





be restless

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WINDOWS



Young women click selfies near a Christmas tree made of mirror pieces, at Viviana Mall in Thane on Friday

Keep it classy, light and feminine

Personal style is something that each of us has; we just have to identify it, understand it, and then live it. It projects your mood, personality and you as a whole, reflecting your interests, lifestyle, inspirations, and your past. ▶ P2

Will Bitcoin cross ₹50 lakh mark?

MUMBAI: Bitcoin has crossed Rs 17 lakh mark and if experts are to be believed, then it may be in the range of Rs 50,00,000 and Rs 1 crore in the year 2021. Bitcoin has performed 200 per cent year to date (YTD), with other top crypto currencies like Ethereum performing well. On fundamental level, Bitcoin's growth is largely attributed to how it is designed and in May 2020, we witnessed third halving, a supply shock event, where the number of daily mined Bitcoin gets cut in half. In the previous two halvings, Bitcoin and overall crypto market cap has risen exponentially, and we are witnessing a start of similar bull trend. ▶ P6



IRREGULAR by MANJUL
I can go up to any extent to save my ideology!

WITH FOLDED HANDS, PM URGES OPPN NOT TO MISLEAD FARMERS

Trust us, new agri laws are best for farmers: Modi

NEW DELHI

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Friday requested political parties with "folded hands" to keep all the credit for their "old election manifestos" which had reportedly promised agriculture sector reforms and urged them to stop misguiding the farmers over the new farm laws.

"I request all political parties with folded hands, please keep all the credit. I am giving credit to all your old election manifestos. I just want ease in the life of farmers, I want their progress and want modernity in agriculture," said Modi, while addressing farmers at the 'Kisan Kalyan' event in Raisen through video conferencing. "Political parties should stop misguiding farmers. It's been six



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses the farmers of Madhya Pradesh, in New Delhi on Friday

to seven months since farm laws were implemented. But now suddenly, games are being played to plough one's own political land through a web of lies," he added.

The Prime Minister further said, those who have started this movement in the name of farmers, when they

had a chance to run the government or become part of the government, what they did back then, the country needs to remember.

"Swaminathan Commission report is the biggest proof of how ruthless these people can be. These people sat on Swaminathan Com-

Tomar says informal talks on, hopeful of solution by Dec-end

NEW DELHI

UNION Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on Friday said the NDA government is hopeful of resolving farmers' agitation against three new farm laws before the new year and is continuing its informal dialogue with various groups to diffuse the crisis. The Agriculture Minister's statement comes as formal talks remaining deadlocked with protesting unions refusing to accept anything less than the repeal of the Acts. Continued on Page 5



"I assure every farmer of the country that like MSP was given earlier, it will continue to be given, MSP will not be ended. Those who could not give MSP to farmers, they are misleading farmers over MSP," he added.

Continued on Page 5



Delhi shivers as icy winds bring mercury down to 3 degrees C

PURNA SINGH
NEW DELHI

THE MET on Friday sounded an orange alert for the national capital for two days till Sunday after icy winds blowing from the snow-clad Himalayas brought down the city's mercury to nearly 3 degrees Celsius. It will be a cloudy on Saturday with fog causing trouble for traffic till Monday. At the same time, according to the System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research (SAFAR),

Delhi's air quality has reached the 'poor' category.

The IMD has four colour-coded warnings as per the intensity of any weather system -- green, yellow, orange and red. Orange alert is given to authorities to be prepared.

The Safdarjung Observatory, which provides representative data, recorded a minimum temperature of 4.4 degrees Celsius, while Ayanagar and Lodhi Road weather stations registered 3.5 and 3.8 degrees Celsius. Continued on Page 5

SC OBSERVATIONS

Farmers' unions to seek legal advice



Govt, not court, needs to resolve farmers' issue: AIKS

NEW DELHI

THE farmers' agitation continued on the 23rd day on Friday and their unions were busy chalking out strategies to intensify the protest. As the issue is now in the Supreme Court, the farmer leaders are not only keeping an eye on the proceedings but are also seeking legal opin-

ions. Although the apex court has not yet delivered any order asking the farmers to vacate the roads. The farmer leaders say that if they are served any notices from the court, they will take support from their lawyers.

Major Singh Punawal, general secretary of Punjab's All India Kisan Sabha,

said, "When the farmers will receive a notice regarding their protest from the SC, we will take the legal opinion from the lawyers." Punawal said the protest by the farmers is going on in a peaceful manner and will continue till the government rolls back all the three farm laws. Continued on Page 5



Sunderlal Bahuguna backs farmers' protest

NEW DELHI: In a major development, Chipko movement leader Sunderlal Bahuguna has extended his support to farmers protesting against the three farm laws. Talking to reporters, Bahuguna said that he supports the demands of the 'annadatas'. Sunderlal Bahuguna is a noted Garhwali environmentalist and Chipko movement leader.

PM's Varanasi office listed 'For Sale' on OLX

VARANASI

FOUR people have been arrested for allegedly posting an online advertisement listing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Varanasi office for 'sale', police said on Friday.

The accused had taken a picture of the "Jansampark Kaaryalay (public relations office)" of

Modi, who represents Varanasi in the Lok Sabha, and put it 'up for sale' on OLX website, they said.

The office is located in the Jawahar Nagar locality of the city, and it falls under the Bhelupur police station limits, Varanasi Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Amit Pathak said.

Continued on Page 5

CBI charges Hathras accused with rape, murder

HATHRAS (UP)

THE four accused in the alleged gang rape and torture of a young Dalit woman in Uttar Pradesh's Hathras in September, have been charged for gang-rape and murder by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in the SC/ST court here.

This information was given by the lawyer of the accused.

The 20-year-old Dalit woman was allegedly raped by four men from the upper caste community in Hathras on September 14. She later died due to her injuries at a hospital in Delhi. The victim was cremated



near her home on September 30.

The police's handling of the case - particularly the late-night cremation of the victim allegedly without the family's approval - led to angry protests across the country.

The officials, however, maintained that the crema-

tion was done "as per the wishes of the family".

In October, the Supreme Court said the Allahabad High Court will monitor the probe conducted by the CBI.

The Allahabad High Court, meanwhile, took suo moto cognisance of the late-night cremation and is

hearing the case.

It may be recalled that the four main accused had written to the Uttar Pradesh police from jail, claiming that they are being framed in the case and sought 'justice'. They also accused the victim's mother and brother of torturing her. The woman's family has denied these allegations.

Earlier this week, the CBI sought more time to conclude its investigation following which the Lucknow Bench of the Allahabad High Court on Wednesday fixed January 27 as the next date of hearing in the case.

HC shocker to BJP

Court orders removal of Mayors sitting on dharna

PURNA SINGH
NEW DELHI

THE Delhi High Court on Friday said if the State disaster management authority has prohibited political and other gatherings in the city till December 31 due to Covid-19, then the protesters outside Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's residence ought to be evicted.

Justice Sanjeev Sachdeva said the court expects the police to take appropriate steps to implement the direction of the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) and also the provisions of section 144 IPC which has been imposed in the area where the Chief Minister's residence is located.

The court said that if no action is taken for violation of the DDMA direction, then it will send out an "incorrect signal".

"The issue is if the DDMA order prohibits such gathering, then you have to shift them. Rather

you have to evict them. Else incorrect signal will go. The District Magistrates have to ensure compliance of the DDMA directions. Compliance of DDMA order can be ensured only by issuing appropriate directions. Issue directions and if they do not comply, then take action," the court said,

Covid-19.

The court was hearing a plea by the Civil Lines Residents Association, represented by advocate Rohit Bhagat, against the ongoing protest outside the CM's residence there on grounds that it was blocking the road and causing inconvenience to residents there.



Mayors sitting on dharna outside Arvind Kejriwal's house

asking the police to shift the Mayors of three BJP-ruled municipal corporations protesting outside the residence of the Chief Minister to another location.

DDMA's November 28 order prohibits till December 31 all social, academic, sports, entertainment, cultural, religious, political functions or other gatherings throughout the national capital to prevent the spread of

The directions and observations by the court came after it was told by Delhi Police that it has provided to the protestors the copies of the DDMA direction, a standing order issued by the agency prohibiting protests in residential areas and that section 144 IPC has been imposed in the area, but they were not moving away from the site.

Delhi government additional standing counsel Gautam Narayan, appearing for the police, said that requests were made to the protestors to shift to an alternative site, but they have not complied with it.

Covid shot voluntary, says govt

NEW DELHI

GETTING vaccinated for Covid-19 will be voluntary, the Union Health Ministry has said while underlining that the vaccine introduced in India will be as effective as any vaccine developed by other countries.

The ministry said it was advisable to receive a complete schedule of the anti-coronavirus vaccine irrespective of past history of

Centre lists SOPs for vaccination



infection with Covid-19 as this will help in developing a

strong immune response against the disease. It also said that protective level

of antibodies generally develop two weeks after receiving the second dose.

The ministry listed a series of frequently asked questions (FAQs) on Covid-19 vaccine on Thursday night and responded to questions like if taking a vaccine was mandatory, how long does it take for the antibodies to develop and if it was necessary for a Covid-19

recovered person to take the vaccine.

"Vaccination for Covid-19 is voluntary. However, it is advisable to receive the complete schedule of the vaccine for protecting oneself against this disease and also to limit the spread of this disease to the close contacts including family members, friends, relatives and co-workers," the ministry said in response to a question on if it is mandatory to take the shot.

Continued on Page 5

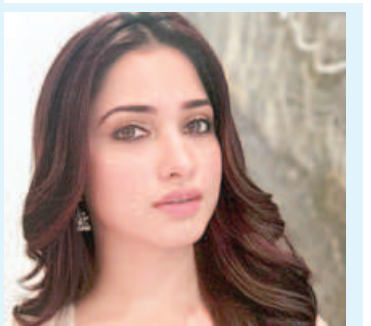
Womenia

TWEET PATROL



TAMANNAAH BHATIA
@TAMANNAAHSPEAKS

Happy Birthday #DiRaju sir!
 Let this day be full of joy and celebration.
 I wish you a fabulous year ahead!
 @SVC_official 🌸👉



Keep it classy, light and feminine

Personal style is something that each of us has; we just have to identify it, understand it, and then live it. It projects your mood, personality and you as a whole, reflecting your interests, lifestyle, inspirations, and your past.

When you find your personal style you know you look great and feel confident when you leave your home. Whether you prefer bohemian, street, high fashion, minimal or classic, you can make your style look classy when the occasion calls for it. Typically, classic and minimalist styles will look classy all the time. Classic and minimalist styles usually learn towards neutral color palettes, shapes, fabrics which make it easier to put together classy outfits. But don't think just because you prefer bohemian or street style that dressing classy is out of the question.

Wear items that are classic fabrics

Classic, timeless clothing made of materials that will last well into the next decade is what you should be looking to add to your essential wardrobe. Think cotton, wool, linen, and silk. These four basic fabrics will stand the test of time if cared for properly. Cleaned and pressed, items made of these fabrics tend to give off a classy vibe all on their own. These fabrics also have variations that allow you to expand on your wardrobe. Denim is one example of a cotton fabric that cuts across all style lines, from street to boho to minimalist.

If in doubt wear solid neutrals

Bold patterns and prints can definitely work in a sophisticated and classy look, but you may not be comfortable with such patterns if you are just beginning on your classy style journey. Neutrals are your friend in this case. Solids are plentiful in the stores, easily combined, and help to stretch your wardrobe. Typical neutrals are white/beige/cream, navy blue, black, and gray. Now, don't think you have to dress head-to-toe in black. Monochromatic allow you to vary a color but remain classy.

