

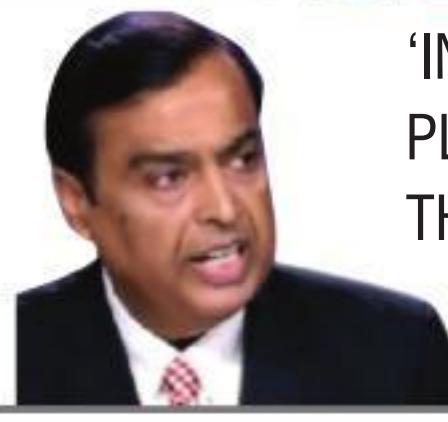
AMIT SHAH SPRINGS
SURPRISE, TAKES
TO CHENNAI ROAD

P4



CONGRESS MUST
REINVENT ITSELF

P7



PEOPLE'S PARLIAMENT, ALWAYS IN SESSION

'INDIA TO FIND
PLACE IN TOP
THREE ECONOMIES'

P8



GODIN AMONG 16
URUGUAY TEAM
VIRUS VICTIMS

P12

WEATHER

Partly cloudy sky. Mist in the morning.
The maximum and minimum
temperatures would be around 24 and 07
degrees Celsius respectively.

RAINFALL: NIL

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 88% Min: 40%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 24.6°C (-2) Min: 08.5°C (-4)
SUN RISES SUN SETS
06:50 hrs 17:25 hrs
MOON RISES MOON SETS
13:13 hrs 00:27 hrs

THUMBNAILS



As the mercury dips in New Delhi, children
wearing woolen clothing drive a toy car at the
India Gate on Saturday.

SUBRATA DUTTA

Punjab farmers bodies end rail blockade:
Punjab farmers' unions on Saturday announced complete lifting of the rail blockade from Monday to pave the way for resumption of both goods and passenger train services in the state after two months. The decision to lift the rail blockade was announced by Bharti Kisan Union (Rajewal) president Balbir Singh Rajewal at a meeting of representatives of the farmers' unions with chief minister Amarinder Singh.

P5

Comedian Bharti Singh arrested in drug case:
The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) on Saturday arrested comedian Bharti Singh following seizure of ganja (cannabis) from her house in suburban Andheri, an official said. The NCB searched Singh's house and office in the morning as part of its probe into alleged drug use in the Hindi film industry. A central agency team carried out a search at Singh's residence at Lokhandwala Complex as well as her production house based on a tip-off. It recovered 86.5 grams of ganja during the search.

P5

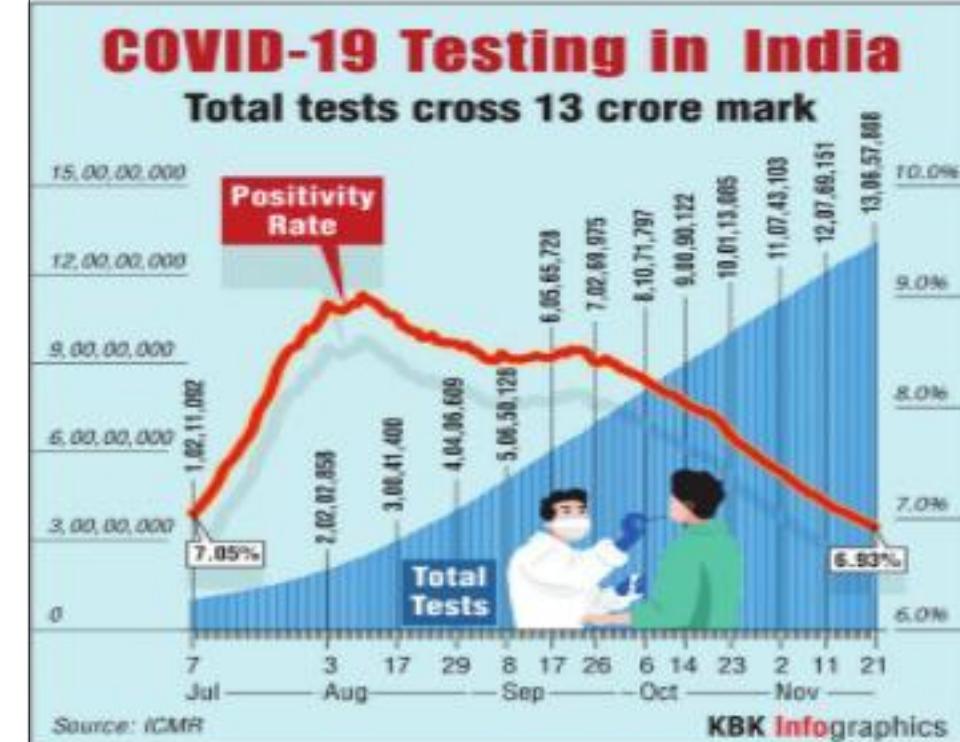
Cumulative Covid-19 positivity rate falling steadily

SNS & PTI
NEW DELHI, 21 NOVEMBER

The total number of tests conducted in India for the detection of Covid-19 infection has crossed the 13-crore mark with last one crore done in just 10 days, while the cumulative positivity rate remained low and continues a downward trajectory, the Union Health Ministry said on Saturday.

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), over 13.06 crore samples have been tested till 20 November with 10,66,022 being tested on Friday. The cumulative national Covid-19 positivity rate has declined and stood at 6.93 per cent as on date while the daily positivity rate on Friday was just 4.34 per cent.

Higher volumes of testing eventually lead to low positivity rate, the ministry said.



India's Covid-19 caseload rose to 90.50 lakh, while the number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to over 84.78 lakh pushing the national recovery rate

to 93.67 per cent, according to the Union Health Ministry data on Saturday.

The total coronavirus cases mounted to 90,50,597 with 46,232 infections being reported

in a day, while the death toll climbed to 1,32,726 with 564 new fatalities, the data updated at 8 am showed.

The number of active cases remained below five lakh for the eleven consecutive day. There are 43,747 active cases of coronavirus infection in the country as on date, which comprises 4.86 per cent of the total caseload, as per the data.

Delhi adds 111 fresh deaths, 5,879 cases: Delhi today recorded 5,879 new coronavirus cases and 111 more Covid fatalities which pushed its death toll to 8,270, according to the Delhi government's latest health bulletin.

These new cases were detected out of relatively lesser number of tests, 45,562, which included 21,845 RT-PCR tests. The positivity rate was 12.90 per cent.



(SEE P2)

Private hospitals charging heavy fees: Parl panel on Covid report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 21 NOVEMBER

Amidst rising Covid-19 cases, inadequate beds in government hospitals and absence of specific guidelines for Covid treatment resulted in private hospitals charging exorbitant fees, a parliamentary panel on Saturday said, asserting that a sustainable pricing model could have averted many deaths.

Chairperson of the parliamentary standing committee on health Ram Gopal Yadav submitted the report on 'Outbreak of Pandemic Covid-19 and its Management', to Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu.

This is the first report by any parliamentary committee on the government's han-

Underlining healthcare spending in a country with a population of 1.3 billion is 'abysmally low', the panel says
fragility of health ecosystem posed a big hurdle in generating an effective response

dling of the Covid-19 pandemic. Underlining that healthcare spending in the country with a population of 1.3 billion is "abysmally low", the panel said fragility of Indian health ecosystem posed a big hurdle in generating an effective response against the pandemic.

"The committee strongly recommends the government to increase its investments in

the public healthcare system and make consistent efforts to achieve the National Health Policy targets of expenditure up to 2.5 per cent of GDP within two years as the set time frame of year 2025 is far away and the public health cannot be jeopardised till that time schedule," the report stated.

The National Health Policy 2017 has set a target of government expenditure on healthcare up to 2.5 per cent of GDP by 2025 from just 1.15 per cent in 2017.

Stating that the public had to undergo distress due to absence of a dedicated healthcare system, the committee observed the number of government hospital beds were not adequate to handle the rising number of Covid and non-Covid patients.

'Covid impact on economy outweighs health challenge'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WASHINGTON, 21 NOVEMBER

The economic consequences of Covid-19 pandemic on South Asia are proving to be even greater than the healthcare challenges in the region, according to a report compiled by a top American think-tank.

Titled "Nine Months of COVID-19: The Impact on South Asia", the report released by the Hudson Institute think-tank on Friday, is co-authored by Husain Haqqani, former Pakistan ambassador to the US, and Aparna Pande and is an update to their 30-page report "Crisis from Kolkota to Kabul: Covid-19's Impact on South Asia" published in May 2020.

"The economic consequences of Covid-19 on South Asia are proving to be even greater than the healthcare consequences," said Haqqani.

All these countries have poor healthcare infrastructure and are home to large numbers of people living below the poverty line, setting the foundation for uphill battles when tackling health crises, he said.

"In order to ensure a safe return to normal life and a resumption of economic activity, South Asian governments would benefit from focusing more on the development of

"The economic consequences of Covid-19 on South Asia are proving to be even greater than the healthcare challenges in the region. Different South Asian countries have dealt with the pandemic in various ways, but the economic costs overall seem to be higher than the healthcare consequences"

human capital, Haqqani said. The report notes that after claiming that Pakistan had undergone a miracle in managing to curtail the spread of Covid-19 cases, the country is once again facing a rise in infection.

"In addition, the last nine months have witnessed further curtailment of media and political opposition, an economy in crisis, and increasing role of the military," it said.

According to the report, in Sri Lanka too, the pandemic has worsened the debt crisis and tightened the grip of the Rajapaksha brothers on polity and society.

With rising cases, Bangladesh is the second most severely hit economy and the pandemic has worsened income inequality, it said.

Turning to Afghanistan, while the healthcare crisis is

taking its toll, the Afghans are also suffering from the continued violent attacks by the Taliban and ISIS, it added.

When it comes to India, the largest country in the region, the report notes that while the India-US relations "remain on an upward trajectory" with an economy that has slowed down drastically, and a clampdown on dissent within the country, "India's democratic credentials face challenges."

The report points to China's continued "attempts to deepen its strategic and economic ties with countries in the region", warning that the "global US-China peer competition will also play out in South Asia.

According to Johns Hopkins University, more than 1,349,700 people have died and there are over 56,270,000 confirmed cases across the world.



Necessary proposals have been sent to the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Government of India. Industry partners and investors have shown keen interest to invest in these parks in Tamil Nadu

K PALANISWAMI
TAMIL NADU CHIEF MINISTER

Delhi riots: Court grants bail to student activist Gulfisha Fatima

PTI
NEW DELHI, 21 NOVEMBER

A Delhi court on Saturday granted bail to student activist Gulfisha Fatima in a case related to communal violence in north east Delhi in February.

Additional Sessions Judge Amitabh Rawat granted the relief to Fatima on furnishing a bail bond of Rs 30,000 with one surety of like amount in the case related to rioting in Jafraabad area in which one Aaman died due to gunshot injuries.

The court granted her bail on the ground of parity as co-accused JNU students and Pinjra Tod members Devangana Kalita and Natasha Narwal have already been granted the relief in the case.

Fatima was in custody in the case since June 3.

"The co-accused Devangana Kalita and Natasha Narwal have been granted bail in this case and their role is stated to be similar to the present applicant/accused (Fatima). The witnesses for all of them are almost the same."

"Considering the period of the custody of the applicant/accused in the present case, the ground of parity as regards co-accused Devangana Kalita and Natasha Narwal and in the totality of the facts and circumstances of the case, the present bail application of applicant/accused is allowed," the court said in its order.

It further said there was nothing to suggest that the witnesses were under threat

from Fatima.

"In any case, two public witnesses are protected and their identity has been concealed. The rest are police personnel," it said.

The court said co-accused Tafsil has been declared a Proclaimed Offender, but Fatima cannot be refused bail for his act and conduct, who will face consequences under the law.

"The present stage is of bail and not acquittal or conviction. Nothing is shown to suggest that the applicant (Fatima) is a flight risk," it added.

The court directed her not to tamper with evidence or leave the jurisdiction of NCT Delhi with its permission. It also asked her to attend the court on every date of the hearing or as directed.

Noting the prosecutor's submission that she should be denied bail on the ground that she was an accused in a separate case related to the larger conspiracy in the riots, the judge said the case was being investigated separately and the court will "cross the bridge when we come to it."

Fatima has been arrested under the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in a separate case related to premeditated conspiracy in the riots. She is currently lodged in Tihar prison in the matter.

During the hearing, advocate Mehmood Pracha, appearing for Fatima, said she was falsely and maliciously implicated in the present case without any evidence.

Pracha further claimed that no role has been attributed to her except vague and unsubstantiated allegations which have no nexus with the alleged crime.

Special Public Prosecutor Rajeev Krishan Sharma, appearing for the police, opposed the bail plea saying Fatima allegedly conspired and has been constantly instigating the local inhabitants since December, 2019, under the garb of peaceful protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), National Register for Citizens (NRC) and National Population Register (NPR).

He said some of the protected witnesses have allegedly said that Fatima and her associates of the Pinjra Tod group used code words to convey secret messages regarding further lines of their protests in front of common people.

The public prosecutor alleged that she was physically present at the protest site at 66 Foota Road, under Jafraabad metro station, Delhi, since February 22, 2020 till late evening on February 24 and the roadblock there, which spiralled into a huge communal riot.

Kalita was granted bail in the case by the Delhi High Court on September 1 and Narwal was granted the relief by the trial court on September 17.

Pinjra Tod (Break the Cage) was founded in 2015 to make hostels and paying guest accommodations less restrictive for women students.

Capital records 111 fresh Covid deaths, 5,879 cases

411 ICU beds for corona patients have been added in govt hospitals in Delhi over the last 5 days

SNS & PTI
NEW DELHI, 21 NOVEMBER

Delhi today recorded 5,879 new coronavirus (Covid-19) cases and 111 more Covid fatalities which pushed its death toll to 8,270, according to the Delhi government's latest health bulletin.

These new cases were detected out of relatively lesser number of tests, 45,562, which included 21,845 RT-PCR tests, the health bulletin said. The positivity rate was 12.90 per cent.

The active cases tally dipped to 39,741 from yesterday's 40,936, the health bulletin said.

The city's coronavirus case-load mounted to 5,23,117, of which 4,75,106 patients have recovered, the bulletin stated.

The number of containment zones in the national capital rose to 4,633 from yesterday's 4,560, the bulletin added.

Delhi had yesterday logged 6,608 coronavirus infections and 118 Covid fatalities. These cases were detected out of 62,425 tests, including 38,918 rapid antigen tests and 23,507 RTPCR/CBNAAT/FeNat tests.

The positivity rate was then 10.59 per cent against Thursday's 12.09 per cent.

The city had on Thursday recorded 7,546 Covid cases - detected out of 62,437 tests - and 98 fatalities.

Amid the raging corona-



Delhi deputy CM Manish Sisodia leads a campaign for distribution of masks as part of preventive measures against Covid, at Patparganj in the Capital on Saturday.

said that the gradual reduction in the number of new Covid cases and the positivity rate was a "clear indicator" that the spread of the virus was decreasing in the national capital. "The positivity rate was 15.26 per cent on November 7. It is less than 11 per cent now. The maximum number of cases (8,593) were reported on November 10," he had then said.

"As many as 411 ICU beds have been added in government hospitals in Delhi over the last five days after chief minister Arvind Kejriwal issued directions in this regard," an official said.

Twenty-nine beds were added on Tuesday, 100 on Wednesday, 76 on Thursday and 206 today, the official said. "Several private hospitals have also added more ICU beds after they were told to reserve 80 per cent of them for Covid-19 patients," he said.

The Kejriwal government had on Thursday directed private hospitals to increase the percentage of non-ICU Covid beds from 50 per cent to 60 per cent. It had also ordered 42 private hospitals to reserve 80 per cent of ICU beds for coronavirus patients with immediate effect.

On 11 November, Delhi had registered its highest single-day spike of 8,593 coronavirus infections. It had then recorded 85 Covid deaths.

JOBS & CLASSIFIEDS QUEST

PUBLIC NOTIFICATIONS

Be it known to all concern, that my clients Sh. Chet Ram Jalindra, s/o Sh. Kishori Lal and his wife Smt. Shakuntala Devi, r/o H No. 37, Lal Colony, Tehsil and Distt. Gurugram (HR), have debarred/disown their son Puneet Jalindra and daughter in law Smita from all their moveable and immovable properties due to their misconduct. And they are living separately from my clients since 15.01.2020. In future any deals with them shall be sole responsible. My clients and his family will not be liable for any their acts. Advocate Subhash Grover Hall No.2 District Court Gurgaon Ph-9810761528.

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The Sunday Statesman

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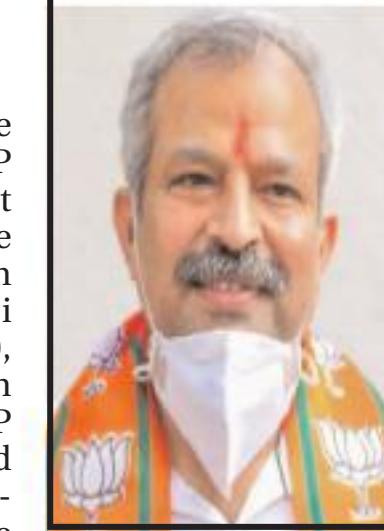
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BANGALORE

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Delhi BJP chief slams AAP govt for hiking fine for not wearing mask

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 21 NOVEMBER



Reacting sharply to the Arvind Kejriwal-led AAP government's recent move to increase the fine for not wearing mask in public places in Delhi from Rs 500 to Rs 2,000, Delhi BJP president Adesh Gupta slammed the AAP government for its alleged failures and mismanagement in tackling the Covid pandemic, saying that raising the fine will not solve the problem but would encourage bribery.

Gupta charged that the Kejriwal government's preparedness to deal with the spread of coronavirus could not be seen on the ground. Such a "decree" will cause more trouble to those people who are unable to buy masks, he said.

The Delhi BJP chief

said that on one hand, the Kejriwal government has given exemption for operating buses, three-wheelers, rural transport services, e-rickshaws etc. in the city with full capacity. On the other hand, it is collecting challan of Rs 2000 from pedestrians on the road also for not maintaining social distancing, he claimed.

Gupta also said that the Delhi government's decision would have made a

virus surge, Delhi had on 18 November recorded 131 Covid fatalities - its highest single-day Covid deaths so far. It

had then reported 7,486 new Covid cases. Altogether 62,232 tests were conducted to identify these cases. The positive

rate was then 12.03 per cent.

This was the fourth day in

the last 10 days that the daily number of Covid deaths crossed the 100 mark in Delhi today. The city had reported 104 fatalities on 12 November.

Meanwhile, a government official said over 400 ICU beds have been added in hospitals run by the Centre and the Delhi government in the city over the last five days.

Yesterday, Delhi health minister Satyendar Jain had

the place except for the limited purpose of registering the agricultural land in favour of his wife.

Shekhar shall surrender to the jail authorities immediately on his return and not visit any other place, and he shall not contact any of the witnesses or family members of the victim, either directly or indirectly, the high court said.

Advocate Amit Sahni, who is representing Shekhar, had filed the interim bail plea.

"It is a prevalent custom in the community of the applicant (Shekhar) that in case one brother expires leaving behind a child, the widow (of the deceased brother) is then married to the unmarried brother/cousin in the same family," Sahni submitted.

