THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

COIMBATORE | SATURDAY 28 | NOVEMBER 2020

WEATHER

Rainfall: 1.4 mm

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Karthigai 13 **Tithi:** Thrayodashi/ Chaturtashi Star:Bharani Rahukalam: 9 am to 10.30 am Yamagandam: 1.30 pm to 3 pm

Fajar: 4.57 am Zohar: 12 noon **Asar:** 3.13 pm Maghrib: 5.39 pm

Isha: 6.54 pm

SUNSET TODAY 5.56 PM SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.25 AM MOONRISE TODAY 4.36 PM MOONSET TOMORROW 6.10 AM

CORONA C UNT

DEATHS (+39.414)

(+438)93,49,285 1,36,190

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS (+1,442)

TN: 7,77,616

WORLD CONFIRMED CASES

6,16,31,826 **DEATHS** 14,43,856

217

worldometers.info

Flightcrew member

suffers mild heart attack before landing

Chennai: A cockpit crew member of an IndiGo airlines flight coming from Vijayawada suffered a "mild heart attack" before the aircraft landed at Tiruchirappalli airport on Friday, officials said. The crew member complained of chest pain at the time of landing and was rushed to a hospital where doctors official of the airlines said. The air-

craft landed safely but its onward journey to Chennai was cancelled The pilot was taken to a hospital and later diagnosed with a mild heart attack. He is expected to undergo an angioplasty tomorrow (in Tiruchirappalli)", the official said. The airlines declined to

divulge any further details, including the number of passengers onboard the flight that arrived from Viiavawada, A Tamil Nadu minister among the passengers booked for Chennai reached Madurai by road and took a flight from there, airport sources said. The airline on its website said the Chennai-bound flight, scheduled to depart at 08.45 am and arrive at 09.55 am, was cancelled

COUNTER



POINT

Lok Sabha, Assembly, municipal... all polls should be held at the same time so that we don't need to woo

voters time and again!

STATE | 3 PM speaks with CM; Centre,



WORLD | 5 Iran's top nuclear scientist assassinated

SPORT | 8 Smith, Finch shine in Australia win

DC CORRESPONDENT

It's not all over for Tamil

Nadu. The regional weath-

er office here has warned

that a low pressure area which is likely to be formed over the Bay of

Bengal on November 30

could bring more rains to Tamil Nadu and Puduche-

rry from December 1.
The system was likely to

intensify into a depression

later, deputy director-gen-

eral of meteorology, Chennai, S Balachandran,

likely to form over south-

east Bay of Bengal during

the next 48 hours. It is

very likely to intensify

into a depression on Nove

mber 30 and move towards

the Tamil Nadu coast," he

Meanwhile, the data available with Indian Meteorological Department has shown that Chennai and surrounding districts

including

told reporters here.

districts

"A low pressure area is

told reporters here.

CHENNAI, NOV. 27



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MORE RAIN FROM DEC.1

City, nearby dts get

20.3% excess rains

Economy signals uptick, limits GDP fall to 7.5 p.c.

deccanchronicle.com, facebook.com/deccannews, twitter.com/deccanchronicle, google.com/+deccanchronicle

state announce relief

Better showing compared with record plunge in Q1

MANUFACTURING

BIGGEST TURNAROUND

Construction: -8.6% (-50%)

Financial, real estate: -8.1%

Trade, services: -15.6%

Public spending: -12%

Agriculture: 3.4%

MADHUSUDAN SAHOO |

NEW DELHI, NOV.27

Amidst hopes of development of a corona vaccine, the Indian economy rebounded at a faster-thanexpected pace in the July-September quarter, helped by a pick-up in manufacturing. The country's GDP contracted by 7.5 per cent during the quarter, lower than economists' projection of 8.5 per cent to 10.5 per cent and signalling a sharp recovery from the record plunge of 23.9 per cent in the previous June

"India's real gross domestic product (GDP) fell to 7.5 per cent in the July-September quarter compared to a contraction of 23.9 per cent in the three months ended June. The GDP at constant (2011-12) prices in Q2 of 2020-21 is estimated at Rs 33.14 lakh crores, as against Rs 35.84 lakh crores in Q2 of 2019-20, showing a contraction

NSA DOVAL

LANKAN PM

Colombo, Nov 27: Sri

Lankan Prime Minister

Friday for a trilateral

among India, Sri Lanka and the Maldives. Sri Lanka will host the

fourth national security

advisor trilateral meet-

ing on maritime security

cooperation with India

and the Maldives on

Friday and Saturday.

The meeting will take

place after six years - the

last meeting was held in

New Delhi in 2014.

dialogue

maritime

CALLS ON

GDP **5.2**% 2019-20 2020-21 -7.5% -23,9%

> of 7.5 per cent as compared to 4.4 per cent growth in Q2 of 2019-20," data released by the ministry of statistics and programme implementation on Friday showed.

> Reacting to the latest GDP data, the government's chief economic adviser K. V. Subramanian said there is an 'upside potential' in the estimates about the economy during the current financial year as

recovery is taking the faster pace than expected. 'I would say that given what we have seen in Q1 and Q2 and with the optimism that is being seen in the estimates, I do see upside potential in that estimate given the good recovery that is happening," he said, adding that food inflation is expected to soften in the third quarter and it is something which has to be tracked

MANUFACTURING IS POSITIVE, FROM **39% CONTRACTION**

FC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, NOV.27

The data on GDP for the second quarter showed that manufacturing, a segment that suffered the most during the pandemic, has shown some encouraging improvement due to removal of lockdown restrictions in a phased manner. "Manufacturing clocked a surprise 0.6 per cent growth in July-September after it had shrunk by a massive 39 per cent in the preceding quarter. Continuing its good showing, the agriculture sector grew by 3.4 per cent, while the trade and services sector showed lower-than-expected contraction at 15.6 per cent,

the government said.

NO QUOTA IN SUPER SPECIALTY MED COURSES: SC

New Delhi, Nov. 27: The Supreme Court on Friday refused to permit reservation to doctors for admission in super specialty medical courses for the academic year

The apex court in its interim order said the

The top court refused to agree with the submission that nobody will be prejudiced if the GO is given effect to. The apex court passed the interim order on the petitions challenging the direc-tions of the High Courts of Kerala and the Government of Tamil Nadu to give effect to inservice quota for the admissions to Super Specialty Courses. A bench headed by Justice L. Nageswara Rao directed that the counselling for admission.

tiple places and Delhi's borders resembled a virtu-

al warzone with restless

crowds of farmers, mostly from Punjab and Haryana,

milling around and a sea

of police personnel keeping them at bay. Drones

circled the air and plumes

of smoke from teargas

shells could be seen from

2020-2021.

Tamil nadu government order reserving 50 per cent seats for in-service doctors would be detri-mental to the interests of the meritorious doctors as 50 per cent of the available seats in Tamil Nadu in super specialty medical courses will not be available to them.

Chengalpettu, Kancheepuram, Thiruvallur have received 20.3 per cent excess rains in the last two months. The districts were often seen grappling with water crisis during

the summer season.

Tamil Nadu has recorded a shortfall of 18 per cent from October November 26, considering the actual and normal

rainfall. The recorded at least 36 per cent excess rainfall in last

couple of months. The Chennai district has topped in the list of receiving high amount of actual rainfall in the same period of time. Chennai received 80 cm actual rainfall against 59 cm normal. Kancheepuram which is estimated to have 51 cm rainfall against 44.5 cm normal has got 15 percent

excess rainfall.
Chengalpettu has also
recorded the surplus rain
in the same period with 11
per cent excess rain. When it comes to the actual rainfall, Chengalpattu received 59 cm against 53 cm normal rain fall.

The impact of Cyclone Nivar played a role in bringing in excessive rains to the city and surrounding districts. The data shows, the city has received 23cm rain in couple of days (November 24 to 26). It accounts for a total of 50 per cent the total of south-east mon-soon so far. The officials expect the city could receive a further 23 cm of rain as a full one month of the season remains.

The cyclone Nivar hit the coasts at a time when state had already received 376 mm of rainfall as against the normal of 284.6 mm between June 1 and September 17.

Farmers brave cops, march to Delhi SANJAY KAW AND BHASKAR HARI SHARMA barricades, teargas shells and baton charges. Clashes broke out at mul-

NEW DELHI, NOV. 27

Mahinda Rajapaksa on Thousands of farmers on Friday sought India's Friday braved batons, continued assistance to teargas and water cannons boost the bilateral ties as along the Delhi-Haryana he met with National Security Advisor Ajit border before the authorities allowed them to Doval, who also held march towards the national capital as part of their talks with the country's defence secretary to fur-"Delĥi Chalo" protest against the Union governther advance the "valu-Punjab Chief Minister contributes to peace and Capt. Amarinder Singh. security in the region. accused by Haryana ČM Doval arrived here on

> the first one to welcome the Centre's decision to allow the protesters to enter the city. Soon after Capt. Singh urged the Centre to immediately initiate talks to address the farmers' issues, Union agriculture minister Narendra Singh Tomar reiterated that the government would hold

talks next week. He said:

government has

Manohar Lal Khattar of

instigating farmers, was

Border in New Delhi, Friday. always been ready to discuss issues with farmers.

organisations for another round of talks on December 3. I appeal to them to leave the agitation in view of Covid-19 and winter."

Police use tear gas to disperse agitating farmers who

had gathered at Singhu border as part of their Delhi Chalo protest against Centres new farm laws, at Singhu

We have invited farmers'

After camping overnight near Delhi, the farmers clashed with the police for

the second day at the Tikri border near Delhi-Bahadurgarh highway. Carrying flags and shouting slogans, the farmers had gathered at various

entry points into Delhi in a

determined bid to push

their way through as part

of their march while the

police blocked them with

ened at the border and sand-laden trucks and water cannons were stationed. Barbed wire was also used for fencing at the Singhu border to prevent the protesters from enter-

> The police resorted to a lathicharge for a brief time to control protesters who broke barricades. Hours later, they were given permission to enter Delhi and hold a peaceful protest at the Nirankari Samagam Ground Burari in north Delhi.

ing the city earlier in the

MiG-29K crashes, one pilot missing

New Delhi, Nov. 27: A safely recovered, search MiG-29K fighter aircraft of for the second pilot Cdr crashed into the Arabian sea, and while one pilot has been rescued, a search operation is on for the second, who went missing after the incident, the Indian Navy officials said on Friday. According to the officials,

the Russian-origin jet had taken off from aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya, and went down at around 5 pm on Thursday.

'MiG-29K trainer aircraft operating at sea ditched at about 5 pm on November 26. One pilot surface units progress. An enquiry to investigate the incident has been ordered," a Navy spokesperson said. The Navy has deployed a

significant number of sur-

veillance aircraft and ships to locate Commander Singh, officials said. This is the third accident involving the Mig-29K aircraft in the last one year. A

twin-seat fighter aircraft had crashed in South Goa district in November last year and both the pilots had ejected safely.

Covid-19 tally crosses 93L mark

New Delhi, Nov. 27: India's Covid-19 tally of cases climbed to 93.09 lakh with 43.082 new cases in a day, while 87,18,517 people have recuperated so far recovery rate to 93.64 per cent on Friday, according to the Union Health Ministry data.

The total coronavirus cases mounted to 93,09,787 and the death toll climbed to 1,35,715 with the novel coronavirus virus claiming 492 lives in a span of 24 hours in the country, the data updated at 8 am

The Covid-19 case fatalirate has further declined to 1.45 per cent. There are 4,55,555 active cases of coronavirus infection in the country which comprises 4.89 per cent of

the total caseload, the data stated. According to the ICMR, a cumulative total of 13,70,62,749 samples have tested up ber 26 v November 11,31,204 samples being

tested on Thursday. India's Covid-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark August 23 and 40 lakh on

50 lakh on September 16, 60 lakh on September 28, 70 lakh on October 11 and crossed 80 lakh on October and 90 lakh on November 20.

The 492 new fatalities include 91 from Delhi, 65 from Maharashtra, 52 from West Bengal, 30 from Uttar Pradesh, 27 from Kerala, 26 from Punjab, 25 from Haryana, 18 from Chhattisgarh and 12 from Karnataka.

A total of 1,35,715 deaths have been reported so far in the country including 46,813 from Maharashtra

followed by 11726 from Karnataka, 11669 from Tamil Nadu, 8811 from Delhi, 8224 from West Bengal, 7674 from Uttar Pradesh, 6970 from Andhra Pradesh, 4710 from Punjab and 3922 from Gujarat.

The health ministry stressed that more than 70 per cent of the deaths occurred due to comorbidities.

"Our figures are being reconciled with the Indian Council of Medical Research," the health ministry said on its website.

Minister

leader quits cabinet

The TMC heavyweight, who was the face of Ms Banerjee's land movement in Nandigram during Left Front rule and later became an MP twice, was the minister of three key departments: transport, environment and water resources investi-

Adhikari's resignation, Bishnupur BJP MP Soumitra Khan made a startling revelation, claiming over 58 TMC MLAs, including state panchayat minister and Narada sting accused Subrata Mukherjee, were ready to defect to the saf-

was bound to happen. I now imagine what Rabi Babu (TMC MLA Rabindranath Ghosh) and Subrata (CM nephew

here. Senior TMC MP Sougata Roy, who recently met Mr Adhikari twice to placate him on Ms Banerjee's instructions, said: "He is still an MLA of our party as he has not quit the post. He has also not tendered his resignation from our party's primary membership. He will remain a member of our party as



DAUGHTER

Srinagar,

prison" where no one has the right to express their opinion, PDP president Mehbooba Mufti said on Friday after the authorities barred her from holding a press conference at her residence here where she was allegedly placed under house arrest in the morning. The former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister said she was not allowed to visit the Pulwama residence of party leader Waheed Parra who was arrested by the NIA earlier this week. "Press has been barred from entering my residence in Srinagar. This despite no written orders explaining my arbitrary detention. Kashmir is an open air prison where no one has the right to express their opinion," Mufti said on Twitter. -PTI

Nov

Kashmir is an "open air

Organ donors to get priority in TN govt jobs

R.VALAYAPATHY| DC

The Tamil Nadu government is considering giving priority in government jobs to those who donated organs, health minister C.

Vijayabaskar has said. Dr Vijayabaskar said the state government has made organ donation a people's movement and during the last 6 years 8.245 organs were received as donation from 1392 donors.

He was addressing a press conference after receiving through video conferencing the Union health ministry's award from Union health minister_Harsh_Vardhan here on Friday for coming to the sixth place in performing organ transplantations. Dr Vijayabaskar said the state's strong healthcare infrastructure helpd it bag the award.

He said tenders have been floated for introducing Air ambulance service in Tamil

Dr Vijayabaskar said Tamil Nadu government made organ donation a people's movement

Nadu and Chief Minister Edappadi K.Palaniswami will launch the service

shortly.

Dr Vardhan said the Dr Vardhan said the Covid-19 pandemic has had a hugely negative impact on the deceased donor pro-

gramme and encouraged people to donate their He said no age, caste, reli-

gion, community, belief should come as an obstacle in a task as divine as that of donating organs. "A large number of people die due to non-functioning of organs. According to the national health portal, about 5 lakh people die every year due to non-availability of organs. I also want to say here that no age, caste, religion, com-

munity, belief should ever come as an obstacle in a task as divine as that of donating organs," he was quoted as saying in a statement by the health ministry on the occasion of National Organ Donation Day.

