation back when he was just a young student "in the winter of 2020, when the whole country's eyes were on us."

"I had just turned 22 and was studying engineering," he continues, "when the second wave hit." With violins stirring at viewers' heart strings, the setting switches to a scene of the narrator as a young man.

"Suddenly the fate of this country lay in our hands," he says. — AP

SECRET PARTIES TEST FRENCH LOCKDOWN

Paris, Nov. 15: France is in a second lockdown amid a second wave of the Coronavirus, but some people can't stop partying.

Police broke up one gigantic fete outside Paris early Saturday, reportedly using special grenades to do so. Police intervened to end a middle-of-the-night house party attended by at least 300 people "in total disdain for health rules," the Paris Police Prefecture tweeted.

Party-goers threw bottles at police, police said. Police had to toss special grenades as intermediate weapons to break up the gathering and escape. — AP

Indian couple's drive-by wedding

Dubai, Nov. 15: An Indian couple in the UAE has organised a "drive-by wedding ceremony" where guests were allowed to wish them from their cars only, in a bid to maintain social distancing due to the Covid-19, a media report said.

Muhammed Jazem and Almas Ahmed from Kerala first had their 'Nikah' then they stood under a flower arch outside their home in Dubai for a socially-distanced wedding reception, *Khaleej Times* reported. The couple's family members and friends, who could not attend the marriage, stopped their cars outside the newlyweds' home and wished them.

"We asked our guests to stop only for a few moments, give us their best wishes, take a picture and then they could drive away," Jazem said. "We instructed them not to step out of the car, to keep moving to avoid traffic, and not pull over," he said. Jazem and Almas, who grew up in the UAE, had an arranged marriage. Jazem, an aeronautical engineer with Emirates Airline, said that since their parents and many of their relatives are elderly, they did not want to have a big event because they fall under the high-risk category. — PTI

FOOD FOR | THOUGHT \$15 billion needed to help malnourished kids, schools

Famine of biblical proportions in '21: WFP

United Nations, Nov. 15: The head of the World Food Programme says the Nobel Peace Prize has given the UN agency a spotlight and megaphone to warn world leaders that next year is going to be worse than this year, and without billions of dollars "we are going to have famines of biblical proportions in 2021."

David Beasley said in an interview with *The Associated Press* that the Norwegian Nobel Committee was looking at the work the agency does every day in conflicts, disasters and refugee camps, often putting staffers' lives at risk to feed millions of hungry people — but also to send "a message to the world that it's getting worse out there ... (and) that our

hardest work is yet to come." "It was so timely because we've been fighting to get above the choir," Beasley said of last month's award, pointing to the news being dominated by the US elections and the Covid-19 pandemic, and the difficulty of getting global attention focused on "the travesty that we're facing around the world." "So this was really a gift from above," Beasley said, recalling the surprise and delight of WFP's 20,000 staffers worldwide, and his own shock at being interrupted during a meeting in Niger in Africa's Sahel region with the news.

Beasley recalled his warning to the UN Security Council in April that as the world was deal-

● **WORLD LEADERS responded with money, stimulus packages, deferral of debt in 2020. The money available in 2020 is not going to be available in 2021**

ing with the Coronavirus pandemic, it was also "on the brink of a hunger pandemic" that could lead to "multiple famines of biblical proportions" within a few months if immediate action wasn't taken.

"We were able to avert it in 2020 ... because the world leaders responded with money, stimulus packages, deferral of debt," he said. Now, Beasley said, Covid-19 is surging again, economies are continuing to deteriorate particularly

in low- and middle-income countries, and there is another wave of lockdowns and shutdowns. But he said the money that was available in 2020 isn't going to be available in 2021, so he has been using the Nobel to meet leaders virtually and in person, talk to parliaments, and give speeches to sensitize those with power to "this tragedy that we are facing

crises that really are going to be extraordinary over the next, who knows, 12 to 18 months."