On a query raised by the court as to how the accused intends to support his proposed wife, the counsel said Shekhar owned agricultural land, which would be transferred to his wife at the time of his marriage.

SC judge inaugurates 'North East Delhi Riots Claims Commission'

PTI
NEW DELHI, 21 NOVEMBER

Supreme Court Judge Justice Surya Kant on Saturday inaugurated the North East Delhi Riots Claims Commission (NEDRCC) for providing compensation to victims of the communal violence that took place in February.

Justice Kant inaugu-

rated the commission online and said in a statement that justice to victims of the riot was the need of the hour.

"Justice to the riot victim is the need of the hour. Riot victims must be compensated with promptitude. To achieve this objective, I wish this commission (NEDRCC) all the very best," Justice Kant said in the statement.

The Delhi government had recently announced hiking fines for not using face masks from Rs 500 to Rs 2,000 amid

a massive surge in COVID-19 cases here.

According to data shared by the police, out of the 1,358 challans issued till 4 pm, 1,306 were for not wearing masks, one for spitting and 51 to those found violating social distancing.

As compared to Friday, there has been a decrease in number of challans issued.

Total of 2,507 challans were issued on Friday for violations of various COVID-19 guidelines.

Despite a notification issued on Friday by the Delhi government about hike in fines, police in some parts issued Rs 500 challans to violators.

"The notification was received and then it has to be passed to the district DCPs, who then brief their staff on ground accordingly. It takes time but all the police districts have started enforcing the new directive strictly," a senior officer said.

The notification issued by the Delhi government said "Authorised persons shall be

close to the ground, while favourable wind speed helps in their dispersion.

Delhi's ventilation index - a product of mixing depth and average wind speed was around 13,000 m²/s on Saturday and is likely to be 6,000 m²/s on Sunday.



The Bihar model is one where votes of 'absentee voters' over 80 years of age or persons with disabilities were collected in person by the booth level officials and submitted to the returning officers.

M.K. STALIN
DMK PRESIDENT

The Sunday Statesman
NEW DELHI, 22 NOVEMBER 2020

03

CBI being used for politics, won't allow it in Pb: Capt

Highlighting that 8 states have withdrawn permission to the CBI to enter there for probes, Punjab CM calls the agency a political tool, charging that a fair probe could not be ensured through it

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, 21 NOVEMBER

Citing the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)'s "poor track record" in the Bargari case, which it had closed without any investigation, Punjab chief minister Captain Amarinder Singh on Saturday said his government will not allow the CBI to enter his state for a probe without prior permission.

Pointing out that eight states, including Punjab, had withdrawn permission to the central agency to enter without prior permission, CM Capt Amarinder charged that the CBI was being increasingly used to play politics and that a fair probe could not be ensured through the agency.

Dismissing the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) as a non-entity in Punjab's political



arena, the CM told a TV channel that the BJP was welcome to contest all 117 Vidhan Sabha seats in the state though the party would not be able to win a single seat without an alliance partner. The Congress had, in fact, no challenge in Punjab, with even the Akalis and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) posing no threat to it,

he claimed, adding that neither of these Opposition parties had "ever talked about anything positive in the interest of the state".

With the Assembly elections in Punjab still around 18 months away, it was not possible to say which issue will dominate the polls, said Capt Amarinder, even as he

expressed the hope that the BJP will resolve the farmers' grievances soon.

Farmers want MSP to remain and the Government of India should take steps to ensure that, he said, lamenting the "adamant stand" being taken by both the Centre and the farmers, leading to the prolonged agitation which was affecting supplies to the frontline soldiers while damaging Punjab's interests. He, however, said agitation was the democratic and constitutional right of farmers, which the central government had evidently realised, as apparent from their decision to call farmers unions for talks.

The CM iterated that corporates were welcome to buy foodgrains in Punjab as long as they follow the existing marketing system, built on close ties between farmers and

Arthiyas. He rejected the BJP charge that the Congress and other Opposition parties were misguiding the farmers, pointing out that the entire Legislative Assembly of Punjab had unanimously rejected the Centre's farm laws, though some parties had subsequently made a U-turn due to political compulsions.

When the farm bills were brought in Parliament, the central government should have consulted all stakeholders, including the Punjab government, instead of passing them without discussion, Capt Amarinder charged.

Terming the dissent in the Congress a sign of internal democracy in the party, the CM said those who had written a letter to the party high command had been included in key committees constituted by party chief Sonia Gandhi.

HP to start active Covid case detection drive from 25 Nov

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 21 NOVEMBER

The health secretary said that ventilators are also available in adequate quantity in the state and these have been installed in various hospitals of the state as per the requirements.

one person should be available at all times to take care of that person.

Awasthi said that at the time of sending a person for home isolation a kit is being provided, in which all types of medicines and a pulse oximeter are also being provided as per the requirement.

A person can check his oxygen level himself using a pulse oximeter.

He said that if any deficiency is found in it or any symptom of corona is found, then the person is advised to provide information to the health worker in time so that proper treatment can be provided to him.

The health secretary said that ventilators are also available in adequate quantity in the state and these have been installed in various hospitals of the state as per the requirements.

Due to the severity of symptoms of corona in patients, proper treatment is being provided in different health institutions.

He said that at present, out of total 6381 active patients in the state, 5673 patients are registered in home isolation and are receiving regular health benefits.

He said that from 25 November an "Active Case Finding Campaign", called

"Him Suraksha", would be started across the state under which health workers will go door-to-door to collect information on symptoms of COVID-19, tuberculosis, leprosy and non-communicable diseases like sugar and blood pressure etc. and appropriate treatment will be provided after further examination.

HP University to promote Ist, 2nd year UG students

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

SHIMLA, 21 NOVEMBER

Himachal Pradesh University on Saturday decided to promote the first year and second year undergraduate (UG) students to the next higher classes.

Besides, those students who have re-appear or compartment in these classes and cannot take the examinations due to Covid-19 will also be promoted.

The decision was taken in the HP University Executive Council (EC) meeting held in

Shimla under the chairmanship of Vice Chancellor Prof Sikander Kumar.

Kumar said EC approved the recommendation of the Academic Council to promote the first, second year and re-appear or compartment UG students to the next higher classes.

Apart from this, the EC approved enhancement of Dr K K Jain Memorial Scholarship to Rs 25000 from Rs 10,000.

"Further, an extension of one year was given to the arrangement made with

SANKALP for UPSC coaching classes being conducted by the university in the Pre-Examination Coaching Centre.

In addition, approval was given for 10 percent reservation in admission to the Economically Weaker Section students at the PG Centre," he added.

He added the EC had also approved the withdrawal of transfer policy for the non-teaching employees of the University and to conduct the MBBS/BDS Online admission process.

NCR's air improves to 'poor' category

PTI
NOIDA, 21 NOVEMBER

ity index (AQI) maintained by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

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

The average 24-hour AQI at 4 pm on Saturday was 256 in Gurgaon, 246 in Faridabad, 238 in Ghaziabad, 231 in Noida and 228 in Greater

Noida, according to CPCB's Sameer app. On Friday, it was 325 in Ghaziabad, 306 in Noida, 314 in Greater Noida, 297 in Faridabad and 275 in Gurgaon. The CPCB states that an AQI in the "poor" category may cause breathing discomfort to most people on prolonged exposure, while in the "very poor" category, it may cause respiratory illness on prolonged exposure.

The average AQI on Thursday was 305 in Ghaziabad, 207 in Noida, 315 in Greater Noida, 255 in Faridabad and 284 in Gurgaon. On Wednesday, it was 236 in Ghaziabad, 207 in Noida, 228 in Greater Noida, 172 in Faridabad and 141 in Gurgaon. The average AQI on Tuesday was 166 in Ghaziabad, 172 in Faridabad, 178 in Noida, 186 in Greater Noida and 204 in Gurgaon. On Monday it was 186 in Faridabad, 207 in Ghaziabad, 226 in Greater Noida, 243 in Noida and 246 in Gurgaon, showing

drastic improvement over the previous day due to a spell of rain in the NCR. On Sunday, the average AQI was 448 in Ghaziabad, 441 in Noida, 417 in Greater Noida, 425 in Gurgaon and 414 in Faridabad.

The AQI for each city is based on the average value of all stations there. Noida, Faridabad, Ghaziabad have four stations each, while Gurgaon has three and Greater Noida two, according to the app.

25 pc of UP's active Covid cases in its 8 NCR districts

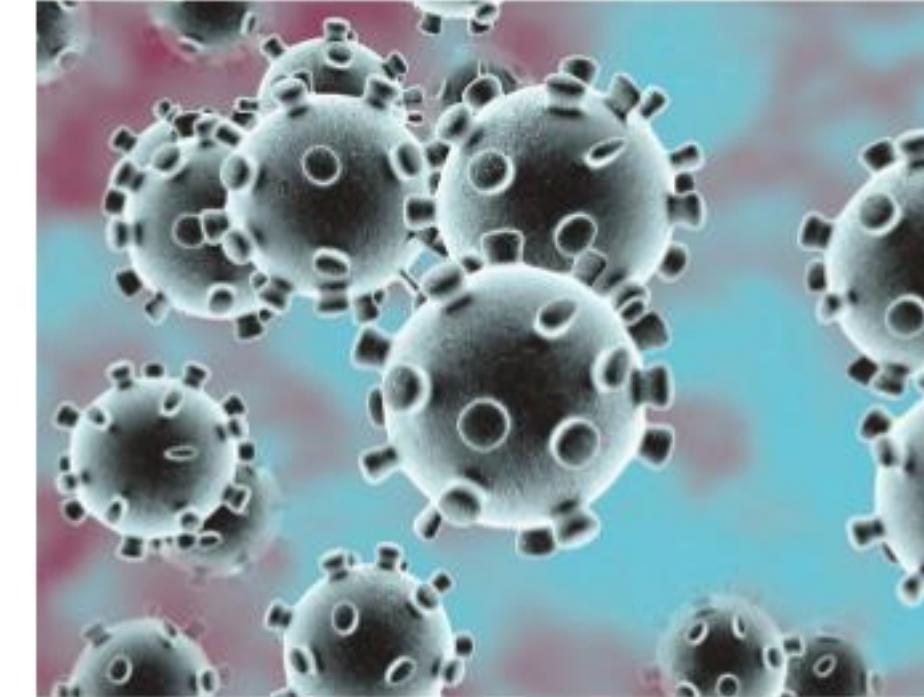
PTI
NOIDA, 21 NOVEMBER

number of active cases stood at 23,357, of which 5,863 (25.10 percent) were in its NCR districts.

Meerut has the highest number of 2,102 active cases among these eight districts, followed by Gautam Buddha Nagar (1,401), Ghaziabad (1,195), Muzaffarnagar (431), Bulandshahr (304), Shamli (168) Hapur (167) and Baghpat (149), according to the data.

The state has so far recorded 7,500 deaths linked to COVID-19, with 819 (10.92 percent) of them being recorded in the NCR districts, it showed.

The highest number of such deaths was recorded in Meerut (375), which is followed by Ghaziabad (89), Muzaffarnagar (85), Bulandshahr



(80), Gautam Buddha Nagar (74), Hapur (62), Shamli (28) and Baghpat (26), the data showed.

Kanpur, Allahabad, Varanasi, Agra, Gorakhpur and Bareilly in terms of population and area.

The NCR altogether comprises 23 districts from the three states of Haryana, UP and Rajasthan, and the entire national capital territory of Delhi spanning across 55,083 sq km, according to the NCR Planning Board.

The data, which is updated every 24 hours, also showed that so far, 4,91,131 COVID-19 patients have recovered from the disease across the state, with 73,046 (14.87 percent) such patients being in the eight NCR districts.

Till Friday, the highest number of such recoveries was recorded in Ghaziabad (20,026), which is followed by

Gautam Buddha Nagar (19,691), Meerut (14,408), Muzaffarnagar (6,140), Bulandshahar (4,786), Hapur (3,445), Shamli (2,898) and Baghpat (1,652), it stated. The official statewide data does not share any number on testing of samples nor does it show the total positive COVID-19 cases at the district level.

There were 4,39,747 active cases of COVID-19 in the country, while 84,78,124

patients have been discharged and overall 1,32,726 deaths recorded so far, according to a central government data updated till Saturday.

The total number of coronavirus cases in the country stands at 90,50,597, the data updated till 8 am on Saturday showed.

"On November 16, they had fled with two tractors after holding the show room's security guard hostage. One of the tractors has been recovered now, while search is on for the other," Singh said.

Those held have been identified as Shahrukh, Aqeel and Imran, all natives of Mehtawati in Haryana but currently staying in UP's Bulandshahr, he said.

"Two of them got injured in retaliatory firing by the police and were sent to a hospital for treatment. All three have been arrested," the officers said.

Their criminal history is being looked into in detail, and further proceedings are underway at the Dadri police station, he added.

Haryana to finalise drone mapping work by Jan '21

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, 21 NOVEMBER

The Haryana government plans to finalise the drone flying work being carried out under the state government's ambitious Haryana Large Scale Mapping Project and SVAMITVA scheme by January 2021.

The work of feature extraction will be finalised by March, 2021. This information was shared during a meeting held under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, with Surveyor General of India, Lt. General Girish Kumar and deputy commissioners of the state regarding review of the Haryana Large Scale Mapping Project and Survey of Vil-

lages and Mapping with Improvised Technology in Village Areas (SVAMITVA) scheme, through video conferencing on Saturday.

While presiding over the meeting, the CM directed the total land area of every revenue estate including categorizing data of private, public, agriculture and residence etc can be collected.

Besides this, the deputy commissioners have also been directed to appoint additional deputy commissioners as nodal officers so as to speed up the work regarding this project.

The CM further directed that the number of drones and surveying teams should be doubled in those districts where the work is not com-

pleted yet. He directed that the work of the draft map should be completed on priority basis. Besides this, he also directed that the pending Jambandis of Gurugram, Dadri, Faridabad, Karnal, Jhajjar, Bhiwani and Rohtak should be made online on a priority basis.

The CM was apprised that in some districts, SVAMITVA scheme will soon be completed 100 percent in some districts including Mahendragarh, Rewari, Jhajjar, Charkhi Dadri, Rohtak.

Once the mapping is completed, then these images are integrated with maps and this work will be completed by 10 December. Drone teams have been deputed in 18 districts.

Nadda, Jai Ram inspect HP AIIMS' construction work

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 21 NOVEMBER

BJP President J P Nadda along with Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur on Saturday inspected and reviewed the ongoing construction work of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) at Kothipura in Bilaspur district.

Nadda also held a meeting with the Director, PGIMER Chandigarh, and other senior officers and the representatives of the construction company, saying there should be no compromise with the construction quality.

"This institute would provide specialised health services to people of the state," he said.

He expressed satisfaction over the fact that despite Covid-19 crisis, the construction work of the AIIMS was going on smoothly and the work is likely to be completed by December 2021.

He stressed that efforts should be made to start the MBBS classes in the month of December this year and said it was a matter of pride that 18 doctors from Himachal Pradesh had been selected for this health institute.

Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur said the state government was committed to resolve all the issues relating to AIIMS and would extend all assistance for fulfilling the requirements of water

supply and power etc at the earliest.

"The state government will also examine the demand of electricity waiver for this institution and Rs 73 crore for power supply, Rs 65 crore for water supply arrangements had been released for AIIMS

Bilaspur," he added.

Thakur thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi and BJP chief JP Nadda for approving AIIMS to Himachal and making adequate budgetary provision for its construction. He said the institute would prove to be a milestone in

strengthening the health services within the state.

Nadda and the Chief Minister also inspected various blocks of the upcoming AIIMS and gave necessary directions regarding the construction work.

Director, PGIMER, Chandigarh Dr Jagat Ram said there would be 100 seats of MBBS in this institute and classes would be started in December this year. Thereafter efforts would be made to start OPD in January, 2021,

he said. He further stated that AIIMS Bilaspur will have facilities of 750 beds, 183 faculty members and 600 nurses and a temporary electricity sub-station had been established in the institute.

State Jal Shakti Minister Mahender Singh Thakur, Industries Minister Bikram Singh, Health Minister Dr Rajeev Saizal, Food and Civil Supplies Minister Rajinder Garg and senior officers were present on this occasion.



What is the reason that apart from a few pretentious steps, the govt was unable to take action against the toxic liquor mafia? Who is responsible?

CONGRESS LEADER PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA

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ndia

THUMBNAILS



Union health minister Harsh Vardhan interact with the blood donors for Corona warriors at Indian Red Cross society at Indian Capital on Saturday. SNS

'Atmanirbhar Bharat provides vision of India's plans to become \$ 5 tn economy'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 21 NOVEMBER

Atmanirbhar Bharat provides a vision of India's plans to become a USD 5 trillion economy by promoting 'Make in India - Make for World' and this will happen through an integration with the global economy, a senior official of the Ministry of External Affairs said on Saturday.

In his address to the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) at India e-biz Expo 2020, MEA Secretary (CPV&OIA) Sanjay Bhattacharya said Covid was an unprecedented

disruption, at all levels, across the world.

"It was not only a health crisis but it also imposed socio-economic challenges. Global economy slumped, social interaction was curtailed and individuals were fearful. It was imperative for the global community to coordinate efforts in the fight against coronavirus," he said in his address on 'Leveraging Business Opportunities in a post-Covid Scenario'.

India cooperated on repatriation of stranded citizens, in both directions and facilitated the return of over one lakh



foreign citizens to their homes, he said.

"Vande Bharat Mission, the largest repatriation exercise, which brought back 30 lakhs stranded citizens, was possible because of the active support from partners across

the world," he said.

India provided emergency medical supplies to several countries and deployed medical teams, emerging as the first provider of humanitarian assistance to Covid , Bhattacharya said.

"Thousands of Indian healthcare professionals went overseas to help them address the challenges of Covid. We strengthened cooperation in Covid research and testing. We stand ready to support in vaccine availability from India, as we will be the largest producers, once the vaccine is approved," he said.

Bhattacharya said that as business leaders give shape to India's economic engagement, the key opportunities will lie in, among other things, Atmanirbhar Bharat which provides a vision of India's plans to become a USD 5 trillion economy by promoting 'Make in India - Make for World'.

"This will happen through our integration with the global economy. The thrust will be on joint ventures in infrastructure and manufacturing, integrating into supply chains and tapping sovereign wealth funds," he said.

Bhattacharya said new emerging technologies, especially in ICT, consultancy, fintech, logistics, edutech, healthtech, biotech and others also have enormous potential. High technology cooperation, especially in defence and space has potential to be stepped up, he said.

Bhattacharya asserted that Indian business must venture into less-explored markets, which can yield greater dividends.

"High-level exchanges between India and our growing circle of partners have promoted deeper under-

standing and cooperation. This is an opportune moment for the business community to develop deeper links, based on each other's national priorities and development plans," he said.

"We are engaged in reforms and transformational changes in our economy, there is strong political understanding with foreign partners and traditional goodwill between the peoples gives more wind to the sails. This is the equivalent of a 'sweet spot' to change the nature and scale of our economic engagement, to new heights," the MEA official said.