"If a person below 18 years of age wishes to donate organ, he can do so with the consent of his parents or guardian. The goal of this campaign is to remove the fear of organ donation," the

Mamata's confidant

RAJIB CHOWDHURI |DC KOLKATA, NOV. 27 Dealing a double blow to

the Trinamul Congress ahead of next year's Assembly polls in West Bengal, rebel TMC minister Shubhendu Adhikari from Cnic. Mamata resigned Banerjee's cabinet on Friday, while another dis-gruntled party MLA Mihir Goswami reached New Delhi to join the BJP. Both have distanced themselves from their party, fuelling specula-tion of their defection to the BJP, which has also kept the door open for

gation and development.

Within hours of Mr

fron party. Welcoming Mr Adhikari's step, Mr Khan said in North Bengal: "It

Goutam Da (TMC minister Goutam Deb) will do. It is a matter of concern (sic). I feel that after Mr Adhikari, Mukheriee is next in the line. On January 9 in 2019, when I joined the BJP, Abhishek Banerjee) had said a lot. But today we have 18 Lok Sabha seats

long as he continues to be



SHORT TAKES

AoC visits IAF administrative college

Coimbatore, Nov. 27: Air Marshal MSG Menon, Air Officer-in-charge of the air headquarters in Delhi, on Friday appreciated the training being carried out in the Air Force Administrative College

(AFAC) here. The Air Marshal, during his two-day visit which concluded on Friday, interacted with the personnel of the college and reviewed various upcoming infrastructural projects at the institute, an official release said. Menon, also the Commodore Commandant of AFAC, complemented all the staff involved for their continued hard work and dedication.

A ceremonial Guard of Honour was presented to him on his arrival at AFAC on Thursday, the release added. -PTI

Assn: Govt lost ₹3,386.24 cr forex from quarries

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, NOV. 27

The nation has lost ₹3,386 crore of foreign exchange and the state government ₹212 crore of revenue loss due to the closure of 175 stone quarries in Madurai district since August 2012, president of the Association of Southern Stone Industries (ASSI) P. Rajasekaran, said. He said the 30,00 workers had lost their jobs in the past nine years and the loss of economic activity had led to the accumulation of ₹500 crore Non-Performing Assets to

Rajasekaran wanted the government to look into the issue and help open the quarries by clearing all the hurdles.

TN records 1,442 new Covid cases, 12 deaths

Chennai, Nov. 27: Tamil Nadu on Friday logged 1,442 new Covid-19 cases, taking the infection count to 7,77,616, while 12 more fatalities pushed the death toll to 11,681. Recoveries continued to outnumber the fresh cases with 1,494 people being discharged from health care facilities, pushing the aggregate to 7,54,826, a health department bulletin said. Active cases in the state stood at 11,109. A total of 61,610 samples were tested today, aggregating to 1,18,64,177 specimens exam-

ined so far. The state has been witnessing a decline in new cases and since November 13 daily new infections were below 2,000. Two districts, including the State capital, logged cases in triple digits today with Chennai adding 392 and Coimpatore 145, while the rest were scattered across other districts. Chennai continued to top the list of cases with 2,14,191 infections out of more than 7.77 lakh in the state.

Of the 12 fatalities reported, five succumbed to the virus in private hospitals and seven in government facilities. All the patients were suffering from chronic illness or co-morbidities. Six people who died were above 70, the bulletin said. Chennai also topped in the number of fatalities, accounting for 3,838 of the state's total 11,681 deaths. A private lab in Dharmapuri district was accorded approval for conducting Covid-19 tests, taking the number of facilities operating in the state to 220, of which 67 are run by the government. —*PTI*

MP files writ in HC seeking replies from Centre in English

A. ARUL PALANI I DC CHENNAI, NOV. 27

Madurai MP S. Venkatesan on Friday filed a writ petition in the Madurai bench of the Madras high court seeking a direction to the Central Govern-ment officials to reply to letters from Tamil Nadu MPs in English.

In the petition, Venkatesan of the CPM stated that he was unable to understand the contents of a letter dated November 9, 2020, from Nityanand Rai, Union minister of state for home affairs, written in Hindi.

Venkatesan filed the petition demanding punishment for violating the

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, NOV. 27

In a suspected case of asphyxiation, two men

and their pet dogs were

found dead inside a house in Lathur block in Chengalpet district here

They were suspected to

have been asphyxiated, as

the duo had left the gener-

ator on the whole night. Based on the preliminary investigations, police said the deceased, N.Rajesh (26) a native of Kulachal

in Kanyakumari, and Rajesh (25) of Nagercoil, had gone to bed after switching on the genera-

Police said the duo was

tor on Thursday night.

on Friday.

Venkatesan filed the petition demanding punishment for violating the Official Languages Act, 1976. "It was shocking that legal and procedural aspects have been

violated by replying

to my letter in

Hindi," he said Official Languages Act, 1976. "It was shocking that legal and procedural aspects have been violated by replying to my letter in

Hindi", he said. Venkatesan said he sent the letter on October 9, 2020, demanding examina-

2 die in sleep; generator gas leak suspected

The police also

found two dead

dogs inside the

struction site in Lathur Block, Madurantakam and lived in a room near-by. Since none of them

came out of the room on

Friday morning, Arumugam (45), the security guard of the private property, tried calling them but to no avail.

He then informed the

Anaicut police, who arrived and broke the

door open. On entering

the room, police found the

two lying unconscious,

and alerted an ambu-

lance. A doctor declared

working in a private conthe two dead. The police

tion centres in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry for the recruitment of CRPF paramedical staff.

He recalled that former prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru in 1963 gave an assurance that Hindi would not be imposed as an official language on non-Hindi speak-ing states including Tamil Nadu. There was a public debate on this question and consensus emerged that led to the assurance from Nehru. The assurance was reinforced again by Lal Bahadur Shastri in 1965 in the background of protests against Hindi imposition in Tamil Nadu and subsequently Indra

Gandhi in 1967 amended

also found two dead dogs

inside the room.

The accident is believed

to have been caused due to

a gas leak from the gener-

Since there were no power in the area for the last three days, the duo might have used the gen-

erator to charge their mobile phones.

Police said it is not clear

whether they were asphyxiated due to smoke/gas emanating

from the generator or due

to some electrical short

The bodies were sent to Chengalpet government hospital for post-mortem.

Anaicut police have regis-

tered a case and are inves-

circuit.

Venkatesan said the approach of the Union home ministry, by replying in Hindi is a clear violation of the Official lan-

guages Act.

He noted that the Section
5 of the office memoranissued by the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions dated December 1, 2018, states that "wherever any letter from a Parliament is in English and the reply is required to be given in Hindi in terms of Act 1963 and the rules framed under, an English translation should also be sent along with the reply for the from non-Hindi speaking states.

DVAC seizes unaccounted cash

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, NOV. 27

A surprise raid by the Kanchipuram detachment of DVAC, Directorate of Vigilance and Anti-Corruption in the local town and country deputy director's office revealed unaccounted cash to the tune of ₹3, 00,000 on Friday night.

The raids came after

police received repeated complaints of various malpractices being indulged in by the deputy P.Kavitha, director vigilance police, arrived at his office on Friday evening and also prevented the staff from either leaving or entering the premises. A search revealed the unaccounted cash up to ₹3 lakh. The raid is still on and more details are

an accused person was allowed to abscond, it

would be very difficult for





Youngsters fishing in a canal near Thiruneermalai lake.

said the development of

India's e-mobility charg-

ing infrastructure and

increased deployment of e-buses is key to meeting

the demand for sustain-

able transport solutions

across India's rural and

"We hope to study and understand how the right

urban areas.

HC turns down advance bail plea of woman biguous that "where the by the accused persons. If

J. STALIN| DC CHENNAI, NOV. 27

Pointing out that exercise of any right must be in consonance with the rights of all other citizens and in the event of any violation, question of detention as well as initiation of action arises, the Madras high court has declined to direct the police to issue notice to a woman, who apprehended arrest in connection with a cheating case, in the event of registering any case against her enabling her to file anticipatory bail petition in advance

before the court.

Justice S.M.Subramaniam dismissed the anticipatory bail petition filed by Vasantha, who apprehended arrest at the hands of the Pudukottai police for the offences punishable under sections 120 (b), 408, 409, 420, 468, 471 and 477 (A) read with

When the petition came up for hearing govern-ment advocate submitted The judge said section 41 (A) Cr.P.C was unam-



that no FIR has been registered against the petitioner as on today and therefore, the question of granting anticipatory bail oes not arise.

Citing two orders of the high court, counsel for the petitioner submitted that a similar order may be passed to issue notice under section 41 (A) of Cr.P.C to the petitioner in the event of registering any case against her, enabling her to file anticipatory bail petition in advance before this court.

History had been unkind to BJP in TN

arrest of a person is not Thus, ingredients stipulated in the said provision was very clear that if arrest was not required, then, only notice was to be issued by the police officer in advance calling a person to explain with regard to the allegations set out in the complaint and certainly, not otherwise. In view of the said provision, the police officer concerned was expected to issue notice only in such of those cases, where arrest was not required and certainly not in all other cases where an arrest was imminent and warranted, the judge added.

The judge said in the event of directing the police authorities to issue notice under section 41 (A) Cr.P.C in all the cases without considering the facts and circumstances, there was a possibility of erroneous implementation of the orders by the police or likelihood of absconding

the police officials to again arrest and investigate the matter to continue the prosecution. "It is a world of electronic advancement. Criminals are acting intelligently and, they are one step ahead of the technological advancement. Thus, registration of cases the police officer must take a decision, whether an arrest is necessary or not. Ultimately an offender should not be allowed to escape from the clutches of law. Law enforcing agencies are to be doubly cautious, while dealing with such complex criminal activities prevailing in the society. Undoubtedly, procedures are to be followed scrupulously. However, the decision making powers must be vested with the police officer concerned in consonance with the code of criminal procedure and

other laws in force.

No fresh corona fatality in

Puducherry Puducherry, Nov. 27: The union territory of Puducherry registered 16 fresh COVID-19 cases on Friday taking the overall tally to 36,856, a top Health department official said. In a welcome development, no fresh fatality was reported for the eighth day in succession on Friday, a release from the Director of Health and Family Welfare S Mohan Kumar said.

IIT-M to run e-bus with innovative charging tech

New Delhi, Nov 27: Madras director Prof Hitachi ABB Power Bhaskar Ramamurthi Grids in India, Ashok said the development of Leyland and the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT-M) on Friday announced a partnership for an e-mobility pilot.

The tripartite partner

ship will run an electric bus (e-bus) pilot to support sustainable in-campus commuting by IIT-M's students and staff. The e-bus, which will incorporate Hitachi ABB Power Grids' innovative flash-charging technology – Grid-eMotion Flash, will be provided by Ashok Leyland, while IIT-M will host the infrastructure required to operate the flash-charging system for the e-bus, Hitachi ABB Power Grids in India said in a statement.

"With sound policy levers in place, this partnership – engaging some of the finest industry and academic minds in India creates a truly sustainable framework for e-mobility," Hitachi ABB Power Grids in India managing director N. Venu said. The partnership will provide a zeroemissions mass public transportation bus system through the compa-'award-winning technology', localised for the Indian market, he added.

"Combination of our robust buses with elec-tric propulsion technology and flash charging from Hitachi ABB Power Grids, can be the answer to the need for sustainable public transportation across the country,' Ashok Leyland chief Ashok Leyianu technology officer N. said. IIT

technology can enable an efficient transport system without damaging the environment. We are delighted to have part-nered with the best in the industry for this endeavor," he added. Hitachi ABB Power Grids' flashcharging system quickly tops up the battery while passengers get on and off the bus. On arterial roads, an e-bus with this solution can reduce the need to take the vehicle out of service for recharging every few hours or having a replacement bus ready, the company said. With India targeting to scale up EV adoption to 30 per cent by 2030, the mass public transport segment is largely untouched, the company said adding for bus operators, the switch to electric has previously presented challenges. That is because with battery-operated buses it is difficult to maximize passenger load carrying capacity and running time while making the whole operation economically viable. An e-bus

G. Babu Jayakumar **Just spamming** he recent hullabaloo over Tamil Nadu BJP's who is considered by many as the God of Tamil people, over Tamil Nadu BJP's **L** attempt to take out a Vetrivel Yatra, which, to put it otherwise, is a van ride by party state president L. Murugan, holding aloft a

spear, evoked mixed reactions. While supporters of the BJP and the Yatra felt that the exercise, purportedly displaying the party's devotion to Lord Murugan, would endear itself to the masses, the detractors decried it as a sign of the party's desperation to gain popular acceptance in Tamil

But the BJP had been indulging in such political gambits for decades, but to no avail. If the party hopes to evoke public sentiments through Lord Murugan,

in 2020, it was the Tamil language in the year 2000. Looking back, the then general secretary of the state BJP L. Ganesan went about trying to prove to the people that his party had more love for the Tamil language than others in many ways. One was his request to the

Union Human Resources Development Minister Murali Manohar Joshi to declare Tamil as a Classical Language and also accord it an official language status. Well, it took another four years for Tamil to gain the Classical Language honour and it is doubtful if the BJP would revive the demand for official language status now.

But then, that was the time when Ganesan thought that he could prove his love for Tamil to the people and thus popularize his party in the He wanted the year 2000 to

be declared as the year of the Tamil Language, evok-ing the same kind of guffaws that L. Murugan's persistence in taking out the Vetrivel Yatra 20 years later is giving rise to. Well, that was not all. When the DMK government under M. Karunanidhi passed a contentious order, which was later struck down by the Madras high court, on Tamil or the child's mother tongue to be the medium of instruction in primary schools from the year 2000, Ganesan was there cheering the government, extending full support to the

"This is a bold step taken by the Tamil Nadu government to save the age-old Tamil...this is not merely a language issue but an issue of self-respect. Whatever be the opposition to the government order, we shall stand by the order," he had

said. The BJP leader also assured the support of his party if the government were to make Tamil the medium of instruction even

Ganesan, at that time, even went to the extent of narrating his personal stories in the public domain to prove that his love for Tamil was real. He wrote in Kumudam, the weekly Tamil magazine that when he was young he and his friends had competitions on speaking in pure Tamil. He narrated the evening outing that he and his friends would have, going around the Big temple in Thanjavur in the 1960s, when the competition was held. Till they left the temple complex, all of them had to talk only in Tamil without mixing English words. In the around 45 minutes they took to go around the temple conversing, every English word used was counted and the one who used the most number of would English words groundnut packets everyone in the group. for

did not compromise his love using Tamil.

for Tamil even after becoming an employee of the state revenue department. He said that he would put his signature in Tamil and when an officer told him that he would not be able to give his salary because he had signed in Tamil, he walked away with a retort: Keep your money. He also recounted conducting elocution competitions in Tamil among the RSS cadre.

Recounting these multifarious expressions of love for Tamil by Ganesan, in an article for the Economic & Political Weekly in August, 2012, well known social scientist from Tamil Nadu the late M S S Pandian commented, 'While all these moves are a sign of the desperation of the Hindu right, they have failed to yield much political dividends.' Pandian also referred to another incident. When the 133 feet tall statue of Tamil saint-poet Tiruvalluvar was unveiled by the then Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi at Kanyakumari, Ganesan became emotional, pointing He even claimed that he out that the people were not

"Let us speak in Tamil, let us write our names in pure Tamil, our lack of interest in Tamil is regrettable..." he went on and on. Tiruvalluvar, whose cele-

brated appropriation bid by the BJP turned out to be a washout in 2016 when one of its leaders Tarun Vijay took a statue of the venerable poet to Haridwar and could not install it as he had promised the people of Tamil Nadu, drew the attention of the party much earlier. In 1999 when the BJP held its national executive committee meeting in Chennai, the venue was named after Tiruvalluvar. Also 100 couplets from Tirukkural, the Tiruvalluvar, were displayed at the venue in English and Hindi transla-

tion. So, going by the past fiascos of the state BJP in its bids to appropriate Tamil identity as its own, it is doubtful if L. Murugan would be able to make the impact he aspires for in the state even if he were to pierce his cheek for real as a penance to Lord Murugan.

the quality of life through reducing pollution in densely populated urban areas," it added.

with flash-charging tech-

nology can solve that

problem while improving

TAKES

Directive operative only for current yr

To super specialty medical Courses for the academic year 2020-2021 shall proceed on a date to be fixed by the competent authority without providing for reservations to in-service doctors. It reiterated that the direction would be operative only for the current academic year i.e. 2020-2021.