Fit is the key

Classy and sophisticated clothing is typically tailored and form-fitting. Skirts should hit just above or below the knee, as should your classy dresses. Classic trousers are straight, slightly wide, faintly bootcut, or menswear-inspired and should be 1/2-inch off the floor in the back. Wide-leg pants and skinny pants in classic fabrics are also acceptable, as are ankle pants. Blazers, blouses, and sweaters should follow the curve of your waist. Not everything you wear has to be perfectly tailored and form-fitting. You can mix in unstructured pieces for a more relaxed vibe. Pair a blue-striped t-shirt with chinos and a denim jacket or a flowy maxi skirt with a crisp white button-down shirt.

Never overexpose

Necklines are typically collared, boat

neck, crew neck or V-neck. For some variety, you can also try square, cowl, and scoop necks. For more formal occasions, asymmetrical, sweetheart and halter necklines work as well. Regardless, keep your cleavage and your belly button covered. Additionally, armholes on blouses and dresses should not reveal your bra.

Style your hair

Make sure you style your hair. If you're wondering how to dress classy and give the appearance of sophistication make sure you spend a little bit of time styling your hair.

If you're short on time in the mornings or don't like styling your hair opt for an easy haircut or a haircut



that you can quickly put up. Find a hairstyle that is easy for you to style every day and one that you love as well!

Makeup makes a difference

You've made it to the last point on how to dress classy. Eyes, cheeks, and lip should be what you focus on if you only have 5 minutes. Put on some mascara to open up your eyes, add some blush to bring some life and dimension to a face, and wear a bold lip to add a pop of color. These three things are subtle but make a huge difference to the completeness of your classy look.

Make your celebrations fruitful with the touch of Indian culture

TEJAL SINHA

Rani Pink Gifts has gotten into the Christmas spirit by adding a dash of red to the otherwise rani pink roots. The holiday season turned their karigars into joyful elves, who have put together this warm winter tradition for you and your loved

ones. This box of festive goodies would surely make up for the cheer of the Christmas markets we missed this year!

Chief cupid and founder of Rani Pink, Anika Dhawan, grew up with tales of old-world romance set against the backdrop of the charming city of Delhi. She draws inspiration from things closest to her heart. Through Rani Pink Gifts, she wants to retell these tales of culture and bring back the love that defined her childhood. Gift packaging has never been a very organised sector. People

Anika shares, "Our generation is very conscious and smart about spending their money. Our concept is 'Going Back to your Roots', where you get to choose your gift set as per your preferences and we are there to help curate the niche stories around them. We launch 25-30 gift packaging collections every year with all sorts of price ranges, textiles and handcrafted materials. With my eternal love for design and decor and all things Rani Pink in colour, I began my entrepreneurial journey with my event planning company, Rani Pink Events. Last year, we further spread our wings to expand to start Rani Pink Gifts, a luxury gifting company. I started designing weddings with Rani Pink Events to bring back the love of handmade celebrations and 10 years later Rani Pink Gifts is an extension of me revisiting my favourite childhood memories and borrowing inspiration from everything Indian at heart. Our designs look back on where it all began; the customs, the celebrations, the community."

India's romance with festivities is a timeless love story and is woven into the fabric of every Indian household, creating intricate patterns of nostalgia, traditions, and stories. Rani Pink Gifts' handcrafted pieces become mementoes for these occasions and add a sparkling touch of our rich Indian heritage to them.

"India's romance with festivities is a timeless love story and is woven into the fabric of every Indian household, creating intricate patterns of nostalgia, traditions, and anecdotes. Rani Pink Gifts' handcrafted pieces become mementoes for these occasions and add a sparkling touch of our rich Indian heritage to them."



Christmas is upon us and this holiday season we have got the perfect gift box to spread the cheer! The house of Rani Pink Gifts collaborates with Le15 to curate a Christmas Gift Box with Pooja Dhingra's Famous Spiced Hot Chocolate Mix



handcrafted pieces become mementoes for these occasions and add a sparkling touch of our rich Indian heritage to them. Our designs look back on where it all began; the customs, the celebrations, the community." Gifts for wedding guests or

goody bags for festivals, their products dress up for the occasion they're invited for. During the process of creation, their artisans give each product copious amounts of love and usher them with handcrafted detailed designs.

She adds, "The initial challenges were quite a few that I wasn't expecting. The major challenge was to change the perception of people about gifting. People have been very conventional with gifting - be it the ready-made trays or artificial flowers. There was this mind set of gifting to be considered a secondary priority, or something that is the by-product of an event. Rani Pink Gift believes your gift needs to tell a personal story, a memory, something to create a larger bond."

The pandemic impact

Anika relaunched Rani Pink Gifts in the middle of the pandemic, after recovering from her struggle with cancer and the response that they got has been overwhelming for her. People are at their homes and they want to celebrate.

In India, people are very high on emotions when it comes to celebrations like weddings and festivals. Due to the Pandemic, they have not been able to celebrate with the same enthusiasm, meet their close friends, so they want to make gifting really special. Pandemic has helped people understand that small or old school is a better way to go down rather than going for wealthier, more extravagant choices.

"What sets us apart from our competitors is that we are the only one in this space that are producing our products from scratch. Each product is handmade by kaarigars and that makes each piece so special. From the boxes, to the embroidered potlis and trays, we create everything in-house," concludes Anika.

Beauty tips for your skin

Winter is always harsh on the skin — dry, flaky skin is not fun and can be painful. Here are some beauty tips for winter are sure to help your skin! Don't forget the sunscreen. Just because it's cold and gloomy out, it doesn't mean you should skip out on the sunscreen. Opt for something with an SPF of 50 or higher.

Don't forget your hands

My hands, especially my fingers, tend to get extremely dry during the colder months. During those frigid days, don't forget to wear gloves and always keep your hands moisturised.

Hydrate from the inside out

This one is a hard one for probably all of us. But drinking water is essential for so many things, not just hydration. It speeds up your metabolism, gives your skin a healthy glow, helps maintain blood pressure and it helps deliver oxygen throughout the body. You can find out how much water you should be drinking per day,

Get rid of dry, flaky skin

Not only is dry, flaky skin not flattering, it's also painful! In order for your moisturiser to really work and penetrate your skin, you must exfoliate and get rid of those flakes. Use a body scrub a few times a week in the shower and follow up with a body oil or creamy moisturizer.

Use a humidifier

Using a humidifier, especially in your bedroom at night, is a foolproof way to help keep your skin supple, especially during the dry months. Adding moisture to the air will help your skin recover from any damage from the dry, cold air.

Take care of your scalp

Coconut oil is a great "treatment" for dry scalp. Use it once a week, if you suffer from severe dry scalp, or just once every couple of weeks to give

your hair and scalp moisture. Simply rub it into your dry hair and leave in for 45 minutes.

Take care of your lips

Keep your pout kiss ready by using a gentle scrub and good balm daily. If you

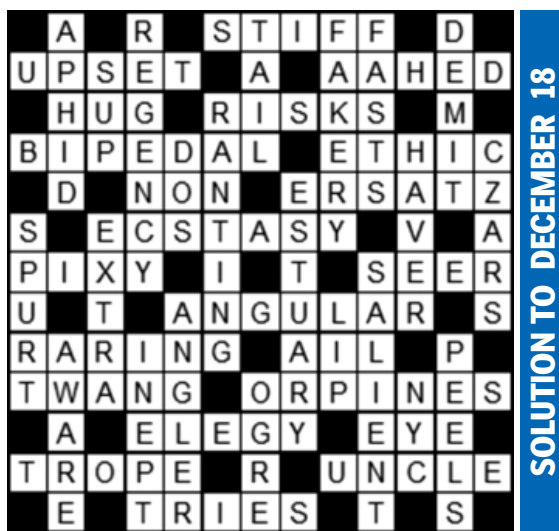
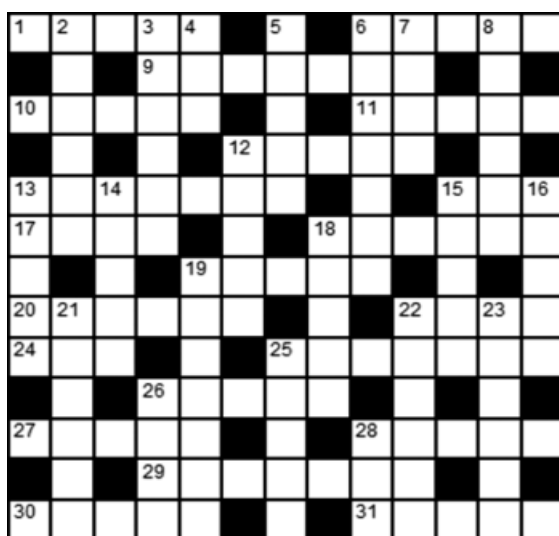


don't have a scrub, an old toothbrush or a wet washcloth will do the trick. Using a humidifier and drinking plenty of water, also help keep your lips flake-free.

Moisturise

Using a moisturiser is such an obvious thing to do, but it's one most may not be doing correctly. You must choose a product that not only works for your skin type but also one that works for your face. That means having two different moisturisers.

ple have mostly been buying stuff like crystal trays from mass markets. They do it in an old school, luxurious, but price sensitive way.



SOLUTION TO DECEMBER 18

CROSSWORD

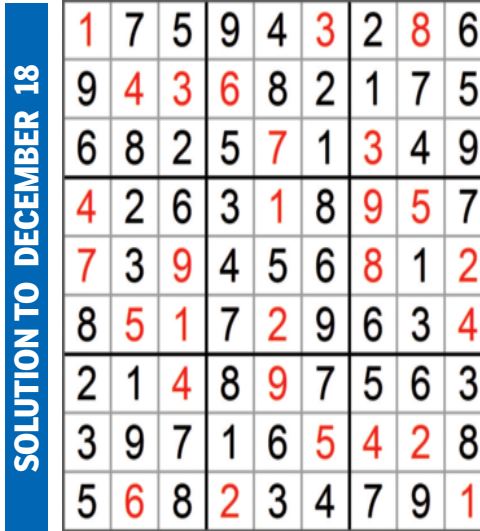
Across

- Type of parallelogram (5)
- Awry (5)
- A milk product (7)
- Grant or permit (5)
- Orsino's food of love (5)
- German industrial city (5)
- Have faith in (7)
- Pay court to (3)
- Norse poems (4)
- Quoting (6)
- Ghanaian capital (5)
- Send goods abroad (6)
- Fencer's fine-pointed sword (4)
- Body of water (3)
- Helps (7)
- Cattle station (5)
- Former prisoner (2-3)
- In front (5)
- Opposed (7)
- Remark not for hearing (5)
- Overexcited (5)

Down

- Stopped (6)
- Nearsightedness (6)
- Obeisance or curtsy (3)
- Facet (5)
- Yerevan its capital (7)
- Astound (4)
- Famous American inventor (6)
- Expel (5)
- Two-time Czech president (5)
- Drug used to treat Parkinson's disease (1-4)
- Thin strands (5)
- Leers (5)
- Infatuation (5)
- Put in order (7)
- Ancient king of Persia (6)
- Fourscore (6)
- Fuel hydrocarbon (6)
- Bitter and tart (5)
- Traffic way (4)
- Remains of fire (3)

SUDOKU



SOLUTION TO DECEMBER 18

NEWS ROUNDUP

Makeup artist Namrata Soni launches beauty brand

PUJA GUPTA

Makeup artist Namrata Soni has launched her vegan and sustainable beauty and cosmetic brand - Simply Nam.

Designed in Scandinavia, with the Indian woman, climate and lifestyle in mind, the brand enters the Indian market with the launch of a Makeup Remover and Cleansing Towel - an eco-friendly alternative to makeup removing wipes.

