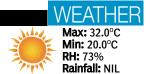
THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM | FRIDAY | 18 DECEMBER 2020



Forecast: Mostly Cloudy. Max/Min temp. 31/20 ºC



(+342)(+26,688)99,77,760 1,44,829

covid19india.org STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+3)(+509)TS: 2,79,644 1,505 (+2)(+534)

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

AP: 8,77,348



worldometers.info/

7,069

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari; Dakshinayana Tithi: Margasira Shuddha Chavithi till 2.28 pm Star: Sravanam till 7.08 pm Varjyam: 11.14 pm to 12.53 am(Saturday) **Durmuhurtam:** 8.55 am to 9.39 am; 12.34 pm to 1.18 pm Rahukalam: 10.30 am to 12 noon **HIJRI CALENDAR**

Jamadi-ul-Aakhir 2, 1442 AH

PRAYERS (ROYAL MOSQUE) Fajar: 5.30 am **Zohar:** 1.30 pm **Asar:** 4.15 pm Maghrib: 5.38 pm **Isha:** 8.30 pm **SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.26 AM** SUNSET TODAY 5.33 PM **MOONRISE TODAY 9.45 AM MOONSET** TOMORROW 10.12 PM

COUNTER POINT



Before you give it to me, test it on my bodyguard!

SHORT TAKES

Weapons worth

₹28K cr okayed

New Delhi: The defence ministry on Thursday approved procurement of weapons and military equipment worth ₹28,000 crore for the three services, officials said. The officials said almost all the weapons and military hardware approved for procurement will be acquired from domestic industry. "The **Defence Acquisition Council**

(DAC) headed by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh approved proposals to procure equipment worth ₹27,000 crore from domestic industry," the defence ministry said in a statement.

Full report on Page 4

People report low taxable income

income tax on the year-onyear basis this quarter declined 5.6 per cent to ₹31,054 crore from ₹32,910 crore, a source at CBDT said. adding the same so far this fiscal stood at ₹60,491 crore, down 10.4 per cent from

Mumbai: Advance personal

₹67,542 crore. Advance tax payment by companies, however, has shown a 49 per cent growth to ₹1,09,506 crore in Q3 this fiscal. The increase is primarily due to the low-base last fiscal when

cut to 25 per cent in the Q3. Full report on Page 4

corporation tax rates were

NATION 4 **Centre transfers Bengal IPS officers**



WORLD 5

French prez tests positive for Covid

SANJAY KAW and

NEW DELHI, DEC. 17

PARMOD KUMAR | DC

Acknowledging the right of farmers to hold non-vio-

lent protests, the Supreme

Court on Thursday sug-

gested that the Centre put

on hold the implementa-

tion of its new agricultural laws, putting forward the

idea of setting up an

impartial and independent

committee to end the impasse. The Centre said

the farmers would not come forward for negotia-

tions if the implementa-

tion of the farm laws was

The Centre told the court

it was not possible to hold implementation of the

laws. While solicitor-gen-

eral Tushar Mehta said it

couldn't be done, attorney-general K.K. Venugopal said he would come with

the response of the govern-

Chief Justice S.A. Bobde

asked Mr Venugopal to

give an assurance that the

laws will not be imple-

mented in the interim

period "till we hear the

this could stall the negotiations. To this, the CJI said

a statement to this effect

The A-G, however, said

ment on the proposition.

put on hold.

SPORTS 8

India lose advantage after Kohli runout

laws, Centre is lukewarm

CJI says farmers have right to protest; floats panel to end row

by the Centre could only

enable the discussions

with the protesting farm-

ers and resolve the stand-

asked for time to discuss it

with government officials

and come back during the

vacation, when the CJI indicated a bench will be

set up to hear the matter

even during the winter

break. Friday is the last

working day for the court

before its 15-day winter recess, that ends on

January 3.
The Supreme Court also

refused to order eviction

of farmers from Delhi's

borders, where they are camping for 22 days, without hearing them. The court said farmers have

the right to protest, but

without inc-onveniencing

The court said it would

ask the Centre if the man-

ner of protest could be

slightly altered so it does-

n't affect citizens' right of mo-vement. "Farmers

have the right to protest. We won't interfere with it,

but we will look into the

manner of protest ... and

slightly alter it so that it

doesn't affect the citizens' right of movement," the

other people.

Venugopal then

Mr



demands of the farmers,"

He said the Centre

should not be under the

impression that the farm-

ers camping at the protest

sites will simply return to their homes, adding that

in 1907, a farmers' protest

continued for nine months

till the British rulers

"When asked about the benefit of the laws, every

BJP leader says farmers

can sell their produce any-

But where should farmers

go to sell their crop at min-

imum support price (MSP)?" the CM asked. He

also claimed that due to

the three new laws "big

capitalists will sell pro-

duce at a higher price", which will lead to price

After the Assembly

passed the resolution with

a voice vote, AAP MLAs

trooped into the well of the

House, tore off copies of the laws. -PTI

the laws.

repealed some laws.

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Vol. 25 No. 231 Established 1940 | 16 pages | ₹6.00

Kejriwal tears up

he said.

farm law copies

New Delhi, Dec. 17: The Delhi Assembly on Thurs-day passed a resolution

against the Central gov-

ernment's three new agri-

culture laws with Chief

Minister Arvind Kejriwal

tearing up their copies, saying he cannot betray

the farmers of the country.

Addressing the Delhi Ass-embly, the Chief Minister also alleged the

laws have been made for "electoral funding of the

BJP and not the farmers".

"I am pained that I have

to do this. I did not intend

to, but I cannot betray the

farmers of my country who have been sleeping on

the streets in the cold...

just 2 degrees Celsius," Kejriwal said, while tear-

ing up the copies of the

"I am a citizen of this country first, a chief min-

ister later. This Assembly

rejects the three laws and

appeals to the central gov-

three laws.

when the temperature is

SC says go slow on farm Panchayat polls won't hit vaccination, SEC tells HC

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 17

The State Election Commission filed a counter-affidavit asking the Andhra Pradesh High Court to strike down the petition filed by the state govern-ment against the conduct of gram panchayat polls on the grounds that the administration would be involved in Covid-19 vac-

cination programme. In the affidavit filed on Thursday, the SEC stated that it would take three to six months for Covid-19 vaccine to reach AP as the Centre would distribute the vaccine on a priority basis. It informed the court that elections in Bihar, Rajasthan and Hyderabad were held successfully.

decided to conduct gram panchayat polls in February after taking opinions of all stakeholders and added that at present, the situation in Andhra Pradesh was suitable for conduct of gram panchayat polls planned in February.

The SEC's affidavit was in response to the state government's petition cha-llenging the poll panel's decision to conduct gram panchayat polls in Febru-ary. The petition sought the High Court's intervention to revoke the proceedings issued by the

The petition, filed by panchayat raj and rural development principal secretary Gopala Krishna Dwivedi, stated that the SEC had taken a unilateral decision to conduct the

The petitioner said the government was according top priority to protect the health of the people from Covid-19, and the State Election Commission had taken the decision without consulting the government despite a Supreme Court direction to do so.

The principal secretary said that by November 29, had registered 8.67 lakh Covid-19 positive cases and on an average, 1,000 positive cases were being reported per day in the state and informed the court that the entire administration in the state was preoccupied to contain the spread of the

BCs are backbone, says Jagan

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 17

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy Thursday said that for the first time in the social history of the country, BCs have been empowered through BC Corporations and asked their chairpersons to work as liaisons between the BCs and the government.

He was addressing a gathering of the BC Sankranti Sabha at Indira

TIRUPATI TO GET

BIGGEST NATURAL

SEWAGE PLANT

DC CORRESPONDENT

The Municipal Corporation of Tirupati (MCT)

has recently taken up an

eco-friendly project — Natural Sewage Treat-ment Plant (STP) of five

million litres per day

(MLD) capacity. It is the

biggest in the country after the 3 MLD natural

The civic body has pro-

- using natural materi-

posed to recycle sewage

als and aquatic plants,

and re-use it for a num-

ber of non-potable pur-

Recycling and reuse of

the treated wastewater

are the suggested alter-

natives to bridge the gap

between water demand

and supply, and to reduce pressure on water

According to reports,

almost 80 per cent of the

water supplied to a

household is being dis-

charged as wastewater

and it has become a

potential pollutant of

groundwater because it

is untreated. In Tirupati,

only 30-40 per cent of sewage is being recycled,

Page 3: Treated water

WAIT 'N WATCH

to be used for horticulture

resources.

STP in Delhi.

TIRUPATI, DEC. 17

Gandhi Municipal Stadium here in Vijayawada, in which 56 BC Corporation chairpersons took oath of

Reddy declared that BCs

are not 'backward classes' but 'backbone classes' of The Chief Minister said

that they had created women empowerment history by earmarking half of the posts to them.

He said that empowerment of weaker sections socially, economically,

and politically has been taken up as a movement and nowhere in the country was such emancipation reported.
The Chief Minister cau-

tioned the newly sworn-in persons that the position was a responsibility and not power.

He sought them to uplift persons who are left out and make them part of welfare programmes.

■ Page 2: We took welfare to doorstep, says Jagan

42nd comm satellite in orbit



DC CORRESPONDENT NELLORE, DEC. 17

India's 42nd communication satellite CMS-01 was placed in its designated spot in space after a flawless mission by a PSLV rocket from the spaceport in Nellore district on Wednesday. The Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle

(PSLV) C50 took off from the second launch pad of the Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota range as scheduled at 3.41 pm. After a flight of 20 minutes and 12 seconds, the rocket released the CMS-01 into its designated

Full report on Page 3

Docs perform surgery in dark at Kurnool GH

DC CORRESPONDENT

The delivery ward in Kurnool General Hospital is in shambles. Lives of pregnant women who visit the hospital are in peril as oxygen cannot be supplied because of shortage of regulators fixed to the central oxygen supply apparatus. Monkeys have allegedly cut off cables making ACs dysfunctional. Doctors perform surgery in pitched darkness as head focus lights are not working.

There are no medicines to stop heavy bleeding, leaving the patient in further pain while life-saving These horrific revela-

drugs are in short supply. tions came to light when KGH Deputy Superinten-Prof Prabhakar Reddy visited the delivery ward on Thursday. He said the condition was

DC CORRESPONDENT

As the Congress' internal

elections draw close, the

top leadership wants to

bridge the gap with the 23

letter writers demanding a

change in the party's wor-

king style and an "active

and present" leadership.

NEW DELHI, DEC. 17

appalling and contractors have been ordered to meet were immediately asked to supply oxygen regulators and indents were put to APMSIDC stores to make available Vitamin-K, Methergine, Anafortan and Urosac bags.

Gynaecologists have been reportedly suturing patients in darkness in the absence of lighting systems in the ward. A gynaecology professor

said "these are minor problems and we are habituated to it. Patients are often told to get their own tablets and other medicines if they are not available in the stock room," he said.

The neonatal ward has at least 30 occupants in the ward any given day. Sometimes it could be more than 40 also, said the Deputy Superintendent. Keeping their requirement, he said, medicines

Insiders claim a meeting

between Congress presi-

dent Sonia Gandhi and

some of the letter writers

was expected by the com-

ing weekend. Acting as a

bridge between the two

sides is former Madhya

Pradesh CM Kamal Nath,

who has in the last couple

of days met the letter writ-

requirements of at least three months, he added. Hospital Superintendent

Dr Narendranath Reddy said patients need not wait for a long time to receive blood reports. He said the labs in the

hospitals were directed to send these reports by WhatsApp, SMS, and email. In this way the patients will save a lot of time, he added.

He further said all the department heads were asked to put an indent for their materials. He said no patients should suffer from want of medical facilties. "Outpatients are also given priority and facilities are improved.

Regarding moving out pigs, dogs and donkeys from the hospital, he said Kurnool Municipal Corporation was asked to help

ers as well as Mrs Gandhi

in a bid to find a middle

The parleys between the

leadership and the letter

writers had come to an

abrupt end when senior

leader Ahmed Patel pass-

ed away in late November.

■ Full report on Page 4

CONG ATTEMPTS COMPROMISE WITH DISSENTERS

YOUTH FEARED DROWNED IN

DC CORRESPONDENT KADAPA, DEC. 17

Seven youngsters from Tirupati were feared drowned in the Penna river at Siddayatam on Thursday evening. The bodies of two of them were found at around 8 pm during a search operation conducted by police and swimmers, who rushed to the spot immediately after the incident was reported.

Somasekhar and Rajesh. According to police, the youngsters were studying in Tirupati and had come to Siddavatam to attend the first death anniversary of their friend Shiva's father. After the ceremony, they went for a swim in the

ers still remained untra-

Survey finds people are in no hurry to get themselves immunised for Covid

Many Indians develop vaccine hesitancy

Mumbai, Dec. 17: Many Indians appear hesitant to get vaccinated for Covid-19 as infections have fallen sharply since a mid-September peak and some people are worried about possible side-effects here, according to a survey of 18,000 people released on

Thursday. India reported 24,037 new infections on Thursday fewer than 30,000 for a fourth straight day — taking its total to 99.6 lakh, the second highest in the world. More than 1.44 lakh people have died. Until early last month, India had looked set to overtake the infection tally of the United States but the gap between them has since widened significantly. The cases in the US have now risen to more

than 1.6 crore. The government says it could soon approve some of the vaccines that have sought emergency use authorisation, including the Oxford-AstraZeneca the Pfizer/ and BioNTech shot, which is

 ABOUT 69 PER CENT of respondents in a survey saw no urgent need to get immunised because of limited information about side-effects and efficacy levels.

 A LARGE of people also believe that Covid-19 cannot affect them because of high levels of immunity.

MANY PEOPLE believe that the country is moving towards herd immunity and therefore they do not need to get vaccinated.

already being used in the United States and Britain. India wants to roll out vaccines in a few weeks, initially focusing on people more exposed to the virus

and over 50, but a survey by New Delhi's citizen-survey platform LocalCircles found that about 69 per cent of respondents saw no urgent need to get immu-

nised. "It appears some of the key reasons for the hesitancv are limited information about side-effects, efficacy levels and a growing belief in parts of the population that Covid cannot affect them because of their high immunity levels," LocalCircles said in a statement. Many people in the sur-

vey, which had responses from nearly a third of India's districts, said they believed "we are moving towards herd immunity". Jiaul Haque, a software

state of Assam, said he thought he had already developed some kind of immunity to Covid-19 and would like to see how the various vaccines work on other people before he signs up for one. "The vaccine has not passed the regular dura-

engineer from the eastern

tion of testing," the 36-yearold said.

"All vaccine companies are in a race against each other, so I'm also concerned about that," Haque

NURSE ON FIRE IN CHITTOOR DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUPATI, DEC. 17 A 22-year-old nurse suf-

YOUTH SETS

fered burns after her sister's husband poured oetrol and set her on fire. The incident took place in Gattukindapalli village of Mulakalacheruvu in Chittoor on Thursday. Her marriage is scheduled in a week.

According to circle inspector Suresh Kumar, the victim, Kadiri Sumathi, 22, was rushed to the government hospital in Madanapalle and then referred to the SVRR Government General Hospital in Tirupati for furtĥer treatment. Doctors said she sustained about 40 per cent burns and her condition was stable. The accused, Venkatesh, 33, who is the husband of the victim's sister, entered the house of Sumathi and set her on fire.

■ Page 3: Accused miffed with victim's parents

PENNA RIVER

The two bodies were identified to be those of Penna river, where they

were swept away.
The bodies of five oth-



POLAVARAM PROJECT

ERECTION OF HYDRAULIC CREST GATES STARTED

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 17

Water resources authorities have taken up erection of hydraulic crest gates following completion of construction of spillway at a height of 55 metres of Polavaram irrigation project at Polavaram in West Godavari on Thursday.

Water resources authorities said that there were a total of 48 crest gates and each gate to be supported by eight arm girders and four horizontal girders, 384 arm girders and 192 horizontal girders to be installed.

At present, assembling arm girders was being taken up, they added.

Each arm girder measures 16 metres and after assembling of arm girders and horizontal girders, skin plate to be installed. The arm girders will help movement of skin plates up and down as per need. Each gate will be having six skin plates and hydraulic cylinders will be used for lifting the

So far, 46 cylinders reached the project site while the remaining cylinders out of a total number of 96 cylinders to be imported from Germany. Each crest gate measures 20.835 metres height and 15.96 metres width.

