THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

ANANTAPUR | THURSDAY | 10 DECEMBER 2020



Forecast: Cloudy sky. Misty morning. Max/Min temp. 29/16 ^QC

Rainfall: Nil

COVID-19

CASES **DEATHS** (+26,348)(+338)97,62,250 1,41,735

covid19india.org STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+721)(+3)TS: 2,75,261 1,480 (+618)(+3)

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

7.045



AP: 8,73,457

worldometers.info/

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari; Dakshinayana Tithi: Kartika Bahula Dasami Star: Hasta till 10.48 am Varjyam: 6.07 pm to 7.35 pm Durmuhurtam: 10.19 am to Rahukalam: 1.30 pm to 3 pm **HIJRI CALENDAR** Rabbi-ul Akhir 24, 1442 AH

Fajar: 5.08 am **Zohar:** 12.05 pm **Asar:** 4.11 pm Maghrib: 5.47 pm

Isha: 7.02 pm **SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.17 AM SUNSET TODAY 5.49 PM MOONSET 12.05 AM** MOONRISE 11.42 PM

COUNTER



Too much of rajneeti!

IN BRIEF

China, Pakistan

start joint exercise

Islamabad: The air forces of Pakistan and China on

Wednesday commenced a joint exercise designed to deepen practical cooperation and improve the actual-combat training level of the two sides. The joint air force exercise "Shaheen (Eagle)-IX" started on Wednesday at an operational air base of the Pakistan Air Force in Sindh.

Prize winning teacher positive

Mumbai: Ranjitsinh Disale, a school teacher from Maharashtra who won a global award having \$1 million prize money, on Wednesday tested positive for COVID-19, said a family

Popular Tamil television actress Chitra found dead

NATION 4

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



WORLD 5

UK body issues allergy warning for Pfizer jab

SPORTS 7

Ronaldo beats Messi in battle of big two



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DCGI denies EUA to Biotech, Serum vaccine

with agency inputs HYDERABAD, DEC. 9

In a setback to two major pharma companies in the race for the vaccine for Coronavirus, the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) has not granted the Emergency Use Authorisation permission (EUA) to citybased Bharat Biotech and the Serum Institute of India (SII) for their vaccines, respective Covaxin and Covisheild.

DC CORRESPONDENT

Even as the number of

fresh cases of "mystery illness" has come down

to 12 on Wednesday and

only 44 affected persons

treatment, a deadly combination of neurotoxins and organochlorine are

prime suspects for the

confounding disease that

has caught national and

even international atten-

tion. State health authorities

maintain that these sub-

stances found in hydro-

carbon pesticides such as

DDT can turn poisonous,

affecting nervous tissues in human body. This could be why affected people are developing

convulsions for a brief

period, being getting back to normalcy after

Several reputed central

agencies like All India

Institute of Medical Sci-

ences (AIIMS), National

Institute of Nutrition (NIN). National Centre

(NCDC), Centre for

Cellular and Molecular

Biology (CCMB), Indian

Institute of Chemical Technology (IICT) and World Health Organis-

ation (WHO) are working

on finding the source of

such poisonous sub-

stances entering the human body and affect-

ing nervous system.
The AIIMS report has

already confirmed pres-

ence of lead in the blood

of affected people in its

preliminary report after

D. SIVA RAMI REDDI | DC

Èluru

ple taking ill.

Citizens in Kurnool are

shocked at the quality of

water being supplied to them by Kurnool Municipal Corporation (KMC) in the wake of

that saw hundreds of peo-

KMC has no sewerage treat plant and every day

contamination

Disease Control

some time.

still undergoing

VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 9

The data submitted by both companies was found to be "insufficient" by the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) of the DCGI in terms of data on the trials of Indian patients, according to sources. The panel sought additional data on the safety and efficacy of

their proposed shots. Due to lack of data on Indian patients, the CDSCO subject expert committee, which met on Wednesday, found that

Toxins in food may have

led to mystery Eluru illness

DC CORRESPONDENT

Chief Minister Y.S.

Jagan Mohan Reddy con-

ducted a review meeting

on the illness in Eluru

with officials and medical teams on Wednesday. He directed them to

conduct a through research and find out the

causes of the illness and

affirmed that the state

government is offering good treatment to people.

like convulsions.

testing 10 patients. It is,

however, yet to come up

with its report of analysing milk samples. NCDC has started its

investigations to find out

reasons for the illness. It

is also collecting samples

from blood and urine of

cattle, as they are expo-

it discharges 60 million litres (mld) into Tunga-bhadra river without any

concerns for peoples health. River pollution in

abhadra, the two rivers

that flow across Kurnool city, have been causing

health issues to people residing on the river

bank. Plastic waste and

material, lead and cadmi-

um that are in the river

and Tung-

non-degradable

Handri

Kurnool shocked by

illness".

POLLUTION EFFECTS

Vegetables raised with polluted water

from Kolleru Lake may contain residues

of pesticides and toxic substances. Their

consumption may cause health problems

Untreated effluents from tanks of

shrimp culture contaminate soil. Those

who consume crops raised on such soil

may also suffer from symptoms being

exhibited by people with the "mystery

VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 9

Find actual reason

for illness: Jagan

phase 1 and phase 2 trials was not sufficient"

The DCGI said that Covid-19 vaccine candidates should have "at least 50 per cent efficacy in phase III clinical trials" for it to be widely deployed.

The DCGI rules of 2019 state that there must be at least 3,000 patients on whom the vaccine has to be tested before approval.

■ Page 3: Phase III trial data needed for approval

During a video confer-

ence with the authori-

ties, doctors and experts from the WHO, AIIMS, NIN, CCMB and the IICT, the Chief Minister

said that corrective mea

sures will be taken based

on the final outcome of

investigations and urged

the experts to find the

actual reason for the ill-

Page 2: WHO officials

sed to pesticide either

through their feed or con-

sumption of contaminat-

In such a case, their

Page 2: Boiled milk of

infected cattle not safe

need to be cleared. Regional Pollution control Board officials say

that Tungabhadra waters

showed marginally high

er toxins after Pushk

arams. The Board con-

ducted a test on the qual

ity of water in Tung-

abhadra in the first week

of this month soon after

bacteria exceed standards

Page 2: Coliform

milk may contain residues of pesticide.

ed water

take details

RUSSIA: INDIA IN ANTI-CHINA GAME PLAYED BY WEST

KUMARASWAMI I DC NEW DELHI, DEC. 9

The West, led by the United States, is trying to engage India in "anti-China games" through its Indo-Pacific strategies and is also trying to undermine Russ-ia's close and privileged ties with

Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov has said, in unprecedented remarks that have high-lighted both Moscow's proximity with Beijing and a growing unease over the India-US strate-

partner-Addressing the Russian International

International A f f a i r s Council, Mr Lavrov said: "It (the West) is trying to restore the unipolar model of world order. 'Poles' like Russia and China are unlikely to be subordinate to it. However, India is currently an India is currently an object of the Western countries' persistent, aggressive and devious policy as they are trying to engage it in anti-China games by promoting Indo-Pacific strategies, the so-

Page 7: Russia unhappy with close Indo-US ties

called 'Quad'.

Farmers reject Centre's offer

Threaten to intensify agitation, block Delhi

SANJAY KAW | DC NEW DELHI, DEC. 9

Within hours of receiving the Centre's draft proposals to amend the new agriculture laws, the farmers culture laws, the farmers unions categorically rejected it on Wednesday and threatened to intensify their agitation by blocking all entry points to Delhi if their demands were not immediately met. They also threatened to capture all toll plazas and hold "sit-

in" protests across the country.

Terming the proposal as "vague" and an insult to farmers, Krantikari Kisan Union president Darshan Pal said: "We will block the Delhi-Jaipur highway and Delhi-Agra expressway and sit on dharna at all toll plazas on December 12.. No tax to be paid on that day at any toll plaza... We will also gherao all district headquarters during our protest on December 14. We have asked the people to protest against every MP and MLA of the BJP." The farmers' organisa-

tions have also threatened they will boycott all Jio products and Reliance malls across the country.

The Centre on Wednesday proposed to

Opposition leaders Sharad Pawar, Rahul Gandhi, Sitaram

Yechury, D. Raia and T.K.S. Elangovan present a memorandum to President Ram Nath Kovind at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Wednesday on the new Farm – D. KAMRAJ

give a "written assurance" that the existing Minimum Support Price (MSP) regime for procurement will continue. In a draft proposal, the Centre also assured the registration of all private mandis to strengthen Agricultural Produce Market Committees.

With the farmers camped out at Delhi's busy border points, three of the Delhi-Haryana border points — Tikri, Jharoda and Dhansa have been closed for traffic. Besides the border

areas of the capital, demon-

strations are also being

held at a ground allocated for the farmers' protests in Delhi's outskirts. At least five deaths were reported since the protests began. After deliberating over

the Centre's proposal, the farmers' leaders made it clear they will continue their agitation until all the three new farm laws are rolled back. The All India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee (AIKSCC) said Narendra Modi government was "insincere and arrogant" about resolving

Self-employment plan gets Cabinet approval

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, DEC. 9

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved an employment generation Atmanirhhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana at an expenditure of ₹1.584 crores for the current financial year and ₹22,810 crores for the entire scheme period 2020-2023. Bharat Atmanirbhar Rozgar Yojana scheme, which aims to create more formal jobs, to benefit around 58.5 lakh employees, said Union minister Santosh Kumar Gangwar while briefing media after Cabinet meeting. The regis-

tration for the scheme will

be effective from October 1.

2020, to June 30, 2021, the minister said. adding that the ministry

the scheme. around 10 crore labourers formally registered with it, even as there are more than 40 crore labourers in the country, his department has no data on the number of people who have lost jobs since Corona virus-induced lockdown was imposed on March 24 this year. Under the programme, the Centre will reimburse 24 per cent, 12 per cent each for employees and employers, for two years for all new formal jobs created in enterprises having up to 1000 employ-

ees between October 1 and till June 30 next year, Gangwar said at the cabi-

In an organisation where Though the government employee strength is more than 1,000 workers, the reimbursement will be restricted to 12 per cent of the employees' contribution, he said.

Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman had on November 12 announced ₹2.65 lakh crore worth economic stimulus package, termed as Atmanirbhar Bharat 3.0, comprising 12 big measures to revive the economy marred by Covid. These measures included the Atmanirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana to generate employment.

PUBLIC WI-FI **NETWORKS GET CABINET NOD**

their demands.

DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs NEW DELHI, DEC. 9

The Union cabinet on Wednesday approved a proposal to launch a Wicountry, wherein public data centres would be opened to facilitate the process. No licence fee would be levied, while registration would be needed for the purpose, which will be done within seven days.

Announcing the decision, Union IT minister Ravi Shankar Prasad told mediapersons that the proposal is aimed at the growth of public Wifi networks in the country, especially in the inte riors of the country so that even people at the grassroots level can have internet access. The programme will be called PM-WANI and, under it, public data offices will establish and maintain Wi-Fi access points and deliver broadband service to subscribers.

Further, official sources said that the proliferation of public Wi-Fi will not only create employment but also enhance disposable incomes in the hands of small and medium entrepreneurs and boost the GDP of the country.

The proliferation of Broadband Services through public Wi-Fi is a step towards digital India, Prasad said, adding that this will have consequential benefits thereon. No Licence Fee for providing broadband Internet services using public Wi-Fi hotspots will massively encourage its proliferation and penetration across the length and breadth of the coun-

try, he further added. "No licence, no regis tration, and no fee will be applicable for the PDOs which could be small shops or even Common Service Centres," he said. App provider will be responsible for developing application to register users and discover WANI compliant Wi-Fi hotspots in the nearby

CJI'S MOTHER DUPED OF ₹2.5CR, ACCUSED HELD quality of KMC water

Nagpur, Dec. 9: Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sharad Arvind Bobde's mother was allegedly duped to the tune of ₹2.5 crore by the caretaker of a family property here, police said Wednesday.

The accused, Tapas Ghosh (49), was arrested on Tuesday. A Special Investigation Team is looking into the matter under the supervision of DCP Vinita Sahu, said Nagpur commissioner of police (CP) Amitesh Kumar. Mukta Bobde, CJI Bobde's

mother, is the owner of Seadon Lawn near Akashwani Square which is rented out for marriages and other functions, he said. Bobde family had appointed Ghosh as caretak-

er of the property in 2007. He was paid salary and also a commission on bookings. Taking advantage of Mukta Bobde's age and frail health, Ghosh and his wife allegedly kept her in the dark about transactions. and did not deposit the entire rent amount which they collected, the CP said They also allegedly forged receipts. The fraud came to light when several bookings were cancelled in lockdown,

NCB makes 1st big arrest in Sushant's case

SAURABH JOSHI | DC

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) arrested a known bigtime drug peddler from Mumbai and seized a contraband to the tune of ₹2.5 crore from him in connection with the Sushant Singh Rajput suicide probe.

The NCB officials said that the accused was the supplier to one of the arrested peddlers, who later passed on the drugs to Rajput's girlfriend Chakraborty's brother Showik for consumption. The seized contraband is premium quality cannabis with market name 'Malana Cream'.