The process for admissions to super specialty medical courses started on August 3, 2020, and it was made clear to all the competing candidates that there shall be no reservation. As the admission process is at the final stages, we cannot permit reservation for in-service doctors for this year," the bench also comprising Justices Hemant Gupta

and Ajay Rastogi said. Additional solicitor general Sanjay Jain had argued that there can be no reservation in super specialty courses.

'Resume fishermen grievance redressal meetings'

DC CORRESPONDENT THOOTHUKUDI, NOV. 27

The fishermen in Thoothukudi have demanded the resumption of the monthly fishermen grievance redressal meeting that has been kept under suspension for

last two years. Having around 15 percent of the total fishermen population of 11 lakh in the state, Thoothukudi is one of the major fish harvesting districts in the state. However, the monthly grievance day meeting got suspended following the police firing at the May 22, 2018, anti-Sterlite protest that claimed 13 lives. "Though the district administration and the fisheries department officials said that the meetings had been suspended temporarily, the monthly meetings remained suspended for two years.

Harvard affiliate Beth Israel establishes Sadhguru center in US

Coimbatore: Harvard Medical School affiliate Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center's department of Anesthesia, Critical Care and Pain Medicine, Boston, has established the Sadhguru Center for a Conscious Planet with the objective of improving the health of patients and the broader community through scientific research in three connected areas of consciousness, cognition and compassion. BIDMC's mission is to teach technologies for inner wellbeing and raise every human being to the peak of their potential. The initiative is part of Sadhguru's mission to establish global platforms that will raise individual human consciousness to accelerate the journey towards creating a conscious planet, according to a

Aruna Jegadeesan probe

panel report early next year

The Aruna Jegadeesan commission, probing into the police fir-

ing that killed 13 participants of a rally against Sterlite in

Thoothukudi on May 22, 2018, will submit its report likely by the

first quarter of next year, said its advocate, Arul Vadivel Sekar. Speaking to the media after completing the 22nd phase of the

enquiry for four days from November 23 in Thoothukudi, Mr

Sekar said that the commission could have completed its enquiry

and submitted the report to the state government had it not got

its 22nd phase of enquiry and received 724 documents pertaining to the police firing," said the advocate, who added that 400 more

witnesses are to be heard in the coming sessions. In the next ses-

sion, scheduled to be held from December 14 to 18, the panel will

record the statements of the police personnel on duty during the incident. "The then district collector, Venkatesh, and the district

police superintendent. Mahendran, will be summoned in the

final phase of the enquiry as without their statements the enquiry will not be complete," said Mr Sekar, who added that no fresh summons has been issued to actor Rajinikanth, who got an

exemption from appearing before the commission in person to

The commission recorded the statements of 547 witnesses till

delayed for 8 months due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

press release.

DC CORRESPONDENT

THOOTHUKUDI, NOV. 27

present his version.



Visitors admire the 'Festival of Lamps' exhibition cum sale at Poompuhar showroom on Anna Salai ahead of Karthigai Deepam festival.

PM speaks with CM; Centre, state announce relief

Nov 27: An ex-gratia of ₹2 lakh each will be given to the next of kin of the deceased and ₹50,000 each to those injured in the wake of cyclone Nivar and heavy rainfall in Tamil Nadu, the Prime Minister's Office said on Friday after Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke with Chief Minister K Palaniswami. The PMO said the mone-

tary assistance to the next of kin of the deceased and injured will be provided from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund (PMNRF) and central teams are being sent to the state to assist in the rescue and relief work. . In the state, about 2.30 lakh people have been accommodated in relief camps following the cyclone, Chief Minister Palaniswami had said. "PM @narendramodi spoke to Tamil Nadu CM Thiru @EPSTamilNadu and discussed the situa-

tion in the wake of the

DC CORRESPONDENT

Tamil Nadu has won the

award for the Best Performing Big State in

overall and inclusive development for 2020, given by the India Today Group, for the third con-

Originally scheduled to

be presented at the India Today e-State of States Conclave on Friday, the

award would now be given

away on December 5, a

release from the India

of the total of 2000, the

state bagged the award

that it had won in 2018 and

2019 for creating job

opportunities and an ami-

able business environ-

ment, besides improving

The state had fared well

in various indices like

economics, agriculture,

education, public heath,

provision of basic amenities, law and order, good

Today Group said.

people's lives.

CHENNAI, NOV. 27

secutive year.

cyclone and heavy rainfall in parts of the state. Central teams are being sent to Tamil Nadu to assist in rescue and relief work," the PMO tweeted.
"PM @narendramodi @narendramodi expressed condolence on the loss of lives and

prayed for a quick recovery of the injured," it said. An ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh each would be given to the next of kin of the deceased and Rs 50,000 each to the injured, from the PMNRF, the PMO said.

Meanwhile, CM Palaniswami announced Rs 10 lakh each to the families of the victims. .Apart from uprooting 2,064 trees in the affected districts, including Chennai, Cud-dalore, Chengalpattu, Ve-llore and Nagapattinam, it caused damage to about 108 power transformers and over 2,927 electric poles, Palaniswami said in a statement here.

The work to clear the fallen trees and restore transformers was

TN wins award for third year

DC CORRESPONDENT

Chief Minister Edappadi

K. Palaniswami thanked

the Supreme Court for its

historic announcement declaring holidays for the

courts on January 14 and

15 to mark the Pongal fes-

of the people of Tamil Nadu, Palaniswami, in a

statement on Friday, said

reflected the culture and

governance, entreprene-

urship and environment

to come on top of the

industrialised state has a robust foundation for pro-

The most urbanized and

over the trend of govern-

ment not implementing

issued by it to ensure

that tribunals should not

"function as another department" under the control of executive, the Supreme Court Friday

said it is high time that

practice

The apex court said dispensation of justice by tribunals can be effective

only when they function

independent of any exec-

utive control and this

renders them credible

and generates public con-

fidence. "We have noticed

repeated

Why govt not implementing

directions

directions relating to tribunals: SC

New Delhi: Disturbed a disturbing trend of the

traditions of Tamils.

harvest festival

CHENNAI, NOV. 27

Welcoming

Scoring 123.1 points out announcement on behalf

Palaniswami thanks SC for

declaring leave for Pongal

being taken up on a war-

footing, he said. 'The state government swung into action immediately after receiving an alert about the cyclone from the Indian Meteorological Department. Strict place to prevent casualties due to the cyclone."

Palaniswami expressed his deepest condolences to the victims' families and said he has ordered financial assistance of ₹10 lakh each -- ₹4 lakh from the State Disaster Relief Fund and Rs 6 lakh from the Chief Minister's Public

Also, he announced compensation for the loss of 61 cows, five bulls, 65 calves and 114 goats in the storm to cattle owners, ranging between ₹3,000 and ₹30,000. About 302 huts and 38 tiled houses were completely damaged and 1,439 huts and 161 tiled houses suffered par-

He said former Chief

Minister J. Jayalalithaa had wanted Tamil to be

the official language of

courts and that his gov-

ernment too would like to

duction and is home for

more service sectors. It is

sixth in the country in

terms of population, 12th

in terms of size, second in

economic development and third in production.

Government not imple-

menting the directions issued by this court.

Therefore, it is crucial

that these tribunals are

run by a robust mix of

experts, "To ensure that the tri-

bunals should not func-

tion as another depart-

ment under the control of

the executive, repeated

directions have been issued which have gone unheeded forcing the

petitioner (Madras Bar

Association) to approach

this court time and again," said a bench headed by Justice L Nageswara Rao. — PTI

stress on the demand.

Flood warning issued to villages along Palar river

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, NOV. 27

Owing to the increased inflow of water into Palar river, Kanchipuram district collector Mahe-shwari Ravikumar issued a flood warning to the villages along Palar on

The flood warning has been issued since the inflow into the river has been increased to 20,000 cusecs so far and is set to go up to 40,000 cusecs in due course.

In Kanchipuram district, the villages that received flood warnings are, Perumbakkam, Muthuvedu, Sevilimedu, Orikkai. In Walajabad, the villages that received flood warning area, Kuruvimalai, Avaloor, Uthiramerur, Thirukukoodal, Pinaayur, OruKaattupettai. People from about 40 villages along the river banks were advised to stay safe and urged them to follow all precaution and safety

Due to heavy rains, 6,000 cusecs of water is being released from Thandarai dam across Cheyyar river in Tiruvannamalai district. The surplus water will reach the river near Perunagar village in Kanchipuram district.

Hence, the officials have requested the people living near Perunagar are advised to not cross the causeway across Cheyyar river. People have been advised to not get into the regulator or try to cross it and bath or wash clothes

children don't go near the The police department

there. Parents have been

asked to ensure that the

place.

on Friday evening stopped transportation Kanchipuram-Perunagar-

CATTLE RESCUED: Despite warnings by the collector, a farmer from Sevilimedu village in Kanchi took his cows to Palar river bank for grazing. Due to a sudden flood in the river, the cows were unable to cross the river banks. Police and fire department officials were informed about the situa-The officials who arrived at the spot used ropes to rescue the cattle. The police officials also found a 35-year-old drunk man stuck in the river cued by the team. The drunk man and the farmer were let off by the police after a stern warn-



Minister K.C. Veeramani showers flower petals to welcome Palar river, Walajapet.

STALIN REMEMBERS VP SINGH

DC CORRESPONDENT

Stalin called upon the people to take a pledge to usher in reservation in all departments on the occasion of the death anniversary of former Prime Minister V. P. Singh, describing him as the protector of social

Singh spread the social justice of Tamil soil all

Govt urged to give up salary cut for engineers

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, NOV. 27

TNCC president K. S. Alagiri urged Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami to give up the government's plans to cut the salary of engineers working in about a score of departments, including highways, PWD and rural develop-

The news of the government move to cut up Rs 15,000 from the pay of the engineers was shocking and unacceptable as these engineers undertook Rs 50,000 crore developmental worth projects in the state by being on the field, Alagiri said in a statement on Friday.

He said the govern-

CHENNAI, NOV. 27

DMK president M. K.

Though born into privilege, Singh thought about and strove for developing the lives of people in the lowest rung of society, Stalin said in his Facebook post on Friday.

over the nation, he said.

ment.

ment was victimizing the engineers because they sought legal redress for pay parity with doctors and said

Now, surplus water from Poondi reservoir released

Chennai, Nov. Authorities on Friday discharged about 1,000 cusecs of water from the Poondi reservoir, among the chief sources of drinking water supply to the metro, after its level neared full capacity in the wake of good inflows.

The reservoir in neighbouring Tiruvallur district has seen good inflows recently due to rains, including during the

the Tamil Nadu coast on Thursday and from the Krishna river in neigh-bouring Andhra Pradesh. On Friday, following inflows of about 9,722 cusecs, the reservoir level stood at 33 feet against its full level of 35 feet, Water Resouces Department (WRD) officials said.

With the water being released into the Kosasthalaiyar river, the distr-

Nivar cylone that crossed ict administration asked people living in low lying banks to move to safer places. Earlier, officials had on Wednesday released water from the Chembarambakkam lake,another key drinking water source for the city, after its level reached 22 feet out of the total 24 feet, with the sluice gates being opened for the first time in five

Special Haj help desk at Tiruchy passport office

DC CORRESPONDENT TIURCHY, NOV. 27

A special Haj help desk will function at the regional passport office at Tiruchy for extending necessary services to the Haj aspirants, according to R. Anand, regional passport officer. In a release at Tiruchy

on Friday, he said the applicants may contact the help desk in person/mail/telephone for expeditious issuance of passports or for any issues relating to their passport applications. The desk will be operational until December 10. The Haj committee has

informed that the last date for submission of Haj application along added.

valid passport details has been fixed as December 10. Only those applicants who possess machine readable passports valid upto 11-01-2022 would be permitted to apply for Haj 2021, he added.

He added that all Haj aspirants are advised to check the validity of their passports and apply for reissue of the passport well in advance.

Any Haj aspirant, who has already applied for an issue of passport and has not received the same (even after their police verification is completed), may come to the regional passport office to enquire about the status of their application, he

murdering his son DC CORRESPONDENT A 64-year-old father was

Man gets life for

sentenced to life on Fri-

day by the Tirunelveli court for murdering his son in 2014. Gurunathan (64) along

with his wife Pitchammal and younger son Kannan of Munnerpallam village near Tirunelveli were arrested for murdering his eldest son Karthikeyan (32) over a property dispute six years ago in 2014. Tirunelveli third additi-

onal district court, hearing the case on Friday sentenced life imprisonment to Gurunathan and slapped a fine of ₹1,000 on him. The proceedings against the two other accused, Pitchammal and Kannan were abated and dismissed as they died during the course of the trial.

Gandhi reopened

Tiruchy DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUCHY, NOV. 27

The Gandhi Market at Tiruchy, shut since March due to Covid-19, was reopened on Friday after the Madurai bench of the Madras high court lifted its interim stay on opening of the

It might be recalled that Krishnamoorthy moved the Madurai bench seeking a direction to shift the market to the suburb Kallikudi where the agriculture marketing department constructed a market complex. The court on his petition granted interim stay for the functioning of the Gandhi market in the existing congested place in Tiruchy city.

Various traders' organisa-tions continuously agitated for the reopening of the Gandhi

Mentally challenged people to get 'Home Again'

T. SUDHEESH I DC CHENNAI, NOV. 27

The mentally challenged people in the state, who are living in mental health institutions, will get independent community living options. The initiative, titled 'Home Again', launched by Hans Foundation, a public charitable trust that provides funds to non-governmental organisations in India, will ensure social inclusion of 250 individuals from Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra in 45

"It was launched as people who have recovered from mental illness are often excluded from meaningful participation in work, family and community. They face widespread discrimination and abuses in terms of their human rights. Providing them proper housing facilities would improve participation in social and mental activities" homes.

According to Ms Shweta, chairperson of the foundation, they have launched the initiative based on last

strategy for inclusive and community based living for persons with mental health issues' prepared by the foundation along the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences and Tata Institute of Social

Sciences "It was launched as people who have recovered from mental illness are often excluded from meaningful participation in work, family and community. They face widespread discrimination and abuses in terms of their human rights. Providing them proper housing facilities would improve participation in social and mental activities," she said. The study had found that

as many as 612 people in Tamil Nadu have been living for more than a year in mental health institutions. Of the 13,610 patients surveyed, nearly 5,000 have been staying in mental health facilities for over a year. Out of which, 54.3

percent are women. Only Maharashtra (1,358) and West Bengal (971) had patients who are having longer stay at mental health institutions than Tamil Nadu.

At least 41.9 percent prefer to return to families while 14.4 wish to stay back. People with severe disabilities accounted for 46.1 percent. A whopping 93.5 percent of mentally challenged patients never stepped out of hospital while 86.5 percent never had a visitor and 94.8 percent never visited anyone out of the hospital. Nearly 50 per cent of long-term residents lived in institutions for between one and five years. The report also found that 11.4 per cent had been in the shelter homes for over a quarter of a century.