HM on Chennai road to greet people

Police had a tough time in controlling the crowd and detained a man, allegedly for flinging a placard, as Shah took to Chennai roads

SNS/PTI
CHENNAI, 21 NOVEMBER



Home minister Amit Shah arrives in Chennai on Saturday. IANS

Tamil Nadu once again on a trending, and this time is #Goback-AmitShah! But unlike Prime Minister Narendra Modi who chose to travel on skis, Union home minister Amit Shah on Saturday sprang a surprise here when he virtually broke protocol to get out of his vehicle and walk on the busy GST Road outside the airport to greet supporters, minutes after he landed here for a two-day visit of the city.

Shah, who thanked the metropolis for its love, said it was "great" to be in Tamil Nadu.

Police detained a man for allegedly flinging a placard when Shah was walking outside the airport. Police had a tough time in controlling the crowd. There was a mild flutter when police detained a man, allegedly for flinging a placard, as Shah walked to greet the people. The man, later identified as Durairaj, was whisked away by police.

"I arrived in Chennai! I am always happy to be in Tamil Nadu. Today I am addressing my beloved Tamil brothers and sisters through various programmes!" he said, tweeting in Tamil.

Several hundreds of AIADMK members joined the BJP cadres in according a rousing reception to Shah. A political observer commented that Shah's visit was more political and crucial too, and was aimed at fine tuning the strategy to face the Assembly poll next year.

"Going by the reception accorded by Chief Minister K Palaniswami, deputy chief minister O Panneerselvam, state ministers and cadres to Shah, it can be construed that the AIADMK is trying to convey that all is well on the alliance front, despite its opposition to the Vel yatra," he said.

Amit Shah landed for a two-day visit to the city and

greeted by chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami and his colleagues in the airport. BJP state leadership also was there to greet him. The home minister reached Chennai on Saturday afternoon to attend a slew of events including inaugurating government projects worth around 67000 crore rupees, including phase II of the Chennai Metro Rail and holding political talks ahead of the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections 2021.

In the video that emerged from the spot, a man standing amidst a group of supporters near the pavement on GST road threw a placard which read, 'Go Back Amit Shah' over the barricades placed to control the crowd.

The placard did not hurt or affected the movement of the leader but the police have detained the man for questioning. The incident has been reported at a time when hashtag #Goback-AmitShah has been trending since Friday night. According to the police, the protester is 67-year-old Durairaj, a resident of Chennai.

Amit Shah's decision to break protocol and walk a few meters on the busy stretch was a clear political message to the opposition and people of Tamil Nadu that the BJP is here to stay. His move comes over two years after Prime Minister Narendra Modi was greeted in Tamil Nadu, CTRavi

Nadu by a number of protesters, who carried black flags and carried placards that read, 'Go Back Modi'. At the time, the PM had chosen to skip travelling by road, instead taking to the skies in a helicopter.

A heavy security cover has been provided in the city following Shah's visit, during which he will meet state BJP functionaries and possibly discuss Tamil Nadu elections, due next April-May, before leaving on Sunday morning.

Traffic was blocked from the airport to the Pallavaram bus stop for some time and it eased after the leaders left the airport.

Shah later inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for projects worth over Rs 67,000 crore, including phase II of Chennai Metro Rail.

Soon after his arrival from Delhi, Shah was received by Palaniswami, Panneerselvam and BJP State President L Murugan, among others.

However, after exiting the airport, Shah's car suddenly stopped and the BJP veteran got out, before walking a short distance, waving at scores of BJP and AIADMK workers who had gathered to receive him with their respective party flags.

Accompanied by BJP National general secretary and party in-charge of poll-bound Tamil Nadu, CTRavi

Alliance with BJP for '21 polls to continue: AIADMK's top leaders

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CHENNAI, 21 NOVEMBER

The ruling AIADMK in Tamil Nadu on Saturday said its alliance with the BJP will continue for the 2021 Assembly elections and exuded confidence it will win a historic poll next year.

AIADMK top leaders O Panneerselvam and K Palaniswami made the announcement at a government event here, attended by Union home minister Amit Shah.

Palaniswami is the AIADMK Co-Coordinator while Coordinator Panneerselvam is his deputy. "I would like to inform through this meeting that in the coming election (2021), the victorious alliance of AIADMK and BJP will continue," Panneerselvam said.

Palaniswami, who said Modi and Shah were working towards making the country a superpower, asserted that "the alliance formed for the Lok Sabha polls will continue."

The top leaders' assertion comes in the backdrop of the government's denial of permission to the BJP's Vel Yatra, aimed at exposing the DMK for "lending support" to an atheist group accused of demagogic Tamil hymn 'Kanda Sashi Kavacham', sung in praise of Lord Murugan, citing the pandemic.

and Murugan, with his security detail in tow, the Home Minister warmly waved at the overjoyed supporters who had thronged the airport since the morning. A heavy security cover has been provided in the city following Shah's visit.

Ex-DMK MP Ramalingam joins BJP, says will try to convince M K Alagiri to join saffron party

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CHENNAI, 21 NOVEMBER

Former DMK MP K P Ramalingam joined the BJP here on Saturday and he said he would try to convince the expelled Dravidian party leader M K Alagiri to join the saffron party.

Ramalingam joined the BJP in the presence of national general secretary and Tamil Nadu unit president CTRavi and Tamil Nadu unit president L Murugan at the party office here ahead of the visit of senior leader and Union Home Minister Amit Shah to the metropolis.

The former MP of both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha said he would try to convince Alagiri, whom he supported to the hilt in the DMK to join the BJP adding however a decision has to be taken only by him.

Ramalingam was suspended from the DMK early this year for 'violation' of party discipline by expressing a view against the party's demand for an all-party meeting to discuss the coronavirus pandemic. He was also relieved from his party post of secretary of agriculture wing.

Welcoming him to the party fold, Ravi said on his Twitter handle, "It is a great sign that former DMK MP Thiru Dr K P Ramalingam has joined @BJP4TamilNadu on the day Union Home Minister Sri @AmitShah is visiting Chennai. This will not only weaken DMK and its base but further strengthen BJP across the State."

Expressing confidence that Ramalingam's entry would strengthen his party, the senior leader, extended a warm welcome to him since the morning. Tamil Nadu senior leaders including Pon Radhakrishnan, C PRadakrishnan and

H Raja were present.

The 66-year old Ramalingam, a staunch Alagiri loyalist, stood with the latter, when a quiet battle unfolded to succeed Karunanidhi in the DMK to the top post of party chief, years ago.

The late patriarch, however, had given ample indications over the years, that his choice and that of the party would be Stalin who eventually became the party president following the death of Karunanidhi in 2018.

Alagiri, who was expelled in 2014, could not return to the party since then.

Ramalingam was among over 30 party leaders who were suspended following the party's rout in the 2014 Lok Sabha polls and the former MP had then dubbed the party decision as autocratic and had later alleged witch-hunting. In 2015, the party made him state secretary of the farmer's wing though he had faced disciplinary action earlier. Ramalingam was elected to the 11th Lok Sabha (1996-97) from Tiruchengode on a DMK ticket and the party also sent him to the Rajya Sabha (2010-16).

Before he joined the DMK, he was with the AIADMK and was elected from Rasipuram constituency in the 1980 and 1984 Assembly elections.

Following the death of AIADMK founder M G Ramachandran in 1987 he threw his weight behind Janaki Ammal, the wife of the late chief minister.

Kerala Gov signs Police Act amendment ordinance

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, 21 NOVEMBER

Kerala governor Arif Mohammad Khan has signed an ordinance amending the Kerala Police Act purportedly to give the police more teeth to prosecute persons who engage in cyber-attacks against women and children

Raj Bhavan sources on Saturday said the governor has signed the ordinance amending the Kerala Police Act that gives arbitrary powers to police to prosecute persons who exploit social media to target women and children.

The amendment proposes five years of imprisonment and a fine of Rs 10,000 for those convicted of producing, publishing or disseminating derogatory content through any means of communication to intimidate, insult or defame any person through social media.

Last month, the state cabinet had decided to give more teeth to the Kerala Police Act by recommending the addition of a new provision, Section 118-A, to the law passed in 2011. The Opposition has alleged the amendment would curtail freedom of expression and the freedom of the press. Leader of the Opposition Ramesh Chennithala had said that the amendment would curtail press freedom, curb free speech and endanger civil liberties.

Apart from the Opposition parties and human rights activists, the CPI has expressed its concerns against the law saying that it could reverse the course on media freedom, muzzle free speech and jeopardise civil liberties.

However, the state government had maintained that the amendment did not seek to curb reportage, political satire or commentary, it only seeks to prevent slanderous social media and online content.

TENDER

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

E-Procurement Notice INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

The Executive Engineer HP PWD Kasauli Distt. Solan HP on behalf of Governor of HP invites the online bids on item rate, in electronic tendering system, in 2 cover system for the under mentioned work from the eligible and approved contractors. Firms registered with HPPWD Department.

Job No	Name of Work	Tentative Cost	Earnest Money	Time Allowed	Cost of Form
1	C/O M/T Bharti to Gamberpur via Deothal road km 0/0 to 6/595 (SH:- Removal of formation deficiency, R/wall, Cross Drainage , GSB Grade 11 & II, B.C 30mm, PCC Drain parapets etc in Km 0/0 to 6/595. Under NABARD RIDF-XXVI)	3,51,69,813/-	3,82,800=0	Twenty Four Month	5000/-
2	Mettling and Tarring of Matlaghat Ghaghait road in km 0/0 to 4/270 (SH:- Removal of Formation Deficiency, C/S, B.C 30mm, PCC Drain parapets etc in Km 0/0 to 4/270 Under NABARD RIDF-XXVI)	2,78,11000/-	3,11,000=0	Twenty Four Month	5000/-

Availability of Bid Document and mode of submission: The Bid document is available online and bid should be submitted in online mode on website <https://htptenders.gov.in>. Bidder would be required to register in the web-site which is free of cost. For submission of bids, the bidder is required to have Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized certifying authorities (CA). Aspiring bidders who have not obtained the user ID and password for participating in e-tendering in HPPWD may obtain the same from the website: <https://htptenders.gov.in>. Digital signature is mandatory to participate in the e-tendering. Bidders already possessing the digital signature issued from authorized CAs can use the same in this tender.

2. Key data:

1. Date of Online Publication	16-12-2020 10:00 AM
2. Document Download Start Date	16-12-2020 11:00 AM
3. Bid Submission Start and End Date	16-12-2020 at 11:00 AM to 30-12-2020 at 4:00 PM
4. Physical Submission of EMD and cost of tender Document	31-12-2020 at 10:30 AM
5. Date of Opening of Bid	31-12-2020 at 11:00 AM

TENDER DETAILS:
The tender Document shall be uploaded online in 2 cover:
i) Cover 1: shall contain Scanned copies of all "Technical Documents/Eligibility information"
ii) Cover 2: Shall contain "BOQ/Financial Bid", where contractor will quote his offer for each item.

iii) SUBMISSION OF ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS: The bidder are required to submit the receipt of online payment towards the cost of bid document and (b) Receipt of online payment bid security/Earnest Money and other Technical Document in OIC Executive Engineer HPPWD Kasauli H.P. as specified in Key dates Sr. No. 2 on tender opening date, failing which the bids will be declared Non-responsive

iv) BID OPENING DETAILS: The bids shall be opened on 31-12-2020 at 11:00 AM in the office Executive Engineer Kasauli Division HPPWD Kasauli HP. by the authorised officer. In their interest the tenderer are advised to be present along with original documents at the time of opening of tenders. If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the bids will be opened on the next working



For us, politics is limited only to elections. Once elections are over, we get back to work but others always indulge in politics. Let them do that,

WHILE SPEAKING AT A PROGRAMME AT KALYAN TO LAUNCH A GIRDER FOR THE PATRIPUL RAIL OVERBRIDGE

The Sunday Statesman
NEW DELHI, 22 NOVEMBER 2020

THUMBNAILS



AAP MLA Atishi Marlena distributes masks among people during an awareness drive on Covid in New Delhi on Saturday. PTI

Maoists held: Two Maoists, including a senior cadre carrying a reward of Rs 5 lakh on his head, were arrested from different places in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district, police said on Saturday. As many as 17 warrants were pending against the ultra, who was working as an area committee member, the official said, terming his arrest as crucial for the police.

Jem associates held: Two militant associates of Jaish-e-Mohammad (Jem) outfit were arrested in Pulwama district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said on Saturday. They have been identified as Bilal Ahmad Chopan, a resident of Wagad Tral, and Mursaleen Bashir Sheikh from Chatlam Pampore, a police official said.

Govt decides dates: Amid speculation over holding the Winter Session of Parliament in the wake of rising COVID-19 cases in the national capital, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Saturday said the Lok Sabha secretariat is ready to hold the session and dates are decided by the government. He said the Monsoon session was held with all precautions amid the COVID-19 pandemic and the parliament standing committees have also been meeting regularly.

Guj HC orders protection to advocate for slain RTI activist

AHMEDABAD, 21 NOVEMBER

The Gujarat High Court has ordered police protection to a senior advocate who had represented the slain RTI activist shot dead soon after filing petitions against illegal mining activities by then BJP MP Dinubhai Solanki.

Junagadh's RTI activist Amit Jethwa was shot dead outside Gujarat High Court on 20 July 2010 when he had gone to meet his lawyer regarding petitions filed against the BJP MP's illegal mining activities in the district. Senior advocate Anand Yagnik

During the nine-year-long trial, as many as 105 of the 195 witnesses had turned hostile but senior advocate Anand Yagnik had argued his way to ensure Solanki's conviction.

nik, who had taken up the brief for the slain RTI activist to prosecute the BJP MP, had recently sought police protection following two of the convicts out on temporary bail who were spotted in his office. Police protection has been ordered for Yagnik and his family. Yagnik was admitted to a hospital this afternoon with symptoms of Covid-19. Former BJP MP Dinubhai Solanki and six others were convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment by a CBI court in July 2019 although an initial investigation by the city's Detection of Crime Branch (DCB) had given a clean chit to him.

However, Solanki was booked as the prime accused only after slain Amit Jethwa's father Bhikhhabhai had moved the High Court pinpointing the role of the BJP MP engaged in illegal mining activities in and around the Gir lion sanctuary in Junagadh. During the nine-year-long trial, as many as 105 of the 195 witnesses had turned hostile but senior advocate Anand Yagnik had argued his way to ensure Solanki's conviction.

Presently serving their life sentences, Solanki and six others have challenged their conviction in the High Court which has allowed victim Amit Jethwa's father Bhikhhabhai to be an intervener in the case.

Punjab farmer unions lift rail blockade

However, the farmer bodies said they will again block the rail tracks if the government failed to resolve their issues

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 21 NOVEMBER

In a move that may bring relief to the state facing an acute shortage of essential supplies, Punjab farmer bodies protesting against the Centre's farm laws on Saturday decided to lift their blockade of passenger trains for 15 days from Monday.

However, the farmer bodies said they will again block the rail tracks if the government failed to resolve their issues.

Meanwhile, Divisional Railway Manager (Ferozepur Division) Rajesh Aggarwal in a statement said as soon as farmers lift their blockade, the Railways will be ready to resume its services.

The train services have remained suspended in the state since September 24, when farmers launched their rail roko agitation against the Centre's recently enacted agriculture-related laws.

Earlier, farmers had allowed



freight trains but the Railways refused to resume these, saying it would either operate both freight and passenger trains or none.

The decision to lift the blockade of passenger trains came after a meeting of farmer leaders with Punjab chief

minister Amarinder Singh. The decision was announced by Bharatiya Kisan Union (RKJ) president Balbir Singh Rajewal.

He warned of resumption of the blockade if the Union government fails to hold talks with the farmers' represen-

tatives in the next 15 days to address their concerns.

We have decided to allow passenger trains from November 23 evening, said Darshan Pal, president of the Kranikari Kisan Union. The Punjab CM too welcomed the decision.

Had a fruitful meeting with Kisan Unions.

Happy to share that starting 23rd Nov night, Kisan Unions have decided to end rail blockades for 15 days. I welcome this step since it will restore normalcy to our economy. I urge Central Govt to resume rail services to Punjab forthwith, tweeted Amarinder. Before meeting the Punjab CM, farmer organisations held their own meeting to deliberate on the issue.

The decision was taken while keeping in mind the interest of Punjab. Buta Singh Shadipur, president of the Bharatiya Kisan Manch, told the media after the meeting here. He said the decision has

not been taken under any pressure either from the Centre or the Punjab government. If the Centre does not resolve our issues, we will again block rail tracks," he said.

Farmer leaders further said they will go to the national capital as per their November 26-27 "Delhi Chalo" march call.

Buta Singh Burjill, president of the BKU (Dokanda), said their protests at toll plazas, outside railway stations, shopping malls and residences of BJP leaders will continue. Earlier soon after the farmers' announcement, the CM urged the Centre to reciprocate it by restoring all train services and hold further talks with them. The CM assured the farmer leaders that he would meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Union Home Minister Amit Shah soon to press for their demands, according to a government statement.

The CM also promised the farmer representatives that he

will look into their other demands, including those relating to sugarcane price hike, clearance of dues and withdrawal of FIRs registered in stubble-burning cases.

He said he will hold talks with them on these issues within the next one week and will also set up a committee in this regard.

In his appeal earlier, the CM pointed out that if the rail services are not restored, the state will continue to face immense problems.

He urged the farmer bodies to let the train services resume as the blockade had caused Rs 40,000 crore in losses to the state so far.

Pointing to a shortage of coal, fertilisers and other essential commodities, he said a large number of units had closed down in Ludhiana and Jalandhar due to scarcity of raw material, resulting in 8 lakh migrant labourers going back to their native places.

Industrialist withdraws name for UP upper house

MEERUT, 21 NOVEMBER

The candidate of Indian Industries Association (IIA) industrialist Kush Puri of Muzaffarnagar has withdrawn his candidature from the graduate seat in the election for the Upper House of the State assembly reportedly under pressure of the BJP. It was for the first time any industrialist was contesting election to represent the industrial sector in the upper house of the state assembly of Uttar Pradesh.

The IIA had decided to field its candidate and the Muzaffarnagar-based industrialist Kush Puri was selected to represent the industrial sector but he had to step back after some initial campaigning.

IIA is an umbrella organisation of Middle and Small (MSMs) industries with over 5000 industrial units in western UP are associated. The IIA wanted its issues to be raised in the state assembly for which they decided to contest on the graduate seat in the election of upper house this time. The election for the upper house is divided into two categories viz teachers seat and the graduate seat.

On teachers seat the candidates are from teaching fraternity whereas on graduate seat any graduate can contest the election. So now the election for 6 teachers and 5 graduate seats in upper house of state Assembly is underway.

For this election, all major political parties have thrown their strength to ensure victory of their candidates. It is alleged that the BJP rank and files have pursued the IIA to withdraw its candidate to ensure the victory of party candidate on Meerut region graduate seat which now has 30 candidates in fray.

SNS

BJP takes stock of ties with allies in Assam

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 21 NOVEMBER

As the BJP begins work on its strategy for the Assam Assembly polls, the state unit appears keen on staking claim to some of the seats held by its key alliance partner, the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP), while its ties are strained with another ally, Bodoland People's Front (BPF).

The BPF's only Rajya Sabha member is set to join the BJP and the regional party is engaged in a bitter contest with the saffron party in the forthcoming Bodoland Territorial

Council (BTC) polls.