Nearly 18,000 tonnes of steel to be used for fabrication of the gates and each gate weighs

FISHERIES DEPT BANS USE OF RING NETS IN BAY

DC CORRESPONDENT VISAKHAPATNAM, DEC. 17

State Fisheries Department has banned use of purse seine ring nets in Bay of Bengal with immediate effect to prevent traditional catamaran fishermen and mecha-

nised boat owners. Joint director of fisheries Dr K. Phani Prakash in a release here on Thursday said that in a survey conducted recently it was found that 83 mechanised boats have been using purse seine ring nets in the district. Except for two boats, the Department has banned the 81 boats from using the ring nets.

He also banned the mechanised boats fishing within 8 km from the shore in the interest of the traditional fisher-

He said the use of ring nets and fishing in the close range has been creating tension among the fishermen leading to the breakdown of law and

Issuing guidelines, the joint director said boats using less than half-inch nets would not be allowed for fishing as per Marine Fisheries Regulation Act of 1995, boats should not venture into the sea without registration and licence and announced the ban on the use of mechanised boats in eight km area as per

HC DISMISSES PLEAS ON LOCAL area Criteria

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 17

Court dismissed a batch of petitions from the students seeking admission in MBBS/BDS courses claiming to be local candidates and clarified on 'local area criteria' in its verdict issued recently.

A Division Bench comprising justice Ch. Praveen Kumar and justice D. Ramesh said that as the Presidential Order was clear on local candidate, it could not give any order in contravention of the Presidential Order.

The court said that if an applicant seeking admission to pursue the course should study in local educational institutions for not less than four successive years and these four years should be concluded including two years of qualifying examination which is Intermediate education or plus two. Only such applicants could be considered as local

candidates, the court said. Several students hailing from Guntur, Kadapa, Krishna and other districts approached the High Court urging it to issue an order considering them to be local. They informed the court that except for two years of study outside the state, they stayed in AP for a period ranging from seven to 10 years. They also said that as their parents moved to other states by part of their work, they too moved along with

Naidu making desperate bids to protect benami lands: CM

TD not kept even 10% of 118 promises it listed to the BCs: CM

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 17

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on Thur-sday said that TD supremo and former chief minister N. Chandrababu Naidu was spearheading the Amaravati movement to protect assets belonging to his benamis and associates who purchased with

insider trading.

Addressing the BC Sankranthi Sabha meeting at the Indira Gandhi Municipal Stadium in Vijayawaha sa Manada the Sabha sa Manada the Sabha sa Manada sa ada on Thursday, the Chief Minister further stated that Naidu was upset with the falling land values and hence leading the move-

Taking a dig at Naidu, Jagan Mohan Reddy said that while empowerment of the BCs has started, a parallel meeting is being organised by the rejected chief minister only in the interest of his coterie.

Terming BCs as 'back-bone classes', the Chief Minister said that the pre-vious TD government had betrayed them. "During 2014 elections, the TD government had listed 118 promises to the BCs. Not even 10 per cent of the promises were kept.

'They (the TD) promised to spend ₹10,000 crore every year towards BC welfare but spent only ₹19,329 crore in the entire five years. In contrast, our government had spent ₹38,519 crore on BCs alone during the last 18 months, benefitting over 2.88 crore people. For all BC, SC, ST and minority population, the state government had spent ₹59,317 crore in the last 18 months for 4.45 beneficiaries.'

162 POETS TO

ATTEND IN VIRTUAL

AMARAVATI PRISM

DC CORRESPONDENT

The sixth edition of the Amaravati Poetic Prism

2020, an International

multilingual virtual po-

ets' meet, is being organ-

ised by the Cultural Cen-

tre of Vijayawada and Amaravati (CCVA) here

on December 19 and 20

in which as many 162

poets from across the

world would participate.

in association with the

state department of lan-

guage and culture and

the department of lan-

guage and culture, Telangana.

Addressing a press
meet here on Thursday,

CCVA chief executive

officer Dr E. Sivanagi

Reddy said that the meet

will be virtual due to the

prevailing pandemic situation in the world.

pone the event but then

decided to use the digital

platform as virtual distancing is gradually

becoming a reality,

Poets from 31 countries

including Albania, Arg-

entina, Azerbaijan, Aus-

tria, Bangladesh, Bos-

nia, Canada, China, Cro-

atia, Cuba, France, Ge-

rmany, Ghana, Greek,

Indonesia, Israel, Italy,

Japan, Malaysia, Mauritius, Nepal, Peru,

Romania, Russia, Spain, Sri Lanka, UK, US, Uzbekistan and Vietnam

will be participating.

Portugal,

Reddy said.

Poland,

'We wanted to post-

The event is organised

VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 17



Jagan Mohan Reddy said. The Chief Minister also listed out the welfare schemes which benefited BCs including Amma Vodi, Rythu Bharosa, housing, YSR Nethanna Nestham, YSR Matsakara Bharosa, Jaganannna Chedhodu, YSR Aarogyasri, YSR Pension Kanuka, YSR

Aasara and so on.
Deputy Chief Ministers
Dharmana Krishnadas
and Amzad Basha, ministers Peddireddi Ramachandra Reddy, Chelluboyina Venugopala Krishna, Botsa Satyanarayana, Gummanuru Jayaram, Anil Kumar Yadav, M. Sankara Narayana, Muttamsetti Srinivas, Srinivas, Kodali Venkateswara Rao, Perni Venka-taramaiah, Kurasala Ka-nnababu, Adimulapu Suresh, Seediri Appalaraju, MPs Pilli Subhash Chandra Bose, Mopidevi Venkataramana, Gorantla Mad-hav, Margani Bharat, MLA Janga Krishna MLA Murthy, Pondicherry minister Malladi Krishna Rao and other leaders and party members were pres-

WE TOOK WELFARE TO DOORSTEP, **SAYS JAGAN**

From Page 1

The Chief Minister said, "Setting up 56 BC corporations and appointing 728 BC leaders, from 139 castes, in the posts of directors and chairman directors and chairman, is history scripted by the Andhra Pradesh government. I am happy to note that 29 of the 56 chairpersons and 336 of the 672 directors are women. We have made laws for implementing 50 per cent reservation for BC, SC, ST, minorities and women in all nominated posts and contracts. Even during the composition of the state Cabinet, 60 per cent posts were given to BC, SC, ST, and minority leaders, and we have sent two BC leaders to Rajya

Jagan Mohan Reddy said that the previous government had debilitated corporations and welfare schemes were only given to TD members through Janmabhoomi committees.

"Unlike the TD government, the incumbent government has ensured that welfare schemes were given to all eligible persons, irrespective of their political affiliations, and took welfare to the doorstep of beneficiaries," the Chief

Minister said. He asserted that the development of the state happens only by such efforts, by empowering women in all fields and safeguarding farmers' interests



A person donned as Haridasu seeks offerings from devotees who were in a queue line to offer special prayers at Kanaka Mahalaxmi Temple during the first Margasira Laxmivaram special prayers at Burujupeta in Visakhapatnam on Thursday.

Muslim assns object to Somu's remarks against dargah visits

VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 17

Muslim Associations alleged that BJP AP chief Somu Veerraju is causing communal differences by objecting to visits of endowments minister Vellampalli Srinivas to dargahs. Addressing a press meet here on Thursday, Muslim

taf Raza stated that Veerraju terming Srinivas as 'minister of dargahs was highly objectionable. He also objected Veeraraju's statement that the minis-statement that the minister must not visit dargahs. 'People from all faiths visit dargahs which reflects the culture of unity in diversity culture of our not renovate them.

Associations convener Al- country," he said. Altaf Raza recalled that the TD government had forcibly taken over the lagahs and damaged the them during the Durga flyover construction but did not make any move to

AP FILES ADDITIONAL AFFIDAVIT ASKING JUSTICE RAKESH KUMAR TO RECUSE FROM CASE ON CONSTITUTIONAL BREAKDOWN

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 17

government state filed an additional affidavit reiterating its earli-er stand asking Justice Rakesh Kumar to recuse from the case pertaining to constitutional breakdown in the High Court on

tary Kumar Vishwajeet filed the additional affidavit in the court. The state government mentioned in the affidavit that Justice Rakesh Kumar had come up with a predetermined decision in the case as he had taken it up on suo moto basis as no

Home principal secre- habeas corpus petitions mentioned about breakdown of constitution in the state

The state government expressed concern that if the case to be heard by justice Rakesh Kumar, it might not get justice. The court adjourned the case for next hearing on petitioner in a batch of Friday.



Naidu challenges Jagan for referendum over Amaravati

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 17

Telugu Desam chief N. Chandrababu Naidu on Thursday threw a challenge to Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy to withdraw his proposal to form three capitals or go for a referendum seeking public opinion on Amaravati as the only capital of Andhra Pradesh.

He offered to quit politics if the Chief Minister's three capitals' plan received public support.

Addressing the 'Jana Bheri' public meeting organised by the Amaravati Parirakshana JAC in the capital city area, Naidu said that without any cre-dibility, Jagan Mohan Re-ddy is telling the BC Sankranthi meeting that the Amaravati agitation was being run by businessmen with real estate interests.

Naidu accused the Jagan Mohan Reddy regime of targetting Dalit farmers and residents of Amaravati just to stop them from joining the agitation. He claimed that the people voted the YSRC to power only because of the hysteric for which all cotions. ria for which all sections of society are paying a

heavy price. Naidu said, "The fake Chief Minister (Jagan) planted kisses on voters' cheeks and now he planting blows on them. He is ignoring that in course of time, Amaravati will have a potential to create wealth up to ₹2 lakh crore for the people of the state. No sane person would take the decision to shift the capital from Amaravati to Visakhapatnam."

working nts N. Tulasi Reddy and Sk Masthan Vali, CPI state secretary K. Ramakrishna, Jana Sena leader Pothina Mahesh, former minister Vadde Sobhanadreeswara Rao, TD state president K. Atchannaidu, former MLA Vangaveeti Radhakrishna, BJP leader Paturi Nagbhushanam, TD MP Galla Jayadev and others addressed the gathering and demanded cancellation of the three capitals' decision and continuation of Amaravati as only capital of AP.

Meanwhile, extending support to the farmers' protest, TD Politburo member Somireddy Chandra-mohan Reddy said that the YSRC's conspiracies against Amaravati will fail and the farmers' agitation will not stop. He demanded that the government continue Amaravati as the state capital. Kadapa district Congr-

ess president Neeli Srinivasa Rao demanded that the only capital of the state should be Amravati. He alleged that Jagan Mohan Reddy, who as the Leader of the Opposition said that he fully supported Amravati as the capital

YSRC ministers demand TD MLAs to seek fresh mandate

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 17

Ministers Perni Venkatramaiah and Kodali Sri Venkateswara Rao alleged that Chandrababu Naidu created fake Amaravati with graphics and cheated the farmers.

Addressing press meets here on Thursday, the duo ridiculed the challenge of Naidu about quitting politics if he faces defeat in the referendum on Amaravati. They said that the age of Naidu is 70 years hence there is no use to people with his continuation in politics and suggested him to stop illu-

Both the ministers alleged that Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy decided to give house sites to 50,000 people belonging to weaker sections in Amaravati but Amaravati JAC promoted by the TD went to the court against the house sites and stalled the process through stay order which exposes TD's real face towards welfare and development of weaker sections of the society. They demanded that the TD explain people why they opposed house sites to people in Amaravati.
The two ministe

demanded Naidu to stop heedless demands like ref-erendum and further demanded Naidu to go for elections by asking his MLA quit their posts for Amaravati to know the

Both the ministers alleged that Naidu had released fake graphics in grabbed 33,000 acres of farmlands from farmers and cheated them. They further alleged that Naidu and his coterie were benefitted from Amaravati as they purchased lands before the announcement of capital place and committed inside trading. They lamented that Naidu had forced the farmers onto the road with his graphics and illusions.
Recalling the terming of YSRC leaders as

Dussasans Duryodhans by Naidu, the two ministers said that the TD leaders turned as Dussasans Duryodhans during their government as the then MLA of TD Chintamaneni Prabhakar harassed tahsildar Vanajakshi by snatching her sari and other leaders of TD sexually harassing women in

call money sex racket at

Naidu wants to create clashes, says Sucharita

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 17

home Mekathoti Sucharita on Thursday stated that Telugu Desam president N. Chandrababu Naidu had planned to create a law and order problem by violating route norms in Amaravati while going to the Jana Bheri meeting. The meeting was called

to mark the completion of 365 days of the farmers' and residents' agiation agains the state govern-ment's move to shift the capital out of Amaravati. Initially, Naidu tried to join the protest but police

refused permission which was poisoning it after

coming to power.

TD politburo member Reddeppagari Srinivasa Reddy said that Jagan Mohan Reddy at least now must realise his mistake and withdraw the decision to shift the capital and issue a public apology to Amravati activists. He alleged that the Chief led to a ruckus.

Sucharita said that the police had given a route chart for Naidu and his convoy and the security was also tightened on the marked route. However, Naidu changed his route in order to create clashes and law and order disturbances.

Terming the act of Naidu as that of a fox, the home minister said that Naidu should cooperate with the police in maintaining law and order.

Naidu after havig a dar-shan at the Kanaka Durga Temple atop Indrakeeladri Hill, proceeding to take part in the pro-Amaravati Jana Bheri meeting.

Minister who continues to rule with the aim of looting was writing an obituary for Amravati for his

own selfish purposes.

Meanwhile, TD leaders
held a huge rally in Kadapa in support of the Amaravati farmers' movement on the occasion of the completion of 365 days

Lack of separate irrigation and drainage canals leading to pollution of water, causing diseases OFFICIAL | APATHY

Focus on pollutants that damage crops: Agri scientists

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 17

Lack of separate irrigation and drainage canals and mixing of water from both sources and usage of such polluted water for cultivation of crops, especially in Godavari and Krishna delta areas, are said to be the major factors for the presence of residues of heavy metals and pesticides in crops like paddy and vegetables

As several Central agencies including AIIMS,

IICT, NIN, CCMB, NEERI, NCDC, NIN and others have come with their findings on the mystery illness, suspected to be due to presence of pesticides in samples of tomato and brinjal, mercury in raw rice and also finding presence of heavy metals like lead and nickel in the blood samples of the affected persons and nickel in milk, it is believed that contaminated water used for raising crops like paddy and vegetables, was the main culprit. For want of proper main-

taking up a project mode study in select places to find out the varied sources of pollutants and the manner in which they are finding their way into food crops.

Scientists suggest | **They** advocate separate maintenance of irrigation and drainage canals in order to avoid water from the two sources getting mixed up.

> In tail-end areas, people use drainage water both for cultivation of crops and for drinking because of improper water supply.

canals and drainage canals and as they go parallel in some parts of the fields where chemicals

tenance of both irrigation state, untreated industrial sewage, runoff water from

were used for cultivation of crops and sources of pollution, find their way into the drainage canals and get mixed with irrigation canals, thereby polluting them. Scientists from Acharya

NG Ranga Agriculture University and YSR Horticulture University and from other research centres opine that unlike in the earlier days when usage of fertilisers and pesticides was promoted to boost production of food grains, they are supposed to concentrate more on

pollutants finding their presence in food crops.
A scientist from Acharya NG Ranga Agriculture University said, "It is time the thrust of research should be more on pollutants than on nutrients, given the situation where food crops are getting polluted from various sources and affecting the health of

Scientists state that earlier they used to concenon addressing deficiency of micronutrients like iron, copper and zinc in food crops as such

the consumers.

deficiency used to make the crops vulnerable for pests having a major impact on the quantum of Underlining the impor-

tance of industrialisation and urbanisation for development of any city or town or village, the scientists recommend paying more attention on the negative impact of such developmental activities in the backdrop of recent Eluru mystery illness so that it helps avoid recurrence of such illness in any part of

Treated water to be

OTHER STORIES

Farm labourer

electrocuted

Nellore: In a tragic incident a 35-years-old farmhand Kanupuru Ramanaiah of Gurrakonda village in Ogili mandal electrocuted after he accidentally stepped on a power cable while spraying pesticide to a farm in the village on Thursday. His family members squarely blamed the owner of the farm for arranging power cables with joints without any permission from the electricity department. Ogili Sub-Inspector Sekhar Babu rushed to the village and shifted the body to the government hospital in Naidupeta after conducting an

4 held, 10 kgs of ganja seized

Nellore: Kavali rural police have seized 10 kgs of ganja from four persons involved in the illegal transportation of the substance near Musunuru village in Kavali rural mandal on Thursday.