"Everybody now wants to meet with the Nobel Peace Prize winner," he said, explaining he now gets 45 minutes instead of 15 minutes with leaders and is able to go into depth and explain how bad things are going to be next

year and how leaders are going to have to prioritize programs, Beasley said. "And the response has really been good." "I'm telling them you're not going to have enough money to fund all the projects you historically fund," he said. "Those are important things," Beasley said, but he likened the upcoming crisis to the Titanic saying "right now, we really need to focus on icebergs, and icebergs are famine, starvation, destabilization and migration." Beasley said WFP needs \$15 billion next year — \$5 billion just to avert famine and \$10 billion to carry out the agency's global programmes including for malnourished children and school lunches. — AP

IN BRIEF
AFRICA HIT
BY CLIMATE
CHANGES

Nairobi, Nov. 15: Floods, droughts, hotter weather and a desert locust invasion — the impacts of climate change are hitting Africa hard, and worse is ahead for the region's food supplies, economy and health, the UN climate agency said on Monday.

Temperatures have been rising on the continent of 1.2 billion at a comparable rate to other regions, but Africa is exceptionally vulnerable to the shock, according to the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO).

Warming temperatures are slashing crop yields. Agriculture is the backbone of Africa's economy. "By the middle of this century, major cereal crops grown across Africa will be adversely impacted," the WMO said in a report.

It projected a reduction in yields of 13% in West and Central Africa, 11% in North Africa and 8% in East and Southern Africa.

African countries are generally low-income and ill-equipped to respond to this and other consequences of climate change, the WMO said.

EPA FOR GAS
PUMP LABELLING
CHANGES

New York, Nov. 15: The US Environmental Protection Agency is considering changes to labels for gasoline containing higher blends of ethanol, or E15, in an effort to appease the biofuel industry's concerns that current labels discourage use of the fuel, according to four sources familiar with the matter.

Expanding the market for E15 has long been a policy goal for farmers and producers of ethanol, a corn-based product, but concerns that some older vehicles don't run well on the product have been a headwind. Current federal E15 labels warn of possible engine damage.

The Trump administration, meanwhile, has been trying to shore up support in the Farm Belt ahead of the election through favourable announcements for biofuel advocates.

An announcement for a proposal on the labelling changes could come soon. None of the sources could say exactly how the administration might alter the labelling.

EPA and the White House did not immediately comment.

President Donald Trump in mid-September said in a tweet he would allow states to permit fuel retailers to use their current pumps to sell E15.

Under US law, refiners must blend billions of gallons of biofuels into their fuel pool, or buy credits from those that do. Refiners that prove the requirements harm them financially can get waivers from the obligations. So-called small refinery exemptions, or SREs, have been a lightning rod of controversy between the Corn and Oil lobbies.

STATION FOR
ZERO-EMISSION
TRAIN FLEET

Frankfurt, Nov. 15: German regional transport group RMV began construction of a filling station near Frankfurt that will use hydrogen generated as a by-product of chemicals manufacturing to fuel the world's largest fleet of zero-emissions passenger trains.

France's Alstom ALSTOM will deliver 27 hydrogen-powered fuel cell trains to the Infraserv Hoechst industrial park in the Rhine-Main region in mid-2022. Starting regular local services by that winter, the fleet will replace diesel engines. The fuel cells on board the trains will turn hydrogen and oxygen into electricity to provide low-noise propulsion that only emits water, helping cut carbon pollution from transport.

Hesse state and the federal government helped fund the 500 million euro (\$590.4 million) project.

The Coradia iLint trains will be fuelled by hydrogen released as a byproduct of chlorine made in the chemicals and pharmaceuticals park, and piped to the tank tracks.

More hydrogen will come from a yet-to-be built 5 megawatt (MW) electrolyser that will draw on renewable electricity.

"We have shown that we will have enough hydrogen to fuel the fleet economically. With one full tank per day, the trains can travel 1,000 kilometres, just like diesel trains," said RMV's managing director Knut Ringat at a ceremony.

RMV will reclaim parts of its investment via fares. The Berlin government has also helped pay a 40% price premium for the trains over a diesel equivalent.



Workers of banana fields evacuate the area in El Progreso, Honduras, on Saturday before the arrival of tropical storm Iota. — AFP

Iota all set to wallop
Nicaragua, Honduras

The latest storm was moving with winds of 75 miles per hour

Tegucigalpa, Nov. 15: Less than two weeks after powerful storm Eta killed more than 200 people across Central America, authorities warned that Hurricane Iota was set to wallop coastal areas of Nicaragua and Honduras on Monday.

As of 0300 GMT Sunday, Iota -- the latest in an unusually busy storm season -- was about 440 miles (705 kilometres) east-southeast of the Cabo Gracias a Dios on the Nicaragua-Honduras border, moving slowly westwards with maximum sustained winds of 75 miles per hour (120 kph).