Assam's present political situation was discussed on Friday night at a two-hour meeting attended by Union Home Minister Amit Shah, BJP president J P Nadda, Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, BJP general secretaries B L Santosh and Dilip Saikia, state BJP chief Ranjit Dass, Assam Minister and North East Democratic Alliance (NEDA) convenor Himanta Biswa Sarma among others.

Dass said since the assembly election is just four and half months away, the central and state leadership of the BJP have

discussed various aspects of the polls and issues related to the government.

They also took stock of the organisational issues, the strength of our alliance partners AGP and BPF, he said.

The state BJP president said that during the meeting, the state leadership has briefed the central leadership that in some of the assembly seats presently held by the AGP, the BJP is growing strong.

The AGP had contested 24 constituencies in 2016 assembly polls in the state and won in 14. The BJP currently has 61 MLAs.

The elections to the 126-member Assam assembly will be held in April-May 2021.

We have also informed that in some seats, the AGP has become weak and in some seats it is strong.

"In recent panchayat elections, in some of the AGP held assembly seats, the BJP performed better than the AGP. Many BJP candidates won in the panchayat elections in such assembly constituencies which are held by the AGP.

So, we have apprised them of our stand, Dass said.

Asked whether the meet-

ing discussed the continuation of relations with the BPF, Dass said they have informed the BJP's central leadership that the BPF is losing ground in the BTC area. After the BTC polls, we will clear our stand.

The BPF will also clear their stand. We have informed the central leadership that the BJP is popular in BTC, he said.

The BPF had fought in 12 seats in 2016, winning all.

The AGP and BPF have three ministers each in the Sonowal government.

Himanta Biswa Sarma also asserted that the BJP is going

to capture power at the BTC after the polls in the autonomous body.

Since we are winning the BTC elections, where is the question of alliance? The BJP will form the government at the BTC, he said.

The 40-member BTC is an autonomous body created under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution.

Its two-phased elections will be held on December 7 and 10.

The BPF headed by Harguna Mohilary, has been in power in the BTC for the last 15 years.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This is notified for the information of rail passengers that the timings of the following Special Trains will be revised due to operational constraints/speed enhancement as under:-

Revised Timings of 02417/02418 Prayagraj - New Delhi - Prayagraj Special Superfast Train (Daily)

Train No.: 02417	↓ STATIONS	↑ Train No.: 02418
ARR. DEP.	ARR. DEP.	ARR. DEP.
---- 22:10	PRAYAGRAJ	07:00 ----
23:16 23:18	FATEHPUR	04:50 04:52
00:25 00:30	KANPUR CENTRAL	03:50 03:55
04:15 04:17	ALIGARH	23:55 23:57
06:13 06:15	GAZIABAD	22:42 22:44
07:00 ----	NEW DELHI	---- 22:10

Revised Timings effective from : 02417 from Prayagraj from 25.11.2020 to till further advice and 02418 from New Delhi from 25.11.2020 to till further advice.

Revised Timings of 02275/02276 Prayagraj - New Delhi - Prayagraj Humsafar Sp. Superfast Train (Daily)

Train No.: 02275	↓ STATIONS	↑ Train No.: 02276
ARR. DEP.	ARR. DEP.	ARR. DEP.
---- 22:30	PRAYAGRAJ	06:20 ----
00:35 00:40	KANPUR CENTRAL	03:20 03:25
06:10 ----	NEW DELHI	---- 22:30

Revised Timings effective from : 02275 from Prayagraj from 25.11.2020 to till further advice and 02276 from New Delhi from 25.11.2020 to till further advice.

Revised Timings of 02451/02452 Kanpur Central - New Delhi - Kanpur Central Special Superfast Train (Daily)

Train No.: 02451	↓ STATIONS	↑ Train No.: 02452
ARR. DEP.	ARR. DEP.	ARR. DEP.
---- 23:55	KANPUR CENTRAL	06:00 ----
00:13 00:14	PANKI DHAM	05:05 05:10
05:50 ----	NEW DELHI	---- 23:55

Revised Timings effective from : 02451 from Kanpur Central from 25.11.2020 to till further advice and 02452 from New Delhi from 25.11.2020 to till further advice.

Revised Timings of 04131/04132 Prayagraj - Udhampur - Prayagraj Special Superfast Train (Bi-Weekly)

Train No.: 04131	↓ STATIONS	↑ Train No.: 04132
<th

Upheaval on cards?

Democrats may well believe that the result of a recount in the southern state of Georgia confirming the victory of Joe Biden is the last nail in a coffin that Donald Trump refuses to lie down in. But it is increasingly becoming clear to even those who had assumed that Mr Trump would give up his uphill battle at some point that the President will not concede the election. The latest legal ploy being talked about by Mr Trump's camp ~ with considerable seriousness, we may add ~ is to have legislators in at least three Republican-controlled state legislatures overturn the popular vote to certify that he and not Mr Biden was elected. Usually, once all votes are counted, the state governor or secretary certifies the result and that ensures electoral college votes from the state are credited to a candidate's kitty. But while this has been the longstanding convention, Mr Trump's supporters have seized on the text of the US Constitution to say that a state must appoint electors "in such manner as the Legislature thereof may direct." This, they argue, means that if Mr Trump can persuade legislators to accept his claims of fraud and overlook some of the votes secured by his rival, they could reach the conclusion that he won the state. Already, former Speaker of the House of Representatives Newt Gingrich has tweeted, "Everyone should remember the central role of state legislatures in picking a President. The Legislature, not the Secretary of State, Governor or court."

The Republicans have taken this argument to court in Pennsylvania, the state which was pivotal to Mr Biden's victory, to say the election was so flawed that the state's Republican-controlled legislature should be allowed to appoint electors and declare Mr Trump the winner. This would require state legislators to ignore the 81,000 plus votes that separated the two candidates. But even if Pennsylvania's legislators do make this huge leap of faith at Mr Trump's behest, it will not by itself be enough for Mr Biden will still have enough electoral college votes to secure the Presidency. For such a ploy to succeed, at least two more Republican-controlled state legislatures will have to fall in line. The Trump campaign's demands on party legislators will test their consciences as seldom before and would, if they succumb, result in the biggest upheaval in American history. Another obscure law has been touted by the Trump campaign. This one allows legislators to appoint electors if "voters failed to make a choice". This could require Republican legislators in Wisconsin where Mr Biden won by a margin of 20,608 votes (or 0.7 percentage points), Michigan (155,629 votes or 2.8 percentage points) and Pennsylvania, to hold that voters did not make a choice. Even as Mr Trump meets Michigan's Republican legislators to persuade them, he has been criticised by veteran Republican Mitt Romney who says it is difficult to imagine a "worse, more undemocratic action". But it will require many more Republicans to believe this if Mr Trump is to fail.

Contact tracing

Delhi's government, which has faced huge criticism for not having taken up contact tracing of those testing positive for Covid-19, may well draw solace from the experience of South Australia, which has now admitted that a drastic six-day lockdown it had announced was triggered by a lie told to contact tracers. The Australian state believed it had been hit by a highly virulent strain of a virus after a man who tested positive claimed to have had only a brief brush with an infected person while buying a pizza. Two days after the state declared a lockdown, authorities discovered the man had in fact worked several shifts at the pizza bar alongside the infected person. This clearly meant that while serious, his infection did not support fears of a highly contagious outbreak. The initial diagnosis had caused widespread panic and forced Australian cricket players to be airlifted out of Adelaide on the eve of their international engagement with India. Neighbouring states closed their borders and even the holding of an Australia-India Test match in Adelaide next month seemed to be in some doubt. Now, South Australia's premier, Steven Marshall, has said: "Had this person been truthful to the contact tracing teams, we would not have gone into a six-day lockdown. To say I am fuming about the actions of this individual is an absolute understatement. These selfish actions of this individual have put our whole state in a very difficult situation."

To place the challenges of contact tracing in perspective, certain comparisons are essential. South Australia has an area of nearly a million square kilometres and a population of 1.68 million. Delhi has an area of less than 1,500 square km and a population of 19 million. South Australia has reported a little over 500 cases while Delhi has more than 500,000. To imagine that Delhi would be able to carry out effective contact tracing with its huge numbers, its density of population and worse, with many of those who tested positive being from other states, is incredible.

Add to this the inherent frailties of human nature and the tendency to either embellish or conceal realities, as South Australia discovered, and the tracing prescription becomes a virtual non-starter. Yet even so-called medical professionals have thought nothing of berating the state government for failing to take up contact tracing effectively. There are many gaps in the capital's response to the virus, not the least of which was the tendency to play to populist galleries, be it in the management of weddings and festivals, or indeed in the hosting of a religious extravaganza that the state had no business getting involved in. But to accuse the government of getting everything wrong, as some now allege, is to both be unfair and to assume it is vested with powers it clearly does not possess.

Population and Policy

If population is set to decline all over and median age increases in developed societies faster than in developing societies, it means such societies will necessarily need immigrants to support their economies or to care for their elderly whose proportion in total population will continue to increase



Life evolved early upon our planet ~ some 3 billion years ago. Compared to that, humans have a short existence of only 250 thousand years. We can say it took around that much time for the world's human population to reach the one billion milestone by 1800 AD. But it took just a century to add one more billion and another century later, by 2011, the world population had reached 7 billion which is poised to reach 8 billion by 2023. This population explosion has been brought about by the combination of many factors: miraculous progress and inventions in agriculture, sciences and medicines, urbanisation and spread of education ~ especially female education, easy access to contraceptives and also the emergence of nation states ~ with a system of governance that delivered healthcare and education to their citizens, though in varying degrees. However, increasing population had to keep pace with higher demands for food, energy, living space and sustainability for environment ~ hence control of population became a major focus of government policy along with management of natural resources and climate since the last century. In advanced economies, scientists started exploring outer space primarily to harness energy sources from other planets and also to establish extra-terrestrial human colonies. Studies began to be undertaken internationally to estimate the maximum population that the earth can support the results of which varied widely, but most of these put the limit at 8 billion, almost our current population.

In 2019, the UN projected world population to reach 8.5 billion by 2030, 9.7 billion by 2050 and 10.9 billion in 2100. During 2015-2020, the annual growth rate in global population declined to 1.1 per cent from its peak of 2.1 per cent during 1965-1970; it will decline further to 0.5 per cent by mid-century. Most of the future growth will occur in sub-Saharan Africa with Africa adding 1 billion people by 2050, followed by Asia with 650 million, while Europe's population will decline by 37 million. In 2100, five of the world's most populous countries will be in Africa (Nigeria, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Egypt). China will peak in 2031 at nearly 1.5 billion, and India in 2059 at 1.7 billion. The US population will reach 434 million, its immigrant population rising by 85 million by 2100. By 2027, India will overtake Chi-

na and by 2050, Nigeria will overtake the USA to emerge as the third most populous country in the world. Stability of population is defined by the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) which is the average number of children per woman. A TFR of 2.1 just replaces the current population. By 2070 the global TFR will fall below 2.1 from the current 2.5, to decline to 1.9 by 2100. It would be an aging population by then, with the median age increasing to 42 from the current 31.

However, a study of population trends in 195 countries by the University of Washington's "Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation" published in the reputed medical journal, The Lancet, in July 2020 provided somewhat more optimistic projections. The study projected the world population to reach its peak at 9.73 billion in 2064 and then gradually to decline to 8.79 billion in 2100. The TFR in 183 of the 195 countries will fall below the replacement level, with the global TFR declining from 2.37 in 2017 to 1.66 in 2100. Population will shrink by more than 50 per cent in 23 countries including Japan, Thailand, Italy and Spain. By 2100, the top five most populous countries in the world in 2100 will be India (1.09 billion), Nigeria (791 million), China (732 million), USA (336 million) and Pakistan (248 million). The study predicts the peak Indian population at 1.6 billion in 2048, up from 1.38 billion in 2017. In 2100, India will still be the world's most populous country, but its population will drop to only 1.09 billion. India's TFR, currently at 2.14, will also decline to just 1.29. With lesser population, environment and climate will become sustainable and with the appropriate global regulation on consumption by the rich, the planetary carbon footprints can also be brought within manageable levels. We won't have to explore colonising other planets at immense expenditure and risk to human lives.

Does it mean that the world's population worries will be over by 2100? Certainly not ~ because while world population will stabilise, such stabilisation is likely to be accompanied by a decline in the working-age population to 4.72 billion. In India this will decline from 762 million in

2017 to 580 million in 2100 ~ still the largest working-age population in the world. China's working-age population would decline to 357 million from 950 million (2017). The economic consequences of this can be far-reaching ~ drastic fall in the GDP and consequent shift in the global balance of power. Decline in working age population will necessarily lead to lesser tax collections and hence stress government finances for supporting a higher dependency ratio in population through higher expenditure on social security. It will call for new demographic policies to deal with this reality.

Policies will also be needed to smoothen the demographic skewness across the states and communities in India. The National Commission on Population has projected India's population to overtake China's around 2031 and its TFR to decline to 1.73 by 2036 with Bihar being the only state with a TFR higher than 2, at 2.38. India had adopted a family planning programme way back in 1951 when with a population of 350 million, it was one of the most populous countries in the world. In 2015-16, the National Family Health Survey (NFHS 4) found India's TFR had reached 2.2, with most states already being below the replacement rate. It was a success story, not celebrated enough, realised through

progressive increases in the age of marriage, use of contraceptives and female education. The NFHS-4 has also found that except Hindus and Muslims, the TFRs of all other communities were way below the replacement levels ~ Christians at 1.99, Sikhs at 1.58, Buddhists at 1.74 and Jains at 1.20. Hindus had a TFR of 2.13, down from 2.59 as estimated during the NFHS-3 in 2005-06, while for Muslims, it was the highest at 2.61 as against 3.40 in NFHS-3. Interestingly these numbers directly correlate with female literacy rates among them ~ 76.2, 63.1, 61.7, 90.6, 53.2 and 50.1 respectively for Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Hindus and Muslims, as per the 2011 Census.

The fact that the TFR had declined by 0.79 for Muslims since 2005-06 ~ the highest among all communities ~ means the community has not been stag-

nating on the population front and that the vicious hold of mullahs and their stubborn opposition to contraceptives may actually be weakening. Instead of demonising and vilifying them as some ultra-rightist fundamentalist groups tend to do, government policies must focus intensively to educate Muslim girls and encourage science education amongst Muslims in general, by providing liberal scholarships for science education and by compulsorily modernising the Madrassa syllabus to make it secular, modern and in sync with all other school syllabi in India.

It also indicates that immigration may no longer remain an issue with governments. If population is set to decline all over and median age increases in developed societies faster than in developing societies, it means such societies will necessarily need immigrants to support their economies or to care for their elderly whose proportion in total population will continue to increase. This will progressively lead to the blurring of national boundaries requiring political parties to reset their policies and goals. The time horizon is near enough to predict that the likes of Donald Trump succeeding by making immigration the centrepiece of their policies will be remote, as they will no longer be able to blame the rising population for the failure of their policies. The fear of an impending apocalypse depicted in the 1968 book Population Bomb by Paul and Anne Ehrlich implying that mass migration from poor countries would undermine the developed western societies with environmental and other catastrophes seems remote and unreal. The developed countries in Europe and America which today discourage immigration will have to reverse these policies for their survival.

India also need not fear Bangladeshi immigration anymore. In fact, as the Microsoft Chief has suggested, if indeed a Bangladeshi rises to become the Infosys CEO, I will have reason to celebrate being born an Indian, because then my country will have become a truly globalised country not only to attract the best global talents but also to offer them equal opportunities as its own citizens. Only a free and a confident country that reckons its historical diversity as its biggest strength can do this.

Not even China can then prevent India from becoming a permanent member of the UN Security Council.



GOVIND BHATTACHARJEE
The writer is a commentator

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Congress woes

SIR, This refers to your balanced editorial 'History lesson' (18 November). The performances of the Congress in recent elections in Bihar and by-polls in MP, UP, Gujarat and Karnataka, suggest that the oldest party is in terminal decline. Kapil Sibal's carefully considered remarks seem appropriate. He is not only an outstanding advocate but also one of the frontline intellectuals in the Congress party.

Mr Sibal is of the view that an effective alternative is mandatory to retrieve the lost image of the party. Organisational overhaul, better articulation of ideas and promoting active leaders are imperative for its resurgence.

But his suggestion, as

expected, has not been well received by the party, barring a few. It is an indubitable truth that those who oppose him know very well

that Rahul Gandhi and his close colleagues are responsible for downfall of the party in Bihar and other states.

It is, therefore, time for the Congress to retrospect on the abysmal results and



REST SHOULD QUIT

SIR, Please refer to your today's report "Graft-taint row forces Bihar minister to quit". Bihar's newly-appointed education minister resigned within hours of assuming charge on Thursday. He is an accused in a recruitment scandal during his tenure as a vice-chancellor of a university.

As per records, eight of the 14 new ministers in Bihar have declared criminal cases against them and six of them are accused of serious criminal cases for non-bailable offences. As per Indian law, no person is guilty till proven by a court of law and according to several courts' verdicts, an accused can hold office till the person is convicted. Importantly, Mr Nitish Kumar is committed to maintaining a corruption-free government. As chief minister in 2017, he had snapped ties with his alliance partner over alleged corruption charges against the then deputy chief minister. Given that saffron party leaders don't allow tainted politicians to hold office too, Mr Kumar should take a call now and remove the other ministers facing serious charges. Opposition parties that won 110 seats in the 243-member Bihar assembly should monitor the cases as they did for the education minister's removal.

Yours, etc., Abhijit Chakraborty, Howrah, 18 November.

Yours, etc., Khokan Das, Kolkata, 20 November.

A MEMBER OF THE **ANN**
ASIAN VOICES

Is Thailand prepared for the carbon war?

The result of the US presidential election was clear, and means that Joe Biden will be sworn in on January 20, 2021. Most observers agree that a Biden presidency will ease tensions in the US-China trade war triggered by his predecessor Donald Trump, helping stabilise the global economy once again.

However, there are concerns that Biden appears to be working with European partners to counter China with what could turn into a technology war, spearheaded by America's return to the Paris Climate Agreement. Biden has prioritised signing back up to the agreement, which Trump withdrew from in 2017.

During his campaign, Biden declared that the US would hold a meeting of more than 190 world leaders at next year's Paris climate change conference (COP21) to set more ambitious goals in reducing greenhouse gas emissions that cause global warming.

Among the outcomes of this meeting will be a US policy to label imports with information on their carbon footprint. The labels will give consumers details of imported products' carbon content or greenhouse gas emissions throughout their service life. More significantly, carbon tariffs will be imposed on imports ~ pushing up the price of products with a larger carbon footprint. On the bright side, Thailand may benefit from the US' return to COP21.

The US will become an important ally in reducing global warming after Thailand signed an agreement to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions (GGE) by 20-25 per cent by the year 2030. In 2017, Thailand recorded a

THE NATION
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GGE reduction of approximately 14 per cent, mainly from power plants and transportation.

Thailand's renewable energy development plan targets 30-per-cent usage of clean energy by 2037, a goal that may lead to easier trade negotiations with the US. Thai exporters are already preparing for carbon-footprint policies, and many are now working with international certification bodies to measure their emissions and certify their labelling for consumers.

Thailand is currently considered the most carbon-sensitive economy in ASEAN, with products registered with the Thailand Greenhouse Gas Management Organisation (TGO).

About 4,472 Thailand-made products have already been labelled by the TGO, most of them in the food and beverage sector, followed by construction, petroleum and jewellery.