The arrested accused was identified as Jinendra Jain alias Rigel Mahakal alias Jeet who was arrested from Andheri's Lokhandwala area from where the NCB officials also seized the contraband. The officials said that Jain was named in the statement by arrestKeshwani, who was arrested for supplying Charas / Hashish.

The charas seized in this case is' Malana Cream which is the most desirable charas in the world. The said charas is grown

only in Malana Region of

Himachal Pradesh. The market price of Malana Cream ranges from ₹50 lakh per kg. "Preliminary probe revealed that Jain was involved in traffick ing of Hashish in Mumbai area. Another accused Mohammad Jumman Shaikh was also apprehended and 5 kg Charas was recovered from him along with small quantities of opium and ecstasy from his house in Millat Nagar, Oshiwara," said an offi-cer. The officials said that the seizure is a part of follow up of Rhea Chakraborty Case and this is the biggest haul of drugs seized in this case. Shaikh is the main supplier of Charas linked to this case.

LAND | SURVEY | MoU signed for survey, first of its kind in 100 years

AP, Survey of India join forces

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 9

The State government on Wednesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Survey of India for the implementation of 'YSR Jagananna Saswatha Bhoomi Hakku-Bhoomi Rakshana', scheduled for launch on December 21.

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy said that they would be conducting a comprehensive survey which will be written in golden letters as a survey of such a magnitude is being conducted after almost 100 years. He said that the two partners are putting together 70 base stations to take up this survey, which will

Speaking on the occasion, be added to their network in future. The Chief Minister said that all the measurements will be accurate with a minimum error rate of 2 cm. State-of-the-art facilities are being used with the latest CARS technology, drones and rovers. He instructed officials to

take up awareness cam-

paigns about the initiative

and directed district collec-

the survey project. He said ors have been appointed by the State government and 9.400 surveyors are being given training by Survey of India. Training for the remaining lot will be completed by January 26."

■ Page 2: 5,000 villages to be covered in first phase

OTHER STORIES

Naga Bhushan is additional A-G

Vijayawada: State government appointed the advocate Jasti Naga Bhushan as the additional advocate general for the state of Andhra Pradesh.The state government issued GO RT No. 329 here on Wednesday appointing him as the AAG. He is the son of Supreme Court former judge Jasti Chelameswar.

MINISTERS ASSURES DEVELOPMENT OF TWO DARGAHS

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 9

Minister for endowment Velampalli Srinivas Rao assured development of Syed Shah Quadri and Ali Hussein Shah Quadri Dargahs into a spiritual pilgrimage centre.

The minister announced that Chadar would be offered in the Durgah on behalf of the state

government during Urs. Dargah Muzawar Syed Khaja Mohiddeen and others presented to the minister an invitation of Urs of Ali Hussein Shah Quadri scheduled to be held on December 11 in the Dargah situated near Praka-

sam Barrage at Vijayawada.
They said that the Dargah
committee made flawless
arrangements for Urs following the Covid-19 guidelines. The minister praising the arrangement appealed to the devotees to attend the Urs programme. He said that their government adhered to develop the Dargah hence started development works which

were under progress.

He assured that YSR Congress government will turn the Dargahs into a spiritual pilgrimage centre in the coming days.

ORGANISERS TOLD TO KEEP POLLUTION **TESTING VEHICLES FIT**

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 9

The Transport Department directed mobile pollution testing vehicles to complete checks of their equipment by December 31 and warned of stern action if they issue pollution certificates without

proper testing to the vehicles. Deputy Transport Commissioner (DTC) M. Purendra said that a programme to create awareness among the mobile testing organisers about vehicle pollution tests was conducted.

He said that as per the instructions of the State Commissioner lution control testing vehicles across the district.

He said that vehicle pollution inspection records made last month are required to be shown at the RTA offices by the 5th of every month. He warned surveillance will be intensified across the district from the first week of January. Mr Purendra said that there are 60 pollution checking vehicles in the Krishna district out

rest of 10 are stationary. **ACQUIRE SKILLS TO SUPPLY QUALITY MILK, FARMERS TOLD**

of which 50 are mobile and

DC CORRESPONDENT NELLORE, DEC. 9

Milk Producers associations and secretaries of Milk Procurement Centres have been told to increase the milk supply to Amul Project and provide tips to the farmers to improve the butter percentage and solid non-fat in the milk to secure enhanced price for

During a review with secretaries and assistant secretaries of Milk Procurement Centres at Ongole on Wednesday, Prakasam district collector Pola Bhaskar said that milk producers should be told not to compromise on milk quality while pointing to the standards of Amul.

'Create awareness among milk producers on the management of cattle and offer tips to provide high quality balanced feed along with nutrients to increase the milk output," the collector told them. He said village taskforce and secretaries should provide technical skills necessary to handle the cattle and improve the milk production.

Mr Bhaskar called for collective efforts from everyone concerned to overcome the initial hurdles in the supply of qualitv milk to Amul since the toil is certain to boost the village

economy unlike never before. JC T.Š. Chetan and Deputy Director of Animal Husbandry, D.L.D.A. Hanumantha Rao were present among others.



Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy watches a Map of Anantapur before laying the foundation stone for three reservoirs from the camp office on Wednesday. Minister P. Anil Kumar Yadav and others are also seen.

CM sets foundation stone for three new reservoirs

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 9

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy virtually laid a foundation stone to Dr YSR Upper Penna project, where three reservoirs Muttala, Thopudurthi, and Devarakonda in Anantapur district are to be constructed at a cost of ₹803 crore under Handri Neva Sujala Sravanthi (HNSS) scheme on Wednesday in the CM

camp office at Tadepalli. Mr Reddy said that their government added two extra reservoirs to HNSS scheme with extra storage capacity of 3.3 tmc of water and this would be carried without increase in cost of ₹803 crore.

Speaking on this occasion, the Chief Minister said that the project was taken up with utmost sincerity and added two more reservoirs to store an additional 3.3. tmc. He stated, "The project is

5,000 VILLAGES

TO BE COVERED

IN FIRST PHASE

will be conducted in 1.26

lakh sq km across vil-

lages, hamlets, towns,

est lands. Around 5,000

villages will be covered

in the first phase, 6,500 villages in the second

and 5,500 villages in the

third phase. The govern-

ment will set up mobile

tribunals to solve land disputes on the spot."

The CM stated "The sur-

vey is overdue. Sub-divi-

sions and distributions

were not registered at

the field level in the last

100 years. A land titling

card consisting of a uni-

que identification num-

ber, measurements of

the property, name of

the owner along with photo, and the total area

would be given after the

survey. Digitised cadas-

tral maps would also be

prepared and they will feature details of the lands in the village.

Survey stones would be

installed once the mark-

ing of land is completed.

Digitised property register and title register and

a register for complaints

would be made available

The CM explained "be

it a house site or agricul-tural land or any real

estate layout, after giv-

ing a title on it, it will be

put for display in the

same village Secretariat

under observation for

two years to see if there

were any objections. A

permanent land title

will be provided after

two years upon finalisation. In case of objec-

tions, the government

will take responsibility and compensate accord-

Lieutenant General

Girish Kumar, Surveyor

General of India, said

that he was honored to

be part of this initiative,

which stands as a role

model for other states.

He said that records of

the surveyed lands will be ready within five minutes. He stated that a

comprehensive survey is

a visionary programme

that uses the latest tech-

nology in the world.

at Village Secretariats.'

From page 1

 THE PROJECT will also fill up 7.216 tmc of water in five reservoirs in 90 days and irrigate about 75,000 acres in Beluguppa, Kuderu, Atmakuru, Kambadur, Kanaganapalli, Chennekothapalli, Raptadu and Ramagiri mandals.

being constructed at the same price quoted by the previous Telugu Desam government with an addition of two more reservoirs thereby increasing the capacity. This shows how much corruption the previous TD government was steeped in. During the previous government, a GO was issued on January 24, 2018, to carry out works at a cost of ₹803.96 crore, but the works was not done. However, our government is establishing two additional reservoirs with the same cost and increasing the storage capacity which clearly explains the contrast." He said that through this project, the government

aims to irrigate about 6.025 lakh acres in Rayalaseema and provide drinking water to about 33 lakh people. He explained that as part of Handri Neva, lifting water from Jeedipalli reservoir, through main canals of Muttala, Thopudurthi, Devarakonda and Somaravandlapalli reservoirs of the upper Penna reservoir which have a capacity of 5.40 tmc will be irrigating 75,000 acres.

He further explained that in addition to this, the project will fill up 7.216 tmc of water in five reservoirs in 90 days and irrigate about 75,000 acres in Beluguppa, Kuderu, Atmakuru, Kambadur, Kanaganapalli, Chennekothapalli, Raptadu Ramagiri mandals.

The Chief Minister said that four more lift irrigation projects are going to constructed Kottapalli, Atmakuru, Bala Venkatapuram, Maddalacheruvu. He said

God all reservoirs across the state are filled with water and the government has been implementing all the welfare schemes as promised and mentioned in the manifesto.

Meanwhile, ministers Botsa Satyanarayana, M. Sankara Narayana and S. Appalaraju, MP Madhav, MLAs T. Prakash Reddy, MLC Iqbal and other officials were present at the event held at Venkatapalli of Kothapalli mandal in Anantapur district near the pylon.

that the lives of people and their economic conditions will be changed forever bringing a better facelift to the rural area. He said by the grace of

Pushkar ghats: Coliform bacteria exceed standards

From page 1 "The three-phase survey

> In the test it was found the data, the pH and disthe standards, whereas the other two parameters. viz., Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) and Total coliform bacteria are exceeding the standards."

A PCB official said that Environment ministry constituted a committee in 1999 which recommended desirable limit of fecal coliform at 1,000 MPN/100ml and a maximum permissible limit at 10,000 MPN/100ml for discharge of treated sewage into a water body or reuse for agriculture, aquaculture or forestry application. And when it comes to drinking water, it should more than

500/MPN/ 100 ml, he said. Pushkar Ghats near Mantralayam at Vinayaka Ghat, Šanta Market, Kurnool Pump House, Rambotla and Sankalbagh

DC CORRESPONDENT

Tirumala Tirupati Devas-

thanam Trust Board chairman Y.V. Subba

Reddy on Wednesday

appealed to the Union edu-

cation minister Ramesh

TIRUPATI, DEC. 9

BJYM SEEKS

ghats showed abnormal upstream water showed fecal contamination as reflected in coliform samthat "It may be noted from ples, said a PCB Engineer. Biological Demand (BOD)

ure of the quantity of oxygen used by microorganisms (aerobic bacteria) in the oxidation process. Ín a study conducted sometime back by independent researchers, the BOD values of water samples during the monitoring periods at the industrial effluent disposal point was found to be between 78ppm to 119 ppm, which indicates that the effluent run-off carries chemical wastes during poly-fibre synthesis. This is due to the discharge of untreated or partially treated industrial effluent direct-

ly in to the river. There is makeable variation in the BOD content along the downstream from the discharge point during the study period which varied from 20.1 ppm to 36 ppm. The

Pokhriyal to recognise the TTD-run Sri Venkates-

wara Vedic University

(SVVU) as a national uni-

versity and requested to hike the TTD quota in the Delhi based S.V. College.

The TTD chairman has

given a representation let-

low BOD values 3.1 ppm to 6.4 ppm.

Oxygen and increase in DO from was due to natural selfpurification.

are polluted by chemical effluents, medical waste in addition to sewage by KMC, said K.N. Reddy, an environmental activist.

D.K. Balaji said it requires ₹300 crore to construct sewerage treatment plant but the civic body does not have that much of money. A proposal has been sent to the Union government to sanction the amount under Swach Bharat

Balaji further said AP Urban Asset Management Ltd and contemplated to take up construction of the treatment plant for sewerage in a phased manner.

also assessed the sewerage treatment desirability

Declare SVVU as national varsity: TTD

ter to the Union minister at her office in New Delhi on Wednesday. In the representation, the chairman said that the SVVU. which was set up in 2006, was recognised by UGC as a State University under 2F category.

The decrease in BOD

The rivers in Kurnool

Commissioner

scheme, he said. Infrastructure **DC CORRESPONDENT**

AKN university to study mystery illness at Eluru Sarma: Lead coated

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 9

Adikavi Nannaya University will take up a study to find out the reason for the mystery illness at Eluru in West Godavari.

The university vice-chancellor held a meeting with the heads of several departments in Rajamahendravaram on Wednesday and discussed with them about the mystery illness affecting several people. He said that based on the suggestion from the state government, the university would take up a study to find out the possible reason affecting the health of several people at

The VC said that a committee under the leader-ship of professor Dr A. Matta Reddy from university science and technology college, would take up the study and submit its

report.

He called upon the managements of university affiliated colleges and NSS volunteers to move to Eluru and extend all necessary help to the affected people and their families and also to the general public to instil confidence among them as they were panic stricken following the mystery illness affecting several people in the

He also said that it was their social responsibility to do so.

BOILED MILK OF INFECTED CATTLE NOT SAFE

From page 1

Humans, who consume such milk even after boiling, have a chance of getting infected with pesticide residues. NCDC is also collecting

samples of crops like paddy and others to test them for any presence of pesticide remnants in them. This is because those who consume food cooked with such crops may get infected. It is also searching for warehouses, where huge quantities of pesticides are stored to check any chance of their leakage or spillage that may find their way into drains, canals and other water bodies, especially owing to recent spell of heavy rains and floods. inated with residues of pesticides in the process.