It is a long-wear reusable patented microfiber cloth with waterproof formula for use with warm water alone. The vegan towel powered with 50-100 times smaller than human hair fibers ensure that it gently removes even the smallest particles of dirt, dead skin cells from skin's surface, lines, and pores, says the brand.

For her new venture, Soni has collaborated with Bozzil, a Swedish multi-market incubator which launches influencer brands in emerging markets.

The Towel comes in a sustainable paper envelope and a mag-

netic reusable box which fits two makeup towels - efficient and sustainable, whilst making it safe for a machine wash upto 1,000 times depending on the frequency and lasts for 3-5 years.

Soni comments, "I am a firm believer of clean beauty and always wanted to create something for the Indian women - something that is practical, affordable, convenient, sustainable and hygienic. And what better than this cleansing towel. My new cosmetics brand is a collection of effective tools and ingredients and I am sure the Indian woman is going to love it."



HC refuses to stay 'love jihad' ordinance; khap law: Ex-judge

'Difficult to believe it was passed by a govt in a country governed by the rule of law'

PRAYAGRAJ

THE Allahabad High Court on Friday refused to stay the Uttar Pradesh government's ordinance to ban unlawful religious conversions, but issued notices to the state and others on a bunch of PILs that challenged the law. The Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Ordinance, 2020 was promulgated in November to prohibit religious conversions in the name of 'love jihad'. A bench comprising Chief Justice Govind Mathur and Justice Piyush Agrawal asked the state government

to file a counter affidavit by January 4 and fixed the case for hearing on January 7, 2021.

The bench, however, refused to grant any interim relief in the form of a stay order. As per the ordinance to ban unlawful religious conversions, the onus was put on the defendant to prove that the conversion was not for marriage. It provides for 1-5 year imprisonment if an accused fails to prove that the conversion of the woman was not for marriage or by use of force, allurements etc.

The Allahabad High Court on Friday stayed the arrest of a man booked by

the UP Police under the recently promulgated Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religious Ordinance, 2020

The Bench was hearing a criminal writ petition filed by Nadeem, who was booked by the UP Police on November 29, two days after the Ordinance was promulgated, on a complaint filed by one Akshay Kumar.

The ordinance, aimed at curbing cases of "love jihad", reflects the philosophy of a khap panchayat, with the objective essentially being to subjugate women, former Delhi High Court Chief Justice AP Shah has said.



The retired judge said that several of its provisions violate the fundamental right to practice religion, striking at the very root of right to life and liberty guaranteed under the constitution. This ordinance, he said, was capable of great public mischief. The former judge found it difficult to believe it was passed by a government in a country governed by the rule of law and a constitution.

Justice AP Shah, who was also former Chairman of the Law Commission, said, several provisions of the ordinance seriously violate the fundamental right to practice religion as

guaranteed by Article 25 and strike at the very root of Right to life and liberty guaranteed by Article 25. "In any criminal case (where) conversion is presumed to be illegal, the burden of proof is usually on the prosecution. In this ordinance, every religious conversion is presumed to be illegal. The burden of proof lies on the person accused of illegal conversion to prove that it is not illegal. So there is a presumption of guilt. The offence is cognisable. It is non-bailable and the police can arrest anyone," Justice Shah said.

The ordinance, he said, requires a

person looking to convert another, to go to a district magistrate who conducts an enquiry. If the conversion is based on allurement, then it is illegal. However, the term allurement itself is defined in a very broad way in this law: a single wedding gift like a wrist watch, a bangle, or say a ring, would amount to an allurement, the former judge said. "Interestingly, reconversion is not illegal. Even if it is by fraud or force. If a person is converted voluntarily, he might be arrested. If he is forced to reconvert, then there is no culpable offence," he pointed out.

INDIAN DOCS FROM US DELAY RETURN TO SUPPORT FARMERS

'Will stay back as long as agitating farmers need us'

TRISHA MUKHERJEE

NEW DELHI

A group comprising 20 Indian doctors from the USA has delayed its return to provide medical services at Tikri border, where thousands of farmers have been protesting against the new farm laws for over three weeks now. Svaiman Singh, one of the doctors in the team, said they set up medical camps at Tikri nearly 20 days back and have been attending to the sick farmers since then. "Every year we come to India to set up free medical camps to help those in need. This year the people who were most in need are these farmers, so we are here," the cardiologist said.

"We came to India about three months back for our annual medical camp trip and were scheduled to return in a month's time, but stayed back to offer facilities to the farmers," he said. Hailing from a farmers' family himself, the doctor said they plan to stay back as long as the farmers need them. He also said they are being helped by doctors in India with all kinds of medical supplies. According to Singh, who has been practising as a doctor in the USA for the last four years, they have been attending to at least 1,500-2,000 patients every day, and the most common ailment bothering the protestors is "stress".



DMK women's wing secretary Kanimozhi during a day-long hunger strike in support of farmers protesting against the three farm laws, in Chennai on Friday

Boxer Vijender organises langar

Boxer and Congress leader Vijender Singh on Friday distributed food at a langar organised by the Jamindara Student Organisation (JSO) for protesting farmers at the Tikri Border on Friday.

While speaking to ANI, Vijender Singh said that his fight is not against the government but against the newly enacted farm laws. "We are here to serve the farmers of our country. Our fight is not against the government but the three black laws," he said.

AIKS to protest against farm laws

The All India Kisan Sabha on Friday said it would join farmers protesting in Delhi against the new farm laws introduced by the Centre. The announcement was made in Nashik by AIKS leaders Ajit Nawale and Ashok Dhawale, Centre for Indian Trade Unions' state president Dr D M Darar and Sunil Malusare among others. The three laws are aimed at allowing corporates to make profits at the cost of farmers. To oppose them, we will leave from Nashik on December 21.

WB Speaker rejects Suvendu's resignation

KOLKATA

WEST Bengal legislative assembly Speaker Biman Banerjee on Friday refused to accept the resignation of Trinamool Congress lawmaker Suvendu Adhikari as it did not confirm to the provisions of the Constitution and the rules of the House. Banerjee further said that Adhikari has been asked to appear before him in person in his chamber on December 21 to make his submission with regard to the matter.

"After an examination I found that there was no date mentioned in the letter... I've asked him to appear before me at 2 p.m. on December 21," Banerjee said. The Speaker was also not present in the House at that time when Adhikari tendered his resignation on Wednesday.

Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress lost two more leaders today, including an MLA, a day after two senior leaders quit the party. Trinamool MLA Shilbhadra Dutta and minority cell leader Kabirul Islam quit, making it four big exits in 24 hours and deepening a crisis for Bengal's ruling party ahead of polls four months away.

SC notice to Kamra in contempt case

NEW DELHI

THE Supreme Court issued show-cause notices to stand-up comedian Kunal Kamra and cartoonist Rachita Taneja on Friday for their alleged scandalous tweets against the apex court.

A bench of Justices Ashok Bhushan, R S Reddy and M R Shah sought response from both in six weeks on the notices issued in two separate cases.

It, however, exempted them from personal appearances in the cases. Attorney General K K Venugopal had granted consent for initiation of criminal contempt proceedings against Kamra, saying the comedian's tweets were in "bad taste" and it was time that people understand that attacking the apex court brazenly would attract punishment.

The attorney general had also given consent to initiate criminal contempt proceedings against Taneja, stating that the caricatures posted by her on social media were intended to denigrate the Supreme Court and lower its authority in the eyes of the public.

The consent of either the attorney general or the solicitor general is necessary under Section 15 of the



Contempt of Courts Act for initiating contempt proceedings against a person.

Criminal contempt of the Supreme Court is punishable with a fine of up to Rs 2,000 and imprisonment of up to six months.

The top court had reserved its order on Thursday on a batch of pleas seeking initiation of contempt proceedings against Kamra and Taneja.

During the hearing on Thursday, advocate Nishant R Katneshwarkar, who appeared for one of the petitioners, claimed that Kamra had posted several tweets scandalous to the judiciary.

Toddler's organs give a new lease of life to 5 kids

AHMEDABAD

SETTING an example of humanity and goodness, a family of a toddler from Gujarat donated their kid's organs after his untimely death and gave a second chance at life to five other children. He gave a new lease of life to five children, including two from Russia and Ukraine. His parents donated the organs after he was declared brain dead following a devastating accident.

The two-and-a-half-year-old boy's, identified as Yash Oza was declared brain dead by doctors a few days after he suffered brain haemorrhage due to a fall from the second floor of a house in his neighbourhood while playing, said an NGO, which facilitated the entire process.

ICMR chief admitted to AIIMS after testing Covid positive

NEW DELHI

INDIAN Council of Medical Research (ICMR) Director General Balram Bhargava has been admitted to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) after he tested positive for Covid-19. The 59-year-old ICMR chief was admitted to AIIMS's Trauma Centre, a dedicated Covid-19 facility, on December 16, a hospital source told IANS on condition of anonymity.

Bhargava heads the apex medical body which is responsible for formulation, coordination and promotion of biomedical

research in India. It is at the forefront of the Covid-19 outbreak management in the country. Bhargava is on a three-year deputation as the Director-General of ICMR. He is also the Secretary of the Department of Health Research, a division under the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat tested positive for Covid-19 on Friday. After contracting the infection, Rawat appealed to all those who have come into contact with him in the last few days to isolate and get themselves tested.

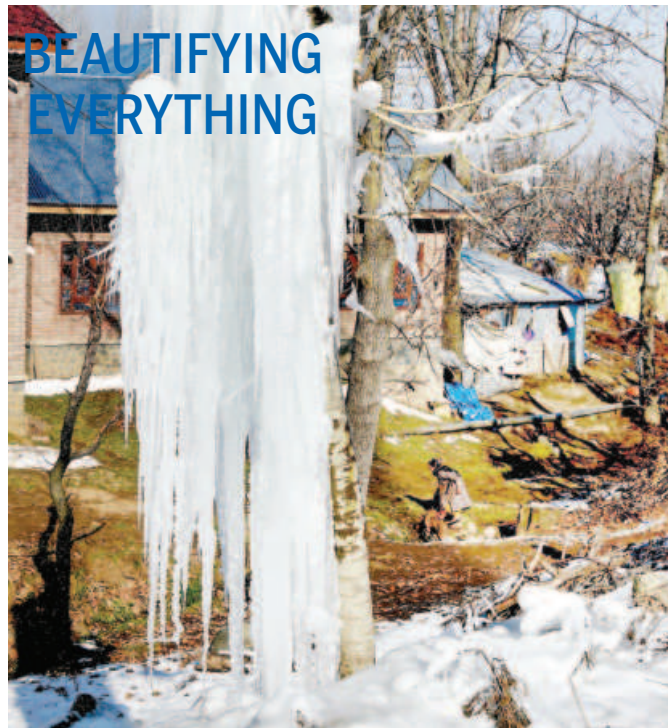
LAC row: India, China resume diplomatic talk

NEW DELHI

RESUMING diplomatic talks on their military standoff, India and China on Friday agreed to continue working towards ensuring complete disengagement of troops in all friction points along the Line of Actual Control in eastern Ladakh at the earliest.

At the virtual talks, the two sides agreed that the next round of military dialogue should be held at an early date so that they can work towards an early and complete disengagement of troops in accordance with the existing bilateral agreements and protocols.

The talks were held under the framework of Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China border affairs.