According to the DSP of Kavali, Prasad, their team has also seized 2 cars, ₹45,000 cash and 4 mobile phones, all worth ₹11.20 lakh from the accused. The offenders are being sent to

1 dead, 5 hurt as

car ram auto

Kurnool: One person died and five others were severely injured in a road accident at Panchalingala cross road on NH-44 near the Tungabhadra River bridge on Thursday evening. The deceased was identified as Maheswari, 33, native of Thakkasila village in Mahbubnagar, The incident occurred after a van rammed into the auto while it was crossing near the Tungabhadra River

3 ARRESTED, **32 RED SANDER LOGS SEIZED**

DC CORRESPONDENT KADAPA, DEC. 17

A interstate Red Sanders smuggler Bodde Srinivasulu and two other smugglers arrested by Ontimitta of Kadapa district police on Thursday.

Total 32 red sanders logs, one truck, one car and one motor

Kadapa district Superintendent of Police Karur Karunapathi Nagendra Kumar Anburajan held a press conference at the District Police office on Thursday and revealed the details.

The district police kept a vigil on the old criminals as per the instructions of the

In the Chintarajupalle forest area in the Rajampeta mandal, the Ontimitta police seized the red sander cut by the Tamil labourers and kept ready for

Police arrested the Bodde Srinivasulu and seized the vehicle used to transport the logs. 20 red sandalwood logs were seized.

EIGHT SAND RAMPS TO BE REOPENED

DC CORRESPONDENT KAKINADA, DEC. 17

Under the state government's programme to distribute house sites for the homeless from December 25, Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy will inaugurate the site at Komaragiri.

Authorities urgent steps to improve sand supply in the state. Presently after placing the order online it takes three days, as most of the ramps lie submerged in floodwaters. Mining can begin only after the waters recede.

Sand is presently dug, with the help of 22 boat ramps. These can carry only 200 tonnes of quantity sand, which is not sufficient to meet the requirements. According to officials, the situation may

improve in January.

There are three sand stockyards at Kakinada, Rachapalli and Gandepalli. These yards have 31.5 lakh tonnes of sand. Presently, the officials are supplying sand through the stockvards. However after the distribution of house sites, sand from the stockyards will not be sufficient to cater to the needs

for construction. collector District Muralidhar Reddy has fixed targets to unearth 45,000 tones of sand per day. He also gave permissions to reopen eight sand ramps.

STATE RECORDS 534 COVID CASES, **TWO DEATHS**

DC CORRESPONDENT

AP registered 534 new Covid-19 cases and two deaths in the last 24

The state health authorities issued Covid-19 bulletin on Thursday reporting that out of 63,821 samples tested, 534 persons were found infected with Coronavirus. Out of a total 1,10,65,297 samples tested, 8,77,348 persons were found infected with Covid and out of them, 8,65,825 infected patients were recovered while 4,454 patients are still active with the virus.

Among the daily cases of confirmed Covid-19 cases, Chittoor topped the state with 130 followed by 74 in Krishna, 54 in Guntur, 51 in West Godavari, 45 in East Godavari, 39 in Srikakulam, 31 in Visakhapatnam, 27 in Kadapa, 21 in Nellore, 19 in Prakasam, 16 in Anan-tapur, 14 in Vizianagaram and 13 in Kurnool.

Krishna registered the highest number of cumulative Covid-19 active cases with 838 followed by 699 in Guntur, 571 in Nellore, 505 in Chittoor, 442 in East Godavari, 291 in West Godavari, 231 in Prakasam, 212 in Visakhapatnam, 190 in Srikakulam, 149 in Anantapur, 142 in Kurnool, 111 in Kadapa

and 73 in Vizianagaram. Two cases of death of Covid-19 infected patients were reported with one each at Anantapur and West Godavari.

With regard to the cumulative cases of Covid deaths, Chittoor was the worst hit with 836 followed by 658 Guntur, 656 in Krishna, 636 in Chittoor, 595 in Anantapur, 578 in Prakasam, 549 in Visakhapat-WG, 504 in Nellore, 487 Kurnool, 455 apa, 346 Srikakulam and 238 in

TD TAKES OUT

OF AMARAVATI

DC CORRESPONDENT

Telugu Desam leaders

and workers in East

Godavari District took

out a processions in soli-

darity to the farmers

who are agitating to

keep Amaravati as the

state capital and are

opposing the three capi-

tal proposal, made by the

However, the police

made preventive arrests

of several Telugu lead-

ers since last night to

not participate in the

10 am on Thursday.

venting arrests.

Mohan Reddy.

Venkateswara

They were freed after

In Mandapeta, party

leaders could not inform

their cadre that the police left the leaders

after 10 am from pre-

So, TD leaders held a

meeting and criticised the YSRC government led by the Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan

In Kakinada, the TD

anamadi

activists led by the Kakinada former MLA

(Kondababu) took out a

bike rally and raised slo-

gans. They demanded

that the government

keep Amaravati as its

state government.

agitation.

KAKINADA, DEC. 17

RALLY IN FAVOUR

PSLV places satellite in orbit after perfect launch

CMS-01 to replace GSAT-12; will be directed to space home in 4 days

DC CORRESPONDENT **NELLORE, DEC. 17**

India's 42nd communication satellite CMS-01 was placed in its designated spot in space after a flawless mission by a PSLV rocket from the spaceport in Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh on Wednesday.

The Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) C50 took off from the second launch pad of the Satish Dhawan Space (SDSC) Centre Sriharikota range as scheduled at 3.41 pm.

After a flight of 20 minutes and 12 seconds, the rocket released the CMS-01 into its designated orbit. The solar panels of CMS-01 were automati cally deployed and ISRO's Master Control Facility at Hassan assumed control of the satellite. In the next four days, the satellite will be raised to its permanent orbit about 36,000 km

above the earth Isro chairman Dr K. Sivan said after the mission that he was "extremely happy" with the success and appreciated the efforts of the satellite and launch vehicle teams in realising this mission amidst the pandemic.
The CMS-01

replace the GSAT-12 that weighed 1,410-kg and was launched on July 11, 2011. According to Isro, CMS-01, which has a sevenyear life span, is meant to provide services in the Extended C Band to cover the Indian mainland, Andaman, Nicobar Lakshadweep Islands.
The PSLV-C50 is the

52nd flight of the PSLV and 22nd of PSLV in the XL configuration with six strap-on motors. This was the 77th launch from the SDSC. No more

DC CORRESPONDENT

The internal struggle

among doctors affects

patients' treatment as

the recently removed

Kurnool Medical Coll-

ege (KMC) principal was

accused of fomenting tr-

organisations pressed

into service to lobby for the reinstatement of

Prof P. Chandrasekhar

The Kurnool Govern-

ment General Hospital

(KGGH) superindent Dr

Narendranath Reddy and P. Chandrasekhar

are at loggerheads and

the functioning of the

hospital is paralysed

due to the pressure tac-

tics mounted to oust the

KGGH superindent.

DC CORRESPONDENT

In view of considerable

drop on Covid cases in

the district, Prakasam

district collector Pola

Bhaskar announced that

they have decided to de-

NELLORE, DEC. 17

as the KMC Principal.

Caste-based



PSLV-C50 zooms into space with Communication Satellite CMS-01 on board leaving orange flames behind from India's Spaceport at Sriharikota on Thursdav.

Guv, CM congratulate **ISRO** scientists

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 17

Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy congratulated the Indian Space Research Organi-sation scientists for the successful launch of PSLV-C50. He wished the Isro team success in all their future endeavours here on Thursday.

Similarly, AP Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan hailed the Indian Space Research Organi-

launches are scheduled this year.

CMS-01 is the first communication satellite that Isro has launched under its new satellite naming scheme. Under the new scheme, Isro is nameing its earth observation satellites 'EOS' and communication satellites

According to sources in Isro, two Indian satellites namely GISAT and Microsat-2A are ready for launch next. The launch of the GISAT-1 satellite on board the GSLV was scheduled for

Patients services hit as sr

the dishonest attitude of

senior doctors who were

hanging out for positi-

Unsettling the incumbents has become the

norm at KMC, and the

teaching hospital att-

ached to it said a senior

doctor. The internal

fight between doctors is

only helping the corpo-

rate hospitals as they

are snatching away patients, pointed out

Medical College pro-

fessors have a huge pri-

vate practice, and they

hardly spent time in the

Patients who come for

fasting check-ups have a

harrowing experience

as the doctors turn up

now the atmosphere is explained. An inquiry elopment, said deputy polluted in the hospital. was ordered into the superindent Prabhakar.

Ongole from the tag of forth. Regional Covid Centre. Simi

Addressing the offi-

cials of the medical and

health department at

GGH IN ONGOLE DE-NOTIFIED AS COVID HOSPITAL

hospital, said another.

another doctor.

A doctor said, "Right only at lunchtime, he

notify the Government floor of GGH to treat

We are young doctors irregularities and fraud

and we were appalled at committed by Prof P.

General Hospital in Covid patients hence-

Ongole on Thursday, he told them to earmark 110 beds on the third ment hospitals for Covid

collector

Medical

docs fight for positions

sation for the successful launch of the PSLV C-50 from Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota and placing the communication satellite CMS-01 in geosynchronous transfer orbit.

He said that the Isro's second successful launch of PSLV after Covid-19 lockdown period demonstrated the dedication of the scientists and added another feather to the cap of India's robust space programme.

Under the new scheme, Isro is nameing its earth observation satellites 'EOS' and communication satellites 'CMS'.

March 5 this year but it was postponed because of technical reasons a day before the launch. The GSLV was dismantled. Now Isro is planlaunch the GISAT-1 on board a GSLV rocket which is being

Chandrasekhar when he

acted as the superindent

of the hospital. The

inquiry was conducted

by Kakinada Rangaraya

Finance minister Bu-

gganan Rajendranath

Reddy, the minister hail-

ing from Kurnool, was

keen on improving the

facilities and image of

the hospital. The doc-

tors here were accused

patients to private cor-

porate hospitals and had

private treaties with th-

em. If KGGH which has

all the state infrastruc-

ture performs those op-

erations, it gets incenti-

ves also from the gover-

nment which could be

utilised for hospital dev-

elopment, said deputy

Similarly, the Prkasam

them to keep 20 beds in

Chirala, 8 beds in Kandukuru and 22 beds

of diverting Aarogyasri

Principal Prof Bobji.

ISRO TO LAUNCH AN EARTH OBSERVATION SATELLITE SOON

DC CORRESPONDENT NELLORE, DEC. 17

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will launch an earth obervation satellite that has been built by a pri-

vate start-up.
"The forthcoming
PSLV-C51 mission will be a very special mission not only for ISRO but also for India as the rocket will be carrying an earth observation satellite 'Anand' made by an Indian start-up called Pixxel," said Isro chairman Dr K. Sivan.

He was speaking after the successful launch of the PSLV-C50 rocket carrying the CMS-01 communications satellite on Thursday.

Dr Sivan said Anand the first satellite produced by a start-up after the government opened the space sector for private players eight months back by setting up the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe). "It is the first of a

series of satellites the start-up company is going to launch," said Dr Sivan adding that PSLV-C51 will also carry a communication satel lite built by students from Space Kidz India apart from a satellite built by consortium of three Indian universi-

The primary payload for PSLV-C51 rocket will be a Brazilian satellite weighing between 600 kg and 700 kg.

PRIORITY IS TO SPREAD SANATANA DHARMA: TTD

DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUPATI, DEC. 17

As directed by the AP CM Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, our top priority is to propogate the Hindu Sanatana said TTD Dharma, chairman Mr Y.V. Subba

Reddy on Thursday. He participated in the foundation stone laying ceremony for development works worth ₹159.50 lakh at Karvetinagaram in the presence of Dy CM K. Narayana Swamy. The works included the construc-tion of a Nirali Mandapam in Skanda Pushk arini costing ₹1 crore, CC Road from Sri Venugopal swamy temple to Pushkarini costing ₹42 lakh, beautification of Pushkarini and other works at ₹17.50 lakh.

Addressing the media persons, the TTD chairman said under the aegis of HDPP Srivari temples were being built in weaker sections colonies of both AP and Telangana. Also, TTD is organis

ing Gudiko Gomata program all over the country and already launched in AP and Karnataka during the holy month of Karthika. he

used for horticulture starting from the upstream areas and passing through

FROM PAGE 1

Though the MCT is working on the new 25 MLD large conventional STP, the apathy with regard to this plant lies in the fact that it needs a large infrastructure network and high cost. Instead of relying only on such STPs, the civic body has now planned for the nonconventional STP, which can treat the wastewater in a natural way with less maintenance and minimum

'Natural STPs have sustainable results, as the maintenance of the plant is very easy and cost-effective. The treated water would have BOD (Biological Oxygen Demand) and TSS (Total Suspended Solids) values of 10 each. We are now building a 5 MLD natural STP", MCT Commissioner P.S. Girisha told DC.

The project cost is estimated to be around ₹14.97 crore and it is expected to be completed in 12 months. The plant will recycle sewage flowing through drains, areas on the north side of the city, and join the escape drain close to Vinavak Sager lake.

The working process of natural STP is that the sedimentation tank allows the sewage to stand for a long time and the total suspended solids will settle down. Thereafter, the water is passed through chambers and compartments which have beds of pebbles of various sizes, which filters the sewage. At least four species of fast-growing aquatic plants feed on the organic

matter in the water.
"What goes into the natural STP is black and greycoloured highly polluted sewage water. And what comes out is clean water with a reduced level of BOD. The water isn't potable, but it will be routed into the Vinayak Sagar Lake and in future, it could be routed to other water bodies, for horticulture or recharging groundwater", the Commissioner said.

ACCUSED MIFFED WITH VICTIM'S PARENTS

From Page 1

The incident occurred when the victim was sleeping in her room, while her parents were in the other room.

On hearing the victim's screams, her parents rushed in, put off the flames and shifted her to the hospital. The accused is still at large and the police have get her malaunched a manhunt for er person.

him. A case has been registered and the police are investigating the incident.

Venkatesh's wife was suffering from some medical ailments. The victim's parents reportedly promised Venkatesh that they would get Sumathi married to him but made arrangements forget her married with anoth-

Arrangements made for CM's arrival on Dec. 25

DC CORRESPONDENT KAKINADA, DEC. 17

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy will visit the East Godavari district on December 25 to launch the distribution of house sites in Komaragiri village.

The district collector D. Muralidhar Reddy along with the Chief Minister's programme coordinator T. Raghuram and Kakinada Urban MLA Dwarampudi Chandrasekhara Reddy visited Komaragiri area. Mr Muralidhar Reddy

instructed the officials to make all arrangements for the CM programme. The Chief Minister will

arrive at the Madhurapudi airport in the afternoon on December 25. From there he were present.

will arrive at Komaragiri by helicopter and will unveil a special pylon to mark the distribution of house sites. He will also inaugurate a model house in Komaragiri.

Later, Muralidhar Reddy convened a meeting with the district officials to make arrangements for the CM programme. The District Police Super-

intendent Adnan Nayeem Asmi, Rajamahendravaram Urban Police superintendent Shemushi Bajpai, joint collectors G. Lakshmisha, Rajakumari,

sub-collectors Anupala Anjali, Himanshu Koushik, district revenue officer Ch. Sathibabu, additional Superintendent of Police Sumit Garud and others

Vaikunta dwara darshan from Dec. 25

DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUPATI, DEC. 17

TTD executive officer K.S. Jawahar Reddy said that all arrangements are being made as per Covid-19 guidelines for providing Vaikunta dwara darshan to devotees for 10 days at Tirumala temple, starting from December 25 to January 3.

Briefing the media persons on TTD's arrangements for Vaikunta dwara darshan here on Thursday, the EO said that devotees with online or offline darshan tickets for the day will alone be allowed to reach Tirumala after stringent checking on these ten days. "Due to the prevailing

Covid-19 situation, darshan will be provided to pilgrims only in limited numbers every day. Offline tickets will also be issued to Tirupati locals at five cen-

tres in the city from Dec. 24, round the clock till the prescribed quota for ten days exhausts", he added.

On December 25, protocol VIPs will be given preference only if they come in person with family members and 1+5 darshan tokens will be issued. On these 10 days, break darshan for Srivani donors will be priced at ₹1,000, he informed.