'Home Again' began with 2,200 individuals with varying degrees of disability (plus an additional 1,000 with more complex needs). The aim is to place four to five individuals per home leading to setting up 400 to 600 community homes in the country.



DMDK leader Premalatha Vijayakanth visits cyclone affected area in Chennai on Friday.



NAVY'S MIG-29K CRASHES, PILOT MISSING

From Page 1

To super specialty medical Courses for the academic year 2020- 2021 shall proceed on a date to be fixed by the competent authority without providing for reservations to in-service doctors. It reiterated that the direction would be operative only for the current academic year i.e. 2020-2021.

The process for admissions to super specialty medical courses started on August 3, 2020, and it was made clear to all the competing candidates that there shall be no reservation. As the admission process is at the final stages, we cannot permit reservation for in-service doctors for this year," the bench also comprising Justices Hemant Gupta and

Ajay Rastogi said.
Additional solicitor general
Sanjay Jain argued that there
can be no reservation in super specialty courses. Senior advocate Jaideep Gupta, appearing for Kerala, argued it might not be possible to implement the reservations for in-service candidates at this stage for the academic year 2020-2021 as the admission process has already commenced.

BID TO CAP SURGE PRICING BY CAB AGGREGATORS

New Delhi, Nov. 27: The government on Friday proposed to cap surge pricing charged by cab aggregators like Ola and Uber at 1.5 times of the base fare. The development as-sumes significance in the backdrop of a long-pending demand of citizens to cap the pric-

ing of ride-hailing services. The aggregator shall be permitted to charge a fare 50 per cent lower than the base fare and a maximum surge pricing of 1.5 times the base fare," said the Motor Vehicle Aggregators Guidelines, 2020 issued by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

This will enable and promote asset utilisation which has been the fundamental concept of transport aggregation and also substantiate the dynamic pricing principle which is pertinent in ensuring asset utilisation in accordance with the market forces of demand and

supply, the ministry said. The driver of a vehicle integrated with the aggregator shall receive at least 80 per cent of the fare applicable on each ride and the remaining charges for each ride shall be received by the aggregator.

In states where the city taxi tare nas not been determined by the state government, an amount of ₹25/30 shall be the base fare for the purpose of fare regulation, the guidelines

Similar fare fixation shall be done by the state government of other vehicles integrated by aggregators with the relevant state, the ministry said.

Research firm RedSeer said that the guidelines for cab aggregators which seek to cap surge pricing at 1.5X among other provisions are expected to have mixed impact for the sector that will benefit from improved safety regulations but could have "negative" fallouts for drivers' earnings.

THE DEVELOPMENT assumes significance in the backdrop of a long-pending demand of citizens to cap the pricing of ride-hailing services.

 THE MOVE will enable and promote asset utilisation which has been the fundamental concept of transport aggregation and also substantiate the dynamic pricing principle which is pertinent in ensuring asset utilisation in accordance with the market forces of demand and supply.



Protesters pelt stones during the Delhi Chalo march by members of various farmer organisations over the farm reform laws at Singhu bor-

Farmers say their agitation is people's movement now

North Delhi becomes nerve centre * Farmers stage sit-in in Uttar Pradesh too

national capital on Friday to hold peaceful protest at a north Delhi ground after facing tear gas and water cannons and clashing with securi-ty personnel while thou-sands remained at border undecided points, whether to go to the demonstration site iden-

tified by police. Farmer leaders from Punjab and Haryana said the stir has now become a movement", drawing support from various sections of socie-

ty. Meanwhile, Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar appealed to the protesting farmers to end their agitation and said the government is ready to discuss all issues with

Asserting that the new farm laws will bring tremendous improvement in the lives of farmers, ne said the government was already engaging with various farmers' organisations and they have been called for dis-

New Delhi/Chandigarh, Nov. 27 Hundreds of farmers entered the national confidence of the national conf Around 600 farmers headed to Sant Nirankari Ground, one of the biggest in the national capital, following several hours of confrontation with the police at different border points with Haryana.

After a meeting between farmer leaders and senior police officers, the Delhi Police allowed the protesters to hold demonstration peacefully at Nirankari Ground, but senior farmer leader Darshan Pal later said they would stay put at border points on Friday night and a decision on whether to go to the identified protest site or not

will be taken on Saturday. At the Tikri border, some groups of farmers were escorted by police personnel around 3 pm amid tight security and taken towards the identified protest site. But rity personnel baton those gathered at the charged the protesters Singhu border, one of the main routes used to irom Punjab, had not entered

the city till late evening. As more Punjab farmers crossed the state's border with Haryana, by evening, all police barri-cades at the border with Punjab and along the highway to Delhi were lifted, allowing traffic to

run as before. In Uttar Pradesh too, farmers staged sit-ins and demonstrations at many places, including

Muzaffarnagar, Meerut, Baghpat and Gautam Budh Nagar in western UP, besides Jhansi and Jalaun in Bundelkhand region, protests on various roads resulted in considerable blockades and traffic disruptions.

Earlier in the day carrying flags and shouting slogans, protesting farmers at the Delhi-Haryana Singhu border pelted stones and broke barricades as they clashed with Delhi Police which used tear gas shells to disperse them. The secufor a brief time. Around three police officials were

were denied entry into the national capital for their 'Delhi Chalo' march in jails. Toha In a letter to the princi-pal home secretary, Jain

aiso injured

against the farm laws, managed to break the first layer of barricading, at the border.

Plumes of smoke were seen as security person-nel used multiple rounds of tear gas to disperse the farmers at the Singhu

A multi-layer barricading was in place at the Singhu border to prevent farmers from entering the national capital. At the Tigri border,

security personnel used water cannons to disperse farmers trying to gain entry to Delhi.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government on Friday denied permission to the Delhi Police to convert the city's stadiums into temporary jails in view of the protest by farmers against the new

farm laws. While rejecting the police's request, Delhi Home Minister Home Satyendar Jain said every Indian citizen has the constitutional right protest peacefully for Angry farmers, who which they cannot be put

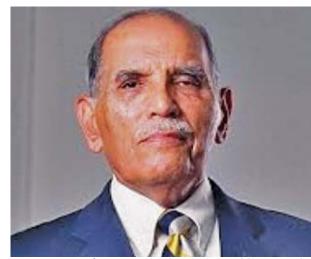
said the central government should accept the demands of the protesters and added that putting farmers in jails is not the solution.

Delhi Meanwhile, Metro services resumed on all lines on Friday evening after they were disrupted for a few hours at multiple places because of the 'Delhi Chalo' march.

"Services normal at all corridors from 5:35 pm onwards," the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) tweeted, adding that the services will be regular on all lines on Saturday.

moved bumper-tobumper on key roads after the Delhi Police closed several border points with Haryana in view of the protest march on Friday. Punjab farmers, representing over 30 farm bodies, had announced they would go to Delhi through several routes -- Lalru, Shambhu, Tohana, Ratia-Fatehabad Talwandi-Sirsa.

When father of **Indian software** ind. was asked to 'show' software



SRIRAM KARRI |DC HYDERABAD, NOV. 27

In the cold January of 2005, Hyderabad was gearing to hold a mega IEEE national conference, marked by several other events, including talks, paper submissions, interviews, panel discus-sions, industry interactions and awards night supported by the NASSCOM, the Computer Society of India (CSI), the Hyderabad Software Exporters Association (HYSEA), STPI, India, with the largest soft-ware company of India, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) as the principal spon-

The prestigious event had the global chairman of IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers) amongst the guests, besides top CEOs of Indian coffware industry Indian software industry. President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam was to link digitally

to give a speech.
TCS, which had just gone public a few quarters prior, had set the Indian tech industry abuzz with excitement with its campaign software put India on the global map, but who put software on India's map? Of course, TCS the company did, but the contribution and achievement had to be personified, it was its founding CEO, Faqir Chand Kohli (popularly called F.C.Kohli, or even FCK lovingly by colleagues and jun-

As head of marketing and communications of TCS, Hyderabad region, it was iy responsibility to ensure the conference was a success in terms of its marketing, branding and communications. But the biggest challenge was an initiative, adequately by TCS regional head, Rajesh Nambiar, (now Chairman and Managing Director, Cognizant India), was to anchor a conversation with F. C. Kohli.
"Be warned, he is a fero-

cious tiger. Unpredictable," Rajesh Nambiar told me. I can handle any tiger, I thought, and went ahead.

Employees of the Tata Group pride the number one (1). Its former Chairman, J.R.D. Tata was India's first pilot, whose license was number #1. TCS was India's first software company. Its development centre in Hyderabad, deccanpark, has the address #1, Software Technology Parks. F.C. Kohli was TCS' and India's technology industry visionary #1. An alpha

As the news spread, not just the employees of TCS, but software professionals from other companies

began assembling on the lawns by 9.30 am. Security was going crazy. People were abuzz with excite-

The white tiger arrived. Thousands stood up. I tried to begin my anchoring act, and announced into the mike – ladies and gentle-men, the founder of TCS, and the Indian software industry... may I welcome, and introduce... F.C. Kohli. Even before reaching the

stage, the 82-year-old man, ramrod straight personality, hollered aloud. "No need to introduce me. I will do it myself. I know more about me than you." The interaction of over 90 minutes will stay etched in memory for-

When someone asked him about stock options, he replied, "you an idiot who wasted his parent's money and did an MBA. You should have remained an engineer and designed great products. What a waste."

When a lady tried her luck

through flattery, asking him to share secrets of his success, he dismissed it, saying, "this is the first time in my life anyone has accused me of being successful." Yesterday afternoon, the

post-graduate from MIT, the man who joined Tata Power four years of India's independence and part of the first team to install and manage our first computer system to run a power line between Mumbai-Pune, creator of TCS, one of the world first three to transform a power utility firm to computer-based operations, man wno retired a CEO at the age of 75, passed away. He was 96.

I had a win when I asked him if he recalled anything unusual or funny about the starting days of the software industry in India. He recalled one for me. He was called late one night by the customs office over a crate imported into India with \$2,500 clearance. When he rushed there, officials told him, "Sir, because of our respect for you, we called. We would have booked a case if it was anyone else. This document says you have imported hardware and software items. We can see the hardware... but where is the software?"

but he saw, clearly, not some invisible to naked eye software, but a future. If Steve Jobs created a near trillion dollar worth Apple, FCK created an even bigger Indian software industry.

Bureaucrats could not see,

Let me stop now, enough said. A word more, and he will scream from the grave... what a pathetic obituary you write...

DDC elections in J&K today

Jammu, Nov 27: The first phase of the DDC election and panchayat bypolls will be held in Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday, with 1,427 candidates in the fray and seven lakh voters eligible to exercise their fran-chise, officials said.

State Election
Commissioner K.K.
Sharma said 2,146 polling
stations have been set up for the smooth conduct of elections of phase-I. "As many as 7 lakh vot-

ers shall use their right to vote in phase I of polling tomorrow. Out of 7 lakh voters, more than 3.72 lakh are from the Kashmir division and 3.28

lakh are from the Jammu division," Mr Sharma told reporters here.

District

BIG | RELIEF | Valuer to assess damages caused in order to calculate the compensation amount

Development Council (DDC) elections, the SEC said a total of 280 constituencies are in the Union Territory of J&K (14 in each district), out of which voting will be conducted in 43 constituencies from 7 am to 2 pm in phase-I. He said 296 candidates are in the poll fray, comprising 207 males and 89 females for DDC elections in Phase- I. Mr Sharma said the sarpanch election will be conducted in 94 constituencies and a total of 279 candidates are

Border clashes spread, two more jawans killed

DC CORRESPONDENT SRINAGAR, NOV. 27

The renewed intermittent clashes between the facing armies along the Line of Control (LoC) that began in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district earlier this week spread to neighbouring Rajouri district on Friday, leaving, at least, two more Indian soldiers dead.

The Army said that the Pakistani troops resorted to "unprovoked ceasefire violation" in Suderbani area of Rajouri early Friday. "Pakistan Årmy resorted to unprovoked

ON THURSDAY, a **Junior Commissioner** Officer Subedar Swathantra Singh was killed and a local resident was injured along the LoC.

cease fire violation on the LoC in Sunderbani sector of district Rajouri on November 27," Lt. Col. Devender Anand, the Jammudefence

spokesman said.

He added, "Our troops responded immediately to the enemy fire. In the ensuing fire, two jawans of the Indian Army Naik Prem Bahadur

Khatri and Rifleman Sukhbir Singh got critically injured and later succumbed to their injuries.'

He said Naik Prem Bahadur Khatri and Rifleman Sukhbir Singh were "brave, highly motivated and sincere soldiers".

On Thursday, a Junior Commissioner Officer Subedar Swathantra Singh of 16 Garhwal was killed and a local resident Muhammad Rashid was injured in Pakistani artillery and small arms fire along the LoC's Kirni and Qasba Poonch district.

Nitish, Tejashwi trade barbs in Assembly

NAYEAR AZAD |DC PATNA, NOV. 27

Bihar Opposition leader Tejashwi Yadav's speech in the Bihar Assembly session on Friday enraged Chief Minister Nitish Kumar so much that he launched a frontal attack on the young

RJD leader. The situation occurred after Tejashwi Yadav called Nitish Kumar "a murder accused" and made personal remarks against him in his speech. Enraged over these allegations by Mr Yadav in the Assembly, Mr Kumar demanded an investigation. "Till now I have been silently listening to all his lies and baseless allegations because he is like my

son. His father is of my age. I know all about him and what he has been doing. I also know everything about his father", Mr Kumar said while replying to Mr Yadav's allegations. "Who made you the deputy chief minister? Are

you even aware who had made your father legislative party leader? You are chargesheeted and yet you have been making all these baseless allegations against me. I know everything about you," Mr Kumar told Mr Yadav. He then added: "Why he didn't clarify his position on the charges against him in 2017 that led to the fall of Mahagathbandhan govern-

Kangana bungalow demolition wrong: HC

DC CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI, NOV. 27

In a relief to actor Kangana Ranaut, the Bombay High Court on Friday quashed and set aside the September 9 order issued by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) directing demoli-tion of alleged alterations carried out at her Bandra office in Mumbai. HC said the demolition action was bad in law and the demolition was carried out on

wrongful grounds. A bench of Justices S.J. Kathawalla and R.I. Chagla

was hearing a petition filed by Ranaut, seeking that the partial demolition of her Pali Hill bungalow carried out by the BMC be declared Ranaut had sought $\overline{\mathbf{2}}$

crore as compensation from the BMC. On the issue of compensation, the bench said it was appointing private firm M/S Shetgiri as the valuer to assess the damages caused in order to calculate the compensation amount due to Ranaut. It further said that the valuer would hear the petitioner and the BMC on monetary damages caused to her due

to the demolition and pass appropriate order before March 21. Court also made it clear that the fees of the valuer would be borne by

"The BMC order actuated by legal malice. There is material in pleadings that smacks of malafide and was done to cause substantial losses. We would be perfectly justified to order compensation against respondents," the bench said in its order.

The court also allowed Ranaut to take steps to make her property habitable in accordance with the

approved plan. If an application is made to BMC for approval, it will be decided within 4 weeks, the court order said.