Huge icicles hang from a tree, formed after a water supply line burst, as temperatures dropped below zero, in Shopian, South Kashmir on Friday

₹2,500 cr scam bigger than C'wealth Games: Kejri

NEW DELHI

DELHI Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Friday said the alleged scam of Rs 2,500 crore in the BJP-ruled municipal corporations was even bigger than the Commonwealth Games scam. Addressing a special session of the Delhi Assembly, he claimed that scams of Rs 5,000-10,000 crore happen every year in municipal corporations while giving required permissions for buildings. "It's a very painful day as we are discussing the biggest scam in MCD. Rs 2,500 crore scam is bigger than the Commonwealth Games scam."

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SINCE 1981

మీ కలలకు సాకారం

సరైన సమయంలో చక్కని నిర్ణయం మంచి ఫలితాలను అందించింది

నా ఎంపిక కపిల్ చిట్స్ ఇప్పటికీ వెన్నంటి ఉంది.

Contributing towards planet’s well-being

INDIA dropped two ranks in the United Nations’ Human Development Index this year. It is at 131st position out of 189 countries in the world. Those near us Bhutan (129), Bangladesh (133), Nepal (142) and Pakistan (154) were ranked among countries with medium human development, the report said. Norway topped the index, followed by Ireland, Switzerland, Hong Kong and Iceland, the report showed. As we all know, the Human Development Index is the measure of a nation’s health, education and standards of living. India’s HDI value for 2019 is 0.645 which puts it in the medium human development category. It considers several aspects like the life expectancy (of Indians at birth in 2019 was 69.7 years). This time around, the UNDP has taken

into consideration the carbon footprint that the countries are leaving on the planet. This is unique, but is essential to preserve the only place we have to live in the universe so far. The report says India’s gross national income per capita fell to USD 6,681 in 2019 from USD 6,829 in 2018 on purchasing power parity (PPP) basis. UNDP Resident Representative Shoko Noda said the drop in India’s ranking doesn’t mean “India didn’t do well, but other countries did better”. Noda said India can help other countries too and lauded its commitment to reduce carbon emissions. The UNDP introduced a new metric to reflect the impact caused by each country’s per-capita carbon emissions and its material footprint, which measures the amount of fossil fuels, metals and other resources

used to make the goods and services it consumes. While India dropped two ranks this year, standing at 131 out of 189 countries, if the Index were adjusted to assess the planetary pressures caused by each nation’s development, India would move up eight places in the ranking, according to the report. The report said under the Paris Agreement, India pledged to reduce the emission intensity of its GDP from the 2005 level by 33–35 per cent by 2030 and to obtain 40 per cent of electric power capacity from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030. “As part of the plan, the National Solar Mission aims to promote solar energy for power generation and other uses to make solar energy competitive with fossil fuel-based options. Solar capacity in India increased from 2.6 gigawatts in March

2014 to 30 gigawatts in July 2019, achieving its target of 20 gigawatts four years ahead of schedule. In 2019, India ranked fifth for installed solar capacity,” the report said. The report said evidence from Colombia to India indicates that financial security and ownership of land improve women’s security and reduce the risk of gender-based violence, clearly indicating that owning land can empower women. It further said indigenous children in Cambodia, India and Thailand show more malnutrition-related issues such as stunting and wasting. “In India different responses in parent behaviour as well as some disinvestment in girls’ health and education have led to higher malnutrition among girls than among boys as a consequence of shocks likely linked to climate change,” the report said. It is a welcome feature that we now understand that our well-being is linked to our planet’s well-being more than any.

Untapped potential keeps T States poorer



IN MY OPINION
V RAMU SARMA
Welfare is necessary though it involves a lot of money since it is supposed to improve the lives of the poor and downtrodden sections of the society. But then, it would be nothing short of mismanagement and foolishness if the government of the day (whichever party it may belong to), goes on announcing schemes without taking simultaneous measures for revenue generation. Of late, we have seen the two Telugu State’s blabbering about the welfare schemes they have launched and making tall claims that the all the previous governments had no brains, never thought of the people’s welfare as they had done. They also claim that the schemes introduced by them are “Na Bhooto, Na Bhavishyati” (never before and never after). The claim does not end here. They also say that they are the first of their kind in the world and only they have the wisdom.

But what one does not understand is if they have the monopoly on wisdom, then why is it that the revenue generation is not as it should be? Do they lack resources? Certainly not, but what these governments lack is intention and focus. Here the focus is to win elections after elections, keep making tall promises, dote out freebies and ensure political power. Fine but along with it, they should also learn to transform these States into cash rich ones instead of accusing the Centre of not releasing funds in time from GST etc. A lot needs to be learnt from the Gujarat government. Perhaps no one had taken the kind of initiative they had taken in promoting tourism silently. They know the best how to generate money even from dust and desert. They have realised that tourism has the unique capacity of generating trade and investment directly at the local level as tourists and entrepreneurs seek new destinations. They have also understood that tourism promotion

can significantly contribute to rural development, community enrichment and social empowerment.

If one scans through the different places that are available for an affordable weekend, Gujarat has any number of places with well developed infrastructure. But if one wants to have similar experience in the two Telugu States, there is hardly any place where one can go. The few that are projected as tourist spots, lack proper infrastructure. Let’s take Telangana for instance, a richer State as compared to its neighbouring Andhra Pradesh. If one wants to go for a one-day outing, the most sought after place these days is Anantagiri for its natural beauty and forestry. But then, finding even a proper public toilet becomes difficult there. There are some beautiful waterfalls which are about 270 to 300 kms from Hyderabad. But again, there is no proper infrastructure facilities in place.

In Andhra Pradesh, barring Visakhapatnam and Araku Valley, one can hardly boast of good tourist spots with proper infrastructural facilities. Though the State has fantastic potential to develop beach tourism with 900 kms of seacoast no measures are taken in that direction.

Even Odisha which is better known for temples like Puri Jagannath is now trying to convert its beaches into revenue generation spots.

The Odisha Tourism Development Corporation is now back on track, bringing tourists back to nature’s best-kept secret. One such initiative is the Glamping Festival at the Marine Drive Eco Retreat on the Ramachandri beach in Odisha. The retreat is 15 minutes away from the Sun Temple in Konark, which is a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Kutch is a remote region in the arid borderlands of north-west India. For centuries, life was brutally tough - rains often failed, there were few jobs and the enterprising would emigrate. In 2001, Gujarat saw a major earthquake, also known as the Bhuj earthquake which occurred on January 26 when India was celebrating 52nd Republic Day. The entire landscape got disrupted. It flattened much of the State. Out of the 21 affected districts, those most affected were Kutch-Bhuj, Ahmedabad, Jamnagar and Rajkot. Within these districts more than 37.8



If one scans through the different places that are available for an affordable weekend, Gujarat has any number of places with well-developed infrastructure. But if one wants to have similar experience in the two Telugu States, there is hardly any place where one can go. The few that are projected as tourist spots, lack proper infrastructure. Let’s take Telangana for instance, a richer State as compared to its neighbouring Andhra Pradesh. If one wants to go for a one-day outing, the most sought after location these days is Anantagiri for its natural beauty and forestry. But then, finding even a proper public toilet becomes difficult there. There are some beautiful water falls which are about 270 to 300 kms from Hyderabad. But again, there is no proper infrastructure facilities in place

million people were affected. According to official figures released by the Central government, the earthquake killed over 20,000 people and injured about 70,000. Those who witnessed the devastation at the time must have thought this would set back development by decades.

But once the tremor and terror ended, the State marched towards triumph. A resilient Gujarat rose against all odds to limp back to life. A concerted effort was made and in 10 years, a new Bhuj was reborn. Apart from restoring houses, two new ring-roads, an airport, parks and thriving shops came up. The Greater Rann of Kutch which borders Pakistan and is known for white desert was converted into a money spinning and most attractive tourist spot. Rann of Kutch is spread out in the districts of Surendra Nagar, Banaskantha, Patan, Kutch and Rajkot.

Kutch is well known for its Wild Ass Sanctuary and the Flamingo City which is in an island and breeding ground for the migratory flamingo birds. Till a decade ago, this area was considered as the most backward in Gujarat with very poor road connectivity and negligible civic infrastructure. Two main

occupations of the people of this region have been animal husbandry and producing local handicrafts of Kutch. But today it is an important place for national and international tourists.

The successive Gujarat governments did not bother whether the ongoing schemes were launched by a particular party or a particular community. They took forward all the ongoing schemes to promote tourism and added newer areas and adopted an aggressive tourism promotion policy. Even bikers from Telangana prefer Gujarat en route to Rajasthan and their blogs have received huge hits. The promotional films produced by Gujarat Tourism department are one of the best and create kind of interest among the viewers to explore those areas. There are no big-time actors, they are mostly young female solo travellers who explain the importance of those areas and the facilities available in a creative manner. Visualisation and narrative are something worth watching. It makes one wish that he too should visit those places.

While almost all industries suffered a serious setback, tourism sector in Gujarat is back

on its feet. Lots of people have started moving out and are even staying overnight at several tourist spots. Rann of Kutch has become a family destination.

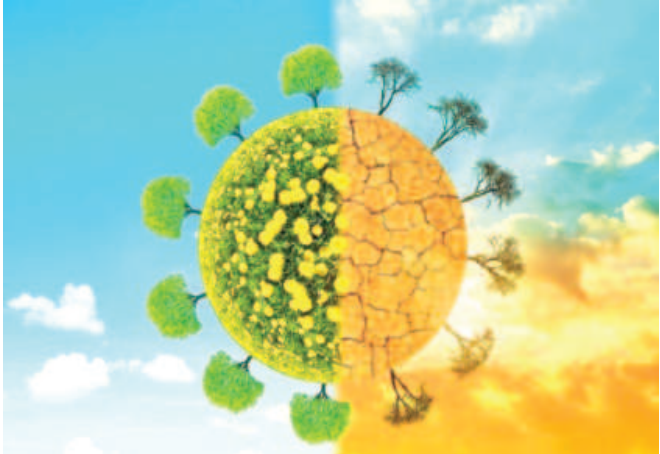
The latest edition to the tourism map is the Statue of Unity which has been witnessing a footfall of about 2,500 people every day in the post lockdown period. Officials say that even the jungle safari was receiving good foot fall despite cap on visitors in view of the Covid-19 protocols. The pandemic did not stop Gujarat and they have gone in for introducing sea plane services connecting the Sabarmati river front in Ahmedabad to Statue of Unity in Kevadia. Similarly, Gir Forest has also witnessed the bookings going up. Interestingly, while the foot-loose Gujaratis are looking for destinations, foreign and domestic tourists from other parts of the country are preferring Gujarat.

The latest schemes taken up by the Gujarat government is the Hybrid Renewable Energy Park near Vighakot village at Kutch in Gujarat which will be the country’s largest renewable energy generation park. It will lead to the generation of renewable energy to the tune of 30 GW. Spread over 72,600 hectares of land, the park will have a dedicated hybrid park zone for wind and solar energy storage, as well as exclusive zone for wind park activities.

The neighbouring State Rajasthan is no less aggressive in tourism promotion and despite the major parts of the State being a desert region, it attracts very high international tourists and has also become a destination for theme and dream weddings of high-profile people in the country.

On the contrary, Telangana stands at 15th place in the country in terms of tourism while AP is in 16th position in terms of tourist footfall. Even a State like UP has more tourist footfall than Telangana. The budget allocation for Telangana is just Rs 250 crore and it is learnt that even this amount was diverted to other schemes. In Andhra Pradesh Budget 2020-21 tourism does not figure anywhere in the list of priority schemes.

While Gujarat is converting sand into money spinner area, the two Telugu States are indulging in politicking and claim to be the wisest of all.



The world in grip of extreme weather events

Rise in temperatures, cyclones, floods and droughts, climate-induced migration: The world witnessed it all in 2020

AKSHIT SANGOMLA

A look back at 2020 evokes an unsettling picture: It was, after all, the year when the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 held the world by a thread, causing massive economic setbacks and upending lives. At the same time, the climate crisis — while it took a backseat in the face of the health crisis — continued to contribute to volatile weather events.