The EO made it clear that no recommendation letters from VIPs and others will be accepted on December 25 and 26 and on January 1 for Srivari Darshan. "TTD has decided to provide Vaikunta dwara darshan to donors of all TTD trusts and advised them to reserve tickets online in advance. Devotees who have booked virtual Kalyanotsavam can come for Srivari Darshan on all days except December 25, 26 and January 1", he added.

Fear grips Kothapakalu as agitators set fire to shed of Divis Labs

instructed

DC CORRESPONDENT KAKINADA, DEC. 17

Tension gripped Kothapakalu, and the nearby villages of Thondang mandal in East Godavari District on Thursday, as agitators stormed the site of the

proposed Divis Labs. They removed the fencing and set fire to a shed of the company used for storing construction material and a generator.

A scuffle took place between the agitators and the police when 15 agitators, were taken into custody. Other agitators blocked the way to the plant site.

According to sources, hundreds of agitators led by CPM Secretariat member Duvva Seshu Babji with the support of CPM and CPI parties picketed the Divis plant. Duvva Šeshu Babji said

that the High Court's status quo order in favour of the farmers and the people is in force on the unit. But, the government and Divis Labs have violated, and the company began works. There was an exchange of words between the police

DSP SRINIVASA Rao said that the agitators who caused the violence are yet

and the agitators. In the process, the police took 15 agitators including Mr Seshu Babji. It is said that Seshu Babji was arrested and taken to Thondangi Kotananduru police sta-

to be identified.

Meanwhile, Peddapuram DSP Aritakula Srinivasa Rao and Kakinada DSP V. Bhimarao reached the spot with additional police

forces and dispersed the agitators.
DSP Srinivasa Rao the

agitators who caused the violence are yet to be identified. The proposal to set up the lab was first mooted when the Telugu Desam

was in power.
There was stiff resistance from the people. Later, during the election campaign, the present Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy and the present and and the present Tuni MLA Dadisetty Raja promised that the YSRC would shelve the plant proposal.

DC CORRESPONDENT KAKINADA, DEC. 17

Former finance minister Yanamala Ramakrishnudu said that the TD would support the agitation against the Divis Labs and the Thondangi mandal is a seashore area, which is not favourable for pharma units.

He said that the Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy doesn't

TD to support agitation know the feelings of the livelihood of the people people and takes decisions in favour of the people. He said that the TD had proposed to set up the Divis

> The TD, including Y a n a m a l a Ramakrishnudu, understood that due to the setincluding ting up of the unit, there would be widespread pollution in the area and the

unit in Thondangi man-

dal, but the people strong-

ly opposed it.

would be ruined.

Then Opposition leader Jagan Mohan Reddy had promised the people that he would not allow the unit in the area.

Mr Ramakrishnudu said that CM Jagan proved that he is working only for the industrialists. He said that Benamis set up by CM Jagan have captured 51 per cent of shares in





SHORT TAKES

ADHIKARI LOYALIST TIWARI QUITS TMC, **TO JOIN BJP**

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, DEC. 17

Former West Bengal minister Shubhendu Adhikari and his loyalist Jitendra Tiwari, also Pandabeshwar MLA, severed their long ties with the Trinamul Congress in a span of few hours on Thursday, over their revolt against Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

After dealing the double blow to their party, the duo, alongwith with two-time Burdwan East TMC MP Sunil Mondal, is now set to join the BJP in the presence of Union home min-Īster Amit Shah at a rally in Midnapore on December 19 upon his arrival on a two-day state tour this weekend.

Adhikari, who resigned as an MLA of Nandigram on Wednesday, wrote to Banerjee politely in a letter, "I am writing to tender my resignation as a member of All India Trinamul Congress as well as from all other positions held by me in the party and its associate organs with immediate effect. I am thankful for all the challenges and opportunities that has been afforded to me and I will always value my time spent as a member of the party."

NCB ISSUES NOTICE TO KARAN JOHAR OVER VIRAL VIDEO

Mumbai, Dec. 17: The Narcotics Control Bureau has filmmaker Karan Johar over a viral video allegedly showing drugs being consumed at a party at his house last year, NCB sources said on Thursday.

The notice has been sent to Johar to check the video's veracity, an NCB official said.

The central agency is conducting an anti-drugs probe that began in connection with the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput in June this year.

The video, which also shows several top stars, is being investigated as part of NCB's probe, the official said. The NCB had received a com-

plaint regarding the video of a party, which was attended by top Bollywood stars last year, the official said.

The complaint was about movie stars apparently seen in a 'drugged' state in the video.

CONG LEADERSHIP WORKING TO END INTERNAL TIFF

CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, DEC. 17

As the internal elections in the Congress draw close the ton leadership wants to bridge the gap with the 23 letter writers who were demanding change in the working style of the party and an 'active and present' leadership. Insiders claim that a meeting between Congress president Sonia Gandhi and representatives of letter writers is expected as soon as coming weekend.

Acting as a bridge between the two sides is the veteran party leader and former Madhya Pradesh chief minister Kamal Nath. In the last couple of days he has met with the letter writers and also with the Congress president in a bid to find a middle path to the internal strife going on.

The parleys between the leadership and the letter writers had come to an abrupt end when senior leader Ahmed Patel had contracted Covid in early October and finally passed away in late November.

SC UPHOLDS HC **ORDER ON KAFEEL KHAN**

New Delhi, Dec. 17: The Supreme Court on Thursday refused to interfere with the Allahabad High Court verdict which had quashed the deten-tion of Dr Kafeel Khan under the National Security Act (NSA) and ordered his immediate release, saying it is "a good judgement

'We will not interfere in the judgement. However, the observation will not impact any other proceedings," said the bench comprising Chief Justice S.A. Bobde and justices A.S. Bopanna and V. Ramasubramanian. The bench was hearing the Uttar Pradesh government's plea challenging the high court's September 1 verdict. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the state, told the bench that observation made by the high court exonerates Khan in the criminal proceedings. "Criminal cases will be decided on their own merits," the bench observed.

Chilling out



Workers warm themselves around a bonfire amid the snow-laden area at Sonamarg in Ganderbal district of Central Kashmir on Thursday. The minimum temperature across Kashmir plummeted several degrees below the freezing point on Thursday owing to a clear sky as the valley reeled under cold conditions, with Srinagar experiencing the

Modi to join Hasina in March for 'Bijoy Dibosh'

SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI | DC NEW DELHI, DEC. 17

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday held a virtual summit with his Bangladesh counterpart Sheikh Hasina that included "comprehensive discussions covering all areas including connectivity and trade, development cooperation, border management and rivers water sharing" after which it was announced that PM Modi would be visiting Bangladesh in March next year to "join the celebrations on the occasion of 50th anniversary of Bangladesh's Independence and 50 years of Bangladesh-India

diplomatic relations".

It may be recalled that the Pakistan Army had surrendered to the Indian Army in Dhaka on December 16, 1971, marking the liberation of the erstwhile East Pakistan which emerged as an independent nation Bangladesh.

In response to a question at a special MEA briefing on the summit in the evening regarding Sheikh Hasina's recent reported statement that Bangladesh can never forget or forgive Pakistan for the atrocities committed in 1971 and also on demands for an apology from Pakistan, India

also took a dig at Pakistan, with New Delhi saying, "There is no denying that state-sponsored oppression against Bangladesh's just war of oppression led to the death of more than 3 million, more than 2 lakh women were raped and tortured. We deeply respect and understand the sentiments expressed

by PM Sheikh Hasina." In his remarks, Modi told Sheikh Hasina, "Following the Victory Day, our meeting today is of even more special significance. It is a matter of pride for us to celebrate the historic victory of Bangladesh over Anti-liberation forces as the Victory Day with you. Today, when Bangladesh is celebrating forty nine years of independence, I pay homage to the martyrs of both the countries who sacrificed their lives. On the occasion of Victory Day, yes-terday I paid tributes at the National War Memorial in India and lit a 'Golden Victory Torch'. These four 'Victory Torches' will tour all over India and will be taken to all the villages of our martyrs. Since 16 December, we are celebrating the 'Golden Year', during which many events will be organised across India."

memorative postal stamp issued by the Government of India on the occasion of birth centenary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, while PM Modi also "thanked the Government of Bangladesh for issuing a stamp in honour of Mahatma Gandhi on the occasion of Gandhiji's 150th birth anniversary celebrations earlier in September 2020".

In all seven agreements were signed at the virtual summit between the two countries in the areas of hydrocarbon, culture, agriculture, high-impact community development projects. A decision was also taken "to expeditiously conclude the ongoing joint study on the prospects of entering into a bilateral Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement". The joint statement said. Modi also "assured that (Covid) vaccines would be made available to Bangladesh as and when produced in India".

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina "highlighted the need for early signing of interim agreement for sharing of the as agreed upon by both the governments in 2011"and Modi "reiterated India's sincere commitment and continu-The two Prime Ministers ed efforts in that regard",

DAC APPROVES 11 OFFSHORE **PATROL VESSELS**

PAWAN BALI | DC NEW DELHI, DEC. 17

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) headed by defence minister

the Indian Air Force.
These airborne early warning and control systems will be designed and developed by DRDO. These are reported to be deployed on six Airbus aircraft to be acquired from Air India. AĒW&C which are airborne help in detection and tracking of attacking enemy aircraft, missiles and drones much before ground based radars. They also provide crucial inputs during dogfights with the enemy fighter jets and give information on troops deployment by enemies on ground.

DAC also approved proposals for 11 next generation offshore patrol vessels for the Indian Navy and modular bridges for the Indian Army.

In a major push to Make-in-India, six proposals out of seven for which AoNs were granted will be sourced from the Indian industry

power and blatant misuse of emergency provision of IPS Cadre Rule 1954. This act is nothing but a deliberate attempt to encroach upon state's jurisdiction & demoralise the serving

Rajnath Singh on Thursday in a meeting grant-ed Acceptance of Nece-ssity (AoNs) for propos-als worth ₹28,000 crore including airborne early warning and control (AEW&C) systems for

Prime Minister Narendra address culture

BANERJEE SAYS

Centre's order; likely to challenge it legally

WB IPS officers

MHA transfers 3

Centre's order despite the state's objection is a colourable exercise of power and blatant misuse of emergency provision of IPS Cadre Rule 1954.

Mamata Banerjee govt refuses to accept the

She added, "This move, particularly before the elections is against the basic tenets of the federal structure. It's unconstitutional & completely unacceptable! We wouldn't allow this brazen attempt by the Centre to control the state machinery by proxy! West Bengal is not going to cow-down in front of expansionist & undemocratic forces.'

The IPS officers are Rajeev Mishra, inspector general (South Bengal), Praveen Kumar Tripathi, deputy inspector general (Presidency Range) and Bholanath Pandey, superintendent of police (Diamond Harbour Police District) in South 24 Parganas.

In August last year a

the feet of the CM at Digha in East Midnapore went viral.

The Centre has assigned Mishra, a 1996 batch offi-cer, to the Indo-Tibetan Border Police. Tripathi, of the 2004 batch, has been sent to Sashastra Seema Bal while Pandey, from the 2011 batch, has been deputed to the Bureau of Police Research and Development. All the three organisations are under the ministry of home affairs headed by Amit Shah. The officers came under the MHA's scanner for security lapses after Trinamul workers attacked the convoy of BJP president J.P. Nadda last week at Diamond

Harbour. The MHA, the nodal controlling authority of the IPS cadre, requisitioned them for central deputation while asking the state government for their release. Furious, the Chief Minister then held them back which only prompted the MHA to act this

PM to address MP farmers' today

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, DEC. 17

RAJIB CHOWDHURI I DC KOLKATA, DEC. 17

Bengal

Banerjee has accused the Narendra Modi govern-ment of "colourable exer-cise of power" after the Union home ministry

ordered the central depu-

tation of three IPS offi-

cers of her government

on Thursday. The Trinamul Congress supre-mo also refused to accept

the Centre's order which

her government, accord-

ing to sources, may chal-

lenge legally.
Banerjee, who is now in
North Bengal, Tweeted,
"Gol's order of central

deputation for the three

serving IPS officers of

West Bengal despite the state's objection is a colourable exercise of

Mamata

Modi will virtually farmers Friday even as some farmer unions have been protesting at Delhi borders against the three recently passed farm sector-related legislations. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan will also distribute relief amount for crops loss to around 35 lakh farmers during the event which will be attended by around 20,000 farmers across the state.

Meanwhile, Union agri-

Narendra Singh Tomar, home minister Amit Shah, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman and railways minister Piyush Goyal held a meeting with some BJP general secretaries at the party head-

During the meeting, sources said, Shah reviewed the party's out-

CHIEF MINISTER

Pradesh on reach minister

on farmers

Shivraj Singh Chouhan will distribute relief amount for crops loss to around 35 lakh farmers during the event. programme

through press conferences and "chaupals" across all districts of the country to allay fears on the new farm laws. The party has been holding chaupals at all districts across the country highlighting the three legislations and how they are aimed at benefitting farmers, mainly small and marginal farmers and countering the propaganda by some farmer unions and opposition parties against the legislations and how MSP and APMC will continue to The meeting at the BJF

headquarters was held on the day the Supreme Court heard a plea related to the farmers' protests against the Centre's three new agriculture laws.

CORONAVIRUS CASELOAD CROSSES 99.56L

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, DEC. 17

With 24,010 fresh cases in a day, the country's Covid-19 caseload 99.56 lakh, crossed while the number of people who have recovered from the infection surged to 94.89 lakh. According to the Union health ministry, the total Coronavirus mounted to 99,56,557 and the death toll rose to 1,44,451 with 355 new fatalities in a day.

As per the health min-

istry data, active recoveries outnumbering new cases on a daily basis have ensured a high recovery rate among patients. The total recovered cases are nearing 95 lakh (94,89,740). The recovery rate has improved to 95.31 per cent on Thursday. The gap between recovered cases and active cases is also increasing consistently, and presently stands at 91,67,374. The Covid-19 case fatality rate stands at 1.45 per cent.

Modi, like RSS, is not dogmatic on economy. But, he is close to a Gandhian socialist, claims author Sitapati

he economics of the Sangh parivar and of Prime Minister Narendra Modi are not based on dogmas or ideology; the RSS is actually like a rainbow coalition of all kinds of economic views. Modi takes his decisions based more on politics than economics, per se, argues Vinay Sitapati in this concluding part of this

QEverybody today tries to guess the deep rooted economic policy impulse, inclination and instinct of Narendra Modi. Some argue he is pro-free markets or pro-corporates. The farmer bill agitation currently hinges on it. You explore the evolution of RSS, the Jan Sangh and now BJP for hundred years. Is RSS, and consequently Modi, socialist or pro-free mar-

As I trace in my book, the RSS is a loose umbrella coalition when it comes to economics. They do not have a fixed ideological view on it. Throughout its history Hindu nationalism has articulated so many different views of economics. In Deen Dayal Upadhya's work, *Integral Humanism*, which is very core to RSS thinking, a vast welfare scheme and

is strongly articulated. You have free market supporters Madhok like Balraj and Subramanian Swamy as much as centrists like Vajpayee. It also included someone like Nanaji Deshmukh, whose personal honesty was peerless and who would raise funds from businessmen, including say Nusli Wadia, grandson of Jinnah. Even though Prime Minister Vajpayee was one

of the greatest economic reformer we ever had, he only continued the economic direction that P.V. Narasimha Rao started.

In essence, the Hindu nationalist ideology was around organising and uniting the Hindu society but had little view on the modern state, or issues that we refer to as 'governance'. The Sangh looks at economics as a flexible tactical political issue, in which the quest for votes is more significant. So Modi's assertion that least governed is best governed is his slogan rather than an RSS ideology.

Modi has a certain view of economics, certainly, but it is that state must play a role and it is crucial. A visceral Gandhian socialist view. In contrast to Modi's economic policies, you can see ideological fervour in Modi's changing of Article 370 or the Citizenship Bill. These are in the ideological realm, with a long genealo-

Incidentally, they have no strong ideological view on foreign affairs either. Yes, there are vague assertions like Vasudeva Kutumbikam or a goal of becoming a Vishwa Guru, but they are not substantial. And arguments of Akhand Bharat mean nothing in modern geo-

Why does it look today that Modi's BJP with the backing of the RSS is so hard to defeat in elections?