Health authorities say that all these grounds will be subject to a scientific scrutiny. Truth can be established once test reports from several central agencies are out.

Health director Dr. T. Geeta Prasadini said, "We will be able to know the exact reason for the cause of mystery illness very shortly. Several central agencies have collected samples of blood, urine, water, milk and crops, among others. These are being testing at present and their reports are

PVC pipes could be poisoning water

DC CORRESPONDENT VISAKHAPATNAM, DEC. 9

Former civil servant and social activist EAS Sarma told the chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy that use of lead coated PVC pipes for supplying domestic water could be the reason for the massive sickness of the people in

In a letter to the Chief Minister on Wednesday, Mr Sarma said an analysis carried out by the officially recognised Quality Council of India, 33 per cent of the water samples taken in 26 cities in India have indicated high levels of lead. Lead coated PVC pipes used extensively in urban drinking water systems seem to be the major contributor to lead poisoning of water.

The water samples thus analysed indicated lead levels to be in excess of the Indian norm of 50 parts per billion, which is in itself a questionable one compared to the WHO norm of 10 parts per bil-

lion. Excess lead in the human body can cause neurological problems of the kind observed in Eluru. The impact of lead poisoning of water is far more deleterious on children. Lead in excess of 10 micrograms per decilitre causes serious learning problems in children. More than 70 different body ailments are attributable to excess lead present in the human body, Sarma told the chief minister in his letter.

It is also possible that discarded vehicle batteries entering the drinking water supply systems might have also caused lead poisoning. The former civil servant

suggested urgent measures on the part of the mu-nicipal bodies to maintain cleanliness at all fresh water sources that cater to water supplies, minimise the use of PVC pipes and carry out frequent, statistically well designed sample analysis of the municipal tap water points at

WHO officials take details

from Page 1

He told authorities to focus on whether the illness was due to water contamination or due to some other cause and asked to conduct a detailed investi-

Officials informed that the presence of lead and nickel in the patient bodies might have caused the illness, which could have happened due to excessive use of pesticides. Officials said that the number of cases have been declining and the patients are recov-ering within 3-4 hours.

Meanwhile, experts from the WHO said they are surveying the areas where people fell sick and are health details including the food they consumed. On the other hand, experts suspect that used in sanitation programmes as part of Covid-19 prevention measures may also be the cause.

Doctors and experts from AIIMS, Delhi said that comprehensive tests are vet to be done, but the investigations primary revealed that lead and nickel appear to be high in the blood of those who were ill. As Indians do have nickel in their bodies, the presence of lead might have caused the illness. Also, it was found that there is a significant drop in the level of lead in the patients after 24 hours of becoming sick.

"The process of recy-

cling batteries or due to the dumping of broken batteries, or when fired may also have led to the current situation. We will test drinking water and milk samples and come to definite conclusion on he reasons as soon as pos-

sible," they said. Experts from AIIMS, Mangalagiri said that pes-ticides might have con-taminated the organic chlorides, which is just a primary finding, where accurate conclusions on this are yet to come.

Expert team from NIN, Hyderabad said that they have examined the food water, milk, urine and blood samples from the families of the sick and also taken samples of vegetables and essentials from the market. 'We are conducting comprehenno signs of danger. We shall submit a report on water, food, milk, urine and blood samples

Similarly, experts from IICT and CCMB are also investigating the cause of illness and are conducting various tests for accurate

Chief Secretary Nilam Sawhney, Principal Secretary of Health Department Anil Kumar Singhal, Andhra Pradesh Medical and Infrastructure Development Corporation chairman Dr K Chandrash-ekar Reddy and expert teams of AIIMS, NIN, IICT, WHO, CCMB and other officials were present.

CM should disclose results of tests: Naidu

VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 9

Telugu Desam chief N. Chandrababu Naidu on Wednesday demanded Wednesday demanded that the Jagan Mohan Reddy government disclose the results of tests held so far in order to find out the actual reasons for the Eluru mass sickness in West Godavari district. He wrote a letter to Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, saying that er the presence of heavy metals like lead and nickel in the drinking water. He demanded that the

government immediately

there were rising fears ov-

address these concerns and ensure proper drinking water supply through mobile mineral water plants and such measures. Stating that the general public were under grip of constant fears, Naidu said that the presence of heavy metals would have a seri-

has submitted its report.

He informed the court

that it was the prerogative

of the state government to

decide its capital city and

ous impact on the health of pregnant women, children and the aged people hence every resident in the town should be given electronic health cards.

Every patient should be monitored on a long-term basis. He demanded that the best medical care should be provided with medical experts and a scientific study of the Eluru illness should be made in order to find out the root

LEGAL | OPINION | State govt taken decision keeping in mind interests of people: Dave

said that the Centre never ing any relation at all and intervened in setting up said that the previous govthe capital city in any ernment had resolved to develop the capital city He said that a few politibetween Vijavawada and Guntur. He said that the court

needed to know how the previous government had taken the decision to develop Amaravati as the capital city.

Sriram arguing in the case

said that Amaravati town

and the capital city

Amaravati were not hav-

DC CORRESPONDENT DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 9 Senior Supreme Court advocate Dushyant Dave has appealed to the High

NELLORE, DEC. 9

IMPLEMENTATION

OF EWS QUOTA

Bharatiya Janata Party Yuva Morcha threatened to launch a statewide agitation to bring pressure on the government to implement EWS Bill (Reservation for Economically Weaker Sections) while accusing the CM for ignoring the Bill even after extending support in the Assembly and Parliament.

Court not to issue any

interim order to stop the

state government's move

to set up three capitals in

the state during the hearing held here on

He informed the court

that the state government

had decided to set up three

capitals, including legisla-

Wednesday.

HC urged not to issue interim order on 3 capitals

tive, executive and judiciary, keeping in mind the interests of the people. He said that the High Court's interference on the capitals issue was unwarranted. Dave said that though the state government had

taken the decision to set up three capitals based on the reports submitted by experts' committees, the previous government's decision to develop Amaravati as capital city, was based on the opinion of political leaders and

He argued that the committee set up under the chairmanship of former minister P. Naravana was

not having any experts in it. Referring to the Sivaramakrishnan Committee, set up by the Centre, as per norms of AP Reorganisation Act, 2014, he said that the previous government ignored such a report and added that it even decided to develop Amaravati as capital city even before Sivaramakrishnan panel

cal leaders and businessmen had decided to set up a capital city at Amaravati and develop it at a cost of ₹1 lakh crore without consulting appropriate

SHORT

THIRUPPAVAI TO **REPLACE SUPRABATHAM**

DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUPATI, DEC. 9

As the auspicious month of Dhanurmasam is commencing from December 16 at 6.04 am onwards, Andal Sri Godai Thiruppavai will be recited in the place of Suprabatham – the awakening seva of Lord inside Tirumala temple till

January 14, 2021. All the Sri Vaishnavaite temples follow the recitation of Thiruppavai hymns during the entire month and it is also an important month for all spiritual seekers as it is believed as the most sacred period to worship Lord Vishnu.

According to Hindu scriptures, a day of God is equal to six months (Uttarayana) and a night equal to the remaining months (Dakshinayana) in a human yearDhanurmasam falls at the end of Dakshinayana. In fact, this month is considered to be auspicious for worship during early hours. To invoke the blessing of the Lord, Thiruppavai pasurams, with each one on each day.

APSSDC-IBM TRAINING FOR UNEMPLOYED

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 9

APState Development Corporation and IBM offering training in front end web development innovation camp and inviting applications from unemployed

APSSDC Krishna district skill development officer E. Tammaji Rao here on Wednesday said that the training would be held for 22 weeks and computer science and electronics graduates and PGs

are eligible to get the training. He said that training would be offered in coding, front end web development and design making. He said that besides this, front end skills, HTML, GIT, JavaScript, CSS-pre processors and CSS programming would be offered through online free of cost.

YSRC DOUBLE STANDARDS IN FARM LAWS: TD

DC CORRESPONDENT KADAPA, DEC. 9

Telugu Desam politburo member Reddeppagari Srinivasa Reddy said that anarchy was continuing in the state. He said the storm had caused crop damage in thousands of acres with heavy rains.
He found fault in estimation

of crop damage of just ₹40 crore against the loss of hundreds of crores of rupees. He spoke to media persons in Kadapa on Wednesday.

accused the Congress government of saying one word in Delhi and another in the state. The party MPs supported the agriculture bills in the last Lok Sabha. Now that he has power in the state, Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy has cooperated with the bandh in support of the farmers' agitation. He said that Telugu Desam MPs had said in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha at the time that there were flaws in the agriculture bills. Telugu Desam party leader Chandrababu . Naidu has always been thinking about farmers, he said. He demanded that the YSR Congress government pass a resolution in the Assembly against the agriculture bills.

130 TONNES OF PDS RICE, 6 TRUCKS SEIZED

DC CORRESPONDENT NELLORE, DEC. 9

Chittoor police have seized 130 tonnes of rice, meant for the public distribution system, at Tada mandal of SPSR Nellore

district late on Tuesday night. They have also seized six trucks transporting the rice bags illegally. A team of police led by Satyavedu Sub Inspector Nagarjuna Reddy jumped into action and found the rice at an unauthorised stock point at Tada following a

Police officials said their men are keeping a tab on the movements of paddy brokers of the region after they came to know that some of them have been purchasing PDS rice in Chittoor district and shifting to Tada for transporting to Chennai and other parts of Tamil Nadu

Vaccination to spur infra

AP has 1,142 PHCs, 7,548 sub-centres which would be used for vaccination

K.M.P. PATNAIK | DC VISAKHAPATNAM, DEC. 9

The massive exercise of Covid-19 vaccination could lead to strengthening of the rural health infrastructure, according to experts.

Over the years, Andhra Pradesh has 1,142 PHCs and 7,548 sub-centres through which the vaccine would be administered to the vulnerable sections of the society.
Incidentally, the State

has begun improving the infrastructure at the PHC and sub-centre level under Effective Vaccine Management (EVM) programme in February itself and a third party

AP RECORDS 618

COVID CASES,

THREE DEATHS

DC CORRESPONDENT

AP registered 618 new

cases of Covid-19 scaling

up tally to 8,73,457 and

three deaths taking toll

According to the Covid-19 bulletin issued

here on Wednesday, out

of 61.038 samples tested

618 persons were found infected with Covid-19

and out of a total num-

ber of 1,05,70,843 sam-

patients were recovered while 5,259 patients are

still active with the

Among daily cases of Covid-19, Krishna

Covid-19, Krishna recorded the highest

with 121 followed by 92 in Guntur, 76 in Chittoor,

66 in West Godavari, 50

in Anantapur, 49 in East

Godavari, 44 in Visakhapatnam, 29 in Nellore, 23 in Kadapa, 22 in Srikakulam, 17 in Prakasam, 15 in Vizianagaram and 14 in

With regard to cumula-

cases, Krishna contin-

ued to lead with 1,042 fol-

lowed by 743 in Guntur, 670 in East Godavari, 639

in Nellore, 465 in Chittoor, 366 in West

Visakhapatnam, 220 in

Vizianagaram and 81 in

Out of three deaths of

patients in the state, Krishna, Nellore and

West Godavari reported

one each. Among cumu-

lative cases of deaths of

reported the highest

number of 834 followed

by 654 in Guntur, 651 in

Krishna, 636 in East

Visakhapatnam, 529 in

West Godavari, 501 in

Nellore, 487 in Kurnool,

453 in Kadapa, 346 in Srikakulam and 237 in

state

authorities discharged

785 patients after recov-

ery in the last 24 hours

AP conducted Covid-19

tests on 1,97,956 samples

per one million popula-

tion and recorded posi-

₹12 LAKH CASH

UNACCOUNTED

SEIZED BY COPS

DC CORRESPONDENT

Wednesday seized unac-

counted ₹12 lakh cash.

The police found this cash at Kadapa –

Anantapuram border,

while they were check-

According to the infor-

mation from Vempalli

Sub Inspector Tirupal

Naik, he along with his

Anantapur road at Siddireddygaripalle vil-lage. They have inspect-

ed a car belonging to

Nageswara Reddy of

Nagulaguttapalli and

found a cash. They are unable to produce any

documentary evidences for the cash, hence the

were

vehicles at Kadapa

police on

checking

KADAPA, DEC. 9

Vempalli

ing vehicles.

594

 $\frac{578}{545}$

Anantapur, 198

Srikakulam, 156

272

infected

infected

Chittoor

in

health

confirmed

Kurnool.

tive Coronavirus

Godavari,

Kadapa,

Kurnool.

Covid-19

Covid-19

patients,

Godavari,

Anantapur,

Vizianagaram.

in the state.

tive rate at 8.26.

Prakasam.

Prakasam,

tested, 8,61,153

VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 9

to 7.045.

agency suggested a 9point parametre to make the rural health points flawless in administering the vaccine. 'We have covered 85 per

cent of the PHCs and subcentres under the EVM and complete all the points before the first shot was administered which is likely to happen after polio vaccination being taken up in midweek of January," said director of health Dr T. Geetha Prasadini.