However, there are tens of thousands of products that are not yet ready. If carbon taxes are imposed by the US and other countries, they will certainly affect both the price and the competitiveness of Thai exports.

Therefore, businesses that export their products to the US must adapt quickly and prepare for the new US policy to reduce global warming. Although their manufacturing costs will increase, the benefits will soon become obvious. In the end, the whole world will have to play by the same rules. Thai businesses that can adapt quickly to the new carbon tariffs will get a head start on the competition.

IN MEMORIAM

BANERJEE KALI SANKAR — Remembering you silently in tears.

— Son Amala, daughter-in-law Alpana, granddaughter Sreya.

A luxury is now a necessity

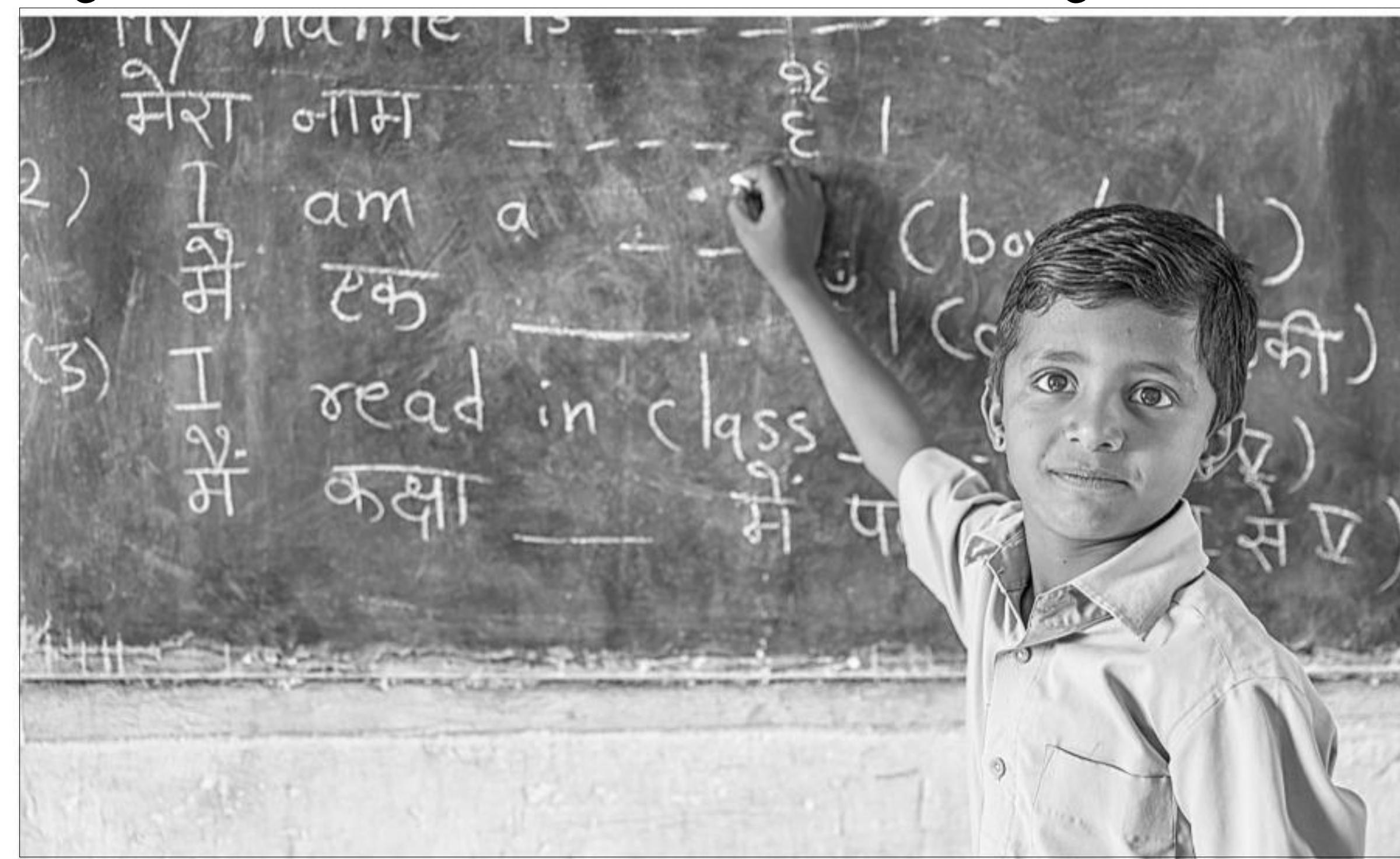
FAHD HAZARIKA

The year 2020 and the Covid-19 pandemic have been nothing less than a nemesis for all mankind, but they have made one thing abundantly clear. Technology is the only answer to all our current miseries, constrictions and incompetency. While every soul on earth, every business, every little activity has suffered equally, as a citizen of humanity, it is the future of education that worries me the most.

The reason? Physical presence of students and teachers inside a classroom on a regular basis isn't a certainty anymore. Luckily, that is also not the only option anymore. Unluckily, the alternatives provided by Information and Communication Technologies are not completely ready and nor are the teachers and students who are supposed to use them. In fact, technology, as presently utilised in schools and colleges, is more of a problem than a solution, especially in India.

Not every Indian teacher or student is adept at using computers and smartphones. Hundreds and thousands of students do not even possess smartphones. For those who do, there are additional issues of connectivity. Some believe that body language of students can't be understood, and interactive activities can't be arranged online, because of which communication sessions are ineffective. Then there is a problem of lack of attention when it comes to young kids because there is no one to check on them. While the list of technical, financial, logistical and geographical reasons why teachers (barring a small fraction of those belonging to high-end schools situated in urban areas) are struggling to deliver the goods in the online medium is endless, it is the adoption and acceptance in the mind that seems to be the bigger hurdle.

This poses another question - Does the average human mind react similarly to all kinds of change, especially, when it's sudden? Not too long ago, when concepts like e-commerce and online retailing had been introduced, they were greeted by consumer responses like - "It's not a real store", "they'll misuse all our



data" and "what about credit card theft?" and other negative responses. Today, here we are with some of the biggest e-commerce giants ruling the roost worldwide. Even regular meals that could easily have been prepared in our kitchens today are being ordered online.

Going further back in time, the telephone was at first criticized for 'invasion' of privacy! Not just that, Guglielmo Marconi, inventor of radio, doubting his own invention once said, "Have I done the world good, or have I added a menace?" And to top it all, ancient Greeks, it is said, were afraid of something as fundamental to the human mind as writing because it would produce forgetfulness, Socrates believed.

So basically, it is a historically established fact that no change, how-

ever sensible, that eventually got adopted and accepted by society, was initially welcomed by those who lived through the transition. Very similar is the condition of humans in this post pandemic world. We have newer, advanced and ever evolving communication technologies, but we're either afraid of futuristic advancements, or just unsure about whether the change will bring about more productivity in anything that we do.

Yes, it's hard to understand the notion of leaving behind the conventional classroom, especially if it's to face this vast space called the Internet. Does this mean that there is no hope? Absolutely not. A lot will change as community online teaching emerges as an option worldwide. An infrastructure that can cater to the needs of students and teachers

in the remotest corners of the country will not only address technical gaps but will also produce acceptability. Stakeholders, particularly students, are sceptical because they aren't confident that online services will be accessible to one and all. That confidence must be built through preparation and inclusiveness.

Every student/teacher must feel that they belong. Everyone must feel connected, empowered. Online systems are not only required for providing additional academic support upon return of normalcy, but also for conducting regular classes in case of similar emergencies in the future. As online teaching grows in relevance and acceptance and stakeholders get increasingly familiar with the medium, we might witness an emphatic emergence of centralized teaching

systems across the entire country. Once this idea grows, students and teachers will have more flexibility, more options to choose from, ability to access classrooms from anywhere in the world and that will definitely be more time and cost effective in comparison to traditional methods of imparting education.

In conclusion, I want to re-iterate that the mental transformation from a familiar and time-tested teaching methodology to a whole new virtual world of teaching is not going to be easy; nor was it meant to be. But with the luxury of leveraging technology in education suddenly becoming a necessity, the writing is on the wall.

The writer is a Guwahati-based freelance contributor.

POLITICAL DIARY | KALYANI SHANKAR

Congress must reinvent itself

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi in a recent book revealed his strategy for winning elections. He declared in an interview given to the author of the book, "I am here for a long haul" and added, "Eventually, it is the rising anger against the imposition of their ideology on every Indian that will lead to the electoral downfall of the BJP".

Going by murmurs in the party, the question arises whether his party leaders or the people are willing to wait that long. As Priyanka Gandhi herself asks the author, "What is the incentive for younger, more passionate people?"

The growing murmurs show the impatience of party leaders - both young and old. In August this year, 23 important leaders including Ghulam Nabi Azad, Anand Sharma, Manish Tiwari and Kapil Sibal had given a jolt to the Gandhi family by writing a letter asking for introspection and course correction.

While Congress president Sonia Gandhi was able to nip it in the bud by convening a Congress Working Committee meeting on this issue and followed it up a reshuffle in the party, the murmurs have picked up again after the Bihar debacle. Two senior former Union ministers, Kapil Sibal and P Chidambaram, have written separately to Sonia Gandhi about the need for introspection. What they are politely suggesting to the Gandhis is that either they run the show properly or allow someone else to run the party. Sonia has responded by setting up three new panels and making four of the dissident members.

The power struggle within the



party has been going on for quite some time between the old guard and the young Turks. The old guard has been disenchanted with Rahul Gandhi. The Congress leadership has forgotten the art of grassroot politics. The Grand Old Party, which was an umbrella organisation, has gradually whittled away as grassroot-level leaders are sidelined and replaced with loyalists mostly without merit. In the past six years, many state elections have proved that the Gandhi family might be crowd-pullers but not vote-catchers. As the leadership weakens, the murmurs

are also on the increase. Had the party done well in Bihar, Sibal and Chidambaram would not have written letters again. Also they are disenchanted with the present leadership, with Rahul as the de facto leader.

The Congress needs to do course correction at least now. The first is the leadership crisis. There is an urgent need for a 24X7 captain to steer the ship. If Sonia has health problems and Rahul is reluctant, some one else should take over. The problem is that neither the party nor the Gandhis want to take this step. In

August when they did some search for a non-Gandhi to take over, it resulted in the party asking Sonia Gandhi to take over again.

The second is the lack of the direction. There should be a conclave involving all party leaders as at Pachmarhi or Shimla in the past. These provided a chance for many to speak their mind in the party forum and arrive at important decisions.

The third is a new imaginative narrative to attract voters. In 2004, Sonia Gandhi came up with the common man concept, which

clicked well. It is time that they think of another such slogan.

The fourth is the restructuring of the organisation and making office-bearers accountable. The deadwood should be removed and fresh blood should be inducted. Rahul continues to depend on people who have never fought any elections or have experience. Any reshuffles that have taken place have not made any mark on the ground. That is why many leaders including Jyotiraditya Scindia left the party and this erosion should be checked. Fifthly, the party is demoralized and it needs a victory, at least in the upcoming elections to five states. The Congress is ruling only in Puducherry and non-BJP parties, except in Assam, rule the others. The Congress is yet to gear up the party while the BJP and regional parties are well ahead in preparations.

Sixthly, the arithmetic should be strong. Congress needs strong alliance partners where it is not strong. In Tamil Nadu, it has an alliance with the main opposition DMK and some smaller parties. In Bengal, it is in alliance with the Left parties. In Kerala, the fight has always been between the Left Democratic Front and the United Democratic front and they alternate between themselves. Now it is the turn of the UDF.

Setting up committees and throwing crumbs to dissidents is not enough. The Gandhis should realize the gravity of the situation and become a new Congress party like the Labour Party in England became the new Labour. For this, pragmatism, vision, new direction and stable leadership are required. If the Gandhis do not realize this now it will be too late to bring back the old glory of the party.

NOW AND AGAIN

Moments with a thespian

TIRTHANKAR MITRA

Soumitra Chatterjee did not seem to have made a lasting impression when I first saw him as a gawking teenager. Like the rest of the crowd which had gathered to have a look at the stars of the Bengali film firmament, I was hoping to catch a glimpse of Uttam Kumar on that Poila Baisakh, the first day of the Bengali new year. It was almost a ritual for the men and women we paid to watch on screen to take part in a soiree on that day at a cinema hall in south Kolkata. Our patient wait was rewarded when Kumar who considered Chatterjee to be like a younger brother walked in almost hand in hand with the latter amidst a deafening roar of applause, accompanied by the popping of flash bulbs. But I became an ardent fan of Chatterjee after seeing him essay the role of the sleuth Feluda aka Prodosh C. Mitter in Satyajit Ray's Sonar Kella and Joy Baba Felunath.

Just when it seemed that the decades seemed to have eroded my adulation, our paths crossed again. I was one of the invitees at a party thrown by the eminent dental surgeon Dr Barin Roy to celebrate his old friend Soumitra getting an award.

Carelessly elegant in a tee shirt and jeans he walked in. There was not the iota of an aura of a star but he looked every inch a handsome man who had aged gracefully. Screwing up courage, I struck up a conversation, introducing myself as a neighbour of late actor Robi Ghosh who was a close friend of Chatterjee.

He made small talk while enjoying a beer. Emboldened by the unexpected proximity, I blurted out my experience and feelings of the long past summer day and instantly regretted it. For it seemed to upset the rhythm of the conversation between the thespian and his wide-eyed fan.

A contemplative look enveloped his chiselled features and then turned into a nostalgic smile. A quick dip into the past was followed by a swift return to the present. "All eyes would always be on Uttam da, no matter who was his companion unless perhaps it was Suchitra Sen," Chatterjee said brushing aside my embarrassment.

He then sauntered off to greet Sabitri Chatterjee, one of his favourite heroines, who had just walked in.

100 YEARS AGO

SEATS IN THE NEW COUNCIL

To The Editor Of The Statesman

SIR, - The time has come for the Anglo-Indians to assert their position as a distinct unit in the body-politic of India. The Reform Scheme has conceded to the Anglo-Indians separate representation. In Bengal two elected seats will be given to Anglo-Indians for the Reformed Provincial Council. These representatives to be elected need not be partisans of one local Association or another. They are to be independently elected, regardless of all representative bodies. The Anglo-Indians as a class will thus be left to elect their own representatives. These representatives will sit in a Council which will be composed of representatives of all the great communities of India, all of whom will combine among themselves and will coalesce with the Anglo-Indian representatives to further the highest interests of the country common to all-India. It is to awaken this new spirit among Anglo-Indians and to safeguard their interests for the future that I pen these lines.

H.W.B. MORENO.
Calcutta.

WIDOWS' PENSIONS

To The Editor Of The Statesman

SIR, - I saw a letter in The Statesman yesterday regarding the impossibility of widows being able to live on pensions of Rs 100 a month and the appeal which followed for help for those widows to meet the cost of living. There are many Warrant Offices' widows left today to support themselves on pensions of Rs 63-12 a month. The children's pension ceases at the age of sixteen, though one would imagine the Government would scarcely miss the trifling sum of Rs 4-2 paid to the eldest child and Rs 3-12 monthly paid to the next, with a gradual reduction for each other child. When these widows get any help from the Imperial Relief Fund, their difficulties have become so great that any help sent is already due, whereas if the Government were to allow them even Rs 100 a month, they would with the strictest economy be scarcely able to live on it.

A SUFFERER.

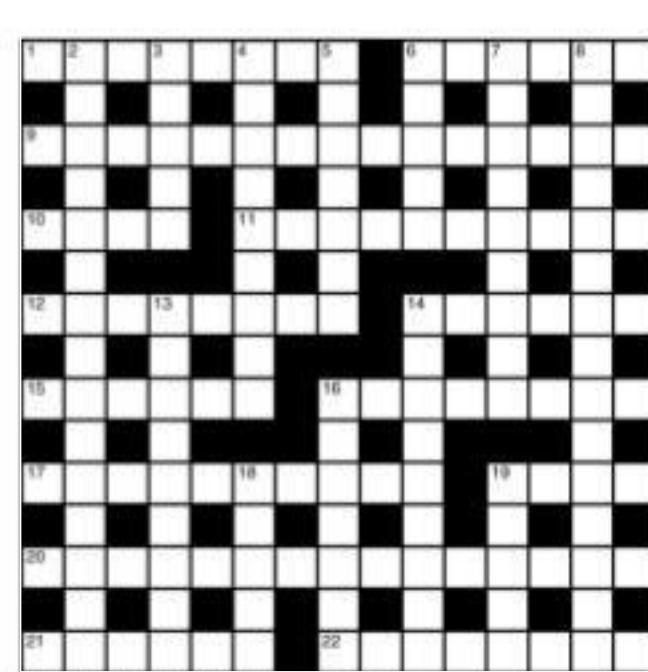
GRAND OPERA HOUSE

To The Editor Of The Statesman

SIR, - I feel that I shall have your earnest support in asking patrons of the Grand Opera House, during my forthcoming short season, to make an effort to be in their seats when the curtain rises. It has been said that even if a performance were announced to commence so late as midnight, some patrons would not turn up until 12-45 in the morning, but I think that if the inconvenience this habit of late arrival causes everybody were seriously and courteously pointed out, those people who - I am sure unwittingly - are to blame would do their best to obviate that inconvenience. A typical case occurred the other day when a gentleman explained to the Box Office clerk that he could only come to the theatre on Saturday nights, as his business necessitated his being at the office early, and he could no subordinate business to pleasure.

H.B. WARING.
Mussooree.

CROSSWORD



SOLUTION FOR 15 NOVEMBER

ACROSS

- 1 Direction of take-off in this plane! (8)
- 2 Good man with something to cover flasher at disco? (6)
- 3 Potassium density fluctuates with force and atomic explosive (5,2,8)
- 4 Difficult problem for Ravel (4)
- 5 Work experience aboard vessel protecting marine species (10)
- 6 Theatre skill doubled energy in comic dialogue (8)
- 7 Solemn promise to refrain from drinking toast (6)
- 8 Second customer calling for house cat (6)
- 9 Smoke hid rocky Arab territory (8)
- 10 Revolutionary and monster becoming (17)

DOWN

- 19 Horse to follow flawlessly finding way through (4)
- 20 People opposed to the enemy are in a rush (4,7,4)
- 21 Payment letter demands material about conservationists (6)
- 22 Performer takes action to return in Hamlet? (8)
- 5 Girl guzzling due to drain coffee cups (7)
- 6 Rocket incorporating new submarine detection system (5)
- 7 Cut wood supporting seats (4,5)
- 8 Substance got him dancing in swimwear (7,8)
- 13 Taking it all in having gone round planet? (9)
- 14 Mixed responses but continues forward (7,2)
- 16 Daily porridge needed for African flier (7)
- 18 Be consumed in chimney erected for tycoon (5)
- 19 Film company sorry having removed jerk (5)

NO 28142

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

THUMBNAILS

Bharti Airtel to acquire 5.2 pc stake in Avaada: Bharti Airtel on Friday said it will acquire 5.2 per cent stake in solar power company

Avaada MHBuldhana for Rs 4.55 crore in an all-cash deal.

Avaada MHBuldhana Private Limited is a newly-formed company and

developing a captive gen-

erating solar power plant

in Maharashtra which will

become operational by

March 2021. It is a sub-

sidiary of Avaada Energy

Private Limited (AEPL).