Optimism had prevailed when the lockdown was announced; observers believed that the shutting down of all economic activities to curb the spread of the virus would bring down the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The belief, however, was only a blip in the long-term GHG emission trends, as the latest State of the Global Climate provisional report by World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) found. It was published December 1, 2020.

Carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄) and nitrous oxide (N₂O) are the three primary GHGs that cause anthropogenic global warming. N₂O seems to be becoming the next big concern in terms of its increasing concentrations in the atmosphere and global warming potential. Human emissions of N₂O — which is 300 times more potent than CO₂ — increased by 30 per cent between 1980 and 2016, according to a research paper published in Nature October 7, 2020.

Nitrous oxide is a dangerous gas for the sustainable existence of humans on Earth. It has the third-highest concentration — after CO₂ and methane — in our atmosphere among greenhouse gases responsible for global warming. N₂O can live in the atmosphere for up to 125 years. Its global concentration levels increased from 270 parts per billion (ppb) in 1750 to 331 ppb in 2018 — a jump of 20 per cent. The growth has been the quickest in the past five decades because of human emissions. As the GHG emissions continue to be on the rise Earth is also getting warmer. The development has spiralled into motion several catastrophic events this year alone.

Global temperature rise

The planet was warmer by 1.2 degrees Celsius from January to October in 2020 than the pre-industrial average measured between 1850 and 1900, according to the Nature report. This is the second-warmest recorded when compared to similar periods in historical data. The year is on course to become the third-warmest year on record. The record heat in 2020 has been despite near-La Niña conditions prevailing in the equatorial Pacific Ocean since August and moderate La Niña conditions prevailing since late September.

The La Niña phase of the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) phenomenon has a cooling effect on many parts of the world. The warmest year on record was 2016, which had very strong El Niño conditions which is the warming phase of the ENSO. This portends that 2020 has been almost as warm as 2016, if not for the opposing ENSO conditions in both year. In fact, a WMO report in July stated that one of the next five years may be witness to global average temperatures of 1.5 degree Celsius above pre-industrial levels. There is a 20 per cent possibility of the event. The report titled The Global Annual to Decadal Climate Update added that the global average temperature rise would likely be above 1°C in each of the next five years. The extent of warming makes the goal challenging and brings a lot of consequences in its wake. These include increase in sea levels, melting ice sheets in the Arctic and Antarctic and extreme weather events such as marine heat waves, tropical cyclones, heavy rainfall, floods, droughts and wildfires.

Heat accumulation

Ocean heat content (OHC) is one of the most crucial indicators of global warming as 90 per cent of excess heat in the atmosphere is taken up by the seas and oceans. The heat content of oceans in the depth from 0-2000 metres was at a peak in 2019 and the trend is expected to hold in 2020 and the coming years as well, according to 15 different international datasets of OHC. All datasets agree that OHC increased significantly in the last two decades. Heat accumulation has occurred in the last 60 years in ocean depth of 700-2000 metres.

Temperatures over ocean surfaces were so high in 2020 that 80 per cent of ocean areas experienced at least one marine heat wave (MHW) till date. During such times, the average temperatures of the ocean surface (up to a depth of 300 feet or more) rise by 5-7°C above normal.

MHWs can be caused by locally formed heat fluxes between the atmosphere and the ocean or due to large-scale drivers of the Earth’s climate like the ENSO. There were also much stronger MHWs (43 per cent) over the oceans in 2020 than the moderate ones (28 per cent).

Global sea-level rise in 2020 was also similar to 2019 values and the general decreasing trend has continued. This was mainly due to the increased melting of the ice sheets in Greenland and Antarctica.

In Greenland alone, ice weighing 152 gigatonnes melted between September 2019 and August 2020, which was on the high end of the 40-year satellite records.

Cyclones

Extreme weather events such as tropical cyclones, floods, heavy rainfall and droughts — well-known and expensive consequences of global warming — impacted many parts of the world. The most dramatic was the record-breaking Atlantic Hurricane Season that concluded on November 30. The season witnessed 30 named storms from June 1 to November 30, which is the highest ever recorded. The storms also formed much earlier in the year than they usually do, breaking records for the earliest storms in recorded history. A record number of these storms also made landfall along the United States coast. The sheer number meant that they were fairly regular and at one time in August, even created a scare of the formation of a mega hurricane when storms Marco and Laura formed in quick succession in the Gulf Mexico.

Among the 30 storms in the Atlantic Ocean this season, 10 showed signs of rapid intensification. Another storm which grew to humongous proportions fast was super Typhoon Goni in the western Pacific Ocean. It gained wind speeds of 233 km / hr in 54 hours. Many storms and cyclones also affected other Asian countries, such as cyclones Amphan, Nisarga, Nivar and Burevi in India and African countries, and cyclone Gati in Somalia which brought two years’ worth of rains in two days.

Apart from the storms, heavy rainfall and flooding in several parts of Asia and Africa led to loss of human lives, property and livelihoods.

The WMO State of the Global Climate report stated that “climate and weather events have triggered significant population movements and have severely affected vulnerable people on the move”. Climate-induced human migration is one of the least understood impacts of anthropogenic climate change. Human migration due to changing climate happens primarily in middle-income and agricultural-dependent countries, according to a study published in Nature Climate Change, September 14.

(Courtesy: Down to Earth)

LETTERS

Removing prejudiced content

THE Karnataka government is considering dropping of relevant paras from the Class VI Social Science textbook which are deemed to be insinuating remarks against the “Brahmin” community. This is a welcome move towards inclusive education which ensures good quality and unbiased content in the schoolbooks. It is true that any misleading content in the textbooks cannot create harmony in the schools and also dangerous for the student’s future. The need of the hour is that the authorities concerned of all states and NCERT re-examine the school textbooks and remove the prejudiced content.

Amit Singh Kushwaha, Satna (MP)

Welcome move by Supreme Court

THE Supreme Court has rightly advised the Centre to form a panel to sort out the issues raised by the farmers agitating at the national capital. Some of the farmers unions also stated that this was a moral victory and if it were so, they should immediately refrain from agitational path and start negotiating point by point with the authorities. The farmers do not have any say in their crop sale and this has been going on in the country for the last many years. It is the nationalisation of banks that has penetrated deep into villages and put a break on the intermediaries/moneylenders by helping the farmers in meeting their financial requirements.

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ISRO, a source of inspiration

THE Indian Space Research Organisation’s consistent and continuous achievements come as a pleasant surprise to the nation at a time people are fed up with reports of news such as agitations, crimes, hate speeches, political challenges etc., in the newspapers (PSLV lobs CMS-01 in to orbit, December 18). ISRO’s efficiency, teamwork and planning are a source of inspiration to be emulated by political parties, governments and various institutions to resolve the burning

issues country is facing such as agrarian crisis, growing unemployment, bad loans, falling GDP, productivity and Covid-vaccine distribution.

Kshirasagara Balaji Rao, Hyderabad

The new farmer laws gave an open market for all farmers to sell their produce in any area unlike earlier where it was confined only to the marketing yards at districts, which should be welcomed by the farmers. Further, the

Centre has also stated that MSP would be implemented in around 23 crops, including horticultural crops which is a benefit to the farmers. Therefore, it is high time the farmers stop their protests and start meaningful and non-political dialogues with the government in resolving the crisis and simultaneously, the governmental authorities also to put the new laws in abeyance and discuss the issues with farmer unions as advised by the Supreme Court.

Katuru Durga Prasad Rao, Hyderabad

WHO research will stand null

AFTER a lapse of 12 months, the residents of Wuhan in China cleverly denying that the deadly virus of the century was not originated in their city (Wuhan residents say: ‘We are not afraid’, Hans India, Dec 18). The attempt of WHO representatives to visit the Chinese commercial city, next month to investigate the cause of the virus may not yield desired results. The Communist regime of China not only hushed up the Covid-19 during earlier days, but also allowed it to spread it into entire world countries, including India. While 77.3 million human beings affected with this virus, including 9.98 million Indians. Over 16.3 million died all over the world, including 1.44 lakh affected Indians since the first death that occurred in Karnataka on March 2020. The virus also crippled the economy and development, throwing many people on streets. In the said circumstances, the reason for research and confirm the origination of the virus by the WHO authorities now has little importance as the damage to mankind had already been done and this scar will remain for ever in the world history.

Govardhan R Jilla, Mumbai

Rythu Bharosa 3rd tranche on Dec 29

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

THE state Cabinet on Wednesday approved the implementation of phase-3 of Rythu Bharosa scheme benefitting around 50.47 lakh farmers. Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy will release Rs 1,009 crore as the third instalment of Rs 2,000 to each beneficiary on December 29.

Information and public relations minister Perni Venkatramiah (Nani), briefing the media on Cabinet decisions on Friday, said that the Chief Minister will release input subsidies for the farmers who suffered crop damage due to Nivar cyclone in November on December 29. The state government has enumerated that 8,06,504 farmers suffered losses in 13,01,000 acre, of which 12,38,000 acre is paddy crop and 70,000 acre is of horticulture crops and Rs 718 crore of the input subsidy will be released on December 29. The input subsidy due to natural calamities is being provided within one month, he said.

He said the Cabinet had approved sanction of 147 lab technician posts and 147 posts of lab attendant posts on contract basis in the constituency level animal disease diagnostic laboratories in the state to provide better facilities to farmers.

The Cabinet also approved to set up Andhra Pradesh Institute of Rural Management (APIRM)

- CM will release Rs 2,000 each to beneficiary farmers directly into their accounts
- Input subsidy for crop damage will also be credited into the accounts the same day
- Cabinet okays setting up of AP Institute of Rural Management at Pulivendula and AP Medical Education and Research Corporation



I&PR Minister Perni Venkatramiah (Nani) briefing media on the Cabinet decisions at the Secretariat on Friday

at Pulivendula with a budget of Rs 83.59 crore to empower rural women and youth by providing training and certification courses.

It also approved the establishment of the Andhra Pradesh Medical Education and Research Corporation (APMERC) through which Rs 16,000 crore would be arranged for strengthening of existing 11 medical colleges and construction of 16 new medical colleges across the state.

The Cabinet accorded permission to give 41.19 acre land in Chennaiahgunta in Tirupati Urban mandal for establishing Survey Training Institute.

It also decided to hand over 410.30 acre land in Chinapavani village, Lingasamudram mandal, Prakasam district to Acharya NG Ranga University, for establish-

ment of agricultural research station for research on pulses and millets.

The Cabinet approved to provide compensation to people who gave land for industrial park of APIIC at Vikruthamala village in Yerpedu mandal in Chittoor district. It decided to transfer of 11.83 acre in Sunkesula village of Owk mandal to forest department in advance possession.

The Cabinet accorded permission to borrow Rs 1,931 crore for Chintalpudi lift irrigation scheme from NABARD.

It approved the proposal for development of micro irrigation projects under Pulivendula branch canal, CBR right canal (Lingala canal) Phase 2. The Cabinet ratified the appointment of Jasti Naga Bhushan as additional advocate general of the state.

TOURISM SECTOR

New policy aims at paradigm shift

AMARAVATI

THE new tourism policy approved by the state government aims to revamp the outlook and give a paradigm shift to tourism in the state, with a theme-based approach, so as to make it a premier world-class destination. The Andhra Pradesh Tourism Policy 2020-25 aims at building a robust tourism infrastructure in tune with the ever-changing nature of tourism and promoting responsible tourism practices among all stakeholders. The state Cabinet, on Friday approved the new policy, which seeks to attract huge private investments through a slew of incentives.