Talking to DC she said the PHCs have been refurbished under Nadu-Nedu programme and the subcentres were being converted into health and wellness centres under The PHCs have been refurbished under Nadu-Nedu programme and the sub-centres were being converted into health and wellness centres

Ayushman Bharat programme. Installation of generators and uninterrupted power supply are in place to maintain the cold-chain, she added. She said AP was ahead

in building infrastructure in the rural sector got ready to launch the vaccine all over the State. "Our PHCs have been

vaccine

administering

since years but Covid-19 will definitely improve the basic infrastructure facilities. In this regard we are conducting gap analysis to find out the needs of the PHCs," said OSD for Covid-19 for north Andhra and principal of Andhra Medical College Dr P.V. Sudhakar.

In rural area, PHCs are grassroot-level government-run health centres that are responsible for providing last-mile health services. Once a vaccine is manufactured, it is transported from the manufacturer/supplier to the state or regional vaccine store. From there, the vaccine is dis-

which in turn send them to community health centres, primary health cen-tres and the last point sub-centres.

has directed the district administrations to form mandal level task force committees and similar committees at PHC and sub-centre smooth functioning of the programme and ensuring involvement of all the line departments.

As per the available guidelines frontline health workers, frontline staff of other departments, 50 plus age group people and people below 50 with co-morbidities will be vaccinated.

WOMAN FARMER OBSTRUCTS SURVEY

DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUPATI, DEC. 9

A woman farmer attempted to end her life by consuming pesticidelaced water in front of the revenue officials who came to conduct a survey for the construction of Rythu bharosa kendra and wellness centre at Baipparedlapa-lle village of Ramaku-ppam mandal in Chittoor district Wednesday.

According to Ramakuppam tahsildar Srinivasulu, the villagers from Baipparedlapalle had staged series of protests in front of the tahsildar office, demanding construction of Rythu bharosa kendra and wellness centre at a Banda Poramboke (government) land in the vil-

lage.
Following this, the revenue officials visited the village on Wednesday morning and started a survey at the said government land – with Survey No. 144/11 (Extent -1.95 acres). The survey was later obstructed by the woman farmer Harathi, who claimed that she owns the land. She later tried to end her life by consuming pesticide-laced water.
"As per records it is a

'Banda Poramboke land, which belongs to the government. The woman has temporarily covered the rocks in the said land with some soil and has been raising groundnut crop which has also dried up. We have requested the woman not to obstruct our duties. But she didn't paid heed to our words and tried to commit suicide by drinking pesticide-laced water,' tahsildar Ramakuppam.

Guard pond in RINL, Vizag steel, inaugurated DC CORRESPONDENT VISAKHAPATNAM, DEC. 9

Chairman and managing director of RINL, the holdcompany Visakhapatnam Steel Plant, P.K. Rath inaugurated Guard pond in the plant premises on Wednesday.

Mr Rath congratulated the projects and works collective for completing the project within the stipulated time and said RINL was always at the forefront in implementing environment friendly measures.

Guard ponds are 'Safe Guard' mechanisms for preventing discharge of 'untreated/abnormal' efflu-

ments. In line with the statutory directives, RINL constructed guard ponds at a cost of ₹10 crore. This guard pond has 4 ponds with each having a capacity of 9,600 cubic meters for storing two days of treated effluent from Coke Ovens. Once the water is stored, it shall be permitted to be discharged into the marine environment after its quali-

ty is cross-checked by APPCB. This ensures that 100 per cent of the effluent being discharged into the marine environment is done only after it meets the prescribed norms. This is one more environment friendly measure taken by



Passengers traveling in Vijayawada to Lingampally inter-city express after it was restored after nine months due to Covid pandemic from Vijayawada Railway station on Wednesday.

Phase III trial data needed for approval

FROM PAGE 1

Dr Kiran M, senior anaesthesiologist, Government Hospital, Nizamabad, said, "Phase III trials are still not complete. They are currently ongoing. Without data of these trials, the EUA cannot be given. There is no concept of EUA in India. This is for the first time vaccines are being taken up under this given the emergency of the pandemic. For this reason, scientists and drug controllers are very

According to sources aware of the proceedings, "the data submitted by a company to CDSCO in order to get a EUA pertained to data of overseas patients by a company for phase III human clinical trials" In case of another com-

pany, recruitment of all 26,000 volunteers is still not complete, sources said. Given these lapses

EUA to be given to these companies. Experts argue that vac-

cine development takes time and evaluation of data requires time.

Dr Sanjay Reddy, senior pharmacist, said, "The data generation will be based on the dosage regime, time after doses and adverse effects, if any. These phases have to be completed. Till it is completed, it will not be known where this vaccine can be administered to people safely." Experts believe that the

waiting period for EUA will take at least another month, if not ore. There three committees which have to evaluate the request from these two companies, including the vaccine subject expert committee, the technical panel and the apex committee. The first committee, SEC, has asked for more data from the companies,

it will take time for the which means that the wait for the vaccine from these two firms reaching people has gotten much longer.

The application by the

Indian arm of US phar-maceutical firm Pfizer was not taken up for deliberation Wednesday as the company sought more time for making a presentation before the committee, they said.

The recommendations by the SEC have been approved by the DCGI, an official source was quoted by PTI to have

Bharat Biotech applied to DCGI for EUA on developed indigenously by the firm in collabora tion with the Indian Council of Medical Research, while Punebased Serum Institute sought a nod for its Oxford Covishield, on December

CLASSIFIEDS

Project Director, Ship Building Centre Visakhapatnam,

Vice Admiral K. Srinivas lays a wreath at the Submarine

Cenotaph as part of Submarine Day celebrations at INS

Virbahu inside Eastern Naval Command in Visakhapatnam

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NTR health varsity web counselling starts today

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 9

Dr NTR university of health sciences issued notification for exercising web options for the first phase web based counselling for admission into MBBS course Competent Authority Quota seats for the academic year 2020-21 from 8 am on December 10 to 8 am on December 13. The Dr NTR university

of health sciences in its notification issued here Wednesday stated that it had notified the first phase of web based counselling for MBBS seats available under CAQ including special categories like physically challenged, police martyrs children and Anglo Indian in government, private, un-aided, non-minority minority medical colleges and MBBS seats in Sri Padmavathi Medical College for Women, Tirupati for the academic year 2020-21 in AP. All the eligible candidates who are present in the

position list displayed

The first phase of web based counselling for MBBS seats available under CAQ including special categories like physically challenged.

on the website on December 7, are asked to exercise their options at https://apmedam.apntruhs.in as per the seat matrix displayed in the e b s i t e

http://ntruhs.ap.nic.in. The eligible candidates present in the provisional final merit position list of applied candidates, should give only one time option to be exercised for all medical colleges as per their order of priority. The same options will be considered for all phases of counselling including mop-up counselling and also for filling special category seats also as and when the final prioritised list from the authorities concerned is

Muslim minority can-

didates only will be considered for competent authority quota seats in un-aided private minority medical colleges. If minority candidates are not available, then the seats will be converted to non-minority in the last phase of counselling and will be filled with eligible candidates.

The seats reserved under special categories like NCC, CAP sports and games will be filled as and when the prioritised merit list is received. Therefore, candidates claiming under special category reservation are also informed to exercise their option for all colleges as per their order of priority The unallotted seats under special categories quota will be converted and added to respective

categories. The selected candidates have to pay univerthrough payment gateway. The Tuition fee is fixed at ₹10,000 in government medical colleges and ₹15,000 in private, un-aided, nonminority and minority medical colleges

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SHORT TAKES

TAMIL TELEVISION ACTRESS CHITRA COMMITS SUICIDE

Chennai, Dec. 9: Popular television actress Chitra was found dead at a hotel room here early on Wednesday and she is suspected to have died by suicide, police said.

The 29-year old actress, well known among television audience in Tamil Nadu was seen hanging from a fan at the hotel room — using her saree like a in suburban Nazarethpet when they reached the spot, police said.

When examined, she was already dead, an official said adding her fiance, who was with her before her death was being questioned.

After a shoot at a nearby location, K. Chitra arrived at the hotel on the Bengaluru bypass and had told the man that she would be back after a bath and requested him to wait outside, police said quoting him. "He says he knocked on the door since she did not come out for long. He says, he then informed the hotel personnel and police was informed at 3.30 am. He is being questioned. A probe is on," the official said.

The 32-year old man was recently engaged to her and he was staying with her in the hotel room. Chitra became more popular among lovers of soap opera after she donned the role of 'Mullai,' in the ongoing television serial 'Pandian Stores.'

The body has been sent to Kilpauk Government Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

THREE AL-BADR **MILITANTS KILLED** IN ENCOUNTER

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC

A gunfight that broke out in a remote village of Jammu and Kashmir's southern Pulwama district overnight ended around noon on Wednesday after the security forced gunned down all the three militants who had been holed up in a private house. The house owner was injured in the clash, the officials said.

The Army and J&K police said that the slain men — all locals — belonged to Al-Badr, a pro-Pakistan militant outfit.
Inspector General of Police

(Kashmir range), Kumar, said that the civilian who was caught in crossfire was immediately shifted to a nearby hospital for treatment and is said to be stable. Kumar said that the operation to flush out militants from Pulwama's Tiken village had been launched jointly by J&K police's counterinsurgency Special Operations Group, the Army's 55 Rashtriya Rifles and Central Reserve Police Force's 182 and 183 battalions.

The police claimed that the militants holed up in the area were given opportunity to surrender. "However, they fired indiscriminately upon the joint search party which was retaliated leading to an encounter. Zamir Sadiq Lone in whose house the terrorists were hiding also received gunshot injuries.

DRDO LABS 'TALK' IN SUCCESSFUL **QUANTUM DEMO**

New Delhi, Dec. 9: The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) on Wednesday successfully demonstrated communication between its two labs using Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) technology, which is a "robust" way to share encryption keys, said an official statement.

In the QKD technology, encryption keys are sent as qubits in a fibre optic cable. Quantum computing uses qubits as basic resources, similar to how bits are used as basic resources in classical computing. The QKD is designed in a way that if an illegitimate entity tries to read the transmission, it will disturb the qubits — which are encoded on photons — and this will generate transmission errors, leading to legitimate end users

being immediately informed. 'Secure communications are vital for defence and strategic agencies world over and distribution of encryption keys from time to time is an important requirement in this context... Quantum based communication offers a robust solution to sharing the keys securely," said an official state-Defence Minister Rajnath Singh congratulated the DRDO for successful demonstration of QKD-based communication between its two labs in Hyderabad, said the statement.



Police keep vigil as Karnataka farmers participate in a protest rally in Bengaluru on Wednesday to press for repeal

Save India's annadatas, **Opposition urges Prez**

Anti-democratic farm laws threaten food security, says Oppn

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, DEC. 9

Opposition parties, led by the Congress and NCP, met President Ram Nath Kovind on Wednesday and sought repeal of the three farm laws against which thousands of farmers have been protesting on various borders of the national capital.

The five-member delegaincluded former Congress president Rahul Gandhi, NCP chief Sharad Pawar, CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury, CPI's D. Raja and DMK leader T.K.S. Elangovan.

The Opposition's memorandum to the President said, "We urge upon you, as the custodian of the Indian Constitution, to persuade your government not to be obdurate and accept the demands raised by India's *annadatas*." "The new agri-laws,

passed in Parliament in an anti-democratic manner preventing a structured discussion and voting, threaten India's food security, destroy Indian agriculture and our farmers, lay the basis for the abolishment of the Minimum Support Price (MSP) and mortgage Indian agriculture and our markets to the caprices of multinational agri-business corporates and domestic corporates," it said.

'We met the President and informed him of our view regarding the three farm laws. We have asked for their repeal. We informed the President that it is critical that they are taken back," Gandhi told the media after the meeting.

He said the way the farm laws were passed in Parliament, "we feel it was an insult to farmers and that is why they are protesting in the cold weather against them". He claimed that using the new laws, the government wants to hand over the farming sector to the "friends of the Prime Minister," but the farmers are fearless and will not back off, and will continue with their peaceful agitation.

Kejriwal still under house arrest: AAP

New Delhi, Dec. 9: The AAP on Wednesday alleged that Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's movement is still "restricted" and the main gate of his residence remains closed by the Delhi Police, which denied the charge.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which had on Tuesday alleged that the Delhi Police put Kejriwal under house arrest after he met farmers protesting against the Centre's agri-culture reform laws at the Singhu border, again claimed that it was being done at the behest of Union minister Amit alleged.

rejected AAP's charge against it as "totally baseless". Addressing a press conference on Wednesday, AAP spokesperson Raghav Chadha said there is an atmosphere of "undeclared emergency" Chief around the Minister's residence.

"I am telling you with full responsibility that the movement of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal is still restricted at the behest of the (Union) home minister. The main gate of the Chief Minister's residence is still closed,"

Elders determined to keep up the fight

New Delhi. Dec. 9: 'Come home only after we win this fight". His son's words to him as as he left his village in Punjab for Delhi ring in Gurdev Singh's ears and give the 71-year-old the strength to carry on with the protest against the new farm laws so what if he is still recovering from a knee replacement surgery.