They win for many reasons, but a big one is teamwork and unity. This RSS teamwork is a response to the history lesson that Indians are terrible team players. They fight among themselves and split into factions. RSS uses this simple but deep insight to organisational create unity. Only one other man did it before them Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. The RSS has created in a sense a very un-Indian ideal of unifying Hindus, to habituate them into team work as an ideal. BJP leaders too have lots of internal bickering and differences, but rarely divorce and split the

Vajpayee was able to use this trait to get rid of two of his earliest rivals – Madhok and Subramaniam Swamy who were very individual-

Even Veer Savarkar was an opinionated individual, whereas Hedgewar and Golwalkar were committed to the sangh above all. This is what I call Hindu fevicol, and it is a hard bond to break. Congress in that sense is

typically Indian organisa-tion. They fight it out in the open and sabotage their own larger cause for a pettier goal. Congress is not a uniquely nepotistic party but a typically Indian-minded family party. Every Indian wants to hand over their power to their son or daughter. In that sense there is a Nehru-Gandhi in all of us. In contrast, when Indians see Narendra Modi, a man without a family to benefit, they are

in respectful awe but it is so unlike them. That sense of sacrifice is what puts Modi above others in the minds of common Indians. Talking of Gandhi, we can see a strand of commonality between

him and Vajpayee and Modi...Brahmacharya, extending the logic of sacrifice of family and material concerns, at least in perception. Does this favour Yogi Adityanath to inherit the mantle from

It is a very powerful appealing idea, the old Hindu tradition of adopting Brahmacharya. Our istic and unafraid to air psyche puts those who their differences in public. accept the monastic life in

Modi?

position of reverence. This is the appeal of Yogi Adityanath obscures many legitimate criticisms of his politics. It definitely gives him an upper-hand if he enters the race to become prime minister one day.

Many say that despite being from the RSS, Vajpayee was a moderate acceptable to all whereas Modi is a Loh Purush (iron man). Did the incarceration in Emergency play a role in giving the BJP leaders like Advani and Vajpayee a different experiential perspective in the issue of personal liberties?

Yes, while Modi was underground in Gujarat during Emergency, Vajpayee and Advani (and a plethora of others), developed a strong view about personal liberties because they were the worst victims of state atrocities during Emergency. Had Modi been arrested then, who knows what kind of a different viewpoint he would have had?

But it was also about the coalitions. The participation of Vajpayee-Advani in the Janata Party government and their later leadership of NDA shows they were willing to engage with a range of people — from a socialist like George Fernandes to aristocrat like Jaswant Singh. Modi has been electorally

freed from the need for a

Coming to Vajpayee and Advani, your jugalbandi book, how did their relationship

Advani began as a fan to the star Vajpayee. Their personal backgrounds personal were very different Vajpayee was a communicator, poet, orator, very Hindi heartland, lower middle class, whereas Advani was from Karachi, highly cosmopolitan, very English, but introverted and serious.

Vajpayee, like Syama Prasad Mukherjee before him, had charisma and magic. He could mean different things to different people. Advani was also under-confident but he had other strengths. He was loyal, disciplined, always willing to make a self-sacrifice. He was for most part underrated. They were great friends too. They are the kind who would go watch Bollywood movies, cry over some scenes and eat pani puri on the roadside.

QDid Advani stick to Vajpayee through thick and thin because he was too scared by Partition and even the idea of a separation was

very heavy on him? (Hmm). I wish we had spoken before writing the book. Could be. But to answer another question of yours, Advani, the rich

scion was comfortable with jail life and never complained of difficulties whereas Vajpayee despite being from a poor back-ground found it hard because of Partition. Advani lost everything, his home, his comfort and material wealth, his beloved Sindh... all in one go. Partition was an event for Vajpayee but a lifelong trauma for Advani.

QIn the end, What's your appraisal of Vajpayee and Advani? How do they differ from the Modi-Shah duo?

At heart, Vajpayee and Advani were both romantics, even children at heart. No one would say that about Modi and Shah. Their jugalbandi is very different. They won't be seen eating pani puri in public or crying while watching Bollywood movies.

The other difference is their understanding of India. Unlike Vajpayee or Advani, Modi and Shah have never served for a single day before taking power in 2014. They have no background of compromising with smaller and regional parties in Parliament. They were also not shaped by Partition or Emergency. They have been shaped by caste and religious politics in the Hindutya crucible of Gujarat. But the two jugalbandis share more than we imagine. All four of them why the BJP wins.

SHORT TAKES

'21 BERLIN FILM **FEST MAY GO VIRTUAL**

Los Angeles, Dec. 17: The Berlin International Film Festival might be held virtually for its upcoming 2021 edition.

Sources told *Variety* that the festival organisers are expected to delay the festival due to resurgence in Coronavirus cases in Germany. They will be announcing their plans later this week. As of now, the 71st edition of the film gala is scheduled to run as a physical event from February 11-21, but the organisers are now rethinking their strategy.

The festival is now looking to stage a competition section in a virtual format in early March, with the European Film Market running as a digital event at the same time. The organisers are also thinking of holding a mini-festival with a series of onsite world premieres for early June.

US JOINT CHIEFS CHAIRMAN MEETS TALIBAN

Kabul, Dec. 17: The top US general held unannounced talks with Taliban peace negotiators in the Persian Gulf to urge a reduction in violence across Afghanistan, even as senior American officials in Kabul warned that stepped-up Taliban attacks endanger the militant group's nascent peace negotiations with the Afghan government. Army Gen. Mark A. Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, met for about two hours with Taliban negotiators in Doha, Qatar, on Tuesday and flew Wednesday to Kabul to discuss the peace process with Afghan President

Ashraf Ghani. Milley's meetings came amid a new drawdown of US troops, although under current US policy a complete pullout hinges on the Taliban reducing attacks nationwide. "The most important part of the discussions that I had with both the Taliban and the government of Afghanistan was the need for an immediate reduction in vio-

CYCLONE YASA: FIJI IMPOSES EMERGENCY

Suva, Dec. 17: Fiji imposed a nationwide curfew Thursday after urging people near the coast to move to higher ground as the island nation prepared for a major cyclone to hit.

Cyclone Yasa was expected to hit the two main islands of /iti Levu and Vanua Levu later Thursday or early Friday. Authorities imposed an overnight curfew and declared a state of natural disaster. The National Disaster Management Office warned the cyclone could bring waves as high as 16 metres (52 feet) in some places and sustained winds of up to 250 kilometres per hour (155 mph), with gusts hitting 350 kph (217 mph).

In the capital Suva, many residents were experiencing

power cuts.
Michael Cheer, who owns the Samabula Cake Shop, was moving cakes into his car so he could take them home and put them into a cooler, rather than driving them across the island to deliver them to another town.

CHINA PROBE BRINGS HOME MOON SAMPLES

Beijing, Dec. 17: China's Change-5 probe successfully touched down on Earth in the early hours of Thursday, bringing home the first samples of the moon in over 40 years. The spacecraft landed in Siziwang Banner in north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region at 1:59 AM (local time), according to the China National Space Administration (CNSA).

Zhang Kejian, head of the CNSA, declared the Chang'e-5 mission a success.

It marks a successful conclusion of China's current threestep lunar exploration programme of orbiting and landing, and bringing back samples which began in 2004, staterun Xinhua news agency reported.

President Xi Jinping congratulated scientists on the complete success of the Chang'e-5 mission. As China's most complicated space project, President Xi in his message to plicated the CNSA said, the Chang'e-5 mission "is another major achievement in overcoming difficulties by giving full play to the advantages of the new system of pooling national resources and strength, marking a great step forward in China's space industry".

Record cases, deaths in Calif.

Most of state's 40 mn residents under stay-at-home orders

Los Angeles, Dec. 17: California has reported more than 53,000 new Coronavirus cases and 293 deaths, setting new records as hospitals struggled to keep up with the surge.

State health officials said Wednesday a change in data processing added 15,337 previous cases to the count, but the new virus cases remained a daily record. The state has been grappling with soaring cases and hospitalisations. Most of California's 40 million residents are under stay-at-home orders because of dwindling inte-

nsive care unit capacity. Hospitals are filling up so fast that officials are rolling out mobile field facilities and scrambling to hire more doctors and

2 health staff develop allergic reactions to Pfizer's Covid vaccine

New York, Dec. 17: Two healthcare workers, who received Pfizer's Coronavirus vaccine, developed "concerning reactions", even as the US rolled out the vaccine to frontline healthcare workers and high-risk individuals amid increasing Covid-19 infections across the country. A report in The New York Times said the two health care workers at Bartlett Regional Hospital in Alaska developed concerning reactions just minutes after receiving Pfizer's Coro-

navirus vaccine this week. One staff member was hospitalised for a few days. One of the healthcare workers, a middle-aged woman, had no history of allergies but had an anaphylactic reaction 10 minutes after receiving the vaccine. She experienced a rash over her face and torso, shortness of breath and an elevated heart rate, the NYT report said adding that anaphylaxis can be life-threatening, with impaired breathing and drops in blood pressure. The second worker received his shot on Wednesday and developed eye puffiness, lightheadedness and a scratchy throat 10 minutes after the injection, the hospital said. -PTI

President Donald Trump announced in October that



A police car drives at the empty pedestrian zone at early morning in Dortmund, western Germany, on Thursday, at a partial lockdown to curb the spread of the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic.

Macron latest to test +ve for Covid

President Emmanuel Macron is the latest world leader to test positive for Covid-19, joining a growing list of others just as inoculation drives against the illness are beginning in a number of countries. Macron, 42, has repeated-

ly said he is sticking to strict sanitary protocols during the pandemic, including not shaking hands, wearing a mask and keeping distance from other people. The Elysee Palace announced on Thursday that Macron would be isolating for seven days.

Melania Trump, tested positive for the Coronavirus. At 74, the US president was the oldest head of state to become infected with the virus to date, and his age put him at higher serious complica-

tions from Covid-19.
British PM Boris Johnson was the first major world leader confirmed to have Covid-19, after facing criticism for downplaying the pandemic. Prince Charles, the heir to the British throne, also tested positive in March and showed mild

Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro announced his released.

he and his wife, first lady illness in July and used it to publicly extol hydroxychloroquine, the unproven malaria drug that he'd been promoting as a treatment for Covid-19 and was taking himself.

Honduras president Juan Orlando Hernandez announced in June that he had tested positive, along with two other people who worked closely with him. Hernandez said he had started what he called the "MAIZ treatment," an experimental and unproven combination of microdacyn, azithromycin, iverbriefly hospitalised and

Alexander Lukashenko, who dismissed concerns about the virus as "psychosis" and recommended drinking vodka to stay healthy, said in July he had contracted it himself but was asymptomatic.

Others who were infected include Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, Russian Prime Mikhail Mishustin, Prince Albert II of Monaco, Guatemalan president Alejandro Giident Aleiandro ammettei, Bolivian interim president Jeannie Anez, president of the Dominican Republic Luis

VACCINATION IN ASIA-PACIFIC BY

Jakarta, Dec. 17: The World Health Organisation said Thursday that countries in the Asia-Pacific region are not guaranteed to have early access to Covid-19 shots and urged them to adopt a long-term approach to the pandemic. "The development of safe and effective vaccines is one thing. Producing them

in adequate quantities and reaching everyone who needs them is another. WHO Regional Director Dr. Takeshi Kasai told reporters in the Indonesian capital, Jakarta.

CHARLIE HEBDO HIT: 30 YRS' JAIL FOR I.S. WIDOW

Paris, Dec 17: The fugitive widow of an Islamic State gunman and a man described as his logisti-cian on Wednesday were convicted of terrorism charges and sentenced to 30 years in prison in the trial of 14 people linked to the January 2015 attacks in Paris against the satirical Charlie Hebdo newspaper and a kosher supermarket.

The verdict ends the three-month trial linked to the three days of killings across Paris claimed jointly by the Islamic State group and al-Qaida. During the proceedings, France was struck by new attacks, a wave of Coronavirus infections among the defendants, and devastating testimony bearing witness to bloodshed that contin-

ues to shake France. All three attackers died in police raids. The widow, Hayat Boumeddiene, fled to Syria and is believed to still be alive. The two men who helped her out of France were tried in absentia, may be dead, though one received a sentence of life in

'88 LOCKERBIE **BOMBING: NEW CHARGES BY U.S.**

Washington, Dec. 17: The Justice Department plans to unseal new charges in the coming days in connection with the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am jet that exploded over Lockerbie, Scotland, killing 270 people, according to a person familiar with the case.

The bombing of Flight 103, whose victims included dozens of American college students, spurr-ed global probe and pro-duced sanctions against Libya, which surrendered two intelligence officials for prosecution before a Scottish court sit-ting in the Netherlands. The New York-bound flight exploded over Lockerbie less than an hour after takeoff from London on Dec. 21, 1988. — AP

RO KHANNA IS DEM VICE CHAIR OF INDIA CAUCUS

Washington, Dec. 17: Indian-American Congressman Ro Khanna, who represents the Silicon Valley in the US House of Representatives, has been named as the Democratic Vice Chair of the Congressional India Caucus. The seat has been created for the first time since its formation in 1994.

Khanna, 44, who was recently elected for a third consecutive term from the congressional district representing Silicon Valley, is being considered as a potential contender to fill the US Senate seat from California that will fall vacant in January after Kamala Harris is sworn in as the country's vice president.

"I believe Ro Khanna would be an outstanding Democratic Vice Chair. Congressman Brad Sherman, Democratic Co-Chair of the Caucus, said in an email. -PTI

Despite US sanctions, Turkey not to step back on Russian S-400s

Ankara, Dec. 17: Turkey won't step back from its decision to deploy Russian air defence systems despite US sanctions imposed on the country over the purchase. Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said on Thursday. In an interview with

Turkey's 24 TV television, Cavusoglu also said Turkey was mulling steps it would take to reciprocate against the US sanctions. but did not say what the steps could entail. The US announced sanctions earlier this week over Turkey's procurement of Russia's advanced S-400 system, under a US law known as CAATSA, aimed at pushing back on Russian influence. The sanctions target Turkev's Presidencv of Defence Industries. the head of the presidency and three other senior officials. The penalties block any assets the four offici**GREECE TO PAY \$2.8 BN FOR FRENCH** RAFALE JETS AMID TURKEY TENSION Greece has earmarked

Athens, Dec. 17: Greece's government said on Thursday that it will pay 2.32 billion euros (\$2.8 billion) for the purchase of French-made Rafale fighter jets and an upgrade of compatible missiles, under a major military overhaul amid tensions with neighbouring Turkey.

Delivery of the 18 jets will begin in mid-2021 and be completed over two years, government spokesman Stelios Petsas said.

credits to the agency.

11.5 billion euros (\$14.1 billion) to modernise its armed forces over five years amid deteriorating relations with NATO ally Turkey over offshore energy rights in the eastern Mediterranean. The Rafale jets will include 12 aircraft currently in service with the French military and six new planes to be built by Dassault Aviation.

als may have in US jurispenalise a US ally. "If we were to step back we dictions and bar their entry into the US. They also would have done so before now," Cavusoglu said in include a ban on most export licences, loans and response to a question on whether Turkey would ca-It is the first time that ncel the S-400 deal with

CAATSA has been used to Russia. Cavusoglu added:

"Now we are assessing the impact of these sanctions in great detail...and will take steps accordingly." The minister also descri-

bed the sanctions as "wrong both legally and politically," arguing that Turk-ey's purchase of the Russian system in 2017 predated the CAATSA law. Cavusoglu said that an improvement of relations between Turkey and the United States would be conditional on President-elect Joe Biden's ability to address Ankara's grievances.

Ties between the two have been plagued by numerous disputes, including the jailing of American citizens and local consular staff, US support for Syrian Kurdish fighters considered to be terrorists by Turkey and the continued US residence of a Muslim cleric accused of masterminding the 2016 coup attempt in Turkey. -AF

Navalny poisoning: No role, says Putin

Moscow, Dec. 17: Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday rejected allegations that the Kremlin was behind the poisoning of his top political foe, opposition leader Alexei Navalny, and accused US intelligence agencies of fomenting the claims. Speaking via video call during an annual marathon news conference, the Russian leader countered the accusations by saving that if the Kremlin wanted to poison Navalny it would have pressed the attack home.

"If there was such a desire, it would have been done," Putin said with a chuckle. Navalny fell sick on Aug 20 during a domestic flight in Russia, and was flown while he was in a coma to Germany for treatment two days later. Labs in Germany, France and Sweden, and tests by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical

Weapons, established that he was exposed to a Soviet-era Novichok nerve agent. Russian authorities have vehemently rejected the accusations of involvement in the poisoning.