Prime among the government's plans under the new policy is to develop high-end five and seven-star luxury resorts and hotels at prominent tourist destinations in the state. Gandikota in Kadapa, which is earning fame as the Grand Canyon of India, will have the first such facility soon as Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy is keen on developing it in his home district.

Besides, 13 other locations have been identified across the state, including the famous Horsley Hills, Nagarjunasagar, Rushikonda (Visakhapatnam), Tirupati and also Polavaram, for construction of five and seven-star hotels and resorts.

"Theme-based tourism will be the USP (unique selling



proposition) of our new policy with a conducive environment for co-creation of diverse tourism products and experiences. We have chosen Rural Tourism, Heritage Tourism, Buddhist Tourism, Eco-Tourism, Beach and Water Tourism, Recreation and Adventure Tourism, Religious Tourism, Cuisine Tourism, Wellness Tourism, MICE Tourism and Medical Tourism," special chief secretary (tourism and culture) Ra-

jat Bhargava said.

These were the state's strengths and major draws that could position it as one of the top tourist destinations. The policy has been crafted keeping in mind the ever-changing nature of tourism, strengths and advantages of tourism in the state, the interests of large-scale and small-scale investors and all the stakeholders, Rajat Bhargava said.

He said that the new policy

offered industry- best incentives, attractive terms for land allotment and initiatives that would position the state as a premier world-class tourism destination with robust infrastructure.

"Our objective is to bring in the best promoters and investors to boost the state's tourism sector. It is a progressive policy that has been prepared after extensive research and stakeholder interactions and we are confident that it will bring in a paradigm shift in AP Tourism," Bhargava said.

The promotion and marketing efforts shall now be centred around being in tune with emerging ad latest trends such as digital marketing, virtual tours, augmented reality and virtual reality, user generated content, strategic partnerships, targeted and focused products and experiences.

The special chief secretary said (tourism) promotion and marketing efforts would now be centred on emerging and latest trends like digital marketing, virtual tours, augmented reality and virtual reality, user-generated content, strategic partnerships, targeted and focused products and experiences. "We attempt to revamp the total outlook towards tourism development. Accordingly, we have put in place a robust tourism infrastructure development plan besides a rigorous investor hand-holding mechanism," Bhargava added.

SC stays 'Constitutional Breakdown' order of HC

- CJ Bobde describes the order 'disturbing'
- State govt in its appeal contends that it is not for the courts to decide as to whether there is a constitutional breakdown in a State under Constitutional framework



- High Court on Oct 1 while hearing 14 habeas corpus petitions made the observation that it will examine whether there is a Constitutional Breakdown in the State

NEW DELHI

THE Supreme Court on Friday termed the Andhra Pradesh High Court's order, which has sought to examine whether there is a breakdown of constitutional machinery in the state, as "very disturbing" and subsequently stayed it.

A bench headed by Chief Justice S A Bobde during the hearing remarked that he has not come across any order like it before and termed it "very disturbing".

In an appeal, the Andhra Pradesh government said that under the constitutional framework, it is not for the courts to decide as to whether there is a constitutional breakdown in a state.

"It is needless to mention that the constitutional courts do not have any judicially discoverable and manageable standards to determine if there has been a Constitutional Breakdown in the

state", said the state government's plea filed through advocate Mahfooz Ahsan Nazki.

The High Court order had sought response from the Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy government on whether there is a situation of "constitutional breakdown" in the state. The High Court on October 1, while hearing 14 habeas corpus petitions filed by detained individuals, had asked the state's counsel to come prepared to assist the court as to whether in circumstances, which have been prevailing in the state, could the court record a finding that there is constitutional breakdown in the state or not.

The state government moved the top court challenging this order. It contended that the order impinges the doctrine of separation of powers since it is the President who is empowered to go into question of "breakdown of Constitutional machinery" under Article 356 and not the judiciary.

SEC files contempt petition against Principal Secretary, CS

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NELAPADU (AMARAVATI)

ANDHRA Pradesh State Election Commissioner Nimmagadda Ramesh Kumar filed contempt petition in state High Court here on Friday against panchayat raj principal secretary Gopal Krishna Dwivedi and chief secretary Nilam Sawhney stating that they have wilfully and deliberately violated the directions of the High Court and are liable to be punished for contempt of court.

Advocates for the State Election Commission (SEC) N Ashwani Kumar, K Ajay Kumar, U Raghava Krishna and D Vamsikrishna filed the contempt petition in the High Court.

Ramesh Kumar stated in the affidavit that both the officials failed to cooperate and provide budget and release of funds to the SEC to discharge its duty of conducting elections thereby affecting the independence of the commission.

Recalling a series of incidents that happened since March this year, the commissioner said that the SEC issued notification on March 7 and 9, 2020 to conduct elections for panchayats and municipal bodies respectively. Though the election process has begun, following the outbreak of pandemic Covid-19 the EC thought the election process could not go ahead in the larger interest of the people. Moreover, all the opposition parties alleged and

- Complains that the duo deliberately violated the HC directions on cooperating with the SEC in discharging its duties
- Says budget has not been made and funds not released to the SEC to conduct elections thereby affecting the independence of the commission.
- Petition says CS sanctioned Rs 40 lakh for election expenditure on Jan 17, 2020 but kept it deliberately pending

widely reported in the media that the electoral process witnessed unprecedented violence and intimidation by the ruling party candidates with the active connivance of the police.

Meanwhile, the Union healthy ministry issued health advisory to contain the spread of the pandemic by maintaining social distance and the SEC resolved to postpone the elections by six weeks or any other date and issued notification on March 15. This invited criticism from the ruling party and several derogatory remarks and allegations were made against the commissioner. The life of the commissioner and his family members were threatened.

The state government challenged the EC notification in the Supreme Court which disposed it of refusing to interfere with the decision of the EC.

Thereafter, the state government hastily through an ordinance amended AP Panchayat Raj Act altering the qualifications, term of office of the commissioner. It had announced the commissioner ceased to

hold the office and appointed Justice Kanagaraj to the post of the SEC. The SEC challenged the appointment in the High Court which directed the state government to allow the SEC to continue in the office. It is apt to state here that the SEC was reinstated only after the contempt petition was filed in the High Court.

The chief secretary sanctioned Rs 40 lakh for election expenditure on January 17, 2020 but the amount was kept deliberately pending. The SEC requested the chief secretary to release the amount the respondents failed to act though they are constitutionally mandated to cooperate and assist the SEC.

Aggrieved by the inaction of the respondents to conduct the elections, the SEC stated that it was total disobedience of the respondents and the high court may summon them and punish them for the contempt of court. The respondents may be directed to cooperate and provide assistance to the commissioner in conducting elections in February 2021.

Delhi shivers as icy winds bring mercury down to 3 degrees C

Continued from p1

The city is likely to record another "severe" cold day on Friday. "Cold day to severe cold day at a few places and cold wave to severe cold wave conditions at many places. Ground frost at isolated places," stated IMD in its bulletin. The city will witness partly cloudy sky on Saturday and shallow fog for the three subsequent days.

According to the head of the India Meteorological Department's regional forecasting centre, Kuldeep Srivastava, the icy winds are blowing towards the national capital region from Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal, which had witnessed heavy snowfall on December 12.

Besides this, the whole northern plains is in the grip of a severe cold wave. Navdeep Dahiya, founder of Live Weather of India stated that Halwara in Punjab recorded the lowest temperature at minus 0.6 degree Celsius, followed by Churu in Rajasthan recording minus 0.3 degree Celsius and Amritsar at 0.4 degree Celsius.

According to the weather department, there will be no significant change in minimum and maximum temperatures over

parts of northwest India for the next two to three days till Monday and rise by 2-3 degree Celsius in minimum temperatures and 4-5 degree Celsius in maximum temperatures during subsequent three days till December 24.

"Cold day to severe cold day conditions very likely in some pockets over Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi and West Uttar Pradesh.

"Cold day conditions in isolated pockets over Jammu division, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, east Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and west Madhya Pradesh during next 24 hours (till Saturday) and decrease thereafter," IMD stated.

The IMD also issued alert for the ground frost over Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, Gilgit-Baltistan, Muzaffarabad, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, west Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan during the next two days till Sunday.

Ground frost refers to the various coverings of ice produced by the direct deposition of water vapour on objects and trees, whose surfaces have a temperature below the freezing point of water.

With folded hands, PM urges Oppn not to mislead farmers

Continued from p1

In the new farm laws, Centre has only stated that whether the farmer sells his produce in the market or outside, it will be his will, he stated. "The previous government had purchased about 1700 lakh metric tonnes of paddy from farmers in its five years. Our government has purchased 3000 lakh metric tonnes of paddy from farmers in its five years at MSP," he said.

"Another lie related to agricultural reforms is being spread about the APMC -- our mandis. What have we done in law? We have given the freedom to farmers in law, given them a new option," said the PM. Not a single market has been closed after the new laws, the Prime Minister asserted. "Then why is this lie being spread? The truth is that our government is spending more than 500 crore rupees on modernising APMC, computerisation of them. Then where did this thing about the closure of APMC come from?" asked Modi.

"Another big lie about new agricultural reforms is about the farming agreement. Is there anything new in the farming agreement in the country? No. The farming agreement has been in operation in our country for years," he added. He assured that there is no reason for mistrust in the recent agricultural reforms.

PM's Varanasi office listed 'For Sale' on OLX

Continued from p1

"On Thursday, it came to our notice that the prime minister's office here has been put up on sale on OLX website. An FIR was immediately lodged at the Bhelupur police station, and the matter is being investigated," Pathak said.

"Four people involved in the case have been taken in custody," he said, adding that the person who took the picture and put it on the website is among them. The accused are being questioned, and further legal proceedings are being carried out, he said.

Tomar says informal talks on, hopeful of solution by Dec-end

Continued from p1

He said the Modi government is committed to addressing all genuine concerns of the farming community and it is willing to resume formal talks anytime but asserted that there was no point talking to those "shooting from peasants' shoulders".

Tomar put the blame on Opposition parties for misleading the farmers and accused them of changing their stance on the reform process and politicising the issue.

In an interview, the Agriculture Minister, who is leading the negotiation with about 40 farmer unions along with Food Minister Piyush Goyal and Minister of State for Commerce Som Parkash, asserted that the newly-passed farm laws are beneficial for farmers and the government is ready to give a written assurance that the minimum support price (MSP) and mandi system will continue.

Earlier in the day, the DMK-led opposition in Tamil Nadu started a day-long hunger strike in support of farmers protesting against the three new farm laws passed by the central government. DMK chief and Leader of Opposition, M K Stalin, party MP Kanimozhi and leaders of alliance parties participated in the protest in Chennai. Stalin slammed Centre and state government for not paying heed to the request of farmers and said that the NDA government has been passing anti-people laws.

Farmers' unions to seek legal advice

Continued from p1

Meanwhile, the All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) said the issue of the farmers' protests against three new farm laws needs to be resolved by the government and not the Supreme Court. The AIKS asserted that no farmer organisation approached the court in the first place and asked for its intervention in the matter.

"The issue needs to be resolved by the Centre and not the Supreme Court. The court order has also said the same categorically. We have not approached the court because of this understanding that it is a struggle by the farmers against a government policy and the executive has to resolve the crisis," senior AIKS leader P Krishnaprasad said.

The farmers' agitation should be allowed to continue "without impediments" and the court will not "interfere" with it as the right to protest is a fundamental right, the Supreme Court said on Thursday while hearing a bunch of petitions against the ongoing stir at Delhi's borders.

Covid shot voluntary, says govt

Continued from p1

The ministry said that vaccine trials are under different stages of finalisation. The government is geared to launch a vaccine for COVID-19 soon, it said.