AEPL has developed a

portfolio of over 1 giga-

watt solar and wind pro-

jects across the country

and the first independent

power producer to cross 1

GW installed capacity mile-

stone in India, according

to a regulatory filing by

Bharti Airtel.

RMSI Cropalitics earns recognition: Agri-tech start-up RMSI Cropalitics has been recognized by NASSCOM as one of the top 50 emerging software product companies who would be the future trendsetters from India, as part of NASSCOM Emerge 50 Awards 2020.

With Zinnov as knowledge partner, the award nomination categories included - FinTech, Health Tech, Retail Tech, Logistics & Supply Chain, SaaS, Enterprise, Bharat, IoT Hardware & devices, Strategic sector & Cybersecurity.

RMSI Cropalitics received the award for its path breaking product Pln-CER™ under the Bharat Category, which recognizes innovative solutions that solve some of the toughest problems of India in a scalable manner using technology.

TDI Infratech to invest ₹100 cr in Mohali project: Realty firm TDI Infratech Ltd on Saturday said it will invest Rs 100 crore to develop a commercial project in Mohali. The project will have space for retail, food and entertainment.

It is part of TDI Smart City Mohali. Spread over 1.38 acres, the commercial project will have a total built-up area of 1.5 lakh sq ft and will be delivered by December 2022.

Healing economy expected to keep markets high

Markets likely to oscillate between renewed fears of rising Covid cases and optimism over vaccine

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

MUMBAI, 21 NOVEMBER

Economic recovery along with hopes of a Covid-19 vaccine will keep domestic stock markets high during the upcoming trade week.

Analysts opined that markets are likely to oscillate between renewed fears of rising covid cases globally and optimism over vaccine development. Besides, profit booking as well as expensive propositions might dampen sentiments. Nevertheless, upcoming Q2FY21 GDP figures combined with sales push during the festive season is expected to arrest any major downside movement.

"Going ahead, the market is likely to be volatile as sentiments oscillate between fear of rising covid cases globally and optimism over vaccine progress," said Siddhartha Khemka, Head of Retail Research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services.

"Investors would closely watch the development



over the US stimulus talks where the hopes are fading. However, the overall structure of the market remains positive, as the economic activity continues to improve and Covid cases continue to decline domestically, except for few regions."

Besides, market observers pointed out that healthy fund inflows and expected positive macro economic data points will buoy sentiments.

As per estimates, more than Rs 25,000 crore have flown into the country's stock markets till now during November.

"Nifty ended the week

with gains of 0.6 per cent, the smallest gain in the past three weeks. This reflects the conflicting state of markets after showing continuous upward movement since late September," said Deepak Jasani - Head of Retail Research at HDFC Securities.

"The fact that market managers turn upwards on an intra-day or overnight basis after dipping is heartening, keeping hopes of some more upmove alive."

"In terms of Nifty 12,963 and later 13,250 remains a resistance while 12,730 remains a support."

According to Joseph Thomas, Head of Research

- Emkay Wealth Management: "The prospects of more money coming in from foreign institutional investors and a relatively better macroeconomic scenario should help the markets in the coming days though the possibility of some profit-taking cannot be entirely ruled out."

Meanwhile, an expected slowdown in the rate of foreign fund inflows along with the upcoming Q2FY21 GDP figures is expected to weaken the Indian rupee during the coming week. Besides, expectations on a further stimulus has fanned fears of higher government bor-

rowings. Nonetheless, rising virus infection in the US amid hopes of more stimulus is expected to keep the US dollar subdued. The rupee is projected to range between 73.70 to 74.50 per greenback.

"Flows into equity markets have been robust and supported the rupee," said Sajal Gupta, Head, Forex and Rates, Edelweiss Securities. As per estimates, more than Rs 25,000 crore have flown into the country's stock markets till now during November.

"However, we expect the flows to slow down going forward and that can put some pressure on rupee and rising imports owing to normalisation can also keep strong rupee in check," Gupta said.

Last week, rupee appreciated to 74.11 levels but saw strong support at 74 handle.

Nonetheless, dollar purchases from RBI as reflected in the forex reserve capped further appreciation.

ally integrated," Agarwal added.

After intense negotiations for an FTA with the EU, talks have been stalled since 2013 after differences on various issues could not be ironed out.

Other Asian nations looking at trade deals with the west, Vietnam has already inked one. Vietnam, which is emerging as a formidable competition to many economies, has already signed at a trade pact with the EU.

"The European economy needs now every opportunity to restore its strength after the crisis triggered by the coronavirus," Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, said in a statement.

"India should not waste time now. It must act fast before other countries seal the deals," Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) president S.K. Saraf told IndiaSpend.com. "We must revive talks on the stalled FTAs and other trade pacts to cash in on the changing geopolitics. The current anti-China sentiment in Europe could help India at this point and we must not waste an opportunity."

'Transition to clean energy sources subdued participation in coal auction'

NEW DELHI, 21 NOVEMBER

The transition to clean energy sources led to subdued participation in the recently concluded first round of commercial coal mine auction, said India Ratings and Research.

Accordingly, in a report, the agency said that domestic coal mining has opened up at a time when the world is transitioning away from coal as a fossil fuel to cleaner energy sources.

"Hence, participation from the players in the recently concluded first round of commercial coal mine auction has remained limited," the report said. In the first round of commercial coal mines auction a total of 19 mines have been allocated to the bidders.

These mines have an estimated annual output production of 51 million tonnes with total reserves of 3,045 mt. Globally, the funding sources to fossil fuel has declined as large financial institutions and equity investors have stayed away from the sector.

Additionally, the awarding of mines is just the first step and multiple challenges will still remain before the commercial production commences at these mines. Historically, the report cited a gap of three-to-seven years between the awarding of mines and the commencement of production.

"Thus, Ind-Ra believes the benefit from the auctioned mines would only be visible after a considerable time gap," Ind-Ra said. According to the report, global players did not participate at all in the first round of auction, despite the Indian government allowing 100 percent foreign direct investment in commercial coal mining. Ind-Ra expects the participation of international players in coal auctions to remain weak in the future as well, owing to the overall transition towards cleaner fuels from fossil fuels."

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 21 NOVEMBER

Centre okays ₹107.42cr grant for 28 food processing projects

The government on Saturday said a grant of Rs 107.42 crore has been approved for implementing 28 food processing projects spread over 10 states that are likely to generate jobs for nearly 10,000 people.

A decision in this regard was taken in the virtual meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Approval Committee (IMAC) chaired by Food Processing Industries Minister Narendra Singh Tomar. Junior minister Rameswar Teli was also present in the meeting.

The committee considered the projects applied through an unit scheme of Creation and Expansion of Food Processing and Preservation Capacities (CEFPCC) under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samanya Yojana (PMKSY) for nec-

essary grants-in-aid.

"28 projects with project costs of Rs 320.33 crore, supported with a grant of Rs 107.42 crore by Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) were approved under the CEFPCC Scheme by the IMAC," an official statement said.

Of this, a grant of Rs 20.35 crore has been approved for six projects from north eastern states. These projects are

worth Rs 48.87 crore, it said. The projects will create a processing capacity of 1,237 tonne daily and are spread across the states of Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Jammu and Kashmir, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, Assam, and Manipur.

These projects are likely to generate employment for nearly 10,000 people, it added.

Harley working to ensure smooth transition for India customers

NEW DELHI, 21 NOVEMBER

American cult-bike maker Harley-Davidson on Saturday said it is working with its new partner Hero MotoCorp to "ensure a smooth transition" for its customers in India, including after-sale services and warranty.

Last month, Harley-Davidson and Hero MotoCorp announced their partnership for the Indian market.

They have inked a distribution agreement, under which Hero MotoCorp will sell and service Harley-Davidson motorcycles.

It will also sell parts and accessories and general merchandise riding gear and apparel through a network of brand-exclusive Harley-Davidson dealers and Hero's existing dealership network in India.

Oil marketing companies (OMCs) on Saturday raised the retail price of petrol and diesel for the second consecutive day after a break of almost two months.

The price of petrol has increased by 15 paisa per litre in the national capital to Rs 81.38 from Rs 81.23 a litre on Friday. Similarly, retail price of diesel has been increased by 20 paisa per litre to Rs 70.88 per litre in Delhi.

With the price revision, the retail price of both the auto fuels has also been increased across the country but the level of increase is different across the cities due to variable taxation structure pursued by the states.

The increase in petrol and diesel prices was expected as global oil market has shown signs of firming up after positive news on successful introduction of a

coronavirus vaccine soon. Moreover, the demand for oil and falling inventory levels in major consuming markets has also firmed up crude price.

The benchmark Brent crude price is hovering close to \$45 a barrel for some time now while US WTI crude is also over \$42 a barrel. The two have remained firm since the beginning of the month after remaining soft in most parts of October at close to \$40 a barrel or less.

Sources in the oil marketing companies said that auto fuel hike on Friday and Saturday may not end just yet and the price of the two petroleum products may increase gradually over the next week as well.

This is required to keep OMCs from incurring losses on the sale of petrol and diesel.

While India has brought both petrol and diesel out from an earlier administra-

tive price regime and their retail prices are revised daily based on global movement product prices, holding the retail price revision for almost two months was surprising.

At a time when globally prices change by the hour, in India it could be kept static for such a long period.

Every dollar increase in price of crude results in retail price of petrol and diesel to be increased by up to 40 paisa per litre.

This would mean that the fuel prices should be up by at least Rs 1.20 per litre by now. However, oil companies have kept fuel prices static even when there was a need to revise it downwards last month.

That saving prevented OMCs from increasing petrol and diesel prices by a higher margin. Now that the option is exhausted, regular price revision could restart.

India will be among the top three economies of the world, he said.

India will be among the top three economies of the world,

he said.

The growth will create unprecedent opportunities and possibilities for young and talented people like you.

Indeed, most of these opportunities will be created by young entrepreneurs themselves.

I see amongst you as creators of successful startups," he said.

The future is very bright for India. This is our ancient nation that has faced many adversities in the past and has emerged stronger each time. This is because resilience is in the very DNA of Indian people and Indian culture.

In the post-COVID era, I clearly foresee explosive and exponential growth in the Indian economy," he said.

Within a couple of decades,

the

He said that if Indian mas-

ters the synergy between the

energy revolution and the

fourth industrial revolu-

tion, it will surely become

"one of the most pros-

perous nations of the

world, an India that guar-

antees prosperity and well-

being" for all Indians.

"The most important ques-

tion we face is this: can we pro-

duce growing amounts of

energy we need to sustain

our economies without harm-

ing the environment, without

failure to fulfil our climate

change obligations. We must

be prepared to answer these

questions with a very confi-

dent 'yes,'" he said.

Ambani praised the leadership of Gujarat under CM Vijay Rupani and said that the state has always been a trailblazer and showing a pioneering spirit.

He said the world acknowl-

edges that the new Gujarat has

paved a path for a new India,

with the visionary leader-

ship of Prime Minister Narendra

Modi that Gujarat received

being now available to the

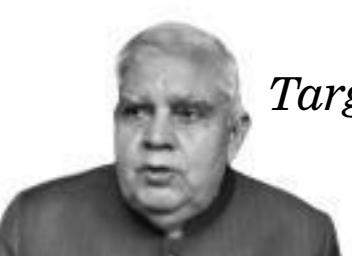
nation.

Around 2,600 students

received their degree certi-

cates at the convocation. More

than 40 scholars received



WEST BENGAL GOVERNOR JAGDEEP DHANKHAR

HITTING OUT AT THE STATE ADMINISTRATION OVER ALLEGED POLITICAL PARTISANSHIP

The Sunday Statesman
NEW DELHI, 22 NOVEMBER 2020

Custodial death & torture slur yet again on Puri police

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 21 NOVEMBER

The shocking instance of two alleged custodial deaths continued to cause outrage in Odisha and even worse were fresh allegations of custodial torture of five persons in Puri district.

The BJP led by its national spokesperson Sambit Patra held a rally in Puri today and met the family members of K Ramesh who is alleged to have died in custody.

It is not custodial death, it is custodial murder thousand times.

Five persons were rounded up by Pipili police on November 14 in connection with an attack on a police informer. Later on 19 Novem-

ber, they were produced in court, which remanded them to judicial custody.

Things took a controversial turn as jail authorities refused to lodge them in prison after finding the under-trials bearing injury marks on

► Fresh charge of 5 tortured in custody

► Govt orders DIG to probe torture

► Police release video of cremation in presence of family members

► BJP protests at Puri

► Uproar in Odisha Assembly

various parts of their bodies. They were later hospitalized, alleged Puri based lawyer Sarat Kumar Rayguru.

Jolted by the fresh charges, the govt ordered a probe. The DIG, Central Range, will probe the matter, said an

official release.

In the Odisha Assembly today, the BJP and Congress charged the prevalence of 'jungle raj' in the state. Transfer of policemen is an eye-wash, cases should be registered against errant cops, said the Opposition.

Congress leader Narasingha Mishra said the Odisha police seems to have been inspired by their counterparts in Uttar Pradesh. Referring to the Hathras incident, Mishra said even at Puri the body of the victim was not handed over to the family and cremation was done hurriedly at the dead of the night.

Leader of Opposition, Pradip Naik demanded suspension of all other business

and a motion on the custodial death be taken up for discussion in the Assembly.

It may be mentioned here that the government, in a late night move yesterday, had transferred Puri SP Akhiléswar Singh and attached him to police headquarters in Cuttack. A sub inspector and two constables were also suspended by Odisha police in a damage control exercise. The inspector of Birmitrapur police station was also suspended in another custodial death case.

While K Ramesh of Puri was the victim in Puri, Tariq Salim died in Birmitrapur of Sundargarh district after being arrested by the police.

Ruckus in Odisha Assembly over closure of schools

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 21 NOVEMBER

called an all-party meeting to try and resolve the deadlock.

The all-party decided that the matter will be discussed in the Assembly tomorrow.

Outside the Assembly, Minister Samir Ranjan Dash told media persons that the proposal is to close 7772 schools and not 14,000 as is being alleged by the Opposition.

Dash claimed that it was rationalisation of the structure to ensure quality education. There are several schools with less than 20 students and they can easily be accommodated in schools within two km radius. The teachers will be transferred to nearby schools.

Meawhile reports from Keonjhar, Bhadrak and a few other districts said students, guardians and teachers staged protests on the streets against the move to close schools.

Orissa High Court notice to govt and information commission

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 21 NOVEMBER

the State Government had shut the RTI cell at the State Secretariat and restricted entry of the people into the secretariat. Though lockdown was withdrawn, the government is yet to reopen the cell. Such step, which is arbitrary in nature, amounts to flagrant violations of Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution of India as because of the Right to Information", the petition filed before the High Court stated.

But the Odisha government by shutting the RTI cell at the secretariat has resorted to deny information to common people with deliberate intent, the petition contended.

"During COVID lockdown,



Traditional martial art form by 'paika's' performing at the late Dr Harekrishna Mahatab jayanti today. Andhra Pradesh Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan, Odisha Assembly Speaker S N Patra, Minister Arun Sahu and several others attended the brief function organised by veteran Congress MLA Suresh Kumar Routray.

Odisha Covid-19 cases declining, but fatalities continue to rise

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 21 NOVEMBER

The number of active COVID 19 cases has been on the decline in Odisha amidst a spike in the case fatality rate.

Odisha currently has 7,748 active cases, which accounts for 2.47 percent of total positive cases registered in the state. At present the country has 4.86 percent active cases out of the total caseload.

With 17 people dying of the virus infection on Saturday, the case fatality rate

stood at 2.18 percent as against the overall national CFR average of 1.47 percent.

Maintaining the virus infections' declining curve, Odisha on Saturday reported 778 fresh cases with the COVID-19 caseload mounting to 3,13,323 while 17 fresh fatalities pushed the death toll to 1,625.

The state's contagion positivity rate which hovered around 9 to 10 percent earlier last month has now dropped to 1.67 percent in the past 24 hours.

Of the detected posi-

tive cases on Friday, Angul district reported the highest number of new cases at 68, followed by Sundargarh at 64 and Khurda at 61.

Of the infected persons, 6.7 percent are men while 33 percent are women. The maximum number of infected persons were from 15-50 age-group with the tally at 1,60,344.

The state's recovery rate (96.99%).

A total of 55,18,644 sample tests have been conducted in the state so far, including 47,464 on Friday.

Railway to build 'Heritage Museum' at Baripada



uary, 2006 when Laloo Prasad Yadav flagged off the first train to undertake the journey from Baripada to Rupsa.

There were two narrow gauge engines lying in the open near Baripada railway station.

Abhijit Kumar Ram, president of Mayurbhanj Railway Traveler Forum and former Zonal Railway Users Consultative Committee expressed his pleasure over the restoration of blue chip railway engines, their bogies and workshop by the department concerned of South Eastern Railway.

Converted into broad gauge, Baripada-Rupsa railway line was inaugurated on 29 Jan-

Naveen thanks Jharkhand CM for dam project

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 21 NOVEMBER

The Odisha CM said his government will extend full cooperation for construction of the dam and reimburse Odisha's share of the cost.

Subarnarekha-Kharkai Basin as per the 1978 tripartite agreement among the erstwhile Bihar (now Jharkhand), Odisha and West Bengal.

The Odisha CM said his government will extend full cooperation for construction of the dam and reimburse Odisha's share of the cost.

Odisha government has paid Rs 1026.91 crore to the

Jharkhand government. Stating that the land acquisition and Resettlement & Rehabilitation (R&R) work in Odisha portion have been taken up, the CM said 51,96 acres of the total 5283 acres has already been acquired. Rehabilitation assistance has been provided to 1268 persons.

He pointed out that though the Chandil dam across river Subarnarekha has been completed, water has been stored up to 181.50 metres during monsoon against the FRL of 192 metres. As the full storage capacity has not been utilised in the dam during monsoon season, Odisha is facing floods.

11 online services for MSME's launched

BHUBANESWAR, 21 NOVEMBER

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik dedicated 11 online services of MSME Department to the public today under the 5T initiative.

The 11 online services of MSME Department have been launched in addition to 12 online services which are already in-vogue. The services include issuance of registration certificates, inspection of pre and post delivery reports, export related issues, rate contracts etc.

Bhubaneswar clocks 46 new COVID cases

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 21 NOVEMBER

Odisha's capital city Bhubaneswar on Saturday clocked 46 fresh COVID-19 positive cases, the second lowest daily virus infection since past four months while the active cases have dropped to less than 2%, marking a steady slowdown of the pandemic.

Notwithstanding drastic fall in infection, the detection of almost 79% cases from local contacts was the disconcerting feature of the day. Of the total tally of positive cases, 592 were active cases, accounting for 1.94% of confirmed positive cases detected in the capital city so far while 29,603 have recovered from the contagion till date. A total of 202 patients from the city have succumbed to the virus.

Bhubaneswar has reported an impressive recovery rate of almost 97.32% with 68 patients getting cured of the disease on Saturday.

Railway to build 'Heritage Museum' at Baripada

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BARIPADA, 21 NOVEMBER

Demand of a 'Heritage Museum' for the restoration of blue chip engines, their bogies and workshop by people here will soon be fulfilled as the South Eastern Railway had floated a tender for the erection of a museum.