Iota was upgraded to a hurricane early Sunday, the Miami-based National Hurricane Center (NHC) said. "Reconnaissance aircraft finds Iota has strengthened into the thirteenth hurricane of the 2020 Atlantic hurricane season," it tweeted.

Iota is projected to hit the Colombian island of Providencia by late Sunday and is expected to rapidly strengthen into a major hurricane as it approaches Central America. "It is likely that the heavy rainfall from Iota, through Thursday, will lead to life-threatening flash flooding and



Deforestation in
Amazon increases

Brasilia, Nov. 15: Deforestation in Brazil's Amazon increased in October for the first time in four months, government data showed on Friday, as destruction of the world's largest rainforest remains high under right-wing President Jair Bolsonaro.

In October, deforestation rose 50% from the prior year to 836 square kilometers (323 square miles), according to preliminary data from government space research agency Inpe.

But monthly deforestation eased from its peak from July to September as the rainy season begins and makes logging difficult. Forest clearances are down 6% in the first ten months of 2020, compared to the same period a year ago, to 7,899 square kilometres, Inpe found. That's roughly 10 times the size of New York City.

Destruction in 2020 continues to be far higher than the years prior to Bolsonaro assuming office on Jan. 1, 2019. Bolsonaro has weakened environmental enforcement called for more farming and mining in the Amazon to

Philippines typhoon death
toll rises as floods hit north

Manila, Nov. 15: The death toll from the deadliest cyclone to hit the Philippines this year has climbed to 67, while many areas remained submerged in a northern region hit by the worst flooding in more than four decades, officials said on Sunday.

President Rodrigo Duterte flew to Tuguegarao province to assess the situation in Cagayan Valley region, which was heavily flooded after Typhoon Vamco dumped rain over swathes of the main Luzon island, including the capital, metropolitan Manila. Twenty-two fatalities were recorded in Cagayan, 17 in southern Luzon, eight in Metro Manila,

river flooding in parts of northern Colombia and Central America," the NHC warned.

"The flooding and mudslides in Honduras and Nicaragua may be exacerbated by the recent effects of Hurricane Eta in those areas, resulting in significant impacts." Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua announced evacuations Friday, even as the region was still reeling from the devastation inflicted by Eta. Eta's heavy rains burst river banks and triggered landslides as far north as Chiapas, Mexico.

The NHC warned that Iota would deposit as much as 16 inches of rain on Honduras, northern Nicaragua, eastern Guatemala and southern Belize. — AFP

● **THE ACCUMULATED effects of weather disturbances and huge volumes of water from a dam affected thousands of families in Cagayan, some of whom had fled to rooftops to escape two-storey high floods.**

during a briefing with Duterte. "We see that it is worsening every year."

The accumulated effects of weather disturbances and huge volumes of water from a dam affected thousands of families in Cagayan, some of whom had fled to rooftops to escape two-storey high floods. Six cyclones hit the Philippines in a span of just four weeks, including Vamco and Super Typhoon Goni, the world's most powerful this year.

But Mamba also lamented about denuded forests in Cagayan, prompting Duterte to order him to curb logging operations in the province. — Reuters

Wyoming oil drilling again blocked

Wyoming, Nov. 15: A federal court judge on Friday for the second time in two years blocked drilling on more than 300,000 acres in Wyoming because the government failed to adequately consider its impact on climate change.

According to court papers, Judge Ralph Contreras of the US District Court for the District of Columbia ordered that the environmental analyses for 282 oil and gas leases be sent back to the US Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for additional study.

It was the second time Judge Contreras issued such a ruling on the same set of leases.

On Friday, he said the supplemental analysis BLM produced following

PLEA AGAINST
DAKOTA PIPELINE
DOUBLING ORDER

New York, Nov. 15: Environmental groups are appealing a decision made last month by Illinois regulators to allow the expansion of the Dakota Access oil pipeline (DAPL), according to documents filed with the state.

The Illinois Commerce Commission last month voted to approve an application to roughly double the capacity of Energy Transfer LP's ET.N 557,000 barrel-per-day crude oil pipeline after legal pushback by environmental groups delayed the vote by about a year.