On Monday, the investigative group Bellingcat and Russian outlet The Insider released a report alleging that operatives from the FSB, Russia's domestic security agency, which is a top KGB successor, followed Navalny during his trips since 2017, had "specialised training in chemical weapons, chemistry and medicine" and "were in the vicinity of the opposition activist in the days and hours of the time-range during which he was poison-ed." The investigation, conducted by Bellingcat and The Insider in cooperation with CNN and Der Spiegel, identified the supposed FSB opera-

UN I PRIZE Vidyut Mohan helps farmers earn extra by converting waste farm residues into value-added chemicals

Indian among 'Young Champions of the Earth' winners

A 29-year-old Indian entrepreneur is among the seven winners of the prestigious "Young Champions of the Earth" 2020 prize given by the UN environment agency to global change-makers using innovative ideas and ambitious action to help solve some of the world's most pressing environmental challenges.

Vidyut Mohan, an engineer, is the co-founder of "Takachar", a social enterprise enabling farmers to prevent open burning of their waste farm residues and earn extra income by converting them into value-added chemicals like activated carbon on-site, UN Environment Programme (UNEP) said in a

statement on Tuesday.

sionate about energy access and creating income opportunities for poor communities," Mohan was quoted as saying in the statement. "(That) is at the heart of finding answers to the difficult question of balancing economic growth and climate change mitigation in developing countries," he said.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said in a message that in the middle of a global pandemic, with societies struggling, economies stretched to their limits and an escalating biodiversity and climate crisis, "we need to act boldly and urgently to repair our relationship with nature and take the path of sustainable development".

He said that the Young Champions of the Earth "inspire and mobilise". UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen said globally, young people are leading the way in calling for meaningful and immediate solutions to the triple planetary crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. "We must listen. As we

enter this decisive decade where we work to cut emissions and protect and restore ecosystems, UNEP Young Champions demonstrate that all of us can contribute, starting where we are with what we have. Every single act for nature counts, and we need the entire spectrum of humanity to share this global responsibility and this

UN SECRETARY-GENE-**RAL** Antonio Guterres said in a message that in the middle of a global pandemic, "we need to act boldly and urgently to repair our relationship with nature and take the path of sustainable development".

profound opportunity," Andersen said. Takachar buys rice hus-

ks, straw and coconut shells from farmers and turns them into charcoal, saving the debris from the fires, which are also a driver of climate change. Since Takachar was launched in 2018, Mohan and its co-founder Kevin Kung have worked with about 4,500 farmers and processed 3,000 tonnes of crops, UNEP said. Mark Radka, chief of the energy and climate branch at UNEP's Economy Division, said the open burning of agricultural residues is a big source of air pollution in many parts of the world and "Takachar's innovative technology can help farmers turn what is currently thought of as waste into a valuable resource while helping clean up our environment.

Slowly and gradually all funding streams available and support services are turning towards sustainability. Companies are going to lose if they don't become sustainable in the long run," Mohan, a 2019 Echoing Green Fellow and a 2020 Forbes 30 Under 30 awardee, said.

The other awardees are 29-year-old Nzambi Matee from Kenya, a materials engineer and head of Gjenge Makers, which produces sustainable low-cost construction materials made of recycled plastic waste and sand; 29-year old Xiaoyuan Ren from China who leads MyH2O, a data platform that tests and records the quality of groundwater across a thousand villages in rural China into an app so residents know where to find clean water. Lefteris Arapakis, 26, from Greece founded the start-up Enaleia, through which the team trains, empowers and incentivises the local fishing community to collect plastic from the sea, allowing

both fish stocks and the

ecosystem to recover; 30-year old Max Hidalgo Quinto from Peru founded Yawa, building portable wind turbines that harvest up to 300 litres of water per day from atmospheric humidity and mist. Niria Alicia Garcia, 28, from the US coordinates the annual Run 4 Salmon event using virtual reality to bring to life the historical journey of the Sacramento chinook salmon along California's largest watershed, raising awareness of this invaluable ecosystem, the species and people it supports; 24-year old Fatemah Alzelzela from Kuwait started Eco Star, a non-profit recycling initiative that exchanges trees and plants for waste from homes, schools and businesses.



Chronicle

18 DECEMBER 2020

Covid not a good reason to scrap Winter Session

hile the Opposition parties have cried foul, and complained of not being consulted by the government on the decision to not hold the Winter Session of Parliament this year, the Constitution is clear that they cannot demand discussion or consultation as a matter of right. That right belongs to the government alone, and the President summons Parliament to meet when advised to do so by the government. The Narendra Modi government is absolutely in the clear on this score.

There is only one constraint under which the government labours, constitutionally speaking. It must ask the President to summon Parliament at least once every six months. While recently announcing that there would no Winter Session in 2020, the government has hinted that the Budget Session would be commenced in January. There is nothing out of the ordinary about that.

The minister for parliamentary affairs, Pralhad Joshi, has claimed that he has consulted leaders of the leading Opposition parties on the scuttling of the Winter Session, and there was general agreement that the session be given the go-by in view of the Covid pandemic. Apparently,

Even if the pandemic was seemed a matter of serious concern, the Winter Session could have been held online

MPs were chary of travelling to Delhi. Jairam Ramesh of the Congress claims no consultation was held with his party. None of this matters, however, since the decision rests with the govern-

Nevertheless, giving Covid as the reason for skipping the traditionally three-week long Winter Session is hardly a persuasive argument. The government and the BJP had seemed eager to hold

the Bihar election when it was due recently, rather than respect the sentiment of the Opposition parties to defer it by a few months. The election to the Hyderabad Municipal Corporation was also held recently. Covid-related considerations did not come in the way. The pandemic is raging in America but the US stuck to the schedule for its recently concluded election for President. The US Congress and the British Parliament have met as scheduled. The British Parliament did not skip meetings even during the Second World War. In November 1962, our Parliament was in session when the Chinese invaded in NEFA.

It is the widest impression today that the government has run away from the Winter Session because questions will be raised about the three-week old farmers' protest on Delhi's borders. Moreover, the Modi government has set a precedent in this regard. Future governments may also act similarly — skip a session whenever expedient. And this is hardly good for our democracy where important questions crop up all the time, often unexpectedly. A bloody-minded government may hold a session of Parliament only when it wishes to pass laws, not otherwise. This is the best way to avoid noisiness in Parliament and be an "orderly" country.

Even if the pandemic was seemed a matter of serious concern, the Winter Session could have been held online. This was done in Britain recently. MPs who could not be physically present attended on-line. India is technologically capable and this could have been organised if the government had the mind to

While the Winter Session stands scuttled, the government can still attest to its bonafides by holding a brief session of two or three days to go over proposals for "reform" of the farm sector with which all may be invited to engage. Whatever the outcome, it is not unlikely that the farmers' protest may be

Post-pandemic bonding

he choice of Boris Johnson to be the chief guest at India's Republic Day celebrations is interesting, not the least because he will be the first British Prime Minister to be bestowed the honour since John Major in 1993. Much water has flowed down the Ganga and the Thames since the time India was just emerging as a fledgling player in the free markets after pathbreaking economic reforms. It might appear the UK needs its old friends as trading partners much more now as it seeks to exit the EU as soon as possible, deal no deal. The time to strike a trade deal with the UK in the form of a FTA is ripe enough.

The world has changed post-pandemic and the shared experiences of grief and economic woes should form a sombre backdrop to what should be more sober festivities in the coming R-Day. Johnson is not the dominant figure he was projected to be when he had just staged a notable coup in the Tory Party and emerged as the champion in British eyes who would steer the island on an independent course. Just as the shadow of Covid-19 on Christmas celebrations as the UK struggles to tamp down a second coronavirus surge, the Indian Prime uister is challenged by striking farmers who expect a "f

It would be presumptuous to believe mighty geopolitics is guiding the choice of guest at this time back to Britannia and the land of colonial masters. But, in a new world order shaped by the blows of the pandemic, of which BoJo has experience since he was personally pushed to the very brink, it would be realistic to examine ways of promoting ties, particularly as India might have much to contribute in IT and ITeS. Britain as well as India's ardour for Chinese goods and 5G technology has also dampened considerably and so even this crisis-ridden time smells of opportunity to get ties right.

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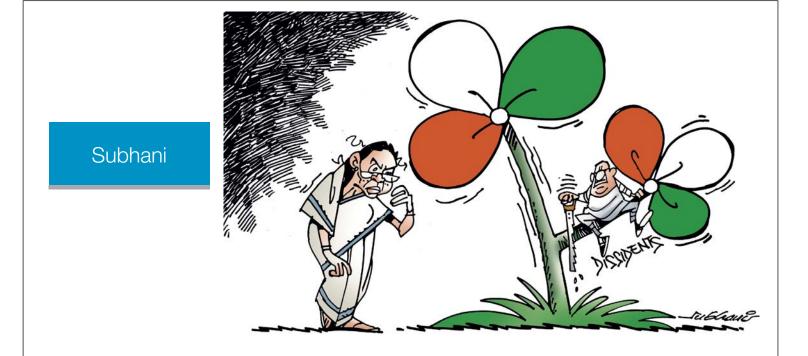
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How rise in inequality distorts Indian society



Mohan Guruswamy

n 2013 the French economist Thomas released wenty-First Century, a magnum opus on income inequality. It was an event book very much like Stephen Hawking's A Brief History of Time. Hawking's book sold as many as 10 million copies, by comparison Piketty's tome had 2.4 million buyers so far. Such event books are more often than not read by only a fraction of the buyers. Speaking for myself, I still have somewhere a slightly read copy of James Joyce's Ulysses, still considered by the cognoscenti as the foremost work of modern literature. It is said that an analysis of Kindle readers of the Piketty book revealed that a typical reader got through 26 of its 700 pages. But have no fear, those first 26 pages have all you need to know. They encapsulate the rationale and results of Piketty's monumental

I once asked a wellknown economist who had reviewed Piketty's Capital about what the main proposition of the book was. He encapsulated it quite brilliantly. He just said that Piketty had set out to prove that R was greater than G, where R is the return on capital and G is the growth of the economy. There is much empirical evidence to back this up. In the eight years between 2006 and 2014. the US benchmark index S&P 500 gained 45 per cent, an average simple growth rate of 5.6 per cent, four times higher than the average GDP growth rate of around 1.5 per cent. The consequence of this, of course, the explosion in income inequality, which is the hallmark of the post-World War II era, and particularly after the

advent of globalisation. Oxfam has informed us that in the past two decades 73 per cent of the growth has been cornered by just one per cent of the population. Oxfam has a known tendency to exaggerate a bit to prove its point, but this proposition, that few people ben-efitted the most during this period of huge economic expansion, is undisputable.

Paul Krugman wrote: "What excited them was Piketty's novel hypothe-sis about the growing importance of disparities in wealth, especially inherited wealth, as opposed to earnings. We are, Piketty suggested, returning to the kind of dynastic, 'patrimonial' capitalism that prevailed in the late 19th century. We only need to look around us to see that most of the wealthy today are inheritors, and without doubt many of them are building on those inheritances to further accentuate the income inequality. What is really troubling about this growing concentration of wealth is the concentration of political power in the hands of very few who are able to influence

politics and policies. According to Marx an individual's within a class hierarchy is determined by their role in the production process and argues that political and ideological consciousness is determined by class position. He saw a class as those who share common economic interests and are conscious of those interests. Classes, according to Marx, were inherently

antagonistic and in a state of constant struggle. In his new book *Capital* and Ideology, Thomas Piketty argues, with far greater validity, that inequality is driven by human institutions, which in turn reflect the

The nature of the institutions determines outcomes, not the means of production or processes

dominant ideology. Piketty defines his thesis very succinctly thus: "Inequality is neither economic nor technologi-cal: it is ideological and political. In other words, he market and competition, capital and debt, skilled and unskilled workers, natives and aliens, tax havens and competitiveness — none of these things exist as such. All are social and historical constructs, which depend entirely on the legal, fiscal, educa-tional, and political systems that people choose to adopt and the conceptual definitions they choose to work with. These choices are shaped by society's conception of social justice and economic fairness and by the relative political and ide-ological power of con-tending groups and dis-Does this mean Marx

was wrong? The times in which Marx and Piketty lived are very different. Marx saw the distortions and inequity in society and wondered why? He came up with explanations. His prescriptions were limited by the knowledge and evidence available to him then. The world has moved on and moved very far since then. When Karl Marx began writing his first three volumes of Das Kapital (1867-1883), it was the early days of electricity. Marx couldn't contemplate the massive leaps of productivity made possible in the 1900s, when the world witnessed a monumental expansion of knowledge and, with it, capital. Piketty's study relates to how both capital and knowledge came to be inequitably allocated because of the institutional arrangements within societies. To understand how institutional arrangements determine outcomes, just

have two or possibly three parallel educational streams. The two urban upper classes largely benefit from a higher standard and quality of educa-tion imparted in English in schools with high quality teaching and facili-ties. This is the stream that produces India's managerial classes (both government and industri-al). The working class stream flows out of our government schools, with its emphasis on vernacular education and indifferent standards. There is

think of India's educational system. We now

a third stream of rural education from which escape even into the next higher class becomes even more difficult, if not impossible. The flow into the upper reaches of Indian society from these three streams is vastly unequal. What Piketty is saying is just this. The nature of the institutions determines outcomes, not the means of production or processes. Capital and Ideology is rich in references to India and draws inferences about the institution of

castes (varnas) and the rising role of brahmins, after the advent of Muslim rule, leading to the diminution of the role of Kshatrivas. The role of the brahmins expanded to an even more dominant status under the British. Piketty lauds the determined "affirmative action" policies after Independence that vastly increased the upward mobility of the lower castes, like most of us do. He also notes that the benefits could not be fully realised due to the low standards of education and its unevenness in towns and the hinterland and between regions. So, what's new? Most Indians with even an elementary understanding of postindependence India know this. The question is what is to be done now?

The writer, a policy anaeconomic and security issues, held senior positions in government and industry. He also specialises in the Chinese

ELURU ILLNESS

The reason being attributed to the Eluru illness is rather strange in the sense that it has affected just one town and its surroundings. The presence of lead or organochlorine or mercury or something else in the food consumed by the people is mostly due to the excessive use of pesticides by the farmers. That means all areas in which these agricultural products were retailed should have been affected. Probably a particular batch of pesticides is responsible for the cause of the illness.

Govardhana Myneedu

COVID-19 VACCINE

The latest data from the NFHS-5 is worrisome and a cause for concern. The poor state of nutrition security of the children is stark and downright (Child nutrition crisis may derail India's aspirations, DC, Dec. 17). In fact, it was unsatisfactory prior to the onset of the pandemic that affected so many lives and livelihoods. The author has rightly mentioned that chil-dren are India's future and they are paying the price for adult bungling and apathy. It is a cogent analysis by the author. Effective steps need to be taken with earnest intent to control malnutrition.

Dr C. Ghanshyam



MOSCOW, DEC. 17. According to latest reports the Venus-7 transmitter shut off after 35 minutes and there was no indication that it still could function.

The Soviet news agency Tass said Venus-7 sent data that was being processed and studied but gave no indications of any find-

The Venus-7 entered the planet's atmosphere at 8.02 am Moscow time and on command from ground controllers, the descent craft was separated.

After a skip entry into the thick atmosphere, the descent module had slowed to a speed of 820 feet a second. Ground crews then popped open its parachute sys-



On 250th birth anniversary, Beethoven still holds his own

F music be the food of love. play on; Give me excess of it... The opening lines of Shakespeare's Twelfth Night might have entered the thoughts of the uniquely privileged Viennese audience that witnessed Ludwig van Beethoven premiering his Fifth and Sixth Symphonies in the Austrian capital on Dec 22, 1808.