The bench also asked Ranaut to show restraint in her social media posts and noted, "We do not accept allegations made by the petitioner in view of the alleged atmosphere in the state or film Industry. The petitioner is suggested to maintain restraint on public platforms. Irresponsible statements made by the cit-

izens are best ignored.' The BMC had denied the allegations of malafide

action against the actor and said that the actor had carried out illegal work at had reserved its verdict on the bungalow and its officials had therefore acted in accordance with the law in carrying out the demolition work

The bench, however, said that the photographs of the site, BMC's attempts at denying Ranaut's allegation, the comments made by Shiv Sena's Sanjay Raut and the editorial in party mouthpiece Saamana following the demolition made it clear that the civic body had acted out of malice. On October 5, the court

sive arguments from all sides. It had also made Sanjay Raut a party to the case and disapproved his tweets and his interview to a TV news channel threatening to teach Ranaut a lesson for her tweets comparing law and order situation in Mumbai to PoK in a tweet. Welcoming the court's court's decision, Ms Ranaut tweeted, "When individual stands against the government and wins, it's not the victory of the individual but it's the victory of democracy.

the plea after days of exten-

IN BRIEF 4.7 magnitude quake hits Turkey

Ankara: An earthquake with a 4.7 magnitude shook Malatya province in eastern Turkey on Friday, sending people pouring out into the streets in fear. There was however, no immediate report of any damage or casualties. The quake, which was centered in the town of Puturge, struck at 11:27 am(local time), Turkey's Disaster and Emergency **Management Directorate** said. It was felt in several neighboring provinces. Malatya's Gov. Aydin Barus told the state-run Anadolu Agency that his office had not received any "negative reports" concerning possible damage or injuries.

Ex-World Bank prez Wolfensohn dies

New York: James Wolfensohn, who served as the president of the World Bank for 10 years and was a guiding force for a couple of the most well-known cultural institutions in the US, has died. He was 86.

Wolfensohn died Wednesday at his home in Manhattan according to the Institute for Advanced Study, where he had been a past chair of the board. His son and one of his two daughters also confirmed his death in media reports. Wolfensohn, born in Australia, worked on Wall Street for many years before taking over as the head of the World Bank, a loan-offering global development organisation, in 1995.

iran envoy goes on trial over bomb plot

Brussels: An Iranian diplomat goes on trial in Belgium on Friday accused of plotting to bomb an opposition rally outside Paris, in a case that has stoked tensions with Tehran. The case shines another uncomfortable light on Iran's international activities just as it hopes to ease tensions with the United States after President Donald Trump tore up the 2015 nuclear deal signed by both countries and other world powers. It also comes a day after a prisoner swap that saw the release of three Iranians jailed over a 2012 bomb plot in Thailand, in exchange for the freeing of an Australian-British lecturer imprisoned by Tehran for alleged spying. In June 2018, Belgian authorities thwarted what they said was an attempt to smuggle explosives to France to attack a meeting of one of Iran's exiled opposition movements. Later that year, the French government accused Iran's intelligence service of being behind the operation, a

SRI LANKAN MAN **RUNS MOBILE LIBRARY FOR KIDS**

charge the Islamic republic

has furiously denied.

Colombo, Nov. 27: During his leisure time, Mahinda Dasana-yaka packs his motorbike with books and rides his mobile library — across mostly muddy roads running through tea-growing mountain areas — to underprivileged children in backward rural parts of Sri

Lanka. Having witnessed the hardships faced by children whose villages have no library facilities, Dasanayaka was looking for ways to help them. Then he got the idea for his library on wheels. He started his programme, called "Book and Me," three years ago, and it has become very popular among the children.

'There are some kids who hadn't seen even a children's story book until I went to their villages," he said. Dasanayaka, 32, works as a child protection officer for the government. On his off days - mostly during weekends — he rides his motorbike, which is fixed with a steel box to hold books, to rural villages and distributes the reading material

to children free of charge. The children are very keen and enthusiastic, they are eagerly waiting for me always looking for new books," Dasanayaka said by phone. His programme is mainly centred in Kegalle, a mountainous region of the Indian Ocean island nation about 85 kilometres (52 miles) northeast of Sri Lanka's capital, Colombo, with poor villages scattered among

tea plantations. He visits the villages once or twice a week to distribute the books. His collection includes about 3,000 books on a variety of subjects. "Boys mostly like to read detective stories such as Sherlock Holmes, while girls prefer to read youth novels and biographies," he said

Iran's top nuclear scientist assassinated

Tehran, Nov. 27: Top ranking Iranian nuclear physicist Mohsen Fakhriin an ambush near Tehran, the Iranian state television reported on Friday.

Fakhrizadeh was shot and injured in his vehicle in in Damavand county. a suburb in eastern Tehran, and later succumbed to his injuries, Iran's foreign ministry said on Friday.

authorities con-Local Fakhrizadeh's death several hours earlier and also said that several attackers were killed in

tist and six others were for the attack. killed in the attack.

The semiofficial Fars news agency, believed to be close to Iran's Revolutionary Guard, said the attack happened in Absard, a small city just east of the capital, Tehran. It said witnesses heard the sound of an explosion and then machine gun fire. The attack targeted a car that Fakhrizadeh was in, the

agency said. Those wounded, including Fakhrizadeh's bodyguards, were later taken to a local hospital, the agency said. No group immediately claimed responsibility

"Terrorists murdered an eminent Iranian scientist today. This cowardice with serious indications of Israeli role — shows desperate warmongering of perpetrators," Mohammad Javad Zarif wrote on Twitter on Friday.

Fakhrizadeh led Iran's Amad (Hope) programme which Israel and the West have alleged was a military operation looking at the feasibility of building a nuclear weapon in Iran.

"If Iran ever chose to weaponise (enrichment), Fakhrizadeh would be known as the father of the

Iranian bomb," Western diplomat Reuters in 2014.

News of the killing comes amid fresh concern about the increased amount of enriched uranium that Iran is producing. vital component for both civil nuclear power generation and military nuclear weapons.

The International Atomic Energy Agency had said that the Amad programme ended in the early 2000s and that its inspectors now monitor Iranian nuclear sites. Iran's state televipublished a photograph of security forces blocking off the road. Photos and video shared online showed a sedan with bullet holes through windshield and blood pooled on the road. Israel declined from immediately commenting

alleged that Islamic Republic's military nuclear programme was led by Fakhrizadeh. Fakhrizadeh's name was specifically mentioned in Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu's presentation about Iran's nuclear pro-

on the killing. It had earlier

gramme in May 2018.



Photo released by the semi-official Fars News Agency shows the scene where Mohsen Fakhrizadeh was killed in Absard, a small city just east of the capital, Tehran, Iran, on Friday, (Inset) Mohsen Fakhrizadeh.

UK asks regulator to approve AstraZeneca

Britain will be the first nation to get vaccine, if approved

London, Nov. 27: The UK government said on Friday that it has formally asked the country's independent medicines regulator to assess the suitabof Oxford-AstraZeneca's Covid-19 vaccine for temporary supply, as soon as the company submits the necessary safety, quality and efficacy data.

The UK will be one of the first countries in the world to receive the vaccine, if authorised, with pharmaceutical major Astra-Zeneca expecting to have up to 4 million doses ready for the country by the end of the year and 40 million by the end of March 2021, the government said.

The move to formally seek approval follows the vaccine team declaring its efficacy in trials earlier this week. However, there have been some concerns raised around the way the results were collated. "We have formally asked the regulator to assess the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine, to understand the data and determine whether it meets rigorous safety standards. This letter is an important step towards deploying a vaccine as quickly as safely possible," said UK Health Secretary Matt Hancock, in reference to a formal letter to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency's (MHRA).

The MHRA is the UK's independent regulator and has already been tasked with reviewing data from Pfizer/BioNTech to determine whether its Covid-19 vaccine meets "robust" standards of quality, safe- ened when Britain's pharty, and effectiveness.



A physician wearing PPE kit takes a nasal swab for a Covid-19 test, as personnel of the Austrian Armed Forces (Bundesheer) are ready to process it, in Korneuburg,

German virus tally crosses 1 million

Berlin, Nov. 27: Germany, once a beacon of hope in Europe's Coronavirus nightmare, logged its one millionth case on Friday, as Russia announced a partnership with India to mass produce its contro-

versial Sputnik vaccine. Like much of Europe, Germany is battling a resurgence of a pandemic that is filling hospitals and forcing countries to shut down for business while they wait for help from a clutch of vaccines that could start rolling out for use next month.

Some of the excitement about the new jabs dampmaceutical giant AstraZeneca admitted that RUSSIA ANNOUNCES a partnership with India to mass produce its controversial Sputnik vaccine.

further research was needed after a mixup in its third-stage trial.

But Russia unexpectedly stepped in with an announcement that an Indian generic drug maker would start producing 100 million doses of its government-backed vaccine in early 2021.

Germany had largely contained the spread when the virus descended on Europe from China at the start of the year after first emerging in December in the Chinese city of Wuhan.

CHINA IMPOSES ANTI-DUMPING DUTY ON OZ WINE

Beijing, Nov. 27: China on Friday said it would impose anti-dumping tariffs on Australian wine, the latest salvo in an increasingly terse standoff between the two that has worsened since Canberra called for an inquiry into the origins of Covid-19.

Beijing has on several occasions used the threat of diminished access to its vast domestic market as a stick to beat Australia and has suspended imports of some products including beef and timber. In the latest blow. China's commerce ministry announced wine importers will be forced to pay deposits of 107-212 percent of the value of their



AMERICA OPENS PROBE INTO TESLA OVER SUSPENSION FAILURES

Detroit, Nov. 27: The US government's road safety agency is investigating complaints that suspensions can fail on nearly 1,15,000 Tesla

electric vehicles.
The National
Highway Traffic Safety Administration says it has 43 complaints that linkages near the ball joints can fail, allowing contact between the tire and wheel liner.

The probe announced Friday covers 2015 through 2017 Model S sedans and 2016 through 2017 Model X SUVs. The agency says 32 owners complained of failures at low speeds, but 11 said the links failed on roads while traveling above 10 mph including four at highway speeds.

It says the number of complaints is increasing as the vehicles age, with 32 in the last two years. Three of the highway complaints came in the last three months.

The agency says it will investigate how often the problem happens and the safety consequences. The probe could lead to a recall. A message was left early Friday seeking comment from Tesla. — AP

'Make-or-break' time as Brexit talks head to UK

Brussels, Nov. 27: The EU's chief Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier will return to London on Friday to pursue face-to-face trade talks, in what he described as the last chance for a deal.

Explaining that he was no longer self-isolating after a Covid-19 case on his team, Barnier confirmed he was returning to meet his British counterpart David Frost for weekend talks.

The UK leaves Europe's trade and customs area in five weeks but talks on a follow-on agreement are still stalled over fishing rights and fair trade rules.

In a tweet, Barnier warned that the "same significant divergences persist" before he briefed a meeting of EU envoys carrying the same down-

beat message.
"We are not far from the take it or leave it moment," Barnier told ambassadors from member states, according to a European source familiar with the closed-door meeting. Without a change of heart from Lon-"reaching a deal will be all but impossible," another diplomat reported Barnier as saying.

London, Frost Prime Minister Boris Johnson's lead Brexit chances for a breakthrough.

"Some people are asking me why we are still talking," he tweeted. "My answer is that it's

my job to do my utmost to see if the conditions for a deal exist. It is late but a deal is still possible, and I will continue to talk until it's clear that it isn't."He added: "But for a deal to be possible it must fully respect UK sovereignty. That is not just a word, it has practical consequences." These conditions, he said, include UK control of its fishing waters and limits on state subsidies for both sides

Sources said EU ambassadors urged Barnier to update the EU's deal" contingency measures, with scenes of backed up lorries at the UK border points widely expected if talks fail. In London, Johnson

said it was up to the Europeans to make the move and claimed that Britain was quite ready

SOURCES SAID EU ambassadors urged Barnier to update the EU's "no-deal" contingency measures, with scenes of backed up lorries at the UK border points widely expected if talks fail.

if talks collapsed. The "likelihood of a deal is very much determined by our friends and partners in the EU," he told reporters.

'Everybody's working very hard, but clearly there are substantial and important differences to be bridged, but we're getting on with it," he said.

Johnson has been resisting signing up to the EU's vision of a post-Brexit "level playing field", with punishing trade penalties if either diverges

agreed standards. He has also balked at giving EU fishing boats access to British waters, in one of the most sensitive and still unresolved issues over the eight months of talks.

Barnier was expected to brief fishing ministers from the countries most affected by the issue, before heading to the British capital.

If a deal cannot be signed and ratified by negotiator — was simi- December 31, cross-larly cautious about Channel trade will face a tariff barrier and busibut especially Britain will suffer.

The talks have already pushed on much longer than expected and time is running out for ratification of any deal by the European Parliament by the end of the year. Members

European Parliament, who will also confer with Barnier on Friday, have expressed frustration with the delays and may have to ratify a deal between Christmas and the New Year.

Despite the urgency, France on Thursday warned that the EU must not be "intimidated" by Britain's refusal to compromise or lose resolve in the final stretch. "The British need an agreement more than we do. Europeans must be convinced of this, and convinced of their strength in these negotiations," France's Europe Minister Clement Beaune said.

Will leave if EC confirms Biden's win: Trump

Washington, Nov. 27: US President Donald Trump said for the first time that he will leave the White House if the Electoral College declares Joe Biden as the winner, but made clear he is not prepared to 'concede" the election.

Trump, a Republican, has refused to accept defeat in the November 3 presidential election, and told reporters on Thursday that it would be "hard" to concede to Biden, a Democrat. mally declare the 78-year-"Certainly I will, and you know that," Trump said mally declare the 78-year-old former vice president as the 46th US President.

when asked by a reporter about leaving the White House if Biden is declared the winner on December 14. "I will and, you know that." "It's going to be a very hard thing to concede because we know there was massive fraud," Trump said, once again repeating the unsubstantiated claims of voter fraud. The 538-member Electoral College is sched-

uled to meet on December

14 and is expected to for-

system, voters do not directly choose the president. Instead, they vote for 538 officials, who are allocated to American states based on their population size. Biden leads Trump 306 votes to 232 under the Electoral College system used to pick US presidents. Biden's tally is far more than the 270 needed to win the race for the White House, and he also leads the popular vote by more than six million. In his Thanksgiving Day remarks, Trump, however, term," Trump, who is con-

ing a press call at the White House what he will do if the Electoral College elects Biden. "If they do, they made a mistake," he said. Thanksgiving in the White House, Trump said, or last." It might be the

On his plans for his last "You can't say what's first

"first one of the second

the Electoral College were

to elect Biden. "It's going

to be a very hard thing to

concede," Trump told reporters when asked dur-

the official start of Biden's transition to power with-out conceded defeat. Biden due to be sworn in as president on January 20. However, election officials in key battleground states have declared Biden

upend his victory. Earlier

tĥis week, Trump allowed

the winner, giving him an unofficial 306-232 edge in the Electoral College that determines the outcome of US presidential contests.
"This was a massive fraud," Trump said of the

PORK | ROASTED | Ractopamine additive, allowed in pork meat imported from the US, bone of contention | VIRUDHACHALAM MUNICIPALITY Under Solid Waste Management scheme 2020 21 the Municipa Commissioner. Virudhachkam swites seared bits from the eligible and qualified contractors for the following works as detailed in the table given below (Two Cover System)

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| enue for the Pre-Bid conference on 09.12.2020, 11.00 a.m. | | | | | |

Venue for the Pre-Bid conference on 09.12.2020, 11.00 am in the office of Virudhachaiam Municipality. Tender document and schedule available in http://tntenders.gov.in-and.http://municipality.tr..gov.in/tenders can be downloaded at free of cost. The Bidding document will be received by the Commissioner, Virudhachaiam Municipality. Earnest Money Deposit, 16.0eg/% of the value of work should be submitted along with the tender If the said tender date happens to be a holiday, the tenders will be opened on the next working day. The Municipal Commissioner reserves the rights to accept or reset any bidding document at accept or seed as exercise. ied working day, the Municipal Commissioner reserves the fights to concept or reger any bidding document at any time without assignin inly reason there of. Eligiblety criteria and other detals can be had from the Bidding document. For other details contact e-mail address communicational amogin, gov/in pre-84447ENDER2320 Commissional(Vc), Wrudhachalam Municipalin

Pig guts fly in Taiwan Parliament protest ly against ractopamine when

Taipei, Nov. 27: Opposition lawmakers hurled pig organs inside Taiwan's parliament on Friday to protest the government's decision to ease restrictions on pork imports from the United States.