Save Our Illinois Land and Sierra Club, which have led the fight to block the project, filed an application for a rehearing with the ICC, the first step before appealing to state district court.

The groups have argued that expanding DAPL, the largest pipeline running out of North Dakota's Bakken shale basin, posed safety and environmental risks and that an oil market downturn has diminished any need for the project.

Dallas-based Energy Transfer has countered that the downturn would be temporary and has said DAPL, which delivers crude to Patoka, Illinois, has had a clean safety record since entering service in 2017. The project has received approvals from several other US states. — Reuters

Climate-change
fight: Fed closer
to joining peers

Washington, Nov. 15: The Federal Reserve is moving closer to joining an international group of central bankers working to understand and reduce climate change risk, paving the way for the world's most influential central bank to help shape global financial markets' response to a warming world.

Fed Chair Jerome Powell on Thursday said the US central bank had been working with the Network of Central Banks and Supervisors for Greening the Financial System (NGFS), and had been attending meetings. "I think we are in the process of applying for membership there now," he said.

Fed Governor Randal Quarles told lawmakers in testimony on Tuesday, "We have requested membership," adding, "I expect that it will be granted."

The NGFS has not yet received an official letter of application laying out the Fed's motivation for joining and its areas of interest, as required by the organisation's charter, NGFS Secretariat head Morgan Despres told Reuters on Friday. But the US central bank has been in talks for months with the group about what it needs to do to join and the workload being a member would entail, he said.

Fed staff have also been

● **THE NGFS has not yet received an official letter of application laying out the Fed's motivation for joining and its areas of interest, as required by the organisation's charter.**

invited to take part in a couple of workstreams, including one on sizing up the impact of climate change on the economy and financial stability, and another on bridging data gaps, Despres said.

The Fed is the only major global central bank besides the Reserve Bank of India that is not a member of the NGFS.

The Fed would bring its expertise as regulator and interest-rate setter for the world's biggest economy and center of global capital markets, as well as its deep bench of research economists, some of whom have been delving into climate-change topics in recent years.

"You can say it will be a game changer," Despres said. "If you are a member you contribute...and you can benefit. ... It does make a difference for us...it does make a difference in fighting climate change." In its biannual assessment of financial stability vulnerabilities released earlier this week, the Fed for the first time included climate change risk. — Reuters

Trump administration to
sell Arctic oil drilling leases

Washington, Nov. 15: The Trump Administration will take key steps to finalize a sale of oil drilling leases in the sensitive Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) in Alaska just before Democrat Joseph Biden, who opposes drilling there, becomes president, a government spokeswoman said on Friday.

The White House will be sending out a call for nominations in coming days, according to a spokeswoman for the US Bureau of Land Management in Anchorage, Alaska.

The call is a request to energy companies on what specific land areas should be offered for sale.

That would start the clock on a 60-day period before sales could take place in ANWR, where drilling had been banned for decades before a Republican-led tax legislation signed in 2017 removed that ban.

Biden opposes drilling in ANWR, while lawmakers in Alaska have long pushed to open up the ecologically sensitive area for oil and gas exploration in the region.

"Development in ANWR is long overdue and will create good-paying jobs and provide a new revenue stream for the state — which is why a majority of

Alaskans support it," said Frank Macchiarola, senior vice president of policy, economics and regulatory affairs at the American Petroleum Institute, an industry group.

Following a 30-day period after the call for nominations, the government would have to issue a notice for an impending sale of leases.

Thirty days after that, the sale would take place, just before Biden's inauguration on Jan. 20.

Alaska produces roughly 500,000 barrels per day of crude oil, far below its peak of 2 million bpd in the late 1980s. — Reuters

LENS ON BANK
LOANS OVER
WILDLIFE HARM

London, Nov. 15: Campaigners called on global banks to stop financing industrial activities that are driving animal and plant species toward extinction, after a report ranked 50 lenders involved in sectors that pose the greatest threat to wildlife.

While European and US banks have faced years of pressure from regulators or environmental groups to act on climate change, their role in financing economic activities that destroy biodiversity is also coming under growing scrutiny. — Reuters

CLEARING THE AIR
Outpouring of anger over perceived danger to habitat of species

‘Jurassic Park’ no threat to Komodos

Jakarta, Nov. 15: Indonesia's environment ministry sought to calm outrage over construction of an island tourism project being dubbed "Jurassic Park", after an image went viral on social media of a Komodo dragon facing off with a big truck.