For good measure, the artistic showcase also featured the first performances of his Piano Concerto No 4 and Choral Fantasy. A 20th-century equivalent would have entailed The Beatles, say, unveiling 'Sgt Pepper' and 'Abbey Road' simultaneously in a live per-formance. Incidentally, the latter album's Because is based on reversing the chords of the Moonlight Sonata. It wasn't the only time turned up in the pop

By 1808, Beethoven was already viewed as the most fascinating composer of his age. He was born in Bonn, probably precisely 250 years ago today. He first visited Vienna as a teenage prodigy, and may have been tutored by Mozart. He was obliged to return to Bonn to attend to his dving mother, but went back to Vienna at Haydn's invitation five years later and remained there for the rest of

I cannot claim to be an aficionado of Western classical music — the temporal investment it requires has always been a hard slog. Yet there are compositions that insinuate themselves into the subconscious, from Mozart's Eine Kleine Nachtmusik to Strauss's Blue Danube, Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake, Ravel's Bolero and Chopin's

I would make a particular exception, though, for Beethoven. It dates back, perhaps, to a presentation on the weekly Disney show featured on PTV in the early 1970s, where a dramatised biography of Beethoven showed the opening chords of the Fifth Symphony being inspired by a debtor banging on the door of the composer's rented accommodation. Those dramatic notes are more often described

as the knocking of Fate. The show was possibly more accurate in its depiction of a deaf Beethoven being swung around by

a soloist after inaugurating his Ninth Symphony to witness the rapturous response. The Ninth came almost a decade after the Eighth, which had been unveiled before an audience of international leaders at the Congress of Vienna in 1814.

That particular segment, now the official anthem of the European Union, has stood the test of time in more ways than one. Beethoven's death centenary in 1927 was widely commemorated across Europe, from Britain to the Soviet Union. As a German, though, he was also appropriated by the Nazi regime, which continued to honour him despite determining that he was 'mixed race'. Based on Beethoven's looks, the suspicion of African ancestry has persisted, without any firm albeit

His politics have also served as the basis of much conjecture. Beethoven famously rescinded the dedication of his Third Symphony, Eroica, to Napoleon after the latter emerged as a potential tyrant. And there is a tale, possibly apocryphal,

foundation.

in a park with Goethe, encountered a royal party and strolled right through it, even as Goethe stepped aside to bow and scrape.

For all his antipathy towards authority, Beethoven relied for much of his life on the sponsorship of European nobles, and many of his compositions were dedicated to princes, counts and barons. But he regularly fell out with patrons, and occasionally detested royals. Yet his Symphony No 8 was unveiled before the crowned heads of Europe

at the Congress of Vienna in 1814. He never compromised his art, though, confessing at the turn of the century that his devotion to music had prevented him from suicide. His personal life was a shambles, littered with unrequited love or romances doomed by the social rules of the era. Yet, despite a handful of detractors, few who heard his compositions could fail to be moved

And the legend only grew after his demise in 1827, just three years after he had inaugurated his magnificent Symphony No 9, whose glorious final movement, a setting for

appropriated for political purposes throughout the past two centuries, and serves today as the European

Union's official hymn. Not surprisingly, the German Nazi regime picked Beethoven as an avatar (despite concluding that he was mixed race). However, a century earlier Friedrich Engels had waxed eloquent about the Fifth Symphony, and some six decades later Vladimir Lenin declared he could listen to the Appassionata sonata every day. "What astonishing, superhuman music," he is quoted by Maxim Gorky as saying.
"It always makes me proud ... to
think that people can work such
miracles."

But perhaps the pianist and conductor Daniel Barenboim summed up Beethoven best a few years ago by pointing out that "he freed music from hitherto prevailing conventions of harmony and structure", and that much of his work could be paraphrased "by saying that suffering is inevitable, but the courage to fight it renders life worth living".

By arrangement with Dawn













FINANCIAL

Chronicle

FRIDAY | 18 DECEMBER 2020 | RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM

quick

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	46,890.34	0.48
Nifty 50	13,740.70	0.42
S&P 500*	3,717.43	0.44
Dollar (₹)	73.58	0.01
Pound Sterling (₹)	99.96	0.50
Euro (₹)	89.98	-0.15
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	49,455▲194	0.39
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	51.38	0.30
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.952	0.008
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.895	-0.025
* As of 8:30 PM IST		

Economy seems bottoming out: Credit Suisse

After years of downgrades to the country's medium-term growth outlook, the estimates are likely to be upgraded now, Credit Suisse said in a report. The country's economy is showing signs of bottoming out, it said. The consensus forecasts of GDP growth for FY22 over FY20 stopped falling after October 2020 (currently at (-) 1 per cent). Analysts at Credit Suisse expect these estimates to be revised upwards.

Puravankara to get ₹556 crore from IFC, EAF



IFC, a member of the World Bank group, and IFC Emerging Asia Fund (EAF) will invest Rs 556 crore in an affordable housing platform of Puravankara Ltd to develop up to four projects. IFC and IFC EAF have partnered with the Puravankara Group to invest in the development of up to four residential projects under ne Puravankara group's afford able housing brand 'Provident'. Two of these four projects are planned in Kochi and Bengaluru.

Redmi 9 Power smartphone sales from next week

Redmi India unveiled Redmi 9 Power which will be sold online from Dec. 22. Redmi said the new smartphone comes with a 6.000 mAh battery that last for two days after a single charge. Redmi business head Sneha Tainwala said the year has been phenomenal for Redmi India, and the company is further pushing boundaries with Redmi 9 Power. Redmi 9 Power's two variants are priced at Rs 10,999 and Rs 11,999.

Blockchain-led solar power

US-based tech services firm Abjayon Inc has partnered with India Smart Grid Forum (ISGF) to support the integration of blockchain platform with UP Power Corporation's (UPPCL) billing system. UP has launched India's first blockchain-enabled peer-to-peer trading of rooftop solar power on a pilot basis in Lucknow. UPPCL, Madhyancha Vidyut Vitran Nigam and UP New & Renewable Energy Dev. Agency will host the project.



■ Fallout of US placing India on watchlist

RBI may go slow on forex interventions

FALAKNAAZ SYED MUMBAI, DEC. 17

The US adding India to the watchlist for currency manipulation could keep the Reserve Bank of India guarded on aggressive forex intervention and may help the rupee gain, according to experts.
The United States Treas-

ury report once again included India in its monitoring list of countries with potentially "questionable foreign exchange policies" and "currency mani-pulation" after the RBI relentlessly bought dollars to forcibly keep the rupee weak to boost

exports.

Abheek Barua, chief economist at HDFC Bank told Financial Chronicle, 'The RBI will have to consider the ramifications of continuing with their action (of massive dollar buying), what possible penalties or the cost of ignoring the US altogether be? It's a difficult call but I believe that the RBI will have to take their foot off the intervention pedal a little going forward given this new develop-

"This is rupee positive and bond yields should go down theoretically, but sentiment is a critical factor in the very short term and let's see how that is perceived. There will be pressure on the RBI to stop buying dollars at the rate they have been both in the spot and in the forward market...So we will just have to see. I don't think it will have a major



impact but certainly it will have some near-term impact from tomorrow onwards," added Barua.

Ashutosh Khajuria, executive director at Federal Bank told FC, "In case the RBI takes the development seriously then it will reduce or stop the inter-vention and so the rupee may have a tendency to appreciate against the dollar unless the foreign flows reduce or stop.'

The rupee is headed for the third yearly decline against the US dollar. So far this year, the rupee has depreciated 3 per cent to 73.52 a dollar, the worst performance among Asian currencies.

The underperformance was on the back of the central bank's dollar buying and weaker domestic economic activities fol-lowing the Covid out-

India's forex reserves have increased by \$117.4 billion to a record high of \$ 574.82 billion from April till date against the previous year's \$457.47 billion. be attributed to dollar weakness against other currencies such as ster-

ling, euro, yuan and yen.

In the first nine months of 2020, the RBI bought a whopping \$57 billion just in the spot market. Its purchases through forward contracts are around \$12.6 billion. The US Treasury Department's report said that the Indian central bank's interventions added up to 2.4 per cent of the country's GDP, breach-ing one of the thresholds

that the US monitors.

India was last included in the currency watchlist in October 2018, but removed from the May 2009 list. A currency manipulator tag is given by the US to countries that deliberately keep their currency low against the dollar to gain export advantage. The treasury report, published twice a year, warns of any unfair currency practices. The US has included India. Taiwan and Thailand to its monitoring list.

Mrs Bectors Food IPO subscribed 198 times

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD

After the grand listing success of initial public offerings by Burger King India and Gland Pharma in the recent past, Rs 540-crore public issue of biscuits and bread maker Mrs Bectors Food Special-ities has also received overwhelming ponse, getting subscribed over 198 times on the last day of the

public offer.
In fact, the public issue got oversubscribed on the very first day after opening for subscription

Tuesday. As per details made available by stock exchanges and sources working closely with the merchant bankers. total subscription as per the last update was . 198.02 times shares on

The qualified institutional buyers portion has been subscribed 176.85 times, non-institutional investors or high net worth investor portion was subscribed 621 times and the retail individual investors portion was subscribed more than 29 times.

Earlier on Monday, the company raised Rs 162 crore from the anchor investors.

The price band for Mrs Bector Food Specialities public offer has been fixed at Rs 286-288 per share of Rs 10 face value.

In rare move, Japan sells gold to fill budget hole

TETSUSHI KAJIMOTO TOKYO, DEC. 17

Japan has sold 80 tonnes of gold used for minting coins to another arm of the government to fund part of its huge stimulus package to combat the coronavirus crisis, government officials told

Reuters.
Saddled with public debt twice the size of its economy and tax rev-enues hit by the pandemic-induced recession, the finance ministry is under pressure to find non-tax revenues to cover the rising cost of spending to deal with the health cri-

The ministry usually taps reserves set aside as special accounts, and profits the Bank of Japan (BOJ) and other agencies return to state coffers after they close their annual books.

This time, the ministry resorted to a rare



arrangement involving the central bank.

Under the move, the ministry's division in charge of international affairs sold a portion of dollar reserves to the BOJ. With the yen it received, the division bought gold from another division of the ministry in charge of debt manage ment.

From the gold sale, the division in charge of debt management gained proceeds worth 500 billion yen (\$4.84 billion) that would be used to finance a

new fund aimed at boosting research and development at universities, two officials told Reuters on condition of anonymity.

The BOJ announced on Wednesday it would buy dollars from the ministry as a precaution against any market disruptions caused by the pandemic. But some analysts say

the arrangement may have been initiated by the finance ministry, which wanted to avoid issuing too much debt or using taxpayers' money for the

"From the standpoint of fiscal consolidation, this deal may be described as effective use of state properity," said Yoshimasa Maruyama, chief market economist at SMBC Nikko Securities. "It sounds reasonable for the BOJ to top up dollar funds. But it was probably the government, not the BOJ, that pulled the

Smartphone market up 42% in Oct.

India's smartphone market grew 42 per cent, with shipments of 21 million units in October—the second highest for a monthdriven by multiple online sale events, research firm

IDC said on Thursday.
IDC said it expects the smartphone market to see a single-digit decline in final consumer sell out in

2020 on a full-year basis. According to IDC, the growth in October was driven by multiple online sale festivals and continuing pent up demand from the third quarter of 2020,. 'This is the highest ever

October shipments and second highest for a month, following 23 million units in September 2020, an all-time high for a single month," it added.
Online platforms acc-

ounted for 51 per cent share of the shipment, and the channel grew 53 per cent year-over-year (YoY). Offline channels, especially in smaller towns and cities, also saw a healthy 33 per centYoY, IDC said.

The low-mid range segment (\$100-200) grew by 60 per cent YoY and its share increased to 58 per cent of the total market in the said month, it added.

The premium segment (\$500-700) witnessed multifold growth with high shipments of the iPhone XR, 11 and OnePlus 8 drivaffordability schemes/offers.

Antony Waste's

₹300-crore IPO

from Monday

IFC invests \$30 million in Biological E

International Corporation, a member of the World Bank Group, on Thursday said it is providing a loan of up to \$30 million (around Rs 220 crore) to Biological E The loan will support

the pharmaceutical firm's expansion of low-priced, generic vaccines for routine immunisation of children and to boost capacity for manufacturing any future Covid-19

An investment in one of India's top vaccine manu-

Hvderabad. Dec. 17:

HFCL on Thursday said it

has begun the commercial

production of fibre-to-the-

home (FTTH) cables from

its new facility in Hyderabad, involving a

fresh outlay of Rs 40 crore.

So far the company has

invested Rs 300 crore in

the Hyderabad facility as

part of its expansion road

HFCL said it has become

the largest manufacturer

of FTTH cables in India.

expand access to low-cost vaccines for children in developing countries and help increase the production of a Covid-19 vaccine when developed, a key step in saving lives and restarting economies, IFC said in a statement.

The IFC financing package aims to support the production of new vaccines and boost the company's capacity for manufacturing any future Covid-19 vaccine, the statement said. IFC interim managing

HFCL begins production of FTTH cables

With this new facility.

company HTL

HFCL along with its sub-

Limited has become the

largest manufacturer of

FTTH cables in India with

a capacity of 6 lakh kms

The company had earlier

invested Rs 260 crore in

the Hyderabad plant, for

manufacturing optical fibre, that was commis-

"This new...automated

high-speed FTTH cable

sioned in January 2020.

per annum.

director and executive

vice president, and chief operating officer Stephanie von Friedeburg said vaccines are one of the most critical and costeffective means improving health outcomes in emerging markets like India.

Welcoming IFC's longterm financing, Biolomanaging director Mahima Datla said it has come at a crucial time when the company is gearing up to expand its vaccine-products portfolio for routine immuni-

facility has come up with

a fresh outlay of Rs 40

throughput, economies of

scale and highest quality

standards," it said. Mahendra Nahata, MD,

HFCL said, India is seeing

buoyant FTTH activity,

driven by private telcos

and government's thrust

on rural network deployment. Expanding FTTH

rollouts will boost 4G con-

nectivity and prepare for 5G launch, he said. —PTI

to ensure high

crore

Soaring LNG prices worsen gas crunch in Asian nations

JESSICA JAGANATHAN

Surging spot prices for liquefied natural gas (LNG) are exacerbating a gas supply crunch in key fastrowing emerging mar kets in Asia just as a cold spell in other parts of the region boosts demand for the fuel.

Companies from Pakistan to China have cancelled a flurry of LNG tenders this week, several trade sources said, as lofty prices risk pushing up the input costs of industries. which could make energy more expensive for con-

Benchmark Asia spot LNG prices have soared seven-fold since May to sixyear highs, driven by pro-Malaysia, Australia, Norway and Qatar combined with accelerating

use in China, India and elsewhere. "Buyers with no alternatives are now paying top-

dollar for prompt cargoes in January," said Chong Zhi Xin, a director at consultancy IHS Markit.

The state buyer Pakistan—one



fastest growing LNG markets—did not award an emergency tender seeking three cargoes for delivery in January after it received high prices, according to sources.

Power plants may opt to burn dirtier but cheaper fuel oil instead, the sources said, but are also facing rising prices in that

In India, Gujarat State Petroleum Corp (GSPC) and Indian Oil Corp did not award tenders seeking cargoes for January to February delivery, trade sources said.

In Bangladesh, gas short-ages are already apparent. "We don't have gas for cooking until (the) afternoon during the winter season. There is hardly

any gas. I can't even boil water, let alone cook food," said Sumi Akter, a mother of two in Dhaka.

Bangladesh has only imported one spot cargo this winter despite issuing several tenders over the past few months, an energy ministry official said.

"We have started import-ing from the spot market but the effort was not successful because of the abnormally high prices,' the official added.

Buyers in China, the world's second largest LNG importer after Japan, are also feeling the pinch, with one steel trader reporting a rise of around 2 per cent in billet prices in steelmaking Tangshan, due to the rise of natural gas prices.

Higher prices combined with a gas supply crunch have seen operations at liquefaction plants in some areas in northern China being cut by 20 to 40 per cent, sources added.

"The LNG prices have reached a point where I don't think it's viable for some price-sensitive buya Singapore-based LNG trader said.

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, DEC. 17

Antony Waste Handling Cell's Rs 300-crore IPO opens on December 21 in tne price range of Rs 313 to Rs 315 per equity share of

Rs 5 face value. Antony Waste Handling is the second largest player in the Rs 5,000-crore municipal solid waste management industry, with a 19year track record.

The company has undertaken more than 25 projects, of which 18 were ongoing as at November 15, including projects for the municipal corporations of Greater Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, Thane, Pimpri Chinchwad, Nag-pur, North Delhi and Mangaluru, besides Noida Greater Noida Industrial Development

Authority. The company had a fleet of 1,147 vehicles and close to 7,400 full time employees to handle municipal

solid waste management. The public issue comprises a fresh issue of Rs 85 crore and an offer for sale worth Rs 215 crore by financial investors.