Six vaccines - one developed by Bharat Biotech in collaboration with ICMR, second one developed by Zydus Cadila, third one by Genovax, Oxford vaccine, trial of which is conducted by Serum Institute of India, Sputnik V vaccine which is being manufactured by Dr Reddy's Lab, Hyderabad, in collaboration with Russia's Gamaleya National Centre and the sixth one manufactured by Biological E Ltd, Hyderabad, in collaboration with MIT, USA are undergoing clinical trials in India.

On whether a vaccine will be safe as it is being tested and introduced in a short span of time and what can be the possible side-effects, the ministry said vaccines will be introduced in the country only after the regulatory bodies clear it based on its safety and efficacy.

"Covid-19 vaccine will be intro-

duced only when the safety is proven. As is true for other vaccines, the common side effects in some individuals could be mild fever, pain, etc. at the site of injection," the ministry said in the FAQs. It said states have been asked to start making arrangements to deal with any vaccine-related side-effects as one of the measures towards safe vaccine delivery.

Two doses of vaccine, 28 days apart, need to be taken by an individual to complete the vaccination schedule, it stated. The ministry said anyone taking medicines for illnesses like cancer, diabetes, hypertension etc, can take the Covid-19 vaccine as persons with one or more of these comorbid conditions are considered high-risk category and they need to get vaccination.

In response to a question on whether the vaccine will be given to everyone simultaneously, the ministry said that based on the potential availability of vaccines, the government has selected priority groups to be vaccinated as they are at higher risk.

Vice-President flags ills of 'instant journalism'

HYDERABAD

EXPRESSING concern over the future of media and journalism and sanctity of news in the face of disruptive technological advances, Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu on Thursday urged all stakeholders to ensure credible journalism, since the media is an effective tool of empowerment of people for informed public discourse.

He spoke at length on 'Journalism: Past, Present and Future,' while delivering the M V Kamat Memorial Endowment Lecture in virtual mode from Hyderabad. He said, "Yellow journalism seeks to cloud facts by resorting to eye-catching headlines and promotes distortion and misinformation. Journalism based on taking up false crusades, as witnessed in the case of suicide of a film actor recently, is a fellow traveller. Both are aimed at increasing readership and viewership and should be avoided."

The VP voiced concern over the implications of growing 'instant journalism' triggered by emergence of Internet and social media expansion in the form of propaga-



tion of fake news and erosion of journalistic norms and ethos.

Naidu referred to financial implications for traditional media like newspapers with their journalistic products being leveraged by technology giants and not sharing the revenues with the concerned. He noted that Internet has disrupted the revenue and reporting models, with serious implications.

The VP urged media persons to keep news and views strictly separate, without al-

lowing each of them masquerading as the other. He stressed the need to stem the decline in journalistic values and ethos. He complimented media organisations for standing up to the crisis unleashed by the Covid pandemic and sustaining the cause of empowerment of people.

Pro Vice Chancellor of Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE) Dr HS Bhallal, Vice-Chancellor Lt General MD Venkatesh, Director of Manipal Institute of Communication Dr Padma Rani, and members of administrative and academic departments were among those present.



Yellow journalism seeks to cloud facts by resorting to eye-catching headlines and promotes distortion and misinformation. Journalism based on taking up false crusades, as witnessed in the case of suicide of a film actor recently, is a fellow traveller. Both are aimed at increasing readership and viewership and should be avoided

DEVGN ALL PRAISE FOR 'GREEN CHALLENGE'

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

GREEN India Challenge, a novel programme initiated by TRS MP J Santhosh Kumar to spread green cover by planting saplings, has now become an integral part of Ajay Devgn's 'NY' Foundation.

Accepting a challenge from Santhosh, Devgn on Friday planted seven saplings at Ramoji Film city. He said that the Green India Challenge has brought many legends together and got enormous fame across the country. Noticing the widespread popularity secured by Green India Challenge, the actor declared that henceforth he would include this popular challenge programme of his foundation. He further said Green India programme touched him a lot and hoped that it would be further widened. He congratulated and appreciated the MP for the green initiative.



COVID VACCINATION

Unregistered hospitals, clinics under govt lens

HANS NEW SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE exercise by health department to identify frontline health staff in all districts for administering Covid vaccine is throwing light on the rampant presence of hospitals and clinics that are not registered with the department is coming. DMHOs (District Medical and Health Officers) have been tasked to get the data of frontline health staff including doctors, nurses, paramedics, technicians and support staff working in both government and private hospitals and also in private clinics in their jurisdiction.

While registered hospitals have submitted the data of frontline health staff, unregistered hospitals and clinics or those



which have not renewed their registrations have not responded to the call. DMHOs are currently busy uploading staff data collected from hospitals and clinics in the last few days.

"If we take the case of Ranga Reddy district, 695 hospitals and private clinics shared employees information for administering the vaccine. However, 74 hospitals and clinics did not show any interest. Out of them, 18 are found to be unregistered and notices have been served to man-

agements to abide by the rules. And if they fail to do so, they will not be allowed to run, as the health of public could be at risk if treatment is offered at such places" according to a health department official. Hyderabad district officials said they would focus on unregistered health establishments once the frontline health staff data is uploaded for vaccination purposes.

Telangana Network Hospitals Association President Dr V Rakesh stated that lives of people could be put to risk if unregistered hospitals and practitioners extend medical treatment. This has been a long-pending issue that needed health department attention and it is welcome that DMHOs in all district are focussing on this now, he added.

Corona cases in TS cross 2.8 lakh mark

HYDERABAD

TELANGANA'S Covid-19 tally crosses 2.80 lakh on Friday with 551 new cases reported in 24 hours

span between Thursday and Friday. With the death of another person due to Covid, the death toll mounted to 1,506. The Covid fatality rate remains at 0.53 per cent against the national average of 1.5 per cent. According to the Director of Health and Family Welfare, 44.96 per cent of the deaths were due to Covid while the remaining 55.04 were on account of comorbidities.

The State continues to record more number of recoveries than new cases. A total of 682 people recovered from the virus, taking the cumulative number to

2,71,649. The recovery rate improved further to 96.94 per cent against the national average of 95.4 per cent. The State now has 7,040 active cases and of them 4,955 are in home or institutional isolation.

State now has 7,040 active cases; 4,955 are in home or institutional isolation

Over 90 per cent of beds in the government-run and private hospitals treating Covid-19 in the state remains vacant. Out of 8,561 beds available in 61 government hospitals treating Covid, 7,821 beds are vacant. A total of 740 people are undergoing treatment in these hospitals. Similarly, in 220 private hospitals treating Covid, only 1,345 beds were occupied. Out of 7,920 beds, 6,575 are vacant. Of the new cases reported during the last 24 hours, Greater



Hyderabad accounted for 111. The daily count in districts remains in single or double digits. Rangareddy district saw the second highest number of new cases at 48 followed by Medchal Malkajgiri (42), Warangal Urban (31), Karimnagar (24) and Sangareddy (23).

Of the 47,991 tests conducted between Thursday and Friday, government-run laboratories ac-

counted for 44,366 while the remaining 3,625 samples were tested in private labs. Eighteen government-run laboratories, 56 private laboratories and 1,076 Rapid Antigen test centres are conducting the tests in the state. Out of total 2,80,195 positive cases so far, 70 per cent (1,96,136) are asymptomatic while the remaining 30 per cent (84,059) are symptomatic

CM to discuss HC order on non-farm registrations today

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

CHIEF Minister K Chandrababtu Naidu has called a high-level meeting on Saturday to chalk out a strategy for the non-agricultural land and property registrations. The State government is planning either to challenge the High Court orders in the Supreme Court or to prepare guidelines in accordance with the high court directions.

The High Court had on Thursday directed the State government to revise the user

manual meant for the registration of the properties by deleting Aadhaar, caste, PTIN (Telangana Property Identification Number) and family members details in the registration process.

The meeting is scheduled to discuss at length the orders given by the court and take a decision accordingly. Officials said that whether to file an appeal against the court orders is under active consideration. The representatives from revenue and law departments will explain to the Chief Minister the court order in detail.

Akbar stresses need for community funding

AIMIM leaders told to be humble and considerate towards cadre

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

IN an attempt to strengthen the rank and file in the party, AIMIM floor leader Akbaruddin Owaisi urged party leaders to take the cadre into confidence before planning development activities in their areas. Addressing a party meeting in Barkas, he asked the leaders to remain humble with the cadre and involve their apt advisers while taking up development works. "Any effort done on individual capacity will not yield



a better result than the one being done in unison," asserted Akbar Owaisi.

He warned the elected party corporators against involving in

any kind of irregularities and causing problems to the common people. "We are in the power not to rule the people arrogantly but to be humble and submissive to

them as they have voted us to power. We could prove ourselves best among others by serving the people selflessly but should keep in mind that by suppressing their voices we can't win their hearts," he explained.

Owaisi stressed on the importance of community funding. He said, "it is the need of the hour to promote community funding and help those desperately in need of the support as evil forces are strengthening their resources and are about to unleash their wicked agendas on us.

Spot admissions for regular courses at MANUU

HYDERABAD

MAULANA Azad National Urdu University is opening the online portal for Spot admissions for all Merit Based Programs (Undergraduate and Postgraduate) for candidates, who wish to apply afresh for admission into different courses and for those candidates who had applied earlier and had not got admissions. According to a notification issued by the Registrar I/c, the last date for registration, uploading the documents and getting provisional admission by paying the fees, subject to conditions, is December 20.

Tech, reforms will help raise farmers' income

HYDERABAD

CONFEDERATION of Indian Industry (CII), Telangana, on Friday organised a virtual session on 'Agriculture 4.0: Technology & Reforms Beyond Covid.' The session focused on latest technologies such as precision agriculture, drones etc, as well as reforms in shaping up the future of farming, and taking measures to increase productivity and its effect on the country's food security.

During his address, Dr Rangiah V Setlem, CEO, Indigene Protein Foods Pvt Ltd, mentioned that India is progressing multifariously and set to become number one in every agricultural commodity production



in the world. He opined that agriculture is the only sector that did not get much impacted in terms of modernisation, attracting investments and devel-

opment of primary infrastructure. He said that the current bills that the Government of India passed must have envisaged farmers with more freedom to choose more relevant to current global practices. He mentioned that by passing of these bills, government must be in-

tending for the progress of the farmers to a larger extent.

Pradeep Palelli, CEO, THANOS Technologies Private Limited, said that drone technologies have several applications in agriculture and presented on some of the uses of drones in agriculture. V Purushothama Rao, a progressive farmer from Nalgonda, briefed the meeting on his innovative farming methods and opined that technology would greatly enhance the farm output. He said that reforms would help in usage of technology in farming and farmers will get better yield.

Over 75 participants who are farmers, senior level executives from industry and academia attended the session.

Equifax to help govt in employment creation

HYDERABAD

DIGITAL Employment Exchange of Telangana (DEET) has officially collaborated with Equifax, a multinational consumer credit reporting agency, to streamline the process of employment verification and strengthen its authenticity.

DEET is an innovative initiative by the Government of Telangana in collaboration with Workruit, an AI-Driven employment platform for job seekers and employers to connect instantly. It is a novel employment platform that provides ease and quick connect between employers and job seekers through a right swipe and further connecting for interviews.

K T Rama Rao, Minister for MA&UD, Industries and IT&C, said, "Telangana has become a gold mine of opportunities for the IT sector, where both the companies and workers are flourishing, owing to the promotion by the state. I see this collabora-



• Collaboration will streamline the process of employment verification and strengthen its authenticity

• Synergy will enable seamless verification and appointment of right workers, facilitating efficiency: KTR

tion of DEET and Equifax as another stepping stone by the Government of Telangana towards a

brighter future for the employment sector. Further, this synergy will enable seamless veri-

cation and appointment of right workers, facilitating efficiency and profits of the companies."