The picture of the dragon, one of the world's largest lizards, blocking the path of a big vehicle on Indonesia's Rinca Island prompted an outpouring of anger about perceived threats to the natural habitat of the vulnerable species.

Reuters was not able to verify the authenticity of



An image of a komodo dragon facing off with a truck went viral on social media. — Twitter

the picture. Wiratno, a senior environment ministry official, said rangers would ensure the safety of dragons roaming near the construction, which will include an elevated deck, a dam and an information centre, to be completed in June. "They will intensively make checks of whether the Komodo dragons are under the buildings, remnants of buildings, and under the trucks carrying material," he said in a statement.

Indonesia's current Komodo population is about 3,000, according to government data. Komodo dragons reach

bite. The project, which involves the country's public works and housing ministry, seeks to cater to visitors of the Komodo National Park, where these can be seen in the wild. Social media users have likened the project to one on a dinosaur island featured in the "Jurassic Park" films. The public works ministry assured the safety of the Komodos. But environmentalists said the construction must stop. "Komodo need to be protected," said Umbu Wulang Tanaamahu Paranggi, director of the Indonesian Forum for the Environment. — Reuters

SHORT TAKES

Star cricketers in selection panel

New Delhi: The new-look national selection committee of the BCCI is set to have a boost in its profile with some of the well-known former India players like Chetan Sharma, Maninder Singh and Shiv Sunder Das applying for the vacant posts from their respective zones. However, Ajit Agarkar, who has 231 international matches to his name, could be the front-runner for the chairman's post in case he decides to re-apply for selector's job. While Agarkar couldn't be contacted for a comment, it has been learnt that he would throw his hat in the ring and his credentials for the top job will be difficult to ignore considering his vast international experience. Although the BCCI has officially got rid of the zonal system, it is highly unlikely that two people from the same zone will be kept in the selection panel. Sunil Joshi from South Zone was the chairman while the Central Zone was represented by Harvinder Singh. — *PTI*

Car racer Pace dies from Covid

Memphis: Jim Pace, the overall winner of the 1996 24 Hours of Daytona, has died after contracting Covid-19. He was 59. Pace's family said he died on Friday in Memphis. "Racer, teacher, and loyal friend," IMSA President John Doonan said. "These are three simple words to describe Jim Pace. All of us at IMSA are devastated by losing such a great champion." Born in 1961 in Monticello, Mississippi, Pace began his racing career in the Barber Saab Pro Series in 1988. He soon moved to sports car racing and won the GTU class at the 1990 24 Hours of Daytona. Six years later at Daytona, Pace won with fellow drivers Scott Sharp and Wayne Taylor in a Riley & Scott Mk III, and he also won the 12 Hours of Sebring lthat year in the same car, with Taylor and Eric Van de Poele. He took his third victory of that season at Texas World Speedway, co-driving with Taylor. — *AP*

France bag finals spot, Germany win

Paris: World champions France and Germany rode on the influence of their Chelsea stars to rack up Nations League wins on Saturday while Spain's Sergio Ramos missed two penalties on the night he celebrated a record-setting 177th international appearance. Chelsea midfielder N'Golo Kante scored just his second international goal as France defeated European champions Portugal 1-0 in Lisbon to secure a place in next year's finals. Kante was quickest to react to a rebound as he netted the winner on 53 minutes that clinched France top spot in their group. France lead Cristiano Ronaldo's Portugal by three points ahead of Tuesday's clash with Sweden in Paris but are guaranteed first place by virtue of their superior head-to-head record. Kante's teammate in the English Premier League Timo Werner scored twice on his return to Leipzig as Germany enjoyed a 3-1 win over Ukraine. — *AFP*

Johnson seizes Masters lead

Augusta: Top-ranked Dustin Johnson went four-under par in the first four holes to seize a three-stroke lead early in Saturday's third round of the Masters, pulling away from an elite field at Augusta National. The 36-year-old American unleashed his best to any major round in his career to stand on 13-under par for the tournament. South Korea's Im Sung-jae, Spain's second-ranked Jon Rahm, third-ranked American Justin Thomas and Mexico's Abraham Ancer shared third on 10-under. Johnson is trying to become the first top-ranked golfer to win the Masters since Tiger Woods in 2002. — *AFP*