The doughty sardar from Nurpur village Punjab's Jalandhar district is just one of the several elderly people camping at the Singur border for the last 13 days, determined to keep up the fight for a repeal of the Centre's three new farm laws.

It is getting colder by the day and they are hundreds of miles from home but the band of old men, among the many thousands of protesting farmers, mostly from Punjab and Haryana, are not giving up any time soon.

"As far as I can remember, all generations in my family have depended on agriculture for their livelihood. My sons, too, are farmers. I came to fight for the honour of our fore fathers and the rights of my children," Gurdev Singh said, pumping his fists in the air.

He had both his knees replaced just four months ago and can't walk without support but isn't complaining. "This trouble is nothing compared to the issue we are protesting about.

My elder son told me, 'Come home only after we win this fight', and that is what I plan to do," the farmer said as two men help him climb down from a trolley

Gurdev Singh's two friends from Nurpur, Sajjan Singh and Pritam Singh, both in their late 60s, echo his bravura spirit. -PTI

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC

BUSY FIGHTING FOR OUR RIGHTS, **SAY FARMERS**

New Delhi, Dec. 9: Caught between the Covid-19 pandemic and the agitation for their rights, farmers protesting against the Centre's new farm laws said the fear of contracting the disease is "not enough" to detract them from their fight. Thousands of farmers camping at the Tikri bor-

ders are largely seen without the basic preventive measure against Covid-19 — protective protective masks.

'The government has already tied a noose around our necks with these laws... we cannot afford to be afraid of Coronavirus," Gagandeep Singh, a farmer from Bhatinda in Punjab, said.

He has been protesting at the Delhi-Haryana border for the last 10 days. Demonstrating for 12 straight days, the farmers have been demanding that the three laws be revoked. Sporting a long white beard, Gurvasan Singh said he was not afraid of the disease that has killed already 1.4 lakh people in the country.

"We are losing our rights. We do not have time to worry about Coronavirus," he said. According to Sachin from Delhi's Kumar Uttam Nagar, the government's refusal to hear the farmers' demands proved that it was creating the fear of the virus to shutdown the protest.

Kumar, whose family has land in Uttar Pradesh mocked, "It seems that the virus will infect us exclusively. What is shown on camera and the reality on ground is different.

Meanwhile, traffic was disrupted at border points with farmers agitating on the Singhu, Tikri and Ghazipur borders of Delhi.

Rajasthan PR poll results mandate on farm bills: BJP

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, DEC. 9

Hailing the Rajasthan local body polls results as "phenomenal," the BJP on Thursday claimed that the results are farmers' mandate for Modi government's farm reforms and also people's support for the party across the coun-

In Congress ruled Rajasthan, the BJP won 353 of 636 zila parishads, 21 zila panchayatas and 1,990 of 4,371 panchayat samitis, primarily in rural areas.

The party also cited its performance in the recently held local bodies polls in Hyderabad, Arunachal Pradesh and the Bihar Assembly polls to assert that the party and the Narendra Modi led central government

THE BJP won 353 of 636 zila parishads, 21 zila panchayatas and 1,990 of 4,371 panchayat samitis, primarily in rural areas.

said the saffron party's win in Rajasthan symbolises the trust the poor, farmers and labourers have in Modi's leadership, while senior party leader and Union minister Javadekar Prakash stressed that people, especially farmers, have given

it a "decisive" victory.

He said all these polls held were Parliament enacted three farm sector reform laws, which have drawn protest from a section of farmers,

especially from Punjab.

Noting that the polls in Rajasthan were held primarily in rural areas, Javadekar said by opting has support in every for the BJP, voters region of the country.
BJP president J.P. Nadda state's ruling party win-

ning most seats in the local polls in Rajasthan. This is a huge victory. This is farmers' mandate for farm reforms," said

the Union minister. When asked about Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's dig at the Union government alleging that reform equals theft" for it, Javadekar took a jibe saying he does not want to respond to a "non-per-

forming politician.' He said the Central government is holding talks with the protesting farmer union leaders with an open mind and expressed confidence that resolution will be reached.

The minister pointed out that these wins have come for the BJP amid the Covid-19 pandemic, economic troubles caused by it and "misinformation" campaign by the opposition against the BJP over

Nadda attacks TMC as he begins poll campaign

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC

BJP president J.P. Nadda on Wednesday attacked the ruling Trinamul Congress in West Bengal as a family-run party after embarking on a two-day visit to the state to set "dynasty politics" on the agenda in next year's Assembly elections. He also led a rally of *Aar*

Noy Onnyay (no more injustice) campaign, a door-to-door outreach initiative of the BJP, on Girish Mukherjee Road in Bhowanipore, the home turf and Assembly constituency of Mamata Minister Banerjee, to make the saffron party's presence felt

On Thursday, the BJP chief is likely to visit Diamond Harbour, the base and Lok Sabha constituency of the CM's nephew, Abhishek Banerjee, in South 24 Parganas.

Inaugurating the state BJP election office in Hastings and nine district party offices, Nadda, in an oblique reference to Banerjee's residence at Harish Chatterjee Street in Kalighat, which is also the heart of the TMC, said, "Karyalay is the centre of culture and tradition. Interestingly, BJP is run from the Karyalay. But for other parties, home is their *Karyalay* from where they are run.'

He said, "To other parties, party means one particular parivar (family) and is restricted only within the *parivar*, which is spread like a net from top to bottom. And the TMC is no exception to it. It has also become a party of *parivar*. But the BJP is a party which itself is a parivar. We are part of a big *parivar*. This is evifor us because Karyalay is not run from any leader's home.' Contrasting

Trinamul Congress supremo with Asahishnuta, Nadda argued: December 7, 1935, Jan Sangh founder Syama dear but learn to appreci-Prasad Mookerjee said in ate the points of view of

BACK I HOME Tigress was translocated to Satkosia reserve in 2018

'Sundari' to relocate to MP



sign as the party begins campaigning for West Bengal

Didi says refugees will not need CAA

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, DEC. 9

Desperate to get back the votebank of the Matuas, a community of Hindu migrants in West Bengal, from the BJP, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday asserted that the refugees would not need the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) to stay as legal citizens here.

Accusing the BJP of cheating the refugees in the name of the CAA in the poll-bound state, the Trinamul Congress supremo once again ruled out of allowing the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and Population National Register (NPR) also here.

announcement came in wake of the BJP national general secre-Kailash Vijayvargiya's announcement that the CAA implementation would migrants underway from either

January or February. Banerjee told a TMC rally at the domain of the Matuas in Bongaon of

There are lot of refugees who live here after coming from Bangladesh. It is your home like ours. There is no need to get a fresh certificate because all of you are citizens. You are being cheated in the name of the CAA. If it gets underway, your grandparents' age proof will be sought. Can you arrange it now?' She informed that all the

94 refugee colonies, under the state government, we re legalised already to giv e its residents citizenship 'in exchange of nothing. "There were 250 more

such colonies which existed privately on central government premises. We have legalised them also to give citizenship to its residents. Remember, the state government, not the central government, holds the main power. Work of the two governments is different. The state government decides who will live in the state. So there is no point in lying in the name of CAA. We will not allow the NRC and NPR to happen,

front of Scottish Church College — Cultivate the habit of discipline and toleration. Surrender not to the convictions you hold

your opponents. This is very much relevant to Bengal even today. If we look at Mamataji, intolerance thy name is Mamata. Intolerance is growing so fast here!

RUSSIA UNHAPPY

Mehbooba Mufti detained again

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC SRINAGAR, DEC. 9

Former chief minister and People's Democratic Party (PDP) leader Mehbooba Mufti on Wednesday said that she has again been placed under house arrest, the third time in less than a fortnight. Taking a jibe at Niti Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant, she said "too much democracy indeed.

Kant had on Tuesday "Tough reforms are very difficult in the Indian context. We are too much of a democracy. For the first time, the government has had the courage and determination to carry out hard-headed reforms across sectors. The PDP chief tweeted,

"Illegally detained today for the third time in less than a fortnight. Too much democracy indeed." She also said, "If my movements are curbed due to 'security concerns' then why are BJP ministers allowed to campaign freely in Kashmir while I've been asked to wait until the culmination of DDC elections?" On Tuesday, she was barred from visiting the families, mainly nomad Gujjars, evicted from their dwellings in the government's ongoing anti-encroachment drive in J&K's central district of Budgam. She uploaded a video on Twitter in which she stands by the locked entrance of her residence here and takes a jab at the J&K administration.

BHOPAL, DEC. 9 Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh on Wednesday gave his nod for relocation of tigress 'Sundari', translocated to Satkosia tiger reserve in Odisha in a re-introduction programme in 2018, in Kanha National Park in

Chouhan's decision to restore Sundari to her original home in Kanha tiger reserve has ended after almost an yearlong impasse over relocation of the wild animal with MP forest department hitherto unwilling to take back her contending that she was not fit to be released in the wild.

In a letter to his Odisha

counterpart Patnaik, Chouhan said MP would take back Sundari. He, however, indicated that it would take some time for relocation of Sundari in Kanha tiger reserve. "It has been decided to

relocate Sundari in the Ghorela re-wilding centre in Kanha tiger reserve to make her fit to be released in the wild. But, an orphan cub is currently being trained in the centre to restore its wild character. Sundari could be relocated to the centre only after the tiger cub was released in the wild", the letter written in Hindi

Chouhan said an expert team from MP which visited Sundari in her enclosure in Satkosia tiger

reserve has found that the wild animal was not fit to live in the wild since she has become habituated to human presence due to her prolonged captivity in the enclosure. "It is learnt from media

reports that rehabilitation of Sundari in the enclosure in Satkosia tiger reserve was not done as per provisions of wildlife Act, leading her to lose her natural wild nature", the letter said.

A male tiger, Mahavir, and a female big cat Sundari, were translocated within a gap of a couple of months to Satkosia tiger reserve in 2018 from Madhya Pradesh in a reintroduction programme.

ordered the MP government to relocate Sundari This was the first experi mental interstate transloin Kanha. cation of tigers in the

However, Mahavir was allegedly killed by locals a months after his translocation.

Later, Sundari killed 2 humans in the tiger forcing reserve. Odisha forest department to shift her to a small enclosure in the reserve forest.

Later, National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) and Odisha government requested the MP government to take back Sundari.

A wildlife activist moved Madhya Pradesh high court seeking a directive to the MP government to take back Sundari.

The court last month

WITH CLOSE **INDO-US TIES**

From page 1

"The West is attempting to undermine our close partnership and privileged relations with India. This is the goal of the US' very tough pressure on New Delhi,' Russian minister Sergey Lavrov

Observers point out that the remarks highlight Russia's unease with India's growing proximity and strong strategic ties with the United States, with whom Russia has had a sharply deteriorating

relationship.
It also highlights
India's challenge in continuing to maintain excellent ties with both Russia and the US.

SHORT **CHOPPER CRASH IN FRENCH ALPS**

KILLS 5, 1 HURT Paris, Dec. 9: Five members of a mountain rescue team were killed and a sixth was seriously injured when their helicop ter crashed in the French Alps, authorities said. The helicopter was carrying the team on a training mission in the Savoie region on Tuesday evening. The helicopter came down at an altitude of 1,800 meters

(5,905 feet), the prefecture of

Savoie said in a statement. The

surviving crew member was

able to give the alert.

He has been transported to a hospital in the city of Grenoble, the prefecture said. Weather conditions were particularly bad, local authorities said. French President Emmanuel Macron paid tribute in a tweet overnight to rescuers who "to save lives, are taking all the risks."

GERMAN POLLS TO BE HELD ON SEPT. 26, 2021

Berlin, Dec. 9: Germany's next parliamentary election, which will determine the country's new leader after Chancellor Angela Merkel's long rule, will be held on September 26, 2021. President Frank-Walter

Steinmeier's office said Wednesday that the head of state set the date in line with a recommendation from the government. It will be post-World War II Germany's 20th parliamentary election Germany holds elections every four

The lower house of parliament, or Bundestag, elects the chancellor. That may not happen until well after the election, because the process of putting together a governing coalition can be lengthy. After the 2017 election, it was nearly six months before Merkel was sworn in for her fourth term

ETHIOPIA DENIES PROBES INTO TIGRAY CONFLICT

Nairobi, Dec. 9: Ethiopia's government is rejecting calls for independent investigations into the deadly conflict in its Tigray region, saying it "doesn't need a baby-sitter."

The declaration comes amid international calls for more transparency into the monthlong fighting between Ethiopian forces and those of the fugitive Tigray regional gov-ernment that is thought to have killed thousands, inc ing civilians.

At least one large-scale mas sacre has been documented, and others are feared. Senior government official Redwan Hussein told reporters on Tuesday evening that Ethiopia will invite others for assistance only if it feels that "it failed to investigate."

To assume the government can't carry out such probes "is belittling the government," he said.

Frustration is growing as the northern Tigray region remains largely cut off from the outside world, with food and medicines desperately needed by the population of 6 million — some 1 million of them now thought to be dis-

INDIA'S WEAPONS PURCHASE FROM US AT \$3.4 BILLION

Washington, Dec. 9: India's weapons procurement from the United States jumped from a meagre \$6.2 million to a whopping \$3.4 billion in the final year of the Donald administration,

according to official data.