Malla Reddy, Minister for Labour, Employment of Telangana, said, "Our platform enables job seekers to access & explore new jobs, alerts and interview details from across the State and allows employers to access top talent for the requirements, bridging the gap of employment."

Jayesh Ranjan, Principal Secretary, ITE&C, said, "The DEET platform over a period of time has been emerging to cover the various aspects in the domain of employment eco-system and partnerships. Equifax provides it with profound insights and capability enhancements." KM Nanaiah, Country Leader, MD, Equifax India, said the first-of-its-kind initiative will further digitise the online job search process on the DEET app and platform by providing online digital verification of the candidates thus reducing the paperwork and improving the timelines

Ashwin spins India to first innings lead

ADELAIDE

OFF-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin picked four for 55 while pacer Umesh Yadav scalped three for 40 as India took a handy 53-run first innings lead against Australia, who were bowled out for 191 on the second day of the first Test at the Adelaide Oval on Friday. India ended the second day's play at nine for the loss of Prithvi Shaw's wicket to take the overall lead to 62.

India had made 244 in their first innings.

Ashwin had got the prized wicket of Steve Smith for just one in the second session as India wrested the initiative early. The off-break bowler followed it up with the wickets of Travis Head, Cameron Green and Nathan Lyon.

Aussie skipper Tim Paine scored an unbeaten 73 to take the fight to the Indian camp while Marnus Labuschagne made 47. The hosts were reduced to 111 for seven at one point in time.

The Indian pacers then off to a great start and bowled great line

and length, not allowing Australian openers -- Matthew Wade and Joe Burns -- to get off the mark for the first 28 balls.

Wade (8) was the first one to get out as he was trapped in front by Bumrah. The left-handed batsman took the review but was adjudged out courtesy umpire's call.

Burns, who has been in terrible form in recent times, became Bumrah's second scalp as he too got out leg-before wicket at his individual score of 8.

Starting the second session at 35 for the loss of two wickets, Australia lost Smith at the team score of 45. Smith, who played 29 balls for his lone run, was caught at slip by Ajinkya Rahane off Ashwin.

Head was the next wicket to fall as he was caught and bowled by Ashwin for 7.

Green (11) then tried to steady the ship alongside Labuschagne but the debutant was undone by a moment of brilliance from India skipper Virat Kohli who dived to his right take an acrobatic catch at mid-wicket off Ashwin.

Paine then joined forces with Labuschagne to steady the ship but at the end of the second session, Australia were still placed in a precarious situation at 92 for 5, still trailing by 152 runs.

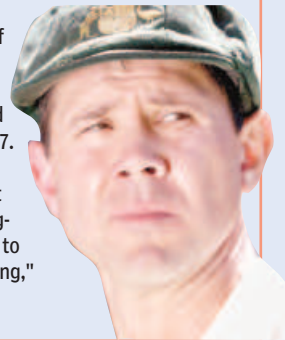
Australian batsmen underestimated Ashwin, it was their undoing: Ponting

AUSTRALIAN batsmen underestimated Ravichandran Ashwin and their aggressive approach towards the senior India off-spinner led to the home side's downfall in the first innings of the opening Test, feels former skipper Ricky Ponting.

The 34-year-old spinner showcased his class by taking four wickets, including the prized scalp of Steve Smith, as Australia were bowled out for 191 in the first innings on day two of the pink ball Test at the Adelaide Oval.

"Batsmen have looked to be quite aggressive against Ashwin. I think they've just underestimated Ashwin and how good he is," Ponting told Channel 7.

Ponting, who coached Ashwin during the Indian Premier League in Delhi Capitals camp, opined that Australian batsmen paid the price for being over-aggressive against the wily spinner. "They've looked to score their runs from him, and it's been their undoing," Ponting said. (PTI)



Australia's situation could have been much worse had the Indian fielders not dropped Marnus Labuschagne twice -- once by Bumrah in the morning session and then by Shaw in the second session.

A double strike by Yadav -- of Labuschagne and Pat Cummins -- at the score of 111 made it look like the Aussies would concede a big lead.

However, Paine's rearguard action with the tail helped the Australians narrow the lead.

Earlier, resuming the day at 233/6, Indian lower order couldn't con-

tribute much as the visitors got bowled out at 244, adding just 11 runs to the overnight score.

Mitchell Starc was the pick of the Australian bowlers as he returned with figures of 4 for 53. Pat Cummins scalped three wickets, conceding 48 runs, while Josh Hazlewood and Nathan Lyon picked up one wicket each. (IANS)

SCOREBOARD

India 1st Innings (overnight 233/6)

Wriddhiman Saha c Paine b Starc-----9
Ravichandran Ashwin c Paine b Cummins 15
Umesh Yadav c Wade b Starc -----6
Jasprit Bumrah not out -----4
Mohammed Shami c Head b Cummins -----0
Extras: (B-2, LB-8 NB-7, WD-1) -----18
Total: (For 6 wickets in 93.1 overs) -----244
Fall of Wickets: 1-0 2-3, 3-100, 4-188, 5-196, 6-206, 233-7, 235-8, 240-9, 244-10.
Bowling: Mitchell Starc 21-5-53-4, Josh Hazlewood 20-6-47-1, Pat Cummins 21.1-7-48-3, Cameron Green 9-2-15-0, Nathan Lyon 21-2-68-1, Marnus Labuschagne 1-0-3-0.

Australia 1st Innings:

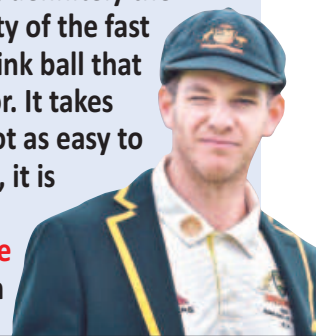
Matthew Wade lbw b Bumrah -----8
Joe Burns lbw b Bumrah -----8
Marnus Labuschagne lbw b Umesh -----47
Steven Smith c Rahane b Ashwin -----1
Travis Head c and b Ashwin -----7
Cameron Green c Kohli b Ashwin -----11
Tim Paine not out -----73
Pat Cummins c Rahane b Umesh -----0
Mitchell Starc run out (Shaw/W Saha) ----15
Nathan Lyon c Kohli b Ashwin -----10
Josh Hazlewood c Pujara b Umesh -----8
Extras: (LB-3) -----3
Total: (10 wks, 72.1 Overs) -----191
Fall of Wickets: 16-1, 29-2, 45-3, 65-4, 79-5, 111-6, 111-7, 139-8, 167-9, 191-10.
Bowling: Umesh Yadav 16.1-5-40-3, Jasprit Bumrah 21-7-52-2, Mohammed Shami 17-4-41-0, Ravichandran Ashwin 18-3-55-4.

India 2nd Innings

Prithvi Shaw b Cummins -----4
Mayank Agarwal not out -----5
Jasprit Bumrah not out -----0
Extras: -----0
Total: (1 wks, 6 Overs) -----9
Fall of Wickets: 7-1.
Bowling: Mitchell Starc 3-1-3-0, Pat Cummins 3-2-6-1.

Yes, definitely the quality of the fast bowling is exceptional. Pink ball that is probably another factor. It takes time to adjust and it is not as easy to pick up and I will tell you, it is harder for the player

— Tim Paine
Australian captain



Lewandowski wins FIFA Best Men's Player award

ZURICH

BAYERN Munich and Poland striker Robert Lewandowski on Thursday beat Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi to win The Best FIFA Men's Player award. Manchester City and England defender Lucy Bronze, meanwhile won the The Best FIFA Women's player award. The award ceremony was a virtual event due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Both players are winning the award for the first time in their careers. While Bronze is the fifth player to win the award that has been won by a different player each year in the women's category since it was conferred to USA's Carli Lloyd, Lewandowski is the third to win the award after Ronaldo, Messi and Real Madrid midfielder Luka Modric. Both Lewandowski and Bronze were also included in the men's and women's World 11 respectively.

Categories and Winners:

Men's Player: Robert Lewandowski (Poland/Bayern Munich)

Women's Player: Lucy Bronze (England/Lyon)

Women's Coach: Sarina Wiegman (The Netherlands)

Men's Coach: Jurgen Klopp (Liverpool)

Women's Goalkeeper: Sarah Bouhaddi (France/Lyon)

Men's Goalkeeper: Manuel Neuer (Germany/Bayern Munich)

FIFA Puskas Award: Son Heung-min (Tottenham vs Burnley)

FIFA Fair Play Award: Italy's Mattia Agnese, 17, who helped an opponent who lost consciousness during a game.

FIFA Fan Award: Marivaldo Francisco da Silva, a super fan of Brazilian club Sport Club do Recife, who has never missed a home game and takes a 60-km walk to reach the club's stadium for every game. (IANS)

Sindhu to return at Yonex Thailand Open

NEW DELHI

ACE Indian shuttler PV Sindhu will return to competitive action in January 2021 where she will be taking part in at least three tournaments.

Sindhu, who is a part of the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) core group, will be seen in action at the Yonex Thailand Open (January 12-17), Toyota Thailand Open (January 19-24) and the World Tour Finals in Bangkok, subject to qualification (January 27-31).

The sports ministry has sanctioned Sindhu's request to have her physio and fitness trainer accompany her at the tournaments.

"The services of her physio and trainer for these three tournaments has been sanctioned at an approx cost of Rs. 8.25 lakhs," a Sports Authority of India (SAI) statement read. She last played competitively at the

Shuttler gets SAI nod for travelling coach and physio

All England Championships in March this year before the Covid-19 pandemic brought sport to a halt.

In September, the reigning world champion had pulled out of Denmark Open. After that, she had agreed to play in the Uber Cup, which was eventually

postponed.

In November, the Rio Olympic silver medallist had said she is totally fit, not just health-wise but also on the badminton court and her preparations for the Tokyo Olympics are in full swing. The Olympics, which were slated to be held in July-August this year, had to be postponed to summer of 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"I have been preparing myself mentally and physically to compete in 2021. We are not too far away and this is a worldwide scenario, hence every athlete is going through the same and we will all have to adapt, train, and give our best in Tokyo," Sindhu had told IANS.



MARGAO (GOA)

WITH two wins, two defeats and two draws, FC Goa have been at best inconsistent thus far this season in the had to deal with inconsistency at

the start of the current season. After two wins, two defeats and two draws in their opening six fixtures, FC Goa will seek to achieve consistency in the Indian Super League (ISL) when they host their bitter rivals Chennaiyin FC at the Fatorda Stadium.

Igor Angulo has been lethal upfront for the home side -- Goa have scored seven times in their last seven games, of which six came from the Spaniard. But their defence has left a lot to be desired, especially in set-piece situations. Goa have conceded six times despite the fact that they have faced just 15 shots on target. Five of these goals have come from set pieces.

Chennaiyin FC aren't faring any better than their opponents. The two-time champions are finding it difficult to score, with only three goals

Goa, Chennaiyin look to shake off inconsistency

to their name so far. They are in eighth position with five points from five games. There has never been a goalless draw when Chennaiyin and Goa have clashed and the fixture currently holds the record for the most number of goals scored (66). If that trend continues, fans are in for a treat on Saturday. (IANS)

Today's Fixture
FC Goa vs Chennaiyin FC
at Fatorda Stadium
7.30pm

Match Result
Jamshedpur FC beat NorthEast United FC 1-0

Chennaiyin FC's midfield will be boosted with the return of Anirudh Thapa from injury

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