Live on TV

TENNIS

ATP Finals: Matches from 7.30 pm and 1.30 am (Tuesday) on Sony Six

WWE

Raw: Bouts from 6.30 am (Tuesday) on Sony Ten 1, HD

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SEVENTH WONDER

Hamilton wins record-equalling seventh F1 world title

Istanbul, Nov. 15: Lewis Hamilton secured a record-equalling seventh Formula One world title on Sunday after winning the Turkish Grand Prix despite starting sixth on the grid. The Briton matched Michael Schumacher's haul of drivers' crowns with three races of the season remaining. The 35-year-old sealed his latest title with a typically measured master-class, handling treacherous wet early conditions to claim his 94th career win despite his unaccustomed start position. A breathless Hamilton said: "I'm lost for words. This is way beyond my dreams."

Hamilton, who sealed his first title in 2008, was adding to his unprecedented roster of records — most wins with 94, most pole positions (97), most podium finishes (163) and most consecutive points finishes (47). It was widely declared as one of his finest triumphs and entirely appropriate on the day he drew alongside Schumacher in the record books. He lapped his team-mate and only remaining title rival Valtteri Bottas, who finished 14th after a desultory outing, to claim his 10th victory in 14 races this season. Hamilton came home over half a minute clear of Sergio Perez for Racing Point. Both chose to make only one pit-stop and spend most of the race on a single set of intermediate tyres as their rivals pitted several times to cope with the slippery conditions. Hamilton's old rival, four-time former champion Sebastian Vettel, finished third ahead of his Ferrari team-mate Charles Leclerc, Carlos Sainz of McLaren and, after a wild and impulsive afternoon, Max Verstappen in the leading Red Bull. Alex Albon came home seventh in the second Red Bull ahead of Lando Norris in the second McLaren, Lance Stroll, who had started from his maiden pole position for Racing Point, and Daniel Ricciardo of Renault. — *AFP*

Hami: Not bad for boy from council house

Istanbul, Nov. 15: Lewis Hamilton cemented his position as one of Formula One's true greats when he equalled Michael Schumacher's all-time record of seven world titles on Sunday, another staggering achievement for a boy who grew up in modest circumstances. His victory in Istanbul -- the 94th of his career -- allowed him to add the 2020 title to his championships of 2008, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2018 and 2019. The son of a black father and a white mother, whose parents separated in his youth, Hamilton, 35, grew up on a municipal housing estate. His father Anthony at one time held down three jobs to fund his son's embryonic racing career in karting. Hamilton's journey was unprivileged and without

luxury, but it was clear from an early age that he had an outstanding gift for speed and all the gutsy natural instincts of a born racer. In 1995, aged 10, and wearing a jacket and shoes borrowed from his predecessor as British Formula Cadet karting champion, he went to a glittering awards ceremony in London where he met McLaren's then-boss Ron Dennis. He asked for an autograph and told him "one day I want to race for you". Dennis replied: "Phone me in nine years and I'll sort you a deal."

'MERCURIAL, TEMPESTUOUS'

Bold, determined and individual, he almost won the title in his first record-breaking season as he

I often say it is beyond wildest dreams but my whole life secretly I have dreamt as high as this. It felt so far-fetched. I remember watching Michael win those world championships. To get one or two or even three is so hard. Seven is unimaginable.

— LEWIS HAMILTON



Mercedes driver Lewis Hamilton celebrates after winning the Turkish Formula One Grand Prix at the Istanbul Park circuit racetrack in Istanbul on Sunday.

— AFP

LEWIS LETS TEARS FLOW AFTER WIN

Istanbul, Nov. 15: After winning a difficult race to equal Michael Schumacher's record of seven Formula One championships on Sunday, the hardest thing for Lewis Hamilton was containing his emotions. His voice could be heard breaking as he thanked his team over the radio moments after crossing the line at the Turkish Grand Prix, while underneath the helmet the tears were

starting to build up. "All these emotions were running through me and I was trying to stop it," Hamilton said in his post-race news conference. "I was thinking about my whole career, from when I was five when I drove in a go-kart, from when we won the British championship, driving home with my dad and singing 'We Are The Champions' and dreaming of being here." Moments after victory

No. 94 and title No. 7, he sat in his car with his head in his hands. "It really hit me and I just burst into tears. I couldn't get out of the car because I just couldn't believe it," Hamilton said. "I didn't want the visor to come up and people to see tears flowing, because I had always said I would never let you see me cry. I remember watching drivers in the past crying and I was like 'I'm not going to do

that.' But it was too much," he said. Speaking a short time after his win, Hamilton was wiping away those tears as he prepared to mount the podium. "I'm definitely a bit lost for words. I dreamed of this as a kid. This is way, way beyond our dreams," he said, thanking his family. Hamilton only had one title, with McLaren in 2008, when he replaced Schumacher at Mercedes in 2013. — *AP*



Lewis Hamilton poses with his dog as he celebrates his record win in Istanbul on Sunday.