As per the data released by Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), the jump in the sale of American weapons to India comes at a time when sale of weapons from the US to other countries has dipped to \$50.8 billion in 2020 from \$55.7 bil-

lion in 2019. In 2019, the sale of US weapons to foreign countries was \$55.7 billion. In 2017, it was \$41.9 billion, it said, Major buyers of American weapons in 2020 were India (\$3.4 billion up from \$6.2 million in fiscal year 2019), Morocco (\$4.5 billion up from \$12.4 million), Poland (\$4.7 billion up from \$673 million), Singapore (\$1.3 billion up from \$137 million), Taiwan (\$11.8 billion up from \$876 million), and the United Arab Emirates (\$3.6 billion up from \$1.1 billion), the data

Several countries reported a drop in purchase of weapons from the US.



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu attends a ceremony to mark the arrival of a plane of the international courier company DHL, carrying over 1,00,000 of doses of the first batch of Pfizer vaccines which landed at Ben

UK body issues allergy warning for Pfizer jab

Caution was given after 2 NHS workers suffered allergic reactions

London, Dec. 9: Britain's Biden promises 100 mn medicines regulator on Wednesday issued a warning for people with "significant" history of vaccine shots in 100 days allergic reactions to medi-cines, food or vaccines to have Pfizer/BioNTech jab, a day after the first set of Washington, Dec. 9: US has claimed more than 1.5 patients were administered their first of two doses of the vaccine against Covid-19.

President-elect Joe Biden has said that in the first 100 days of his administration, he would mandate The warning comes everyone to wear a mask, after two National Health ensure 100 million Covid-Service (NHS) workers 19 vaccinations and reoexperienced "anaphylactoid reaction" symptoms shortly after being injected, but are now said to be pen the majority of schools as he assured Americans that his "crisis-tested" team of experts will recovering well. NHS deliver better healthcare

and revive the economy. The US is in the midst of a deadly pandemic that has infected almost 15 million Americans and killed 2,86,000. Globally, there are 68.2 million Covid-19 cases and the pandemic

England said all its trusts

involved with the mass

vaccination programme

have been informed and Wednesday,

receive the vaccine will be asked if they have a

history of allergic reac-

"As is common with new

vaccines, the MHRA have

advised on a precaution-

ary basis that people with

a significant history of

allergic reactions do not

receive this vaccination

after two people with a history of significant

responded adversely," said Professor Stephen

Powis, medical director

An anaphylactoid reac-

tion tends to involve a

skin rash, breathlessness

and sometimes a drop in

blood pressure and both

the NHS workers who

experienced this are said

to have a history of seri-

ous allergies and carry adrenaline pens around

'We have been advised

products

by MHRA [Medicines and

Regulatory Agency] of

two vellow card reports

that may be associated with allergic reaction due

to administration of the

Covid-19 BNT162b2 vac-

cine," Pfizer UK said in a statement. "As a precau-

tionary measure, the MHRA has issued tempo-

rary guidance to the NHS

while it conducts an inves-

tigation in order to fully

understand each case and

Dr June Raine, the head

of the MHRA, told a joint

select committee hearing

on Tuesday that "real-

time vigilance" will con-

tinue throughout the vac-

rollout process.

its causes," it said.

with them.

Healthcare

for the NHS in England.

allergic

reactions

patients scheduled

million lives. Announcing his national health team, Biden asked

the Trump administration to act now to purchase the doses it has negotiated with Pfizer and Moderna and to work swiftly to scale manufacturing for the US population and the world.

"This can be fixed. If it does, my team will be able to get at least 100 million vaccinations done in my first 100 days. Third, it should be a national priority to get our kids back into school and keep them in school," he said. — PTI

MERKEL BACKS TOUGHER VIRUS RESTRICTIONS

Berlin, Dec. 9: German Chancellor Angela Merkel advocated tougher restrictions on public life and pleaded with her compatriots to cut down on socializing as the country reported its highest sin-gle-day death toll of the Coronavirus pandemic on Wednesday.

Germany is gradually moving toward a tighter lockdown, at least for a limited period after Christmas, as new virus cases remain stubbornly beginning to creep higher — despite a partial shut-down that started on

Don orders vaccine priority for America

Washington, Dec. 9: US President Donald Trump has signed an executive order that prioritises Americans' access to Covid-19 vaccines before the US potentially begins

helping other nations. If necessary, Trump said, he is ready to invoke the Defence Production Act to ensure that Covid-19 vaccines first get to the

Americans.

The Defence Production Act allows a president to force private manufacturers to ramp up production and give the federal government priority on any orders places. American companies, he said, were the first to produce a verifiably safe and

effective vaccine. 'Together, we will defeat the virus, and we will soon end the pandemic, and we will save millions and millions of lives, both in our country and all over the world. And we've already started," Trump said during signing the executive order Tuesday at a White House celebrating 'Operation Warp Speed', his administration's effort to produce and dis-

vaccines for Covid-19.

THE DEFENCE Production Act allows a president to force private manufacturers to ramp up production and give the federal government priority on any orders it places.

American companies, he said, were the first to produce a verifiably safe and effective vaccine.

that his administration provided a total of \$14 billion to accelerate Coronavirus vaccine development and to manufacture all of the top candidates long in advance.

As a result of this "unprecedented investment", both Pfizer and Moderna have announced that their vaccines are approximately 95 per cent effective, he said.

Pfizer has developed its vaccine outside of 'Operation Warp Speed', but is collaborating with the US government on manufacturing and distribution. The UK on Tuesday began its vaccinations with the first set of people injected with their first of two doses tribute safe and effective Pfizer/BioNTech jab.

U.S. SANCTIONS HINDERING ACCESS TO VACCINE: IRAN

Tehran, Dec. 9: Iran's President Hassan Rouhani said on Wednesday that US sanctions are making it difficult for Iran to purchase medicine and health supplies from abroad, including Covid-19 vaccines needed to contain the worst outbreak in the Middle East. Donald

President Trump's administration has imposed crippling sanc-tions on Iran's banking sector and its vital oil and gas industry since unilaterally withdrawing the US from Iran's nuclear deal with world powers in 2018. While the United States insists that medicines and humanitarian goods are exempt from sanctions, restrictions on trade have made many banks and companies across the world hesitant to do business with Iran, fearing punitive measures from Washington.

The country is also cut off from the international banking system, making it difficult to transfer pay-

Biden picks retired Army general to lead Pentagon

Washington, Dec. 9: US President-elect Joe Biden has announced retired Army general Lloyd J. Austin as his nomination for Defence Secretary. If 67-year-old Austin would be the first African-American to lead the Pentagon.

The nominee for the 28th Secretary of Defence comes with a distinguished record of military service spanning four decades. "General Austin shares my profound belief that our nation is at its strongest when we lead not only by the example of our power, but by the power of our example. Throughout his lifetime

of dedicated service – and in the many hours we've spent together in the White House Situation Room and with our troops overseas General Austin has demonstrated exemplary leadership, character and command," Biden said while making the announcement on

"He is uniquely qualified to take on the challenges and crises we face in the current moment, and I look forward to once again working closely with him as a trusted partner to lead our military with dignity and resolve, revitalise our alliances in the face of global threats, and ensure the safety and security of the American people," the Democratic leader said. An accomplished, respected and trailblasing figure in the US military history, Austin retired from the Army in 2016 after over 40 years of service.

African-The first American to serve as Commander of US Central Command, Austin is a trusted and crisis-tested leader who has overseen some of the most complex and impactful operations in the history of the armed services — including serving as the chief

continuing as Prez have denied any such fraud.

Washington, Dec. 9: Days before the official certification of the November 3 US presidential elections in favour of his Democratic opponent Joe Biden, President Donald Trump claimed that he would continue to hold the position as he has

won the elections. Trump has been making unsubstantiated claims about widespread voter fraud and electoral malpractice in the presidential polls. State election officials and the media Election officials have

declared Biden as the President-elect received more than the required 270 of the 538 electoral college votes The elections are official ly scheduled to be certified next week. However, Trump is continuing his legal efforts to upend Biden's victory. He has allowed the official start of Biden's transition to power but has not yet conceded defeat.

U.S. TOP COURT REJECTS GOP BID TO HALT BIDEN'S PENNSYLVANIA WIN

Trump: Hopeful of

Washington, Dec. 9 (AP) The Supreme Court has rejected Republicans' lastbid to reverse Pennsylvania's certification of President-elect Joe Biden's victory in the electoral battleground.

The court without comment on Tuesday refused to call into question the the certification process in Pennsylvania.

meet on December 14 to cast their votes for Biden. Biden won 306 electoral votes, so even if Pennsyl vania"s results had been in doubt, he still would have more than the 270

electoral votes needed to

become president. -AP

state's 20 electors are to

Governor Tom already has certified Biden's victory and the

architect of the effort to defeat ISIS in Iraq and Syria, and working closely with Biden to bring nearly 1,50,000 American military personnel home from Iraq, the transition said.

US President-elect Joe Biden has also selected Ohio Rep. Marcia Fudge as his housing and urban development secretary, according to three people familiar with the deci-

Fudge was first elected to Congress in 2008 to represent a district that includes Cleveland, and

had been considered a leading candidate for agriculture secretary in the administration. Biden Her intended nomination confirmed Tuesday by three people

familiar with the decision

who spoke on condition of anonymity to avoid preempting the presidentelect's announcement. She enjoys the strong backing of South Carolina Rep. Jim Clyburn, the No. 3 House Democrat who

gave Biden a key nod of support in the primaries.

Pak lawmakers to resign to paralyse govt: PDM chief

stan has deepened after an 11-party Opposition alliance announced that their lawmakers will resign en masse by the end of this month from parliament to paralyse the government and force Prime Minister Imran Khan to call early snap polls. The decision was taken

the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), an alliance of 11 Opposition parties formed in September this year to overthrow Prime Minister Khan's government, held a marathon meeting in Islamabad. PDM chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman announced on Tuesday night that a consensus

was reached on resigning from parliament. "All lawmakers will submit their resignation letter to their party chiefs by 31st December," he said, flanked by PML-N leader Maryam Nawaz and PPP

chief Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. The exact timing of stomping out of assemblies would be decided later, said Rehman. Soon after the election in 2018, he had urged the Opposition leaders not to take oath to join parliament due to alleged rigging. But his idea was overruled by others, chiefly by the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and the The Pakistani Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). It is

Islamabad, Dec. 9: The political crisis in Paki-**ANCESTRAL HOUSES IN PESHAWAR** Peshawar, Dec. 9: Pa- Asghar, following a report

nkhwa government has determined the price of the ancestral houses of legendary Bollywood actors Dilip Kumar and Raj Kapoor in the heart of this city at ₹80,56,000 and ₹1,50,00,000 respectively.

The provincial government in September decided to purchase their ancestral houses to conserve the historic buildings which are in dilapidated condition and facing demolition threat. The two buildings, locat-

ed in the heart of this northern Pakistani city, have been declared as national heritage. Deputy Commissioner Peshawar Muhammad Ali

believed that en masse resignation is the only way to bring the government on its knees and force it to call early elec-

The PPP government in the Sindh province was considered as a hurdle as it was not sure if that it would sacrifice its government to help the Opposition alliance.

The leaders also agreed to go ahead with a rally in Lahore on December 13 as a show of power to the government. It will be the sixth rally after similar and Works Department, fixed the price of Dilip Kumar's four Marla house for ₹80.56,000 while that of Raj Kapoor's six Marla house for ₹1,50,00,000. Marla, a traditional unit of area used in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, is considered as equal to 272.25 square feet or

25.2929 square metres. The archaeology department has sent a formal request to the provincial government for releasing over ₹2 crore for purchasing both the historic buildings, where the two greats of the Indian cinema were born and raised in their early days before the Partition. -PTI

gatherings held in Karachi Gujranwala, Quetta, Peshawar and Multan.

The Opposition parties succeeded in attracting a huge number of people despite hurdles created by the government. Prime Minister Imran Khan rejected the demand to step down or call early elections and consistently advocated that Opp osition was protesting to put pressure to stop probes in corruption against their

MISSION I MARS Automatic engine abort occurred with just 1.3 secs remaining in countdown, no word on next flight

SpaceX aborts test Starship flight in last second

Cape Canaveral (US), eight miles (12.5 kilome-Dec. 9: The first highaltitude test flight of futuristic Starship was aborted at the last second in Texas

on Tuesday. SpaceX came close to launching a prototype of the rocketship that com-pany chief Elon Musk is designing to carry people

The goal was to shoot Starship to an altitude of

tres) — the highest yet — and then bring it back to a vertical landing. But an automatic engine abort occurred with just 1.3 seconds remaining in the countdown. SpaceX announced on

its web broadcast it was

THE GOAL was to shoot Starship to an altitude of eight miles (12.5 kilometres) — the highest yet - and then bring it back to a vertical landing. But an automatic engine abort

done for the day, and there was no word on flights, but these earlier, when it might try again. simpler models have gone no higher than 490 feet SpaceX already has conducted five Starship test (150 metres.) The stain-

occurred with just 1.3 seconds remaining in the countdown.