The cost for the project is Rs. 1,01,55,993.28 and work is to be completed within eight months of award of tender, said official sources here.

The Rupsa-Baripada-Ban-griposi narrow gauge line was started by the erstwhile ruler of Mayurbhanj Maharaja Sri Ram Chandra Bhanji Deo. The Maharaja had laid the narrow gauge railway line in 1904.

The first section of 52 km route from Rupsa to Baripada was inaugurated by the then Lieutenant Governor of Bengal Sir Andrew Fraser on 20th January, 1905.

The line was known as 'Blue Chip Railway'.

Rupsa railway junction was under the erstwhile Bengal Nagpur Railway's Broad Gauge line and presently with

NGO moves court for release of tigress 'Sundari'

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
ANGUL, 21 NOVEMBER

DFO of Satkosia, Ramasamy to attend the court next week on behalf of the chief wildlife warden, according to Satkosia tiger reserve (STR) field director Pradip Raj Karate.

Sundari which has been kept in an enclosure is fine and is taking live prey. She is under constant monitoring by the forest staff, said officials.

Both, the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) and Odisha government have repeatedly requested the Mad-

hya Pradesh government (MP) to take back Sundari, informed the officers.

It may be recalled that the Odisha government in consultation with the NTCA, WII and Tiger experts had embarked on the first ever wild to wild translocation of tigers. Three pairs of tigers from MP were to be released in Satkosia Tiger Reserve in Odisha.

Finally it was tranquilized in November 2018 and was put in the enclosure. Since then it has been staying there.

NEED TO KNOW

HOSPITALS

22586262, 22585007

- AIIMS 26588500, 26588900
- Moolchand Medcity (formerly Hospital) 42000000 8-24-hour Chemist Shop 42000444
- Vidyasagar Institute for Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences 26924300, 26924304
- Batra Hospital & Medical Research Centre 29051280, 29955747
- Deen Dayal Upadhyay 25496320, 25494403
- Guru Tegh Bahadur

- ISBT (General Inquiry): 23868836, 23865181
- SMS Inquiry Nos. 57886, 54959, 567647

- Roadways 2371743, 23325320

- Port 011-25671580; Terminal I-B 25671579, 1800180388
- Rajasthan Roadways 23864470
- U.P. Roadways 23868709

- JET AIRWAYS Flight Inquiry and Reservation 39841111
- Emirates Flight Inquiry and Reservation 43513187

- Air Canada Flight Inquiry and Reservation 41528181
- Indigo Airlines New Delhi City Office 43513185, Call Center 09910383838, 18001803838, Reservation 23466262 (City)
- Guru Tegh Bahadur

- Kuwait Airways Flight Inquiry and Reservation 23354373

- Port 011-25671580; Terminal I-B 25671579, 1800180388
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- Emirates Flight Inquiry and Reservation 43513187
- Air Canada Flight Inquiry and Reservation 41528181
- Indigo Airlines New Delhi City Office 43513185, Call Center 09910383838, 18001803838, Reservation 23466262 (City)
- Guru Tegh Bahadur

- Port 011-25671580; Terminal I-B 25671579, 1800180388
- JET AIRWAYS Flight Inquiry and Reservation 39841111
- Emirates Flight Inquiry and Reservation 43513187
- Air Canada Flight Inquiry and Reservation 41528181
- Indigo Airlines New Delhi City Office 43513185, Call Center 09910383838, 18001803838, Reservation 23466262 (City)
- Guru Tegh Bahadur

- Port 011-2567158

Slashing the country's overseas budget would be...
moral, strategic and political mistakeFORMER UK PRIME MINISTER DAVID CAMERON
WARNING AGAINST OVERSEAS BUDGET CUTS

World

WEATHER

CITY	MAX(°C)	MIN(°C)
SINGAPORE	31	25 R
HONG KONG	24	21 H
TOKYO	19	8 CL
LONDON	13	9 H
DUBAI	29	22 H
SAN FRANCISCO	18	9 S
NEW YORK	17	8 S
MOSCOW	1	-3 H

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

THUMBNAILS



Malaysian Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin shows the "APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040" copy at the virtually held Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation economic leaders' meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. IANS

Prison break in Lebanon: Nearly 70 inmates broke out of a prison in Lebanon Saturday after smashing their cell doors and attacking prison guards, police said. According to a police statement, five of the escaped inmates died when a car they stole while fleeing crashed into a tree during the chase. AP

Thai students rally for reforms: Secondary school students in Thailand's capital rallied Saturday for educational and political reforms, defying government threats to crack down with legal action against the country's high-profile protest movement. AP

Protests staged across France: Rights campaigners and journalists organisations staged street protests in Paris and other French cities on Saturday against a security bill that they say would be a violation of the freedom of information. The proposed measure would create a new criminal offence of publishing images of police officers with intent to cause them harm. AP

Indian writers feature in 2020 '100 Notable Books' selected by NYT

NEW YORK, 21 NOVEMBER

Critically-acclaimed books by three Indian writers have featured among this year's 100 notable books list of *The New York Times* that also includes former US president Barack Obama's newly released memoir 'A Promised Land'.

Editors of The New York Times Book Review selected 100 "notable fiction, poetry and nonfiction" works from around the world.

The prestigious list also includes the work of fiction 'A Burning' by India-born Megha Majumdar.

"A brazen act of terrorism in an Indian metropolis sets the plot of this propulsive debut novel in motion, and lands an innocent young bystander in jail. With impressive assurance and insight, Majumdar unfolds a timely story about the ways power is wielded to manipulate and crush the powerless," the report said of the book.

'Djin Patrol on the Purple Line' by Deepa Anapara, who grew up in Kerala, also features on the list.

"This first novel by an Indian journalist probes the secrets of a big-city shantytown as a 9-year-old boy tries to solve the mystery of a classmate's disappearance. Anapara impressively inhabits the inner worlds of children lost to their families, and of others who escape by a thread," the lead daily said.

Samantha Subramanian's 'ADominant Character: The Radical Science and Restless Politics of J. B. S. Haldane' is a nonfiction work. PTI

Trump seeks to leverage power of office

Trump's efforts amount to an unprecedented bid by a sitting president to maintain his grasp on power by delegitimising his opponent's win

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, 21 NOVEMBER



President Donald Trump sought to leverage the power of the Oval Office on Friday in an extraordinary attempt to block President-elect Joe Biden's victory, but his pleas to Michigan lawmakers to overturn the will of their constituents appeared to have left them unanswered.

Trump summoned a delegation of the battleground state's Republican leadership, including the Senate majority leader and House speaker, in an apparent extension of his efforts to persuade judges and election officials to set aside Biden's 154,000-vote margin of victory and grant

Trump the state's electors. It came amid mounting criticism that Trump's futile efforts to subvert the results of the 2020 election could do long-lasting damage to democratic traditions.

Trump's efforts extended to other states that Biden carried as well, amounting to an

unprecedented attempt by a sitting president to maintain his grasp on power, or in failure, to delegitimise his opponent's victory in the eyes of his army of supporters.

Rick Hasen, an election law expert and professor who has been meticulously chronicling the 2020 race, wrote that there would be "rioting" in the streets if an effort was made to set aside the vote in Michigan, calling it tantamount to an attempted coup.

"We should worry because this is profoundly antidemocratic and is delegitimising the victory of Joe Biden in a free and fair election," Hasen wrote on his blog. "It is profoundly depressing we still have to discuss this. But it is extremely unlikely to lead to any differ-

ent result for president."

In a joint statement after the White House meeting, Michigan Senate Majority Leader Mike Shirkey and House Speaker Lee Chatfield said allegations of fraud should be investigated but indicated they were unmoved by Trump's claims thus far. "We have not yet been made aware of any information that would change the outcome of the election in Michigan and as legislative leaders, we will follow the law and follow the normal process regarding Michigan's electors, just as we have said throughout this election," they said.

"The candidates who win the most votes win elections and Michigan's electoral votes," they added, saying they used

Michigan's elections agency on Friday recommended that the November 3 results be certified next week by state canvassers, a decision that would bless Joe Biden's victory over President Donald Trump but likely not cool partisan strife over the vote.

The recommendation was posted online with the formal Monday meeting notice of the Board of State

the meeting with Trump to press him for more pandemic aid money for their state.

Canvassers.

On Tuesday, GOP canvassers in Michigan's largest county, Wayne, refused to certify local results but then changed their position after hours of intense public criticism over Zoom. Then after talking to Trump, they said a day later they were rescinding their previous vote but it was too late.

The state Bureau of Elections said all of Michigan's 83 counties have sent their certified results to Lansing.

The president on Friday again falsely claimed victory, declaring as an aside

a White House announcement on drug pricing, "I won, by the way, but you know, we'll find that out."

Trump's roughly hourlong meeting with the Michigan legislators came days after he personally called two local canvassing board officials who had refused to certify the results in Wayne County, Michigan's most populous county and one that overwhelmingly favored Biden. The two GOP officials eventually agreed to certify the results. But following Trump's call, they said they had second thoughts.

The Board of State Canvassers is to meet Monday to certify the statewide outcome and it was unclear whether Republican members of that panel would similarly balk.

Biden could announce Cabinet picks next week

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON, 21 NOVEMBER



President-elect Joe Biden is moving quickly to fill out his administration and could name top leaders for his Cabinet as early as next week.

Biden told reporters on Thursday that he's already decided on who will lead the Treasury Department. That pick, along with his nominee for secretary of state, may be announced before Thanksgiving, according to people close to the transition who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations.

The Cabinet announcements could be released in tranches, with groups of nominees focused on a specific top area, like the economy, national security or public health,

being announced at once.

Such a move is intended to deliver the message that Biden is intent on preparing for the presidency even as President Donald Trump refuses to concede and attempts to subvert the election results in key states. Trump's roadblocks have undermined core democratic principles such as the peaceful transfer of power and are especially problematic because Biden will take office in January amid the

worst public health crisis in more than a century.

"It's a huge impact. And each day it gets worse, meaning a week ago, it wasn't that big of a deal. This week, it's starting to get to be a bigger deal. Next week, it'll be bigger," said David Marchick, director of the Center for Presidential Transition at the nonpartisan Partnership for Public Service. "Every new day that's lost has a larger impact than the day before."

Still, Biden's transition is progressing, with the president-elect holding frequent virtual meetings from his home in Wilmington, Delaware, and a music venue downtown. At this point, Biden is deeply involved in choosing his Cabinet, a process described by one person as similar to fitting puzzle pieces

together.

In putting together the 15-person team, Biden is facing demands from multiple, competing interests, as well as the political realities of navigating a closely divided Senate.

He'll have to find the right mix of nominees to appease progressives demanding evidence he's committed to major reforms; fulfill his promise to build the most diverse government in modern history; and pass through a more difficult than expected nomination process with a slim margin of control for either party, depending on the outcome of two Georgia Senate runoffs in January.

Those considerations appear to be already informing Biden's calculus for secretary of state.

Biden, Harris meet Pelosi

WASHINGTON, 21 NOVEMBER

US President-elect Joe Biden and his deputy Kamala Harris have met House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Minority Leader Senator Chuck Schumer and discussed their shared priorities to provide immediate help to working families and small businesses struggling due to Covid-19.

During the meeting, Biden raised his agenda for the first 100 days of his presidency, including taking aggressive action to contain Covid-19. PTI

sharing of information between the outgoing Trump team and the incoming Biden team, Twitter said, adding that all existing tweets on those accounts will be archived and Twitter will transfer the accounts reset to zero tweets to the Biden White House that day.

"Twitter is actively preparing to support the transition of White House institutional Twitter accounts on January 20th, 2021," Twitter spokesperson Nick Pacilio told Politico in an email.

"As we did for the presidential transition in 2017, this process is being done in close consultation with the National Archives and Records Administration," Pacilio said.

Tibetan political leader visits White House for first time in 6 decades

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WASHINGTON, 21 NOVEMBER



The head of the Tibetan government in exile has visited the White House for the first time in six decades and met the newly appointed senior US official on Tibetan issues, the Central Tibetan Administration said on Saturday, a development that could enrage Beijing, which has accused the US of trying to interfere in China's internal affairs.

Dr Lobsang Sangay entered the United States White House on Friday, a historic feat. This is the first time in the last 6 decades the head of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) has been invited into the White House, the CTA said in a statement.

"It's a huge honour to be the first political head of the Central Tibetan Administration to formally enter the White House," Sangay said in a tweet.

"Today's visit amounts to an acknowledgement of both the democratic system of the CTA and its political head... This unprecedented meeting perhaps will set an optimistic tone for CTA participation with US officials and be more formalised in the future.

China has criticised Destro's appointment, saying it amounted to political manipulation aimed at destabilising Tibet.

Sangay, the President of the

MEMORIES



A man pays respect at a memorial dedicated to people who died in clashes with security forces, at the Independent Square (Maidan) in Kyiv, Ukraine on Saturday. AGENCE

US troops pulling out too soon: Abdullah

ASSOCIATED PRESS
ANKARA, 21 NOVEMBER

by Australian authorities to pursue the perpetrators.

Abdullah spoke in Ankara where he sought Turkey's support for negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban that are taking place in Qatar to find an end to decades of war.

The talks have made little progress so far.

This is the decision of the US administration and we respect it," Abdullah said of the US decision this week to reduce troops levels in Afghanistan. Our preference would have been that with the conditions improving, this should have taken place.

Afghanistan's chief peace envoy Abdullah Abdullah said Saturday that the US decision to begin withdrawing troops from Afghanistan has come too soon, as his country is still struggling to attain peace and security amid an ongoing conflict.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Abdullah also described as shocking an Australian military report that found evidence that elite Australian troops unlawfully killed 39 Afghan prisoners.

He welcomed a decision

With silence, GOP enables Trump's risky endgame

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, 21 NOVEMBER

Republicans in Congress are engaged in a risky but calculated bet that once President Donald Trump has exhausted his legal challenges to the election, he will come to grips with his loss to President-elect Joe Biden. But the opposite is happening.

As one Trump court case after another falls by the wayside, Trump is doubling down on efforts to disrupt the election outcome. Rather than accept the reality of the vote, the president is using the weight of his office to try to squash it.

He summoned Michigan state lawmakers to the White House on Friday after personally reaching out to GOP officials ahead of next week's deadline to certify election results. Others from Pennsylvania may similarly be invited in.

Republicans are standing by as it all unfolds. What started as a GOP strategy to give the president the time and space he needed to process his defeat is now spiralling into an unprecedented challenge to the election outcome like nothing since the Civil War.

This is the point where the Republican Party's letting Trump's pout go on too long, said presidential historian Douglas Brinkley, a professor at Rice University in Texas.

"It's making future stars of the Republican Party look tiny and small," Brinkley said. "All of these senators are going to carry a dark mark on their legacy for coddling Trump after he lost."

Republicans started with a simple premise: If Trump had concerns about fraudulent voting, as he widely claimed, go to court and make the case. It was a way to buy time, give Trump a chance to bring evidence, and perhaps convince some of his most ardent supporters of the outcome.

But there's no guarantee their gamble will work. Rather than glide toward that outcome, Trump is digging in moving beyond the GOP argument that it's about counting legal votes and halting illegal ones to more broadly trying to overturn results.

Trump has talked openly about stacking the Electoral College, where electors are typically determined by the outcome in the states, with his backers.

"I won, by the way," Trump said on Friday at the White House. "We'll find that out." Almost none of the top Republican leaders in the House or Senate responded directly on Friday when asked by The Associated Press if they believe the states have any reason not to certify their election results.

Rape, abuses in palm oil fields linked to top beauty brands

ASSOCIATED PRESS
SUMATRA (INDONESIA), 21 NOVEMBER



With his hand clamped tightly over her mouth, she could not scream, the 16-year-old girl recalls and no one was around to hear her anyway.

She describes how her boss raped her amid the tall trees on an Indonesian palm oil plantation that feeds into some of the world's best-known cosmetic brands. He then put an ax to her throat and warned her: Do not tell.

At another plantation, a woman named Ola complains of fevers, coughing and nose bleeds after years of spraying dangerous pesticides with no protective gear. Making just \$2 a day, with no health benefits, she can't afford to see a

doctor.

Hundreds of miles away, Ita, a young wife, mourns the two babies she lost in the third trimester. She regularly lugged loads several times her weight throughout both pregnancies, fearing she would be fired if she did not.

These are the invisible women of the palm oil industry, among the millions of daughters, mothers and grandmothers who toil on vast plantations across Indonesia and neighboring Malaysia, which together produce 85 per cent of the world's most versatile

vegetable oil.

Palm oil is found in everything from potato chips and pills to pet food, and also ends up in the supply chains of some of the biggest names in the USD 530 billion beauty business, including L'Oral, Unilever, Procter & Gamble, Avon and Johnson & Johnson, helping women around the world feel pampered and beautiful.

The Associated Press conducted the first comprehensive investigation focusing on the brutal treatment of women in the



Big pharma ran millions of dollars of negative advertisements against me during the campaign which I won by the way but you know we will find that out, almost 74 million votes

AS HE REFUSED TO ACKNOWLEDGE JOE BIDEN AS THE WINNER OF THE US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

The Sunday Statesman
NEW DELHI, 22 NOVEMBER 2020

THUMBNAILS

Mortar shells hit Kabul residential areas: About 25 mortar shells slammed into different parts of Kabul on Saturday, killing at least eight people and wounding 31 others, an official said. The shells were fired from two cars, Interior Ministry spokesperson Tariq Arian said. No one took immediate responsibility for the early morning attack that also targeted the posh Wazir Akbar Khan area of Kabul.

AP

Author Jan Morris dies at 94: Jan Morris, the celebrated journalist, historian, world traveler and fiction writer who in middle age became a pioneer of the transgender movement, has died at 94. Morris died in Wales on Friday morning. Her agent Sophie Scarfe confirmed her death. Morris had been in failing health.

AP

Donald Trump Jr. tests positive: Donald Trump Jr., the eldest son of US President Donald Trump, has tested positive for Covid-19, his spokesperson said, latest in the First Family to have been infected by the deadly virus. He has quarantined himself.

PTI

Death on eve of Brazil's Black Consciousness Day sparks fury

RIO DE JANEIRO, 21 NOVEMBER

A Black man died after being beaten by supermarket security guards in the Brazilian city of Porto Alegre on the eve of Friday's Black Consciousness Day observations, sparking outrage after videos of the incident circulated on social media.

A short clip showed one guard restraining Joo Alberto de Silveira Freitas just outside the doors of a Carrefour supermarket while the other pummeled him with repeated blows to the face. A store employee stood to the side filming. Other clips, shot afterward, showed a guard kneeling atop Freitas' back.

Dozens of protesters entered a Carrefour in Brazil's capital, Brasilia, on Friday morning, chanting Black lives matter! One held a sign reading: Don't shop at Carrefour. You could die. Inside another Carrefour in Rio de Janeiro, protesters shouted "Carrefour Killer" as a black man lay still atop the conveyor belt of a checkout. They forced the store's closure. In Sao Paulo, protesters smashed the front window of a Carrefour, scattered goods from shelves all over the store's floor and set a fire that employees hurried to extinguish.

Carrefour released a statement lamenting Freitas' brutal death, and said it will end its contract with the security company, fire the store manager who was on duty and close the Porto Alegre store out of respect for the victim.

The men who beat Freitas have been detained and are being investigated for homicide due to the victim's asphyxiation and his inability to defend himself, said Nadine Anflo, police officer.