Taiwan's notoriously rambunctious legislature frequently sees chaotic clashes between rival lawmakers but Friday's scuffles were particularly novel.

Lawmakers from the opposition Kuomintang (KMT) party dumped buckets of pork offal on the debating chamber floor and then proceeded to hurl intestines, hearts, liver and other organs at their rivals. Taiwan's government recently annou-nced it would allow imports of US pork-fed with the additive ractopamine

from January 1.

The supplement improves leanness but is banned in places like the European

Union and China.
Officials in Washington have made it clear restrictions on US pork and beef imports are a key stumbling block to the US and Taiwan signing a trade deal.

Taiwan's President Tsai Ingwen and her Democratic Progressive Party, which commands a strong majority in parliament, hope the easing of restrictions will pave the way for an agreement.

But many in Taiwan are opposed to US pork imports and the KMT have seized on the issue after a series of stinging electoral defeats. Last weekend they joined



Pork intestines and other organs are seen after Taiwan lawmakers threw them at each other in Taipei on Friday.

tens of thousands in an annual labour rally, where opposition to pork imports was a petition from the US.

Taiwan's powerful domestic pork industry also fears com-The DPP campaigned heavi-

told reporters. Lin Chu-yin, a DPP legislator, posted pictures of the discarded offal on her Facebook account. "The opposition party has the right to protest, but they shouldn't be wasting food," she wrote.

they were in opposition, and

The governing party now argues the additive is not a safety threat and that the deal

will boost ties with the US, a

valuable trading partner and

'We're very sorry to throw

strategic ally against China.

pig's internal organs in par-

liament, but this is to high-

light the pork issue," opposi-

tion lawmaker Lin Wei-chou

of hypocrisy.



Chronicle

28 NOVEMBER 2020

Logistical posers loom as vaccine race nears finish

*umanity's race to come up with a vaccine for Covid-19 has had a chequered history over the last 10 months. Many researchers and pharma companies have made steady and spectacular progresses, kindling the hopes of millions of people for an early end to the miserable life they live under the shadow of threat the microorganism poses to all. The last fortnight saw them on a roller-coaster ride of hope with about five vaccine candidates announcing various degrees of efficiency. The one from Oxford University, being jointly developed by pharmaceutical major AstraZeneca, was leading the race when it announced their inexpensive, easy-to-produce vaccine reported an average efficacy of about 70 per cent.

The good run received a setback now with the manufacturers acknowledging an error in the vaccine dosage received by some participants. As per reports, the manufacturers were silent as to why some study participants did not receive as much vaccine in the first of two shots as expected. It was also found that the group, which received a lower dose, looked better protected than those who got two full doses. It has also come out that no one in the test group with the highest efficacy rates was over 55. Reports pointed at other irregularities and omissions, too, triggering questions about the preliminary results of the trials.

It has now been decided that AstraZeneca will run an extra trial. Notwithstanding the averments by the company that the trials were conducted to the highest standards, the UK government has now asked the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency to see if the vaccine meets rigor-

Scientists who work on the vaccine and the people who look forward to its arrival need not lose their hearts on the temporary setback. Science has designed its procedures in such a way that truth ultimately triumphs; the anomalies that have come out now are part and parcel of the process and there are inbuilt mechanisms to identify and correct them in time. The only impact it will have on the entire project is a delay, perhaps of days or weeks, in the

authorisation of the vaccine for public use.

Governments and the public must look at a more serious issue on hand — on the just and equitable distribution of the vaccine. Health experts have already issued warnings against the rich countries reserving the entire stock of early production of about three billion doses of the vaccine, leaving the poor nations and their more vulnerable people at bay. Intellectual property laws could hinder the way of the vaccines to the poor countries and a group of British law-makers have already demanded a waiver of the rules and authorise generic manufacturers with its production. Some of the vaccines demand cold chains, which are nearly impossible to install in certain climactic conditions. Every single issue will have an impact on all the people and their fight against the pandemic and hence be addressed collectively by all nations. Science has its way of correcting itself; it's harder to accomplish the same in politics.

Bull runs for Oscars

he jury to choose an Indian feature film for the Oscars (April 25, 2021) must be complimented for picking the Malayalam film Jallikattu. The title may resonate with the sporting bulls of Tamil Nadu but the theme is startlingly different with the 'protagonist' being a bull that escapes from a butchery in a remote village in Kerala and becomes the subject of a hunt portraying some of the worst aspects of human beings who are so prone to violence. It will compete in the 'Best international feature film' category in which Indian movies have not made much headway over decades, with not a single one even being shortlisted among five for the coveted prize.

The movie, appreciated at the Toronto international festival where its director Lijo Jose Pelliserry was awarded and India's festival, may have edged out 26 others on various entertaining themes released in the year of the pandemic that has proved inhibiting for theatrical releases. But if the film has been chosen for its content and its screenplay as an ode to the art of film making it may fare better than many of the choices made by juries based on their understanding of popular content in the Bollywood tradition to please the masses. This point is well borne out by the short shrift the aesthetic creations of a filmmaker of the calibre of Satyajit Ray received in terms of nominations to the Oscars.

Many films aim to be a metaphor melded from the complexity of human emotions, which Jallikattu manages with certain raw quality displaying a freshness of approach. Opinions may vary wildly when it comes to judgements in subjective situations like movie appreciation, just as it has in this case when *The Disciple* lost out. And yet, somehow, the story of a bull must draw empathy considering how man's depredation of the plant has already led to ecological disasters, including the coronavirus pandemic caused by a pathogen crossing species. The Oscars hinge on many factors, including lobbying, but cinematic excellence is invariably rewarded, much as the South Korean film Parasite breaking win at Oscars this year

DECCAN CHRONICLE

KAUSHIK MITTER

K. SUDHAKAR

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High hopes over vaccine: Are we being unrealistic?



Shobhaa's Take

am writing this a day after the anniversary of the horrific 26/11 terror attacks on Mumbai in 2008, that not only shook the metropolis like nothing ever had, but shook the rest of India and the world as well, as shockwaves reverberated across continents at the audacity of the operation. It's been 12 years since that ghastly day when the bone-chilling events were played out live on television channels globally. I guess time has a way of making us forget even the greatest of tragedies. This year, the significant date went by without much notice. The local media in Mumbai gave it scant, passing coverage — if at all. A couple of pictures appeared the next day in a few dailies, featuring police officers paying tributes to their slain colleagues and all the ror strike. Only one prominent obituary in a leading daily served as a reminder of what families had endured when their loved ones were brutally gunned down by ruthless criminals from across the border. Not so surprisingly, the pandemic deaths have overtaken and overwhelmed us to such an extent that we neglected to honour the memories of all those we tragically lost more than a decade

ago.
While we wait breathlessly for the magic vaccine, here's my prediction for what it is worth: great Prime er, Narendra Minister, Narendra Modi, will be the first, high-profile citizen to take the vaccine today when he visits the Serum Institute in

Pune. He is scheduled to fly into Hyderabad and Ahmedabad on the same day to take stock of vaccine development work at facilities in these three cities. Will he... won't he? Take the shot, I mean? I think he will I mean? I think he will. This is nothing more than a gut feeling, while figuring out the mind of one of the shrewdest leaders in the political sphere. For one, a bold gesture such as this one will send out a powerful signal to the rest of the world that India has beaten everyone else in the vaccine race. For another, it will be more than a mighty booster shot for his personal ego. Besides, with two key state elections to consider, his party, the BJP, will try and flatten any curve in its path — not just the Covid one. India's global image as a pharma leader will be further bolstered if NaMo goes for it. And history be made by this one gesture of this one man! Narendra Modi has both an uncanny sense of timing, besides an obsession to create personal history. If he indeed does take the vaccine before any other major international political personality, he will be hailed as the "Hero of the Pandemic 2020". Catch him passing up on such an opportunity!

When the scenario is this cynical, it's hard to stay optimistic and believe by this time next year everything will be 'back to normal', or 'back on track'

Nothing is ever going to be the same again that's a given. But we cannot carry on without investing in hope for a better

unprecedented level, as

we scramble to grab every little straw that

offers relief from the

dreaded virus, without

thinking

repercussions.

Till then, we have little choice but to go along with the official info, tomorrow. which may or may not be accurate. Rumour The question that is mills are in overdrive, about who is making how much selling masks worth asking is this: Are we pinning unrealistic hopes on the vaccine "saving" humanithat are substandard, and how easy it is to get licences to import masks if the person puts ty? People are still dropping like flies, particularly in America... while the Covid-19 sta-tistics in India continue down ₹45 lakhs — no scrutiny, no testing, no questions asked. When to be alarming. We are the scenario is this cyniexpecting miracles once cal, it is hard to stay the vaccine gets marketoptimistic and believe by this time next year everything will be "back to normal", or "back on track". Nothing is ever ed — and there are still four or five months to go without that happening. Yes, we must place our faith in experts and scigoing to be the same entists at this point and again — that's a given. pray for deliverance. Will that happen because we desperately But we cannot carry on without investing in hope for a better tomorwant it to? Or will we be row. Whether or not dealing with a fresh set schools reopen next of problems? As of now, year, whether or not our hospitals and health-care systems can cope the world is in need of instant solace and reassurance. We hang on to down the line, whether every tiny scrap of posior not there will be a tive news and breakthird, fourth and fifth wave... babies will continue to be born, people throughs. We are too close to the pandemic to will get married, lovers will find a way to celehave sufficient distance brate romance. Poets es about the vaccine. At the moment, I am sitting will write moving verse, on the fence, and not painters will give expression on canvas, musicians will compose committing to taking it as and when it's here. I have zero knowledge melodies — nothing will about its side effects, the creative impulse, least of all a zero knowledge about its long-term efficacy, microbe. Christmas is but a few and zero knowledge weeks away. Santa Claus and his reindeers about its overall behaviour. In that sense, we are all guinea pigs, ready to try whatever it is that appears, because we are scared and numbed by fear. Fear of

will arrive in a safe bubble and he will greet children with a lusty "hohoho" from behind a sturdy face shield and mask — so be it! The world will continue to spin, and the stars will still shine. 'Tis the season to be jolly — why deprive ourselves?

> Readers can send feedback to www.shobhaade. blogspot.com

LETTERS

DIGGING SPREE

This refers to the report that residents in some parts of Chennai were put to great hardship for want of internet connectivity, No internet connectivity for hours in the city. The worst sufferers were students whose online classes had been disrupted. The service providers have blamed the electricity board as the underground cables were cut by their workmen during the maintenance operation. Rain or shine, this kind of inconvenience has become common these days, thanks to the various government/private agencies not paying due attention while on a digging spree. The Chennai corporation should penalise the agency concerned whose negligence is responsible for causing inconvenience to the public.

P.G. Menon, Chennai

PROMISED LAND

Obama's new memoir A Promised Land has reportedly sold close to 9 lakhs copies in the US within a day of its release and is on track to be the best-selling presidential memoir in modern history. A Promised Land is extraordinarily intimate and introspective as Obama is candid about tĥe balancing act of running for office as a Black American, bearing the expectations of a generation buoyed by messages of "hope and change" and meeting the moral challenges of high-stakes decisionmaking. He is frank about the forces that opposed him at home and abroad, open about how living in the White House affected his wife and daughters, and unafraid to reveal self-doubt and disappointment. The 768-page book is said to be the most alluring memoir because of the quality of writing than for any possible revelations. And no wonder, Obama has been described as the most literary president of the US since Abraham Lincoln.

R. Sivakumar, Chennai

Farrukh Dhondy **Cabbages** & Kings



Row over a kiss: It's puritanism, not a breach of Hindu heritage

"Faith is a wraith Promising paradise for the soul Hope is the rope That lets you climb out of a hole Charity should spell clarity ---Returning the wealth you stole..."
— From **Dhoka Cola** by Bachchoo

parents first took me to Khajuraho on a cultural holiday trip when I was about eleven years old. We went from Kanpur to Madhya Pradesh and spent some time looking at the display of erotic carvings in the temples. A late beginner, I suppose, I didn't quite appreciate the erotic dimension of the sculp-tures, though I observed my dad and mum studying them with a dis-

tanced, yet acute, curiosity.

Without protesting any form of innocence or naivete, gentle reader, I promise I have never opened the pages of the *Kama Sutra*, even though there have been at one time or other two editions, one pictorially endowed, on my bookshelves in my short and happy life. I know that they are eighth century depictions of sexual possibilities, some in extreme yogic distortions which promise erotic pleasure, but I have never felt the need to take instruction in these instinctive urges from man, beast or book. One ploughs one's own furrow, so to speak.

Apart from Khajuraho in Madhya Pradesh, there are at least twelve and perhaps a hundred surviving Hindu temples which include in their sculptural representations acts of human sexual coupling. And some of the central symbols of Hindu cosmic creativity are the lingam of Shiva and the universal Yoni which symbolises birth and perpetuity. Hinduism has, from the Vedas onwards, never been prissy about human love, sex and procreation. The Temple of Surya in Konarak in Odisha has some of the world-famous exemplars of erotic sculpture. In Maharashtra, the Markandeshwar temple and the depiction of love in Ellora are also a glorious part of India's heritage.

Hence it came as an absolute article of bewildered wonder that some idiot, or some misguided organisation, is suing Mira Nair's depiction in the Netflix series adaptation of Vikram Seth's universally acclaimed novel *A Suitable Boy* in a Madhya Pradesh court for a scene in which two characters kiss near a temple. In the name of Krishna and the gopis, of Shiva and Parvati, of Vishnu and Lakshmi, Ram and Sita

the unknown. I am ask-

ing myself silly ques-

tions like: "What if I do

take the vaccine and my

body revolts against it?

What if I avoid contracting Covid but my kid-

neys fail? Or my liver packs up?" The thing

about the pandemic is

how it has generated a

fear psychosis on an

and of the Khajuraho temples of Madhya Pradesh, are these misguided Victorian puritan protesters saying that love and its active manifestations are anything to object to? Are they anti-Hindu-historyand-heritage bigots?

Surely Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his entire Cabinet and the philosophy of his party are dedicated to the upholding of Hindu heritage and India's inherited values and traditions!

This absurd puritanism, which objects to a scene in a fictional drama of two characters kissing not even in an act of fornication so graphically celebrated in revered Hindu temples — is surely some imperial hangover which we can do without?

Hinduism is much more philosophically explorative and wider than the Semitic monotheisms of Judaism, Christianity and some interpretations of Islam. There is no puritan tradition in Hinduism which would forbid the depiction of two lovers kissing outside a Kentucky Fried Chicken shop or a temple. The people who are attempting to bring this case against Netflix ought to be, Your Honour, sent to re-education classes about the ethics of dharma, etc, in Hindu teachings! (Don't get carried away, you idiot, this is a column, not an address to the court -Ed. Of course, boss! Sorry — fd)

I would like to address the people in Netflix who face these absurd charges, but I have no conduit to them. I would say to them have some faith in Indian justice because I have faced similar legally enlisted assaults and have prevailed.