THE STAINLESS steel version on the launch pad on Tuesday was the first to feature a nose cone.

less steel version on the launch pad on Tuesday was the first to feature a nose cone, body flaps and

SpaceX has taken over Boca Chica in the far southeastern corner of Texas, near the Mexican border, to build and test its Starships. The compaintends Starships — the upper stage atop Super Heavy boosters — to deliver massive satellites into orbit around Earth, and send people and cargo to the

moon and Mars.



shows SpaceX full-size Starship SN8 rocket prototype before its launch. - AFP

Chronicle

10 DECEMBER 2020

Democracy and reforms: How much is too much?

s there a connection between democracy and Niti Aayog? Or, not to put too fine a point on it, between India's democracy and the government's think tank on economic affairs that was created as the National Institute for Transforming India (Niti) by dismantling the Planning Commission, which had planned to achieve balanced development of the various regions to remove poverty. Probably not, if putative observations of the Niti Ayog CEO, Amitabh Kant, made recently, are to be taken at face value.

The transformation of India in the conception of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is the chairman of the think tank he created in January 2015 through a mere cabinet decision and not the constitutional route, is to be achieved, fundamentally through de-regulation in all fields of economic activity. This means taking away any role for the government through "hard reforms" that Mr Kant spoke of while addressing an event virtually on Tuesday.

The country's major news platforms quoted the Niti Aayog operational chief as saying that "tough reforms" were very difficult in the Indian context because there

The agri-laws were rammed through **Parliament virtually** without discussion — in an example of the 'political will' shown by the regime

was "too much democracy" in the country. He also noted that the Modi government had shown the "political will" to drive hard reforms. He reeled off examples such as mining, agriculture and labour.

The political meaning of this is obvious — that the rules, regulations and the culture of debate, dissent and protest in a democracy will not yield "tough reforms" needed to deliver economic prosperity. This is a discredited notion and Mr Kant evidently ran for cover when the implication of his remarks was revealed to him. He flatly denied say-

ing the words attributed to him though it is highly unlikely that all reputed media $% \left(1\right) =\left(1\right) \left(1\right) +\left(1\right) \left(1\right) \left(1\right) +\left(1\right) \left(1\right) \left($ outlets would misquote him. The videos of his only underscore that his clarification and denials are to be regarded with a stiff dose of skepticism.

Mr Kant went to the extent of saying that India can compete with China only through "hard reforms" and not through holding seminars. Seminars imply discussion and debate. This China reference would also suggest that in the Niti Aayog CEO's scheme, debates are not the way to push "tough reforms", implying a failure of the well-known basis of democracy. Presumably, then, hard reforms can only be achieved through bulldozing, the way it is done in China, a totalitarian state where a single leader is all knowing and all-powerful.

Examples of so-called "hard reform" (even when they undervalue public welfare by privileging the market principle on an exclusive basis), pushed through the methods of democracy, have evidently eluded Mr Modi's most powerful economic bureaucrat. He could have recalled, for instance, that former Britain PM Margaret Thatcher battled and debated in Parliament and the media to get her way in scuttling welfare measures of an earlier era to set her country on a new path.

In fact, to make economic reforms non-sliding, acceptance by the widest sections of the people is a necessity, not a luxury, and the political principle of democracy provides for the most thorough means to install a new idea or practice. The present regime has failed to do just that, the most recent egregious example being the contentious agri-laws against which a storm is brewing. These were rammed through Parliament virtually without discussion — in an example of the "political wil

The rise of Everest

easured in 2005 by a Beijing survey to be 8,844 m, Mt Chomolungma (meaning mother goddess) was a harder climb from the Chinese side, but also ▲shorter by a good four metres. It prompted mountaineers to rush over to Nepal to summit Sagarmatha (literally, top of the world) whose height was generally acknowledged to be 8,848 metres. It cost the Communist country no small amount of Everest tourism.

Following the 2015 earthquake in Nepal which left 9,000 dead, including some climbers, the country's survey department experts, fearing that the mountain had become shorter, called for a fresh taking of measurement. So far, Nepal had been following the findings of the 1954 Survey of India, which had put out the second fig-ure. An American survey in 1999, however, had calculated Everest to be higher, at 8,850 metres. It added grist to speculations as to whether the young-fold mountain

The speculators were correct. The two newest satellite aided surveys — Nepal's in 2019 and the one completed by China earlier this year — finally agree —the height of Everest is 8,848.86 metres — the mountain having grown by three feet or 86 centimetres. It is 164 years after Radhanath Sikdar used trigonometry and machines called theodolites to first calculate it on behalf of Sir George Everest to be 8,839 metres, making it the highest peak of the world.

It wasn't easy measuring the earth's tallest mountain this time either. Surveyors had to climb the mountain with a GPS receiver. A Nepali surveyor who stayed at the summit for two hours lost a toe to frostbite.

Now comes the key question — can this increase be attributed to rock, or is it merely icecap, as China once claimed? Yes and no, says Sridevi Jade, plate tectonics expert. The Himalayas stand on the boundary between the Indian and Eurasian plates. Jade calculates that the Indian plate is slipping under the Eurasian plate by about five centimetres a year. After accounting for erosion on the top, Everest is gaining about one centimetre every 10 years. So while the quake may have taken off centimetres, replicating Hillary and Norgay's feat just got harder.

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Boris' fumbling holds lessons for the world



Sunanda K. Datta-Ray

Reflections

important lesson for the pandemicstricken world to remember as challenge after challenge casts its shadow on Prime Minister Boris Johnson's beleaguered government in London is that no opinion — not even that of a suspected adversary — should be dismissed or derided at a time of grave international danger.

More of that later. Immediate attention focuses on another aspect of the coronavirus crisis which inspired Britain's Agra-born business minister, Alok Sharma, to exult grandiloquently: "In years to come, we will remember this moment as the day the United Kingdom led humanity's charge against this dis-He meant — as every British spokesman repeats ad nauseam – that the UK is the first country to agree to use the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine against Covid-19.

Not everyone is equally boastful. While the ambassador German reminded listeners that the vaccine represents collective European enterprise, the tiny oilrich island kingdom of Bahrain quickly muscled into the limelight to share Britain's glory with its own agreement with Pfizer/BioNTech. Another critic with little stomach for bombast that resound applause in Mr Sharma's ancestral Uttar Pradesh sharply reminded him that this moment might also be remembered for "the UK having one of the worst death rates and the worst economic impact

due to poor governance". Going beyond the United Kingdom's 1.71 million Covid-19 cases and 61,014 deaths, he might have been speaking of the frantic last-minute parleys in Britain's pro-

tracted divorce negotiations with the European Union which suggest that the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, did not think things through when he played up to domestic separatists with his aggressive Brexit agenda. With time running out for the December 31 deadline, this week's last throw of the dice (as it's called) in the negotiations may be heading for a breakdown rather than a breakthrough. If so, it would be catastrophic for both parties who cannot escape their interdependence. While British waters are much richer in fish than

ues to pander to the insular lobby by accusing the EU of riding roughshod over British sovereignty, Rachel Reeves, a senior member of the Labour Party's shadow cabinet, warned that he "needs to deliver the deal he promised the British people". He can't ignore her for Brexit has exposed his reliance on Labour votes in the House of Commons. Neither can he ignore the new Cold War against China and Russia that US President Donald Trump had launched with vehe ment diatribes against the so-called "Wuhan virus" to woo American voters ahead of the presi-

the seas surrounding Europe, British trawlers

make their money selling

to the European nations.
As Mr Johnson contin-

dential election. With talk of Washington invoking the 1977 International Emergency Economic Powers Act to blacklist the popular Chinese video app TikTok as "an unusual and extraordinary threat", Mr Johnson has taken up the cudgels for the United States like another British leader, Tony Blair, who kowtowed to George W. Bush and joined the American invasions of Iraq and

explains the sudden £16 billion increase in Britain's defence budget over the next four years, despite the pandemic's calamitous damage to the economy. Such gestures appease the Americans, as do accusations of the Kremlin trying to pene-trate Britain's secret sciresearch programmes and promises to reveal Russia's alleged covert interference in

British politics Initially, Mr Johnson rejected pressure, American as well as from the rightists among his own Conservatives, to ban the Chinese technology company, Huawei, from any role in building the UK's 5G infrastructure. He has since done a volte face and now cites "sound technical reasons" for giving Huawei marching orders. But although Huawei is said to threaten British security and is excluded from the 5G network, Mr Johnson cannot be seriously concerned since the eviction will become effective only over seven vears

Neither this anomaly nor the ban itself seems to have attracted much public attention in Britain. The reason may be that people are genuinely horrified by China's oppression of the Uighurs, its tightening grip on Hong Kong, military assertiveness South China Sea and muscle-flexing in Ladakh. But the Brexit controversy makes Britain vulnerable, and succumbing to American pressure at this juncture may compound London's depen-

Dr Hans Kluge, who heads the WHO's European operations, says that lockdowns are unnecessary if 95 per cent of the population wears masks. Sadly, many **European and** American leaders dismissed masks then as politically unacceptable.

Instead of taking back control of his country's destiny — the publicly reiterated reason for leav-ing the EU in the first Mr Johnson place — Mr Johnson might end up by moving closer to the old joke of Britain as the 51st state of the United States of America. Obviously, the pandemic aggravates the impact

of all other crises. Covid-19 might also have caused less suffering and spread less terror if a sane approach had been followed from the beginning. Dr Hans Kluge, who heads the World Health Organisation's European operations, says that lockdowns are unnecessary if 95 per cent of the population wears masks. This should have been far more widely and forcefully propagated when the pandemic was exploding across the world. Sadly, many European and American leaders dismissed masks then as politically unacceptable.

As Britain and the EU nations were going into lockdown, Dr George Fu Gao, director-general of the Chinese Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, China's main public health body, corroborated Dr Kluge's view. Asked about the mistakes being made by other countries trying to control coronavirus, he replied that "the big mistake in the US and Europe, in my opinion, is that people aren't wearing masks" That opinion should

have been taken seriously even though China had already been cast as the adversary. According to independent observers, China's return to normality was largely the result of old-fashioned public health measures, with a heavy emphasis on testand-trace and travel bans, vigorously enforced by mobilising the country's vast resources and, of course, invoking the state's coercive authority. There's a lesson there for the rest of the suffering world.

> The writer is a senior journalist, columnist

CAPITAL LOCATION

The AP government is 100 per cent correct in asserting its right to decide on the location of new capital city. Its right should not be questioned even by a court of law. At the most the HC could ask for state's plans on how it will use the land acquired by the previous government at huge cost. Evidently all those who parted with their lands either voluntarily or under duress, had anticipated huge profit from cost escalation of land.

Govardhana Myneedu Vijayawada

COVID CASES

It is heartening that people are getting back on horse again after the Covid-19 cases are showing a consistent downfall. At the same time, Covid-19 protocols need to be adhered to strictly till not a single case is reported. The onus is on the people not to throw caution to the winds and pay a heavy price.

Dr C. Ghanshyam Visakhapatnam

LOPSIDE PRIORITIES Even after 70 years of Indepen-

dence, the suburbs are without potable water and motorable roads. Throughout the country it is the same scenario. We see multiple activities like washing of clothes, cattle and the picking up drinking water from another point along a stream passing through a village or a suburb. No wonder people often get afflicted with waterborne diseases and are prone to other ailments. This is due to negligence and lopsided priorities of rulers.

Sasikantnagar

High Court upholds Mulki rules

From our legal staff reporter

HYDERABAD, Dec. 9 The full bench of the Andhra Pradesh High Court today held that the Mulki rules relating to appointment of public servants in so far as they are applicable to Telangana

50 YEARS AGO IN region revive and survive to continue after the

judgement of the Supreme Court striking down in 1969 Section 3 of the Public Employment Act 1957.

The full bench consisted of Chief Justice Kumarayya, Mr Justice Gopal Rao Ekbote and Mr. Justice Sambasiva Rao.





Is pollution a greater pandemic than Covid?

s a parent, I dread Delhi winters, not just because of the cold, but because of the terrible pollution in the air. We live in the city with the worst air quality in the world. Air quality index is generally Moderate (101-200) between January and September, and then it drastically deteriorates to Very Poor (301-400), Severe (401-500) or Hazardous (500+) between October and December.

It amazes me how year after year, as the winter approaches, there is a huge outcry over pollution in the city and then it dies down its own natural death as the summer returns. There is

no urgency to tackle this pandemic!
Although some of us are still getting used to wearing masks, to many of us with little children, this is nothing new because our kids have been wearing masks for the past couple of winters. In my son's Montessori pre-school, it was made compulsory for the little babies to wear masks to school. Back then, it felt like I was entering a science fiction film set every time I would go to school. Little did I know that it would become the new normal soon!

As per the current data, as on

November 28, 2020, there have been 1,35,906 deaths due to the coronavirus in India. Globally, there have been 1.45 million deaths. Now, compare this to the deaths caused due to pollution. In 2019, exposures to outdoor high average levels of PM 2.5 caused 9,80,000 deaths in India - nearly 60 per cent of all air pollution — attributable deaths. Globally, there were 4.14 million such deaths in 2019. Even if we were to double the coronavirus-related deaths, they would still amount to just about 27 per cent of the deaths caused due to air pollution in India. Then, why is

this pandemic being ignored? What will it take for the authorities and the government to wake up to its reality? Is it that the awareness of this epidemic is only with the educated and urbane few, that it will only become important once the vote bank

of the poor make it an issue? As per the State of Global Air 2020 report (SoGA 2020) released on October 21, a report published by the US-based think-tank, Health Effects Institute, there were at least 1,16,000 infant deaths due to air pollution

recorded in India last year.