AP

G-20 summit: Saudi urges united response to virus

Saudi Arabia is the host of the virtual G-20 summit this year, bringing together leaders from the world's greatest economies

ASSOCIATED PRESS
DUBAI, 21 NOVEMBER

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The pandemic, which has claimed more than 1.37 million lives worldwide, has offered the G-20 an opportunity to prove how such bodies can facilitate international cooperation in crises but has also underscored their shortcomings.

The G-20's member-countries represent around 85 per cent of the world's economic output and three-quarters of international trade.

We have a duty to rise to the challenge together during this summit and give a strong message of hope and reassurance, King Salman said in his opening remarks.

The kingdom, which assumed the G-20 presidency this year, is the host of the virtual summit that is bringing together leaders from the world's richest and most developed countries.

opened economies, such as the US, China, India, Turkey, France, the UK and Brazil, among others. President Donald Trump is among those expected to participate in the closed-door virtual sessions that are taking place Saturday and Sunday.

The Covid-19 pandemic has been an unprecedented shock that affected the entire world within a short period of time, causing global economic and social losses, said the Saudi monarch, who convened G-20 heads of state for an emergency meeting in March as the coronavirus was fast-spreading around the world.

At the time, the recorded global death toll from the virus had just climbed past 22,000. G-20 leaders vowed to share information and the material needed for research, to exchange epidemiological and clinical data, and to strengthen health systems.

They also promised to work together to increase funding for vaccine research.

While quick research and sharing of scientific information for the development of Covid-19 tests and vaccines has happened, individual G-20 countries have mostly focused on securing their own vaccine supplies.

King Salman urged G-20

Singapore-Hong Kong air travel bubble postponed

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
SINGAPORE, 21 NOVEMBER

Singapore and Hong Kong on Saturday postponed a planned air travel bubble amid a spike in coronavirus infections in Hong Kong.

Flights were originally scheduled to start from Sunday but have been suspended as the pandemic in Hong Kong escalates.

Under the original deal which was announced in mid-October, the bubble flights will be suspended for two weeks if the seven-day moving average of the

leaders to provide support to developing countries in a coordinated manner.

The Saudi monarch touted G-20 efforts to inject more than USD 1 trillion into the global economy this year as stimuli to support businesses and the most vulnerable.

He also commended the group for extending protections to those most impacted by the global economic recession, including a G-20 decision

daily number of unlinked local Covid-19 cases is more than five for either Singapore or Hong Kong.

Travel bubble has been postponed, Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development Edward Yau said, adding that the two governments will announce in early December as to when the flights will restart.

For the passengers affected, there are the usual arrangements for a refund by travel agents.

Hong Kong reported 43 new coronavirus cases on Saturday.

Breakthroughs on Covid vaccines offer ray of hope, says UN chief Guterres

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has described the recent breakthroughs towards development of Covid-19 vaccines as a "ray of hope that needs to reach everyone and called on the G-20 nations to support the global collaboration to accelerate development of coronavirus treatments and drugs.

This week, global drug-makers Pfizer and BioNTech said their Covid-19 vaccine candidate is 95 percent effective, including in adults over 65 years of age. The recent breakthroughs on Covid-19 vaccines offer a ray of hope. But that ray of hope needs to reach everyone, Guterres said.

Asserting that "solidarity is indeed survival, Guterres said that the Access to Covid-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator and its COVAX Facility are the vehicles to get nations there.

Based on current projections, the companies expect to produce globally up to 50 million vaccine doses in 2020 and up to 1.3 billion doses by the end of 2021. The major announcement came just days after Moderna said its virus vaccine has an efficacy rate of 94.5 per cent.

Iran closes biz, curtails travel amid virus surge

ASSOCIATED PRESS
TEHRAN, 21 NOVEMBER

Iran on Saturday shuttered businesses and curtailed travel between its major cities, including the capital of Tehran, as it grapples with the worst outbreak of the coronavirus in the Mideast region.

Top Iranian officials downplayed the risks posed by the virus outbreak, before recently urging the public to follow measures like wearing masks and avoiding unnecessary travel.

Iran has recorded daily death tolls of above 430 over the past five days. The Iranian Health Ministry said on Saturday that the total number of confirmed cases has risen to above 840,000.

Iranian newspapers said Saturday that the deputy health minister in charge of research, Reza Malekzadeh, resigned from his post in reaction to recent remarks by the minister of health Saeed Namaki, who said government-led research projects were not successfully addressing the current needs of the ministry. In reply, Malekzadeh in his resignation letter criticised public mismanagement of the virus outbreak by the minister.

Guatemala V-P calls on President to resign with him

ASSOCIATED PRESS
GUATEMALA CITY, 21 NOVEMBER

Guatemala's vice president told President Alejandro Giammattei that both men should resign their positions for the good of the country following the approval of a budget cutting educational and health spending that caused a public outcry.

We both resign, Vice President Guillermo Castillo said he told Giammattei Friday. He had suggested vetoing the approved budget, firing government officials and attempt more outreach to various sectors around the country.

Giammattei had not responded publicly and Castillo did not share the president's reaction to his proposal. Castillo said he would not resign alone.

Discontent had been build-

ing over the new 2021 budget on social media and then generated clashes with police Friday in front of the congress. A large protest march was scheduled for Saturday.

The spending plan was negotiated in secret and approved by the congress before dawn Wednesday. It also passed while the country was distracted by the fallout of two consecutive hurricanes that brought torrential rains to much of Central America. The Roman Catholic Church leadership in Guatemala called on Giammattei to veto the budget on Friday.

It was a devious blow to the people because Guatemala was between natural disasters, there are signs of government corruption, clientelism in the humanitarian aid, said Jordan Rodas, country's human rights prosecutor.

Terror financing case: Pakistan court jails two more aides of JuD chief Hafiz Saeed

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LAHORE, 21 NOVEMBER

A Pakistani court has jailed two more aides of Mumbai attack mastermind and Jamat-ud-Dawah (JuD) chief Hafiz Saeed in a terror financing case.

The Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) of Lahore on Friday handed down six and a half years of imprisonment to JuD leaders Muhammad Ashraf and Lucman Shah, respectively.

ATC Judge Arshad Hussain Bhutta also imposed a fine of Rs 10,000 on each of them.

On Thursday, the 70-year-old JuD chief was sentenced to 10 years of imprisonment in two terror cases by ATC Lahore. Saeed's two close aides - Zafar Iqbal and Yahya Mujahid - were sentenced to 10 and a half years each, while

his brother-in-law Abdul Rehman Makki was sentenced to six months of imprisonment in the same cases.

Saeed, a UN designated terrorist whom the US has placed a USD 10 million bounty on, was arrested on 17 July last year in the terror financing cases. He was sentenced to 11 years in jail by an anti-terrorism court in February. The JuD chief is lodged at Lahore's high-security Kot Lakhpat jail.

Saeed is wanted in India for planning the 2008 Mumbai attacks when 10 Pakistani terrorists killed 166 people, including six Americans, and injured hundreds others.

Paris-based global terror financing watchdog Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is instrumental in pushing Pakistan to take measures against terrorists roaming freely in Pakistan

Australia will respond 'very seriously' to war crime allegations: PM Morrison

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MELBOURNE, 21 NOVEMBER

Australia will respond "very seriously" to war crime allegations against its defence personnel, Prime Minister Scott Morrison has assured the people of Afghanistan, a day after a long-awaited military report said the country's special forces unlawfully killed 39 people in the war-torn nation.

According to the report released on Thursday, there is "credible information" that at least 19 serving and former Australian special forces allegedly committed up to 39 unlawful murders during the conflict in Afghanistan.

The four-year inquiry by New South Wales Court Of Appeal Justice Paul Brereton found the Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel were involved in the serious crimes, either carrying out the offences or at least being "accessories" to the incidents.

Responding to the report during an interview to Sky News here on Friday, Morrison said: "We will take this very seriously and we'll deal with it after a long-awaited military report said the country's special forces unlawfully killed 39 people in the war-torn nation.

"That stands. And firmly. It stands for a number of reasons. The first of which, the obvious great acts of our Defence forces over many, many years," he said.

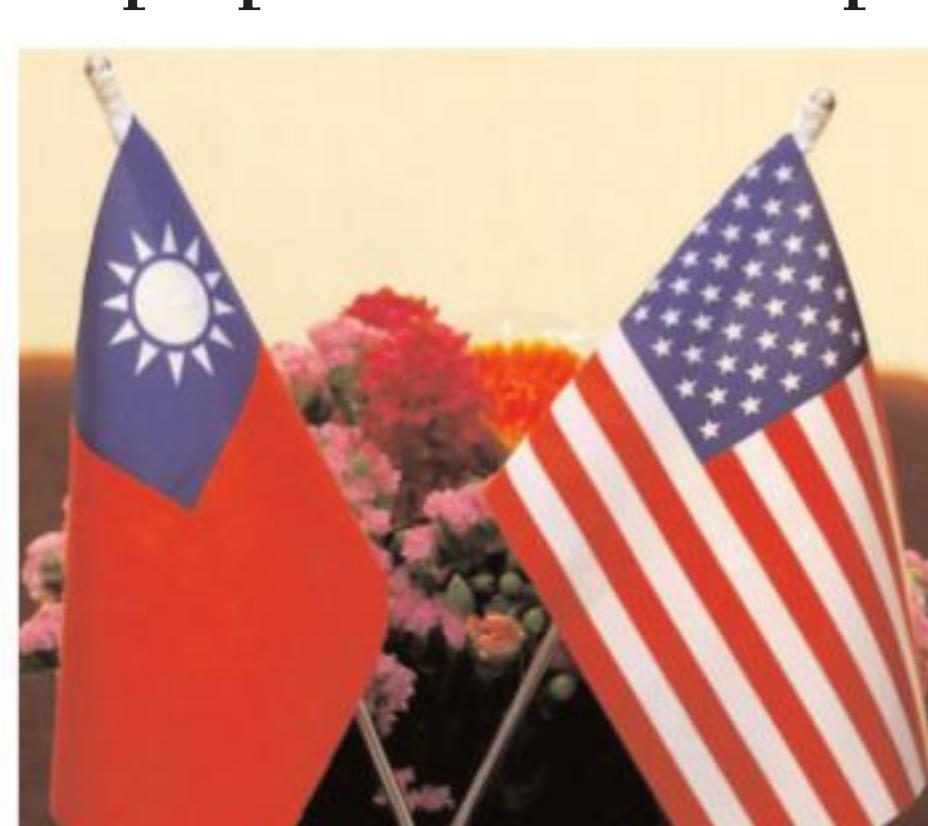
"And their selflessness, service, and the choice that is made by serving men and women to pull on that uniform and to serve their country in the way they do," he said.

According to the Australian media, the latest report has been based on over 400 interviews with soldiers and officers from the SAS, a special forces unit, Commandos, Afghan villagers, special forces interpreters and support staff.

The inquiry found evidence some Australian troops in Afghanistan carried "throw-downs" such as weapons, radios and grenades not issued by the ADF but planted next to the bodies of Afghan civilians to suggest they were a "legitimate target" in any post-incident investigations.

US, Taiwan step up economic cooperation in new dialogue

ASSOCIATED PRESS
TAIPEI, 21 NOVEMBER



strong, but it continues to deepen and grow, said Brent Christensen, director of the American Institute in Taipei, the de-facto embassy.

The US-Taiwan economic dialogue signifies that not only is the United States-Taiwan economic relationship

nothave a free trade agreement. However, Taiwan in August announced the easing of restrictions on imports of American beef and pork, lowering a trade barrier for U.S.

The talks Friday were held

partly in person in Washington, led by U.S. Undersecretary of State Keith Krach and Taiwanese minister without portfolio John Deng, with attendants from the American Institute in Taipei and the Taiwan government also joining in virtually.

Krach is one of two senior White House officials to visit Taiwan this year, a month after Health Secretary Alex Azar became the highest-level U.S. Cabinet official to hold talks in Taipei since the U.S. switched formal relations from Taiwan to China in 1979. China responded with a show of force, flying multiple fighter jets across the Taiwan Strait toward the island during both visits.

The U.S. has also started selling more advanced weaponry to Taiwan under the Trump administration, including a \$2.37 billion sale of Harpoon missile systems announced in October.

'She fled Ethiopia's fighting. Now she warns of Catastrophe'

ASSOCIATED PRESS
NAIROBI, KENYA

Shaken by the gunfire erupting around her town in Ethiopia's northern Tigray region, the woman decided to get out. She joined a long line at the local government office for the paperwork needed to travel. But when she reached the official, he told her she had waited her time.

"This is for people who are volunteering to fight," he said.

As Ethiopia's government wages war in its Tigray region and seeks to arrest its defiant leaders, who regard the federal government as illegitimate after a falling-out over power, the fighting that could destabilize the Horn of Africa is hidden from outside view. Com-

munications are severed, roads blocked and airports closed. But as one of the few hundred people who were evacuated this week from Tigray, the woman in an interview offered rare details of anger, desperation and growing hunger as both sides reject international calls for dialogue, or even a humanitarian corridor in the third week of deadly fighting. The United Nations says food and other essentials "will soon be exhausted, putting millions at risk."

"I am telling you, people will slowly start to die," she said. Not all of her account could be verified. But the description of her passage through the Tigray capital, Mekele, to Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa, fit with others that have trick-

led out from aid workers, diplomats, a senior university official and some of the more than 30,000 refugees who have fled into Sudan after the fighting began Nov. 4. She was connected with the AP by a foreign evacuee.

As borders, roads and airports swiftly closed after Ethiopia's prime minister announced that Tigray forces had attacked a military base, the woman felt torn. She had family in Addis Ababa and wanted to be with them.aaa

Banks had closed, but loved ones gave her enough money to travel to Mekele. As she drove, she squeezed her car through makeshift barriers of stones piled up by local youth. She said she did not see fighting.

In Mekele, she met with

friends around the university. She was shocked by what she saw. "It was a panic," she said. "Students were sleeping outside the university because they had come from all over." There was little to feed them. Supplies in the markets were running low.

While in Mekele, she said, she heard three "bombardments" against the city. Ethiopia's government has confirmed airstrikes around the city. When Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in televised comments told civilians in Tigray not to congregate for their safety, "that was a big panic," she said. "People said, 'Is he going to completely bomb us?' There was huge anger, people pushing and saying, 'I want to fight.'"

When she visited a loved one at a university hospital, "a doctor said they have no medicine, no insulin. At all," she said. "They were hoping the (International Committee of the Red Cross) would give them some."

Seeking to travel on to Addis Ababa, she found fuel on the black market but was warned her car could be a target. But the U.N. and other aid groups had managed to arrange a convoy to evacuate non-essential staffers to the Ethiopian capital, and she found a space on one of the buses. "I think I was quite lucky," she said.

The convoy of some 20 vehicles made its way through the night to the capital of the arid Afar region east of Tigray,



For more updates

SPOILER ALERT
Footage from a documentary shows the moment Lionel Messi (in photo, left) was urged to "show Liverpool some respect" by the referee in the first leg of the Barcelona's dramatic 2019 Champions League semi-final. Liverpool pulled off a great comeback, drubbing Barca 4-0 in the second leg to overturn a 3-0 deficit.

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THUMBNAILS

Dementia fear: Players should stop heading the ball in training if research proves it leads to dementia when they are older, several Premier League managers have said since the topic came to the fore following the death of Nobby Stiles, who suffered from it.

Fifa awards: The Best Fifa Football Awards ceremony organised by the International Federation of Association Football, postponed from its September date owing to the Covid-19 pandemic, will now be held on 17 December as a virtual event.

Cyber attack: Manchester United were the victims of a cyber attack described as a "sophisticated operation by organised cyber criminals," the club confirmed. The Red Devils revealed on Friday evening that they were currently working to "minimise" the disruption.

Positive tests: Abhishek Raman, Writwick Chatterjee, Dip Chatterjee and Partha Pratim Sen tested positive for Covid-19 out of 142 players examined in a setback for the Bengal T20 Challenge tournament planned by the state body and scheduled to begin on 24 November.

Television's claim: The 13th Indian Premier League, recently held in West Asia, was the most-watched edition in the tournament's history in terms of live television viewership, which reportedly increased by 23 per cent over last year, the official broadcaster claimed.

Setback scare: India captain Virat Kohli's decision to take paternity leave will give Australia a key advantage in the Test series, says former Australian skipper Allan Border. Kohli will leave the tour after the first of four Tests, due to start in Adelaide on 17 December.

Zoya's charge: Sri Lankan Nuwan Zoya on Friday accused the International Cricket Council of announcing that he had been found guilty of match corruption without telling him first. The ICC said on Thursday that an anti-corruption tribunal had found him guilty.

Long-term leader: Babar Azam said on Friday he had received an assurance from the Pakistan Cricket Board about his long-term captaincy of the team. "There is no pressure that I may be removed after losing a series," Azam was quoted as saying.

Tests prioritised: Trent Boult needed a small break to catch up with his family and get ready for the Test series against the West Indies rather than play the three Twenty20 Internationals that start next Friday, according to former New Zealand quick Shane Bond.

Tour plan: Sri Lanka will tour England in June next year for a bilateral series. While three One-Day Internationals are confirmed, they could also end up playing Tests and Twenty20 Internationals depending on the fate of the World Test Championship final.

My injury wasn't serious, says Sharma

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 21 NOVEMBER

The controversy over his hamstring injury had not failed to amuse Rohit Sharma (in photo), who said today he had always known there was nothing serious about it. He will be ready for the tour of Australia, he added.

"I don't know what was going on, to be honest, and what was being said. But let me put this on record, I was constantly in communication with the Board of Control for Cricket in India and Mumbai Indians," Sharma said.

He hit a match-winning knock of 68 off 50 balls in the Indian Premier League final against Delhi Capitals, despite the injury. He is currently training for strength and conditioning himself at the National Cricket Academy in Bangalore. "I told (Mumbai Indians) I can take the field since it is the shortest format and I will be able to manage the

situation quite nicely. Once I made my mind clear, it was all about focussing on what I needed to do. My hamstring feels absolutely fine. Just started the process of getting it nice and strong. Before I play in the longer format, I need to be clear in my mind that there is no stone that is left unturned. That's probably the reason I'm at the NCA," Sharma said, adding: "For me, it was not a concern what X, Y or Z was saying about whether I'd make it to Australia. Once the injury occurred, the next two days all I did was to figure out what I can do in the next 10 days whether I will be able to play or not. Unless one goes to the ground, one won't know how the body is shaping itself."

"Every day, the degree of the injury was changing. The way it was responding was changing, so I was feeling quite confident that I could play and that is what I told MI at that point. I told them that I think I will be okay to play just before play-offs. If there

is any discomfort, I won't be playing in the play-offs. Of course, there is still some work that needs to be done on my hamstring. That's why I didn't go to Australia for the white-ball segment of the tour as there are back-to-back games. Around six games in 11 days," he said.

The limited-overs matches begin on 27 November.

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The limited-overs matches begin on 27 November.

"The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) had a discussion with Siraj and he was offered the option of flying back and be with his family in this hour of grief," Shah was quoted as saying in a BCCI media release.

"The fast bowler has decided to stay with the Indian contingent and continue performing his national duties. The BCCI shares his grief and will be supportive of Siraj in this extremely challenging phase," Shah added.

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