The first was against a film I had commissioned and wrote called *Bandit Queen*. A group of people tried to stop the film being released for several reasons, not all idealistic, but they didn't succeed.

Then there was the case against a film I wrote called Mangal Pandey, The Rising.

Some people claimed that they were the descendants of Mangal Pandey and the film had represented him in an unfavourable light. The judge ruled that it was a waste of court time and threw the case out. I am now told that judges have

changed, that there has been some ideological adjustment on the juridical benches. Gentle reader, living in London, so far away from home, I know nothing of this. I feel confident that the barristers who defend this very peripheral right to freedom of depiction, even using the arguments I have posed above, will convince a judge who knows

his Hinduism.

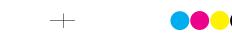
Freedom of expression and the right to any, even those considered dissenting, opinions are an absolute requirement of democracy. Regimes in today's Turkey and Iran have suppressed free expression as the right of the state to exclusively disseminate information, both in the name of their exclusive interpretations of Islam. I don't know, but perhaps they censor scenes on Netflix of couples kissing outside

mosques. Of course, the Madhya Pradesh court should treat the case against the kissing next to a mandir with the contempt it deserves. And that would be a precedent in universal law pronouncing the freedom of depiction which doesn't transgress decency, tradition or in the case of the kiss outside a temple, explicitly









SATURDAY | 28 NOVEMBER 2020 | COIMBATORE

quick

| INDICATOR | % | |
|------------------------|--------------------|--------|
| Sensex | 44,149.72 | -0.25 |
| Nifty 50 | 12,968.95 | -0.14 |
| S&P 500* | 3,631.85 | 0.06 |
| Dollar (₹) | 74.03 | -0.19 |
| Pound Sterling (₹) | 98.84 | -0.12 |
| Euro (₹) | 88.14 | -0.23 |
| Gold (10gm)* (₹) | 48,142 ▼ 43 | 0.008 |
| Brent crude (\$/bbl)* | 48.04 | 0.24 |
| IN 10-Yr bond yield | 5.911 | 0.039 |
| US 10-Yr T-bill yield* | 0.852 | -0.026 |
| * As of 8:30 PM IST | | |

Hero MotoCorp appoints Clarke as COO, HR head



Hero MotoCorp said it has appointed global mobility expert Michael Clarke as chief operating officer, with the additional role of chief human resources officer. Clarke will join from January 1 and report to Pawan Munjal, chairman and CEO. "Mike brings considerable global experience and expertise in managing complex operations, international restructuring, organisational and cultural change," Munjal said.

LVB bond write-off will hurt other banks: Icra

write-off of Rs 318-crore tier-II bonds by Lakshmi Vilas Bank (LVB) ahead of its merger with DBS Bank is a precedent set by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and will hurt the private sector lender's peers, a report said.

During the Yes Bank rescue earlier this year also, there was an over Rs 7,000crore bond write-off, but that involved a different instrument called additional tier-I bonds.

In the case of LVB, which has been merged with DBS in a scheme proposed by the RBI, invest-ments of Rs 318.20 crore in bonds issued by LVB will be written off, the lender informed the exchanges late Thursday night.

"RBI has set a precedence with the proposed write-off as it's the first time a tier-II bond is being written off," ratings agency Icra said in the report on Friday.

The agency added that investors should factor in

the risk in Basel-III instruments, as these instruments can be completely written off in case the bank gets into trouble.

"We expect the risk premiums for such instruments to increase for weaker private banks, given this event," the ratings agency said.

In an exchange filing late on Thursday evening, the bank said the RBI has advised it of the need to fully write down the Series VIII, Series IX and Series X Basel-III-complaint tier-II bonds before the amalgamation with DBS Bank comes into

effect on Friday.
"If the relevant authori-

the bank or amalgamate the bank with any other bank under the Section 45 of the Banking Regulation Act, such a bank shall be

deemed as non-viable and

both the pre-specified trig-

ger and the trigger at the

point of the point of non-viability for write-down of

bonds shall be activated. 'Accordingly, the bonds shall be written off before amalgamation or reconstitution in accordance with applicable rules," according to the terms of the information memoran-

dum of the respective Basel-III Tier-II bonds issued by the bank," LVB

LPG subsidy for BPCL consumers to continue

New Delhi, Nov. 27: LPG customers of Bharat Corporation Limited (BPCL) will continue to get cooking gas subsidy post-privatisation of the nation's second-biggest fuel retailers, oil minister Dharmendra Pradhan said on Friday.

"Subsidy on LPG is paid to consumers directly and not to any company. So the ownership of the company that sells LPG is not of any material consequence,"

The government gives 12 cooking gas (LPG) cylinders of 14.2-kg each to households in a year at a subsidised rate. This subsidy is directly paid into the bank accounts of the users. The subsidy is paid in advance and consumers use this to buy LPG refills that are available only at

OUICK CROSSWORD

1.Easy conquest (8)

9. Wanderer (5)

11. Sham (5)

12. Hint at (5)

13. Inert gas (5)

16. Minimum (6)

18. Lose colour (4)

19. Easily frightened (8)

Word Mine

A M O

GOOD; 11 OUTSTANDING

How many words of four or

more letters can you make from

the letters shown in today's

puzzle? In making a word, each letter may be used once only.

Each word must contain the

letter at the top of the pyramid. There should be at least one nine letter word. Plurals, foreign

words and proper names are not allowed.

6. At a great distance (4)

7. Frozen Arctic plain (6)

market price from dealers of oil marketing companies—Indian Corporation, BPCL and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited.

The moment a refill is bought using the subsidy, another installment is transferred into the user bank accounts.Pradhan said the LPG subsidy payment is done digitally to all verified customers. — *PTI*

Burger King sets IPO price band at ₹59-60

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD

US-based Burger King's Indian subsidiary announced an initial public offering (IPO) to raise Rs 810 crore.

The public issue, opening on December 2, has been priced in the band of Rs 59-60 per equity share of face value of Rs 10 each. The public offer from

the fast food company closes on December 4.

The IPO comprises fresh issue of shares worth Rs 450 crore and an offer for sale of 60 million shares by promoter QSR Asia Pte.

Ltd.
"The size of the fresh issue of up to Rs 600 crore has been reduced by Rs 150 crore pursuant to the pre-IPO placement, and accordingly, the fresh issue size is up to Rs 450 crore," the company said while announcing the IPO.

"The net proceeds from the fresh issue are proposed to be utilised for setting up of new company-owned Burger King Restaurants and for general corporate purposes," the company said.

In the IPO, 75 per cent of the offer is reserved for the qualified institutional investors, 15 per cent for the non-institutional investors or high net worth individuals and 10 per cent for the individual retail

Mid-caps, small-caps seen outperforming near-term

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD

After a bull run in largecap stocks, analysts estimate a catch-up rally in the broader markets consisting of mid-caps and the small-cap stocks.
On Friday, while the

benchmark indices closed in the red with Sensex down 110 points, or 0.25 per cent, the BSE Mid-cap Index gained 1.91 per cent and the BSE Small-cap Index gained 2.40 per cent, thus, out performing the large-cap stocks.

The situation in the domestic market is panning out just like for the US broader market benchmark Russel 2000 and European Stoxx 600 that have given a break-out after record bull run in the benchmark indices Dow Jones Industrial Average, S&P 500 and Nasdaq indices, analysts



The BSE Mid-cap Index has rallied over 74 per cent from its March low of 9711.44 to 16,914.65 but is still far below its all time high of 18,321.37, touched on January 9,

The BSE Small-cap Index at 16,875.15 is also up over 90 per cent from the March low of 8,872.83 but far short of the alltime-high of 20,183.45 it touched on January 15,

2018.
"In line with our prog-

nosis, mid-cap and small-cap indices have extended their up move after a higher base formation in September and October We expect both indices to witness acceleration in upward momentum and outperform the Nifty in coming months," said brokerage ICICI

"Globally, Russell 2000 and Stoxx 600 have also registered multi-year range breakouts. Historical, positive correlation of domestic indices with global peers makes us further confident in our positive stance," it added.

"In the coming month, we maintain our overall constructive stance, with incremental shift to broader markets as the Nifty is expected to undergo consolidation amid positive bias in the range of 12800-13200 after a sharp 14 per cent rally in November," ICICI Securities said.

Credit guarantee extended to health sector

New Delhi, Nov. 27: The government on Thursday said it has extended the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) to the health sector and 26 other sectors identified by the Kamath Committee.
The National Credit

Guarantee Trustee Limited Company (NCGTC) has issued the operational guidelines for implementation ECLGS 2.0 scheme, the finance ministry said in a announced by the government earlier this month as part of the Rs 2.65-lakh crore Atmanirbhar Bharat 3.0 package.

"Under ECLGS 2.0 entities with outstanding credit above Rs 50 crore and not exceeding Rs 500 crore as on February 29, 2020, which were less than or equal to 30 days past due as on February 29, 2020 are eligible," the statement said.

The loans provided under ECLGS 2.0 will have

a five-year tenor, with a 12month moratorium on repayment of principal, the statement said.

"These entities or borrower accounts will be eligible for additional funding up to 20 per cent (which could be fund based or non-fund based or both) of their total out-standing credit (fund based only) as a collateral Guaranteed Emergency Credit Line (GECL), which would be fully guaranteed by NCGTC," it added. — *PTI*

COFFEE-BREAK

Your day today By Dr C.V.B. Subrahmanyam Aries: Take advice, analyse where you need

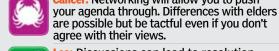
to improve and you will succeed. If you are overwhelmed, take one step at a time. Don't take minor disagreements at work to heart.



Faurus: Talking to loved ones will ease some worries and make you feel better. Listen to associates but take your own decisions. Financial decisions may need rethinking.



Gemini: New initiatives will succeed provided you act at the right time. Overconfidence could lead to mistakes. Disagreements with loved ones should not be taken to heart. Cancer: Networking will allow you to push



agree with their views. o: Discussions can lead to resolution of issues affecting professional goals.



New assignments are likely. Personal relationships may be rocky. Virgo: Home and family issues will be on your mind. Disruptions at home and workplace could make you irritable.



impact. Unexpected gains are indicated. ou share your b'day with Yami Gautam is an Indian actress. She made her film debut in 2012 with the comedy

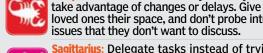
Vicky Donor. She also starred in films like

Badlapur, Kaabil, Uri: The Surgical Strike



ibra: Work will progress smoothly and your creative abilities will peak. Don't give in to provocations and lose your temper. Prioritise your love life.

corpio: Patience and flexibility will let you



loved ones their space, and don't probe into issues that they don't want to discuss. agittarius: Delegate tasks instead of trying to do everything on your own. Keep your views to yourself. Pay attention to



nuances.

Capricorn: Overconfidence could lead to mistakes at work. Spend time with friends to relax. If things don't go according to plan, don't be too hard on yourself. arius: Your ability to multitask is at its peak



but you need to prioritise your commitments. Listen to the advice of associates. Be discreet with your plans until things fall into place.



Pisces: Creating win-win situations will help you shape things. Teamwork will be productive. Brainstorming sessions might be stressful, so be diplomatic. You may have to multitask to ensure that you meet deadlines.

cards to satisfy the con-straints of the auction. Then



ALDER COMPUTER **SIMULATION HELPS WITH**

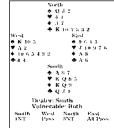
LEADS

nyone who has played with and against robots at Bridge Base Online will know that their opening leads are imaginative. Against three no-trump, a minor-suit singleton has been chosen several times! Nearly 10 years ago, Englishmen Taf Anthias and

they calculated which leads work best at Chicago and teams (where overtricks don't matter), and which at matchpoints (where over-tricks are very important). Their conclusions can be found in "Winning Notrump Leads" and "Winning Suit David Bird used software to analyze opening leads. They took numerous hands and randomly dealt the other 39

Contract Leads" (Master Point Press).

Some of the conclusions were predictable, several surprising. Look at the West hand in today's diagram. South opens one no-trump,



SUDEO TUNIOG **NOLLEY** low arrange the circled letters

1. One taking another to court (9)

4. Malicious resentfulness (7)

14. Dried seabird excrement (5)

8. Those not present (9)

10. Net mail (anag) (7)

15. Stop the flow of (4)

jumble

RACYR

2. Convulsion (5)

5. In favour (3)

17. Demise (3)

3. Ban (4)

Across: 6.

Unbalanced, 8. Awash, 10. Elope, 13.

Down: 1. Inca, 2. Dash, 3. Face, 4. Echo, 5. Adversity, 7. Salacious, 9. Saute, 11. Leave, 12. Duo, 15. Loom, 16. Tact, 17. Dope, 18. Brew.

Accumulates, 14. Inlet, 17. Debut, 19.

Jumbles BLURT KITTY FINALE H Answer: When Microsoft co-foundor Mr. Gates bot new suit, he chose one that IFTI THE BILL and North raises to three no-trump. What would you lead? The authors point out that in this auction, East-West will

average 14.4 cards in the majors to the other side's 11.6. So, lean strongly toward a major. They found that even a passive lead from a short major worked better than from honor-fourth in a minor. In this example, the heart ce beat the contract 27.8% f the time, which was 8% better than a diamond. At matchpoints, the heart ace

was still best. In this deal, the heart ace is the only winner. South takes the second heart and drives out the club ace, but East establishes his hearts. Declarer has only eight winners (one spade, two hearts and five clubs), and if he takes the spade finesse, he goes down two.

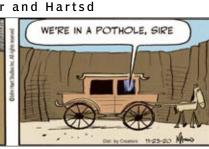
A diamond lead, though, is too slow.

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CALVIN AND HOBBES | Bill Watterson







ARCHIE|Bill Henry Scarpelli & craig boldman



BLONDIE | Dean Young and John Marshall



ANDY CAPP | Reg Smythe



TARZAN|Edgar Rice Burroughs







SHORT TAKES

Bagan beat

Bengal in derby

Vasco, Goa: Fijian striker Roy Krishna continued his prolific goal-scoring form as he helped ATK Mohun Bagan prevail over SC East Bengal 2-0 in the first ever Indian Super League derby Krishna, who had scored ATKMB's lone goal against Kerala Blasters in their cam-paign opener, struck in the 49th minute before Manvir Singh killed the contest in the 85th minute with a solo effort. With two wins on the trot, ATK Mohun Bagan led the table with six points, followed by Northeast United FC. It was a typical Antonio Lopez Habas' style of play that panned out on the field as ATKMB were slow to get off the blocks before taking control of

the game. Their defence, helmed by Tiri, put up a disciplined show to return with a clean slate for their second successive match in the league. - PTI

Belgium on top in FIFA rankings

Zurich: With Belgium still at No. 1, FIFA released its final rankings list for 2020 on Friday and set the seedings for the European portion of the World Cup qualifying draw. Defending World Cup champion France is in second place, with Brazil third and England fourth. European champion Portugal rounds out the top five, with Spain in sixth. FIFA will host the European draw on December 7. The 10 top-seeded teams include Italy, which was seeded second four years ago and failed to qualify for the 2018 tournament in Russia after ending up in a group with Spain. The Netherlands, ranked 14th,

Badminton League

took the last top-seeded place,

dropping No. 16 Switzerland

into pot 2. - AF

off due to Covid-19

New Delhi: The sixth edition of the Premier Badminton League (PBL) was on Friday postponed to next year, keeping in mind the health and safety of the players amid the raging Covid-19 pandemic.