— AP

reeled off nine successive podiums from his debut in Melbourne, rocking the establishment along the way with his speed and his style. On and off the track, he was fast, somewhat mer-

curial and occasionally tempestuous and the combination led to a fierce rivalry with team-mate and two-time champion Fernando Alonso at McLaren. That was a signal of how tough it was to

be for all his future team-mates as Hamilton, who narrowly missed out on the 2007 title, returned to triumph in 2008 with a dramatic last-gasp fifth-place finish in Brazil. He also showed frustration as McLaren failed to deliver the speed to beat Sebastian Vettel and Red Bull, who reeled off four straight title triumphs from 2010 to 2013, by which time Hamilton had departed for Mercedes. Escaping the management regime of Dennis and his father, Hamilton found freedom at Mercedes alongside team-mate Nico Rosberg, his teenage karting friend and rival. Rosberg broke Hamilton's sequence of supremacy in 2016 and then retired, leaving the Englishman to dominate. — *AFP*

Thiem survives Tsitsipas scare

London, Nov. 15: Dominic Thiem beat Stefanos Tsitsipas in the opening singles match of the ATP Finals on Sunday. In a repeat of last year's final at London's O2 Arena, won by Tsitsipas, US Open champion Thiem stumbled after winning a first-set tie-break but found his range again to win 7-6 (7/5), 4-6, 6-3. Thiem was impressive on serve in the first set, winning 79 per cent of service points, but failed to convert three break points against the Greek world number six. The Austrian third seed found himself in deep trouble when trailing 4-1 in the tie-break but battled back and made his first set point count when Tsitsipas went long with a backhand lob. Tsitsipas produced a forehand winner in the third game of the second set to break the Austrian and haul himself back into the contest, facing no break points as he levelled the match. The defending champion appeared to have the momentum but it was Thiem who drew first blood in the deciding set, earning a break with a del-

icately dinked forehand at the net in the second game. The fifth game ultimately proved to be decisive. Tsitsipas had a chance to break but caught the net with a powerful backhand and could not engineer another break point in a game that contained six deuces. Earlier, Novak Djokovic received the ATP Tour No. 1 trophy after finishing the year at the top of the rankings for a record-equalling sixth time. The Serbian, who has drawn level with American Pete Sampras, said: "Obviously I am super proud of it, but I have mixed emotions because of what is going on in the world. I can't be ignorant to that, although I have achieved one of the biggest goals in sport." Top seed Djokovic, who is competing in Group Tokyo 1970 alongside Daniil Medvedev, Alexander Zverev and Diego Schwartzman, plays his opening match on Monday. London's O2 Arena is hosting the ATP Finals for the 12th and final season before the year-end championships moves to Turin next year. — *AFP*



Novak Djokovic poses with his year end ATP number one trophy during Day One of the ATP Finals tennis championship at The O2 Arena in London on Sunday.

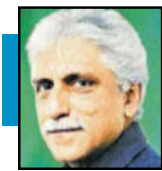
— AP

Aussies love to hate ‘polarising’ Kohli

Sydney, Nov. 15: Test captain Tim Paine says Australians have "polarising" opinions on India skipper Virat Kohli, one whom they love to hate as rivals but at the same time enjoy watching him bat as fans. Australia and India are set to lock horns in a four-Test series with the opening Day-Night game in Adelaide starting December 17. "I get asked a lot of questions about him, he's just another player to me it doesn't really bother me. There's not really a relationship there with him to be fair, I see him at the toss and play against him and that's about it," Paine told ABC Sport. "With Virat it is a funny one, we love to hate him but we also love to watch him bat as cricket fans. He certainly is polarising in that type of scenario. We love watching him bat, but we don't like seeing him score too many runs." The last time the two sides met tempers flared with both skippers having