UK's largest Rolex retailer lifts trading in UP forecast as demand improves

CORINNE GRETLER

Watches of Switzerland Group Plc raised its revenue forecast after a stronger-than-expected first half, providing a glimmer of hope for the bat-

tered Swiss watch industry.
The company, which is the UK's largest watch retailer, forecast full-year sales of 900 million pounds (\$1.2 billion) to 925 million pounds. Demand was better than anticipated in the six months ended October as well into the start of the Christmas holiday period. The stock rose as much as 10 per cent Thursday

morning in London. upbeat outlook some improvereflects some ments for the Swiss watch industry as it suffers from store closures and a virtu-

al standstill in travel. Swiss watch exports slipped 3.2 per cent last month, continuing a gradual moderation of declines caused by the coronavirus pandemic that's led to a slump of 24 per cent so far this year.

There is more demand," Watches of Switzerland chief executive officer Brian Duffy said in an interview. "That gives us the luxury of being able to conduct our business a fair bit better than others.

The company's previous sales forecast was for 880 million pounds to 910 million pounds. The number of people

working in Switzerland for watch industry dropped by about 1,550 in through year September, an industry group said Wednesday. Bloomberg

VIRUS FATIGUE **Ticket sales in Japan have reached pre-Covid levels in last 3 months** Imax doubles down on China as theatres buzz again

SHIRLEY ZHAO

Imax Corp sees the potential to add at least 400 theatres in China by 2023, as the cinema chain operator looks to expand its footprint in a country that's emerged as the largest movie market this year.

The Ontario, Canadabased firm known for massive screens in its movie halls, has signed a deal with its Chinese partner Guangzhou Jinyi Media Corp for five new locations and upgrades at seven existing ones, it said in an email. Imax, which has about 700 theatres in China, sees the possibility of expanding its network by 50 per cent over the next three years, it added.

The theatre chain is stepping up its commitment in China as the Asian country rebounds strongly from the coronavirus pandemic-induced slowdown while the outbreaks continue to ravage the US and Europe. While both US and China contributed about a third of Imax's global box office in 2019, the latter has surpassed the US as the world's top

"One big vote of confidence in the Chinese market is that a number of our Chinese leading exhibitors are adding more theatres to their Imax footprint," Imax chief executive officer Rich Gelfond

film market this year,

underscoring its impor-

tance for movie hall opera-



said in an interview. The company has also "been on a trajectory to release more local language Chinese films," he said.

China's box-office gross revenues touched 16.4 billion yuan (\$2.5 billion) this year, compared with about \$2 billion ticket sales in the US, according to data from ticketing platform Maoyan Entertainment

and market tracker Box Office Mojo. "Imax's exposure to China's quick box office rebound gives it a leg-up

against regular theatres that have a greater presence in North America and Europe, where the recovery has been tepid," Bloomberg Intelligence analysts Geetha Ranganathan and Amine Bensaid wrote in a Nov. 17 note.

Box office revenues in China are now at 75 per cent of the levels seen last year, owing to local-lan-guage blockbusters such as "The Eight Hundred," -also the world's top-grossing movie this year --Gelfond said. The pandemic has also accelerated the company's commitment to releasing more Chineselanguage films, he said. While China has become an increasingly important movie market, it has also become a tricky one as it witnesses a heightened sense of nationalism.

As people get fatigued with social distancing and vaccine initiatives become more widespread, Imax expects movie watchers to return in hordes. And not just in China.

Ticket sales in Japan in the past three months have reached the same level in the year before while South Korea too has seen a strong comeback, according to Gelfond.
"When people feel safe

going to the movies, they are coming back in very large numbers," he said. Bloomberg













WRESTLING | WORLD CUP

Belgrade, Dec. 17: Young Anshu Malik was the lone

Indian woman wrestler to

win a medal at the individ-ual World Cup, grabbing a silver in the 57kg category,

Anshu, who is coming up

from the junior ranks, clinched her third medal at

the senior level from as

many tournaments. She lost the gold medal bout 1-5

to Moldova's Anastasia

Nichita on Wednesday

Anshu began with a 4-2

win over Azerbaijan's Alyona Kolesnik and fol-

lowed it up with 3-1 victory

over Germany's Laura

Mertens in the quarterfi-

In the semi-final, she outplayed Russia's Veronika

. Chumikova, recording a

Another Indian grappler Pinki also did well to reach

the 55kg semi-finals, where she lost to Belarusian

She later lost the bout for

bronze to Russia's Olga

Khoroshavtseva by technical superiority. Sarita (59kg), Sonam Malik (62kg) and Sakshi

Malik (65kg) could not go

beyond quarterfinals in

their respective categories. Later, Narsingh Pancham

Yadav's much-anticipated

return to the mat after a

four-year doping ban ended

with a Qualification round

while

night.

nals.

victory by fall.

Iryna Kurachkina.

Silver for Anshu,

SHORT TAKES

Australian Open moved to February

Melbourne: The Australian Open was pushed back to February 8 on Thursday after weeks of negotiations as coronavirus disruption hits a second Grand Slam tennis season. Men's qualifiers will be held in Doha but Australia will host a series of build-up events including the flagship ATP Cup, the men's ATP Tour said, announcing its early 2021 schedule. The three-week delay to the season's opening Grand Slam comes after this year's Wimbledon was cancelled - for the first time since World War II - the French Open was postponed and the US Open was

played behind closed doors. Fans are expected to be allowed at Melbourne Park, the tournament's venue, as the coronavirus is under control in Australia, but players will need to undergo 14 days of quarantine. - AFP

Silva, Chhetri propel Bengaluru

Goa: Bengaluru FC piled on further misery on Odisha FC with a 2-1 win in the Indian Super League at GMC Stadium, Bambolim, on Thursday. Cleiton Silva (79') scored the match-winner for Bengaluru after Steven Taylor (71') had cancelled out Sunil Chhetri (38') first-half lead for the Blues, who remained unbeaten in their six matches this season. Bengaluru were dominant from the start but were lucky not to fall behind early in the game. Diego Mauricio played a delightful through ball for Manuel Onwu, who managed to get the ball past Gurpreet, but his celebrations were curtailed, as the assistant referee signaled

Odisha had their moments in the game with Onwu and Jerry Mawihmingthanga creating problems for the Bengaluru defense but failed to test their

Cavani charged by FA over racist post

London: Edinson Cavani has been charged with misconduct by the Football Association for a now-deleted social media post containing a Spanish phrase that is offensive in some contexts and for which the Manchester United star apologised.

The 33-year-old Uruquayan striker's Instagram post thanked a friend for his congratulations after scoring twice as United came from 2-0 down to beat Southampton 3-2 last month and included the *"negrito"* (smail black person). He later deleted the post and apologised when it was pointed

out the meaning that could be attached to it. Both United and the player said at the time that the word was clearly used in an affectionate manner and has different connotations in South America.

Lakers edge Suns in pre-season bow

Los Angeles: LeBron James and Anthony Davis eased into the NBA's pre-season on Wednesday as the Los Angeles Lakers scored a 112-107 victory over the Phoenix Suns.

James, who barely two months ago led the Lakers to their NBA Finals triumph in Orlando, bagged 11 points with two rebounds and two assists during 15 first half minutes in Phoenix. Davis added 10 points with four rebounds in 18 minutes on court. Both James and Davis were rested for the second half. New Lakers signing Marc Gasol added three points in a 21-minute appearance. Kyle

Lakers with 23 points. The coronavirus-interrupted 2019-2020 campaign - which shut down for four months between March and July eventually wrapped up in Florida in October. With the new season tipping off on December 22, it means teams will have the shortest off-season in NBA history. - AFP

Kuzma led the scoring for the

Live on TV

Australia vs India: First Test - Day Two from 9.30 am on Sony Ten 1, 3, Sony Six, HD

Big Bash League: Sydney Sixers vs Adelaide Strikers from 5.40 am (Saturday) on Sony Ten 1, HD

FOOTBALL

Indian Super League: North East United vs Jamshedpur from 7.20 pm on Star Sports 2, 3

Smackdown: Bouts from 6.30 am (Saturday) on Son Ten 1, HD

AUSSIES GET A GRIP

India end Day One at 233/6 after Kohli runout

deserved but also from

time to time, played those shots to drive home a

point. His 88-run partner-

ship with Rahane (42 off 91 balls) during the final

in the pavilion.

Adelaide, Dec. 17: Virat Kohli's enduring love affair with Adelaide Oval resulted in a classy 74 but his untimely run-out triggered a batting collapse as India ended the opening day at 233/6 against Australia in the first Day/Night Test here on

Thursday.

Kohli, who looked in complete command, was run out when his deputy Ajinkya Rahane backed out after calling for a single and it happened just before the second new ball was taken.

From a comfortable 188/3, India slumped to 206/6 as Rahane and Hanuma Vihari (16) found the pace and swing generated by the pink ball under lights too hot to Ravichandran Ashwin (15 batting) and Wriddhiman Saha (9 batting) saw off the final few

SCORECARD

India 1st Innings: Prithvi Shaw b Starc O, Mayank Agarwal b Cummins 17, Cheteshwar Pujara c Labuschagne b Lyon 43, Virat Kohli run out 74, Ajinkya Rahane Ibw Starc 42, Hanuma Vihari Ibw Hazlewood 16, Wriddhiman Saha (not out) 9, Ravichandran Ashwin (not out) 15. Extras (b-2, lb-7 nb-7, wd-1) 17. Total (For 6 wkts, in 89 overs) 233. FoW: 1-0, 2-3, 3-100, 4-188, 5-196, 6-206. Bowling: Mitchell Starc 19-4-49-2, Josh Hazlewood 20-6-

47-1, Pat Cummins 19-7-42-1, Cameron Green 9-2-15-0, Nathan Lyon 21-2-68-1, Marnus Labuschagne 1-0-3-0.

overs and also got a few his skipper gave opposi-

In conditions, which can't exactly be called bat-ting friendly, Kohli blend-ed the right amount of caution and aggression in his 180-ball innings, showing one and all that he is a few lightyears ahead of his peers when it comes to quality batsmanship.

If Cheteshwar Pujara (43 off 160 balls) let bowlers dictate terms with an ultra-defensive approach.

as India literally crawled during the first two ses-

So intent was Pujara on blocking anything and leaving everything for the better part of his innings, that a 68-run stand for the

Shaw's (0) poor technique was once again exposed by Starc while Mayank Agarwal (17) got a beauty from Pat Cummins.

session nearly put India on even keel but fortunes tilted once Kohli was back troika of Starc (2/49 in 19 overs), Josh Hazlewood (1/47 in 20 overs) and Pat Cummins (1/42 in 19 Rahane was soon snapped with the second steady line comprising mostly of fuller deliveries. new ball by Mitchell Starc

NUMBERS GAME

OUT IN TESTS

On the opening day of the first Test against Australia at Adelaide, India skipper Virat Kohli was run out for the sec-87 Test match. He was dismissed run out for the first time against the same opponent at the same ground in January

Kohli became the eighth Indian batsman to Tests. His 74 was his 12th fifty plus innings in 35 innings of 20 Test match-

- S. PERVEZ QAISER

big names flop

KOHLI'S SECOND RUN

en run out in 91 innings of 56 Test matches as skip-

make 12 or more fifty plus scores against Australia in

PANGHAL IN FINAL OF BOXING WC

New Delhi, Dec. 17: Amit Panghal (52kg) stormed into the final after three other Indian boxers were assured of medals at the World Cup in Cologne, Germany on Thursday even as a posi-tive Covid-19 case among the support staff caused some anxiety in the contingent.

Asian Games champion Panghal defeated Frenchman Bennama, a bronze-medallist from the world championship 5-0 in the

semi-final clash. Earlier, three Indian women were also assured of medals after finding themselves in semifinals when draws were unveiled.

Pooja Rani (75kg), Manisha (57kg) and Simranjeet Kaur (60kg) made the last four due to the small size of their respective draws. — PTI

Olympics-bound Dahiya suffered a surprise opening-round loss at the individual World Cup, here. — PTI

ond time in 146 innings of third wicket with Kohli couldn't release pressure going into the second break of the evening. In the morning, Prithvi It was also Kohli's maid

The Australian pace bowled a very es against Australia.

Australia's Mitchell Starc (third from right) celebrates with teammates after bowling out India's Prithvi Shaw on the opening day of their first Test at the Adelaide Oval in Adelaide on Thursday.

No Russia at next two Olympics

Geneva, Dec. 17: Russia was banned on Thursday from using its name, flag and anthem at the next two Olympics or at any world championships for the next two years.

Court Arbitration for Sport's ruling also blocked Russia from bidding to host major sporting events for

Russian athletes and teams will still be allowed to compete at next year's Tokyo Olympics and the 2022 Winter Games in Beijing, as well as world championships including the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, if they are not implicated in doping or covering up positive tests. The punishments are

less than the four-year ban

the World Anti-Doping Agency had proposed. One small win for Russia

is the proposed team name at major events. The "Russia" can be retained on uniforms if the words "Neutral "Neutral Athlete" or "Neutral Team" have equal prominence, the court said.

Still, the court's three judges imposed the most severe penalties on Russia since allegations of statebacked doping and coverups emerged after the 2014 Sochi Olympics. The case centered on

accusations that Russian state authorities tam-pered with a database from the Moscow testing laboratory before handing it over to Wada investigators last year. It contained



In this Feb. 23, 2014 file photo the Russian national flag (right) flies after it is hoisted next to the Olympic flag during the closing ceremony of the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia.

likely evidence to prose-cute long-standing doping violations.

The CAS process was formally between Wada and the Russian anti-dop-

ing agency. The Russian agency, known as Rusada, was ruled non-compliant upheld Thursday by the three judges.

Rusada was also ordered to pay \$1.27 million to Wada. Russian athletes and their lawyers took part as third parties arguing they should not be punished for misconduct bv state officials not working in sports. Giving Wada the lab database by a December 2018 deadline was a key condition for Rusada being reinstated three months earlier when a previous expul-sion from the anti-doping community was lifted.

Wada investigators in Moscow eventually got the data one month late. Evidence of doping tests and emails appeared to have been deleted or changed, and whistleblowers were implicated.

__ A F

Blue-haired Mbappe shines in Paris win

Mbappe scored a penalty as Paris Saint-Germain cruised to a 2-0 win over 10-Lorient

Wednesday, keeping the reigning champions just one point behind Lille ahead of their visit to the leaders this weekend. Mbappe's second-half penalty, when Andrew Gravillon was sent off, and Moise Kean's strike helped

PSG to victory after Lille, who host the Champions League runners-up on Sunday, beat Dijon by the

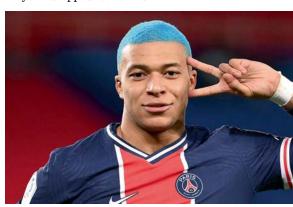
Lyon dropped to third

place, a point behind PSG, after a dramatic 2-2 draw with Brest.

Marseille slipped five points behind the leaders after a 2-1 defeat at Rennes. PSG coach Thomas Tuchel after the game said that the injured Neymar could return this weekend. "For Neymar we will do everything — that is the good news," said the

German. PSG had 81 per cent of possession in the first half against struggling Lorient without creating many clear-cut chances.

-AFP



Paris Saint-Germain's Kylian Mbappe celebrates after scoring against FC Lorient during their French League match in Paris on Wednesday.

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Show starts today

Firmino scores as Reds ruffle Spurs

Liverpool

Arsenal

Leeds

(Salah 26, Firmino 90) Tottenham

(Bamford 35, Rodrigo 61, Dallas 77, Alioski 85,

(Hendrick 26, Clark 65)

end to an explosive

(Aubameyang 52)
Southampton

(Walcott 18)

Newcastle

Furious Jose Mourinho had a heated exchange with Jurgen Klopp after Roberto Firmino's lastheader sent Liverpool to the top of the Premier League with a 2-1 win against title rivals Tottenham, while troubled Arsenal were held to a 1-1 draw Southampton on Wednesday. Tottenham boss Mourinho was incensed with the antics of Liverpool manager Klopp and his coaching staff, claiming they set out to influence the decisions of the officials with constant complaints on the

After Klopp's wild celebrations of Firmino's 90th minute goal, Mourinho exchanged angry words with the German coach on the pitch at full-time. It was an incendiary

tion with

clash that Mohamed Salah put Liverpool ahead, only for Son Heung-min to equalise before the interval. Asked about his animated conversa-Mourinho said: "I told him the best team lost and he disagreed, but that's his opinion"



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