The league, which is one of the highest prize money badminton tournaments in the world, was initially scheduled to take place in the last week of December in Delhi, Mumbai and Pune.

Para athletes in TOPS scheme

New Delhi: The Sports Ministry has included eight para athletes, including four who have qualified for the Tokyo Paralympics, in the Target Olympic Podium Scheme. The decision was taken by the Mission Olympic Cell at its meeting on November Thursday. The eight athletes are from athletics, shooting, badminton and table tennis. From para-athletics, Vinod Kumar and Ajit Kumar Panchal (both men's discus throw) and

Live on

Praveen Kumar (men's high

jump) have been included in

the scheme. -PTI

CRICKET Women's Big Bash League: Final -Thunder from 1.40 pm on Sony Six

Lanka Premier League: Kandy vs Dambulla from 3.30 pm; Galle vs Colombo from 8 pm on Sony Six

Bahrain Grand Prix: Practice 3 from 4.25 pm; Qualifying from 7.25 pm on Star Sports Select 2, HD

FOOTBALL

English Premier League: Brighton vs Liverpool from 6 pm; Manchester City vs Burnley from 8.30 pm; Everton vs Leeds United from 11 pm; West Brom vs Sheffield from 1.30 am (Sunday) on Star Sports Select 1, HD

Indian Super League: Bengaluru vs Hyderabad FC from 7.20 pm on Star Sports 2, 3

Italian League: Sassuolo vs Inter Milan from 7.30 pm; Benevento vs Juventus from 10.30 pm; Atalanta vs Verona from 1.15 am (Sunday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

Regd. No. TNENG/2010/35692

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SVITHEREENS Brazil mourns Diego's demise

Finch, Smith centuries blow India away in opener

Pandya's career-best effort wasn't good enough to compensate for a forget table bowling effort as India slumped to a 66-run defeat against Australia in the first ODI, making a rather unimpressive start to the tour, here on Friday.

Virat Kohli's men start ed exactly on a note they wouldn't have liked, giving away 374 runs in 50 overs with rival captain Aaron Finch (114 off 124 balls) and his illustrious predecessor Steve Smith (105 off 66 balls) hitting $contrasting\ hundreds.$

A pitch that looked docile during the first half suddenly came to life in the second as Josh Hazlewood (3/55) bounced out the Indian top-order, including Kohli and a frightened Shreyas Iyer, who got himself into a

Pandya's 76-ball 90 and a 128-run stand with senior opener Shikhar Dhawan (74 off 86 balls) delayed the inevitable but it was always a catch-up game after the team was reduced to 101 for 4 inside 14 overs.

Big-hearted leg-spinner Adam Zampa (4/54 in 10 overs) dismissed Shikhar Dhawan and Hardik Pandya in quick succession as India surrendered to scoreboard pressure finishing at 308/8 after 50

India's eternal nemesis Steven Smith seems ready to torment them a lot in next two months if his 11 fours and four sixes were any indication on Friday.

Not for once was he trouby the Indian ers, who were bowlers. already under the pump after a 156-run opening stand between Finch and David Warner (69).

As far as Indian innings is concerened, a high per-centage of dot balls (148) in the Indian innings also showed how the mighty Australian team dominated the proceedings.

INDIANS JOIN AUSSIES IN ANTI-RACISM MOVE

The Indian cricketers on Friday joined their Australian counterparts in forming a barefoot circle on the ground to support tne anti-racism move ment and acknowledge the culture of indigenous people of the host country.

The barefoot circle ceremony was held before the start of the opening Oneday International between the two teams here.

Kohli rues first defeat **SCORECARD** Australia: D. Warner c Rahul b

Shami 69, A. Finch c Rahul b Bumrah 114, S. Smith b Shami 105, M. Stoinis c Rahul b Chahal O, G. Maxwell c Jadeja b Shami 45, M. Labuschagne c Dhawan b Saini 2, A. Carey not out 17, P. Cummins not out 1. Extras (B-1, LB-6, NB-2, W-12.) 21. **Total (for six wickets** in 50 overs) 374. **FoW:** 1-156, 2-264, 3-271, 4-328, 5-331, 6-372.

Bowling: Shami 10-0-59-3, Bumrah 10-0-73-1, Saini 10-0-83-1, Chahal 10-0-89-1, Jadeja 10-0-63-0.

India: S. Dhawan c Starc b Zampa 74, M. Agarwal c Maxwell b Hazlewood 22, V. Kohli c Finch b Hazlewood 21, S. Iyer c Carey b Hazlewood 2, K.L. Rahul c Smith b Zampa 12, H. Pandya c Starc b Zampa 90, R. Jadeja c Starc b Zampa 25, N. Saini not out 29, M. Shami b Starc 13, J. Bumrah not out 0. Extras (LB-2, NB-3, W-15) 20. Total (for 8 wickets

Hazlewood 10-0-55-3, Cummins 8-0-52-0, Zampa 10-0-54-4, Stoinis 6.2-0-25-0, Maxwell 6.4-0-55-0.



International cricket match at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Friday.

Steve Smith of Australia celebrates after scoring a century against India in their ODI match at the Sydney

INJURED ISHANT OUT AS

Australia's captain Aaron Finch hits a six as India's wicketkeeper K. L. Rahul watches during their One-Day

Sydney, Nov. 27: India skipper Virat Kohli on Friday questioned his team's body language after the opening ODI loss to Australia and said Hardik Pandya not being fit to bowl is affecting the side's balance as he doesn't have enough allrounders at his disposal. India made a dismal start to their tour of Australia, losing the first ODI by 66 runs here, chasing a mammoth 375-run

hundreds for the hosts. "Everyone needs to show the intent in the entire 50 overs. Probably, we played 50 overs after a long time that could have an affect...but having said that we have played so much ODI cricket that it is not something we don't know how to do," Kohli said in the post-match

target after Aaron Finch

and Steve Smith smashed

presentation. "I think the body lan-guage in the field wasn't great after around 25 is what happened today," "I think the body lan-

ROHIT WAITS TILL DEC. 11

Sydney, Nov. 27: India's senior-most fast bowler Ishant Sharma has been ruled out of the upcoming Test matches against Australia as he will not be match-fit in time while Rohit Sharma's hamstring will be assessed finally on December 11, BCCI secretary Jay Shah said on Thursday.

BCCI issued a short injury update of the two senior players after a fiery online media interaction by Virat Kohli, who made his displeasure clear about lack of communication and clarity on the whole issue. While Kohli had raised a question as to why Rohit didn't do his rehabilitation in Australia along with Wriddhiman Saha, Shah in his press note clarified that Rohit had come back to country to attend his ailing father after which he reported to the NCA.

"Rohit Sharma had to come back to Mumbai after the IPL to attend to his ailing father. His father is now recuperating well and that has allowed him to travel to the NCA and start his rehabilitation," Shah

overs. It was a disappoint- the Indian skipper added. ing part. If you don't take your chances against a

couldn't pick wickets regularly and it allowed the Australians to post a big total in the end. -PTItotal in the end.

Australia Sydney 27-12-2020 - S. PERVEZ QAISER **INJURED STOINIS**

DOUBTFUL FOR

SECOND ODI

Bangalore 02-11-2013

Mumbai 25-10-2015 Ahmedabad 27-02-2010

NUMBERS GAME

Australia recorded their highest total against India by making

374 for 6 in 50 overs. Their previous best was 359, recorded four times. Overall, it is the third-highest total by any team against

Steven Smith recorded third fastest hundred for Australia by completing 100 runs off 62 balls during his 105-run knock. The quicker ones are Glenn Maxwell's 51-ball century against Sri

Faulkner's century in 57 balls against India in Bangalore in 2013.

All five Indian bowlers except Mohammed Shami, conceded 60-plus runs, only the second such instance for India. The first such

HIGHEST TOTALS AGAINST INDIA IN ODIS

25-10-2015 15-12-2009

27-12-2020

19-01-2017

Svdnev

St Kitts

Opponent Venue

Sri Lanka

India lost

India won

India lost

Date

08-03-2015

24-03-2007

Bangalore 02-11-2013

Venue

Mumbai Rajkot

Sydney

Cuttack

FASTEST HUNDREDS FOR AUSTRALIA IN ODIS

FASTEST HUNDREDS AGAINST INDIA IN ODIS

S. Africa S. Africa

Lanka at the 2015 World Cup, also at Sydney and James

instance was against West Indies at Guwahati in 2018.

India in One-Day Internationals.

Opponent

Australia

England

South Africa Sri Lanka

South Africa

Batsman

AB de Villiers

AB de Villiers

Steven Smith

Glenn Maxwell

James Faulkner

Matthew Hayden S. Africa

Adam Gilchrist Sri Lanka

James Faulkner Australia

438-4 411-8

51 (102)

57 (119) 58 (102)

62 (105)

Sydney, Australia all-rounder Marcus Stoinis could be in doubt for the second ODI against India after he sustained an injury during the series opener here on Friday.

Stoinis grimaced in pain after delivering the second ball of his seventh over of India's run chase. He left the field immediately and Glenn Maxwell completed the over. According

cricket.com.au, the 31-year-old suffered a "leftside pain" and will have scans to determine the extent of the injury. Stoinis' injury may put all-rounders Cameron and Moises Green Henriques in contention for the second ODI on Sunday. Steve Smith said the team is keeping its fingers crossed Stoinis' situation. -PTI

Sao Paulo, Nov. 27: Brazil and Argentina are long rivals for football supremacy in South America, and Brazilians naturally think of their own Pele as the best footballer in history. But they are putting aside the argument to mourn the death of Argentine superstar Diego Maradona.

Ex-presidents, author Paulo Coelho and former competitors were among Brazilians paying tribute to Maradona for his influence on the game and charisma off the field. Brazilian newspapers that only put sports in their top headline when the national team wins a World Cup had Maradona's death in that position Thursday.
A mural of Maradona

was even painted on a wall in the Vila Cruzeiro favela in Rio de Janeiro, an honor that proud and soccercrazy Brazilians rarely, if ever, give to foreigners.

"He was an example of persistence and persever-ance because he grew in life as a human being, said graffiti artist Angelo Campos, who painted an energic Maradona in a blue shirt under an inscription with his nickname, "El Pibe de Oro" (the Golden

The Neo Quimica Arena in Sao Paulo displayed a triumphant Maradona image on a giant screen by its main entrance. That is the same stadium where most Brazilian fans cheered against Argentina in the 2014 World Cup semifinal against Holland. Argentina won on penal-ties but lost final to Germany 1-0. All top-tier Brazilian clubs paid tributes, including Santos, where Pele played nearly all of his career.

POLICE CLASH WITH FANS IN **ARGENTINA**

Buenos Aires, Nov. 27: Riot police fired rubber bullets and tear gas in clashes Thursday with football fans near the wake for Argentine foot-ball legend Diego Maradona in Buenos

Aires.
Officials earlier ordered Maradona's coffin to be moved to another room inside the presidential palace after fans took over an inner courtyard and disrupted his lying in state.

The government had early announced a threehour extension to the wake to allow time for fans to pay their respects. Tens of thousands of

people had queued from early morning to file past the star's coffin, draped in the Argentine flag and the player's No.10 jersey, at the presidential palace. Many of the mourners were in tears, and some wore replicas of the World Cup winner's jersey as they gathered at the Casa Rosada

palace to see his coffin. But as the day wore on, fans queueing outside the palace grew increasingly impatient and some took over a courtyard inside the palace, where they chanted slogans.

At the same time, riot police clashed with stone throwing fans on streets around the palace, and several people were arrested. — AFP



Players of Napoli (in blue) and Rijeka observe a minute's silence in homage to Maradona prior to their Europa League match at the San Paolo stadium in Naples on Thursday as a screen displays a photo of late Argentinian

Napoli dedicate win to Maradona

Paris, Nov. 27: Napoli honoured the memory of Diego Maradona with a 2-0 win over Rijeka which allowed them to go top of Europa League Group 'F' in the first match since the death their Argentine icon.

Gennaro Gattuso's side entered the field all wearing the number 10 jersey of Maradona, who won Napoli's only Serie A titles in 1987 and 1990 as well as the 1989 UEFA Cup.

"Diego is a legend and will never die," Gattuso said after the match.

"Since yesterday you could see that the city breathed a different atmosphere. We hope to dedicate something important to him and win a troph," he added.

Napoli are now two points ahead of and

Sociedad following their goalless draw Netherlands.

Roma made their way into the last 32 with a 2-0 win at Romanian side Cluj, while Hoffenheim joined them after ensuring their respective passages into the next round from L.

Earlier Jame Vardy's lastgasp leveller in a thrilling 3-3 at Braga sent Leicester City through to the knockout rounds, where they were also joined by Arsenal thanks to their 3-0 win at Molde

Leicester looked dead and buried when Fransergio put the hosts 3-2 ahead in the first minute of added time, but Vardy stole in at the back post shortly after to tap in the goal that put the Premier League side into the Last 32.

-AFP

Kiwis down West Indies in 1st T20

Paceman Lockie Ferguson unleashed a devastating five-wicket barrage as New Zealand downed the West Indies in a roller coaster Twenty20 series opener in Auckland on

The match — the first nternational cricket international played in New Zealand for almost nine months produced a nail-biting finale as the Black Caps

reached 179-5 in the final match Ferguson and West over after being set a target of 176.

showers Persistent meant the innings were reduced to 16 and many players, particularly the tourists, were rusty after

only emerging from Covid-19 quarantine on Thursday. But there were outstanding individual perform-

ances on both sides, par-

ticularly man of the

Indies captain Kieron Pollard's unbeaten 75 from 37 balls.

Ferguson claimed career-best haul of 5-21 to put the brakes on a flying start from the West Indies, saying the short boundaries at Eden Park helped his cause.

Pollard almost swung momentum back to the West Indies single-handedly, clubbing eight sixes

and four fours to ensure his team set a competitive target.

The tourists were even brutal against more Hamish Bennett, plundering 29 runs from a nightmare over for the fast bowler.

They were 58 without oss before Ferguson loss broke through and cleanbowled Fletcher on 34. The Black Caps' Devon Conway and Jimmy

dangerous when Pollard broke their 77-run partnership when Conway was caught on 41. But Neesham,

scored 48 from 24 balls, steered Zealanders home. — AFP
Brief Scores: West Indies 180/7 in 16 overs (K. Pollard not out 75, Fletcher 34; Lockie Ferguson 5/21 lost (D/L) to New Zealand 179/5 in 15.2 overs (Neesham 48, Conway 41; O. Thomas 2/23).

INCRC FINAL ROUND POISED ON KNIFE-EDGE DC CORRESPONDENT

CHENNAI, NOV. 27

The abridged MRF MMSC fmsci Indian National Car Championship 2020 draws to a close with the third and final round being held at the MMRT this weekend behind closed doors due to the prevailing pandemic with government-mandated Covid-19 protocols in place. The two-day, seven-race programme, kicks-off on Saturday, November 28 and concludes the following afternoon. The track, which received a drenching from cyclone Nivar earlier in the week, has recovered well for the races to be held as scheduled.

The titles in all four categories — the premier Indian Touring Cars, Super Stock, Formula LGB 1300 and the MRF Saloon Car series — are up for grabs with very little separating the contenders, both individual and

team championships. As for the Championship stakes, the ITC class has Coimbatore's Arjun Balu (Race Concepts) enjoying a 35-point lead over Goan Keith D'Souza (FB Motorsport) going into this weekend's triple-header with a maximum of 75 points on offer.