a go at each other at every given opportunity. The duo even had to be separated by the on-field umpires on a couple of occasions. "Australia and India, it's a heated competition and he's obviously a competitive person and so am I, so yeah there were a few occasions when we had words but that wasn't because he was the captain and I was the captain, it could have been anyone," Paine said. Comparing his on-field battle with Kohli to the likes of Joe Root and Ben Stokes, the wicketkeeper-batsman said it always a heated affair when the best players are out in the middle. "There is always a bit more tension when a player is as good as he is, it's the same when you play against England, its Joe Root or a Ben Stokes," Paine said. "It's often the best player is the one that your team goes up a little bit, the intensity goes up when the best players in the world come out to the crease." — *PTI*

Kohli withdrawal has put broadcaster, CA in distress



Ayaz Memon Over The Top

Virat Kohli's decision to be with his wife for the birth of their first-born has thrown the impending Test series against Australia into a tailspin on several fronts. Kohli is among the foremost batsmen in the game, and over the past 7-8 years easily India's best batsman in the five-day format. His absence considerably weakens the Indian batting. Considering he is also captain, this is a double whammy for the Indian team. Kohli's most cele-

brated win also came in Australia, in 2018, when led India to a first-ever Test series Down Under. That he is the game's biggest drawcard has added to the turmoil his decision to return to India after the pink-ball Test at Adelaide has caused more particularly for broadcasters Channel 7. Financially in the doldrums for over a year, India's tour has come as a lifeline for Cricket Australia. This included a trade-off to ensure the IPL was played at the cost of

the T20 World Cup. Meanwhile, Cricket Australia structured a complex telecast deal between Fox Cricket and Channel 7 where the latter got rights for all Test cricket played in Australia and the former exclusive rights for all white ball cricket, plus simulcast rights for Tests. Had things gone normally, Fox Cricket would have had 7 exclusive match days featuring Kohli (4 ODIs, 3T20s), plus 20 days (potentially) of him in the four Tests. Kohli's withdrawal from three Tests has put Channel 7 in deep distress. Now they have only five days (maximum) of the Indian captain, which potentially diminishes viewership and hence revenues. But while terribly impor-

tant for Channel 7 and CA, this is not the only reason why Kohli's absence from the three Tests has invited widespread scrutiny and opinion. Former players like Allan Border and Steve Waugh, while respecting Kohli's decision have recalled the times when these things wouldn't even have been on the radar of cricketers. This, in fact, is the crux issue (financial implications are consequential) and needs to be assessed in a contemporary frame of reference. Societies evolve, sensibilities change, people's behavioural patterns also change over time. What may have seemed normal 30-40 years back in several aspects, would be considered gross and insensitive

today. It could be unacceptable to the mother that her partner is not with her at the time of delivery. Or indeed the male partner is even if the female partner is accepting of his absence. While uncommon in the past, this is hardly unusual in this day and age. Rohit Sharma returned from Australia in 2018, missing a Test, to be with his wife who was expecting their first child. This year, Joe Root missed the first Test against West Indies to be with his wife who was expecting their second child. And it need not be only about birth of a child. Ben Stokes missed the home series against Pakistan to be with his ailing father in New Zealand. In fact, he missed a few

weeks of the IPL, too to spend more time with his dad. What's compounded matters currently is of course the Covid pandemic. Had times been normal, Kohli perhaps may have missed one Test at most. Once out of the bio-secure bubble, however, he would have to be quarantined again for a fortnight, which makes his return to Australia redundant. Dismay at Kohli missing three Tests is genuine, and not just for CA and broadcasters, but also fans. The longest format deserves the best to be seen in action. Could the itinerary have been planned differently so that he featured in all Tests? Perhaps. That Kohli wanted to be with his wife

at the time of delivery was known even before the IPL started. Had the Tests been scheduled before the ODIs and T20s, he would have played in all four. But that would have meant missing almost the entire ODI and T20 series, which would have left Fox Cricket fuming! All told, the final determinant can't be based only on monetary considerations. In being present for the birth of a child or someone sick in the family, the decision rests with the player. HR practices in sport, certainly at the elite level, are no longer about dictats from authority or rough and ready solution-finding. That such practices have to be holistic, highly sensitive and enlightened is the new reality.