For the youngest infants, most deaths were related to complications from low birth weight and premature birth — direct outcomes of mothers' exposure to air pollution during pregnancy. More than half of the infant deaths were due to PM2.5 in outdoor air and the rest were linked to house hold air pollution due to use of solid fuels such as charcoal, wood and animal dung for cooking, as per the study that claims to be the first-ever compre hensive analysis of air pollution's global impact on newborns. There is a growing body of evidence about the link between infant death and air pollution and several Indian and international studies have tried to explain it.

In 2019, India's population-weighted annual average concentration of PM 2.5 was recorded at 83.2 micrograms per cubic metre — seven times higher than the WHO's safe standards of 10 μg/m3 - and remained highest in the world. (The "population-weighted annual average concentration" is the average level of air pollution to which

a country's population is exposed.)
As per the American Lung Association, children face special risks from air pollution because their lungs are growing and because they are so active and breathe in a great deal of air. Children's exposure to air pollution is a special concern because their immune system is not fully developed when exposure begins.

Just like the arms and legs, the largest portion of a child's lungs will grow long after he or she is born. Eighty percent of alveoli develop after birth. Children have more respiratory infections than adults, which also seems to increase their susceptibility

to air pollution. Furthermore, children don't behave like adults, and their behaviour also affects their vulnerability. They are outside for longer periods and are usually more active when outdoors. Consequently, they inhale more polluted outdoor air. They are also closer to the earth, where the pollutants are

As per a study titled "State of Global Air 2019", the average life of a South Asian child growing up in the current high levels of air pollution will be shortened by two-and-a-half years. This means that a child born today will die 2.5 years sooner, on average That is a really scary prospect, and one that makes me want to leave this city, and country, along with my child. Doing a little bit of research on my own, here's what I found:

■Children are more at risk from the effects of pollution since they have faster breathing rates, and their lungs are still developing.

■Children exposed to high pollution are more likely to have reduced lung function as adults.

■Long term exposure to air pollution may cause asthma and other health risks, including cancer, in children.

■Air pollution is one of the leading threats to child health, accounting for almost one in 10 deaths in children

under five years of age. ■Pregnant women exposed to air pollution can hinder the development of the brain and lead to cognitive problems later in the children.

As per the World Organisation, in Delhi, poor air quality irreversibly damages the lungs of 2.2 million or 50 per cent of all children. My child and your child could be part of that number! There is no way of sugarcoating this; as a parent, I am afraid for my child.

If this is not a national emergency, then what is? Our children are the future, and the future is at stake here!

Leher Sethi is an entrepreneur and















Ex Argentina coach

Sabella no more

Buenos Aires: Former coach Alejandro Sabella, who led the 2014 World Cup runner-up Argentina team, died on Tuesday at a clinic in Buenos Aires suffering from heart dis-

He was 66 years old. The former boss of Estudiantes de La Plata died at the Cardiovascular Institute of Buenos Aires, where he had been admitted on November 25 - the day soccer legend Diego Maradona died — after suffering an arrhythmia.

The medical center said in a statement that Sabella was the victim of "secondary dilated heart disease and long-standing cardiotoxicity.

Ben Stokes' father

passes away at 65

Christchurch: England allrounder Ben Stokes lost his father Ged, who died here on Tuesday after a year-long battle with brain cancer. He was 65.

Stokes is currently with the England team in South Africa for the limited over series. He had played all three T20Is and was rested for ODIs, which was cancelled on Monday after multiple cases of Covid-19 were detected in the bio-bubble. Ged, a former rugby player and coach, had been suffering from

brain cancer for some time and Stokes was there in Christchurch for more than a month taking care of his ailing

father. Stokes' famous "bent middle finger" gesture during the 2019 South Africa series was a tribute to his father's amputated finger. Ged had to remove a part of his finger in order to continue playing.

— PTI

Former runner

Earnest is dead

Hyderabad: Former middle distance runner and secretary of Ranga District Athletics Association B. Earnest Das passed away on Monday night. He was 81.

Das participated in the Indo-German Athletics Test held in Hyderabad in 1965. An international athletics official, he officiated in the 1982 Asian Games in New Delhi, 2002 Asian Grand Prix in Hyderabad and the 2003

Afro-Asian Games in Hyderabad. He also served as manager of the South Central Railway Athletics team for 30

His son B. E. Stanley Jones is Athletics Federation of India's Technical Committee chairman.

Association general secretary K. Sarangapani and Hyderabad **District Athletics Association** president Prof. Rajesh Kumar mourned the demise of Das and offered condolences to the family members.

Chess tourney

at the weekend

Hyderabad: The Brilliant Chess Academy is conducting the 175th Brilliant Trophy Open chess tournament online on Saturday and Sunday. A total of ₹10,000 will be given to Top 20 places in the Open category. Special prizes will also be given to top two places in the Under 7, 9, 11, 13, 15 age groups for boys and girls separately. For further details contact J. Subrahmanyam on 9247399717.

Live on TV

Big Bash League: Hobart Hurricanes vs Sydney Sixers from 1.45 pm on Sony Six

Lanka Premier League: Jaffna vs Colombo from 3 pm; Galle vs Kandy from 7.30 pm on Sony Six

FOOTBALL

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

Europa League: CSKA Sofia vs Roma from 11.25 pm on Sony Ten 3; Dundalk vs Arsenal from 11.25 pm on Sony Ten 2; Napoli vs Real Sociedad from 11.25 pm on Sony Ten 1; Sparta Prague vs AC Milan from 1.30 am (Friday) on Sony Ten 1; Tottenham Hotspur vs Antwerp from 1.30 am (Friday) on Sony Ten 2; Wolfsberg vs Feyenoord from 1.30 am (Friday) on Sony Six; Leicester City vs AEK Athens from 1.30 am (Friday) on Sony Ten 3

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Ronaldo bests Messi

Cristiano nets brace as Juve crush Barcelona 3-0

Barcelona, Dec. 9: Cristiano Ronaldo struck twice from the penalty spot to win his battle with rival Lionel Messi and guide Juventus to a 3-0 win over Barcelona on Tuesday, earning the Italians top spot in Champions League Group

G.
The former Real Madrid striker and his Argentina counterpart traded Ballon d'Or wins for a decade between 2008-2017 and were figureheads for the duelling Spanish giants, but there was only one winner at the Camp Nou as they met for the first time since Ronaldo's departure for Juve in 2018.

Juventus lost 2-0 at home against Barcelona in October without Ronaldo, sidelined with Covid-19, but were greatly improved and earned the first Champions League away win against Barcelona since Bayern Munich triumphed in 2013.

Both sides, tied on 15 points, were assured of qualification before kickoff, but Juve's three-goal victory handed them a head-to-head superior

record. Ronald Koeman, reeling from Barcelona's 2-1 defeat by promoted min-nows Cadiz on Saturday in La Liga, reacted by making four changes but the hosts started badly.

It only took 13 minutes for Ronaldo to break the deadlock, slotting home from the penalty spot after the referee deemed Ronald Araujo's challenge on him a foul. Juve's did not relent and their pressure led to a second goal, Weston McKennie volleyhome Juan Cuadrado's sweetly clipped cross in the 20th

THE RESULTS

Juventus (Ronaldo 13-pen, 52pen, McKennie 20) Barcelona

RB Leipzig (Angelino 2, Haidara 13, Kluivert 69) Manchester United 2 (Fernandes 80-pen, Pogba 82)

Chelsea Jorginno 28-pen) Krasnodar (Cabella 24)

Borussia Dortmund 1 (Piszczek 68, Witsel **Zenit Saint Petersburg** (Driussi 16)



Cristiano Ronaldo (right) of Juventus lines up a shot to score his team's third goal against Barcelona during their UEFA Champions League Group 'G' football match at the Camp Nou stadium in Barcelona on Tuesday.

Racist slur halts PSG game

Paris, Dec. 9: Manchester United were knocked out of the Champions League after a 3-2 defeat by RB Leipzig Tuesday, while Paris Saint-Germain's qualification for the last 16 was overshadowed by a racism row involving a match official that caused their game against Istanbul Basaksehir to be suspend-

ed for 24 hours.

Requiring just a point to advance, Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's side fell behind to an Angelino goal inside two minutes in Germany. Amadou Haidara soon added a second and United and were trailing 3-0 heading into the final quarter after a Justin Kluivert strike.

Bruno Fernandes's penalty and a deflected Paul Pogba header gave United a lifeline but Leipzig, who reached the semifinals last term, held 'H' on 12 points.

Leipzig must wait until Wednesday to find out whether they finish first or second in the section, after the contest between last season's runners-up PSG and Turkish champions Basaksehir was interrupted with the score 0-0 in the 14th minute.



amid allegations of racism by one of the match officials during the UEFA Champions League Group 'H' football match against Istanbul Basaksehir at the Parc des Princes stadium in Paris on Tuesday.

Players walked off in Paris amid allegations of racism by the fourth official, in an unprecedented incident in European football's elite club competi-

tion. The row erupted after Basaksehir assistant coach Pierre Webo, the former Cameroon international, was shown a red card during a fierce row on the touchline with staff from the Turkish club appearing to accuse the

official of using a racist Television microphones picked up a furious Webo

repeatedly asking why a racist term had been used to describe him.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said he "strongly" condemned the incident, while UEFA announced it would open "thorough investigation"

Mumbai hammer Chennaiyin 2-1

Bambolim, Dec. 9: Mumbai City FC rallied to eke out a 2-1 win over Chennaiyin and record their fourth victory on the trot in the Indian Super League here on Wednesday.

Adam Le Fondre smashed in a 75th-minute winner after Hernan Santana (45th) had cancelled Jakub Sylvestr's first goal.

The Sergio Lobera's team maintained the top spot in the ISL table.

Chennaiyin FC had a but his powerful drive perfect start and would from inside the box, was

have been ahead in the second minute if it was straight at keeper Vishal Kaith. The rebound fell to not for Sylvestr missing a sitter. Rafael Crivellaro delivered a perfect corner which was flicked in by Enes Sipovic and found

Sylvestr, who missed the numerous Mumbai were not at their best and took time to settle. But they did have their moments. The home side's best chance came in the 25th minute when Adam Le Fondre son. Chhangte had a clear sight on goal,

Bipin Singh, but he couldn't utilise the opportuni-Chennaiyin were clear-

ly the better side in the opening quarter creating chances Lallianzuala Chhangte, Sipovic and Crivellaro. The Chennaibased side took the lead in the 40th minute. Sylvestr scored probably the easiest goal of the sea-

deserved credit for his initial spadework on the right before he played a low cross from the byline to find Sylvestr, who slotted

Just when it looked like Chennaivin would walk into the breather with a Mumbai's Santana had different plans. Spaniard, who was unmarked at the far post, nodded in a Hugo Boumous' corner to restore parity post which they doubled the lead in the 75th minute through another set-piece. -PTI

KASHMIR INTO SEMIFINALS

Kolkata, Dec. 9: Real Kashmir and United SC secured their second successive wins to seal semi final berths from their respective groups in the 123rd IFA Shield here on

Wednesday. Fresh from a 2-1 win over Peerless SC, the Snow Leopards were caught unawares by the aggressive brand of football by Aryan SC before they finally broke the deadlock with a Mason Robertson strike in the 72nd minute. -PTI

Warner is recovering from a strained adductor muscle that forced him to limp out of Australia's second one-day international against India last month, after a knock of 83. "I feel I have made great progress in a short amount of time and it's best for me four-match series. to stay here in Sydney to It is not yet clear who will continue working on get-

Warner said. "The injury feels a lot bet-ter, but I need to be able to satisfy in my own mind and to my team-mates that it is 100 percent ready for Test match conditions.

ting back to full fitness,'

Sydney, Dec. 9: Australia's star opening batsman David Warner has been

ruled out of the first Test

against India, but will try to return for the block-buster second instalment

on Boxing Day, Cricket

Australia said Wednesday.

"That includes running between the wickets and being agile in the field. Right now I feel I am short being able to play at peak fitness and another 10 days will make a difference," he added

The day-night first Test



will begin in Adelaide on December 17, kicking off a

take Warner's place in Adelaide, but Cameron Green's century this week for Australia 'A' against a strong India 'A' attack – featuring Ravichandran Ashwin, Umesh Yadav and Mohammed Siraj — has

put him in the running.
In contrast, Will Pucovski
and Joe Burns, in line to form Australia's top order, both flopped in the warmup match and Pucovski also had to leave the field with concussion symptoms after a delivery struck his

RAHUL CRUISES INTO TOP 3 IN T20 RANKINGS

Dubai, Dec. 9: India captain Virat Kohli moved up a place to eighth while K. L. Rahul broke into the top three in the latest ICC rankings for T20 batsmen, after their impressive performances in the three-match series against Australia.

Taking the third spot in the chart, Rahul has bagged 816 rating points and is 55 points behind second-placed

Babar Azam in the current standings. England batsman Dawid Malan (915 points) retained the top spot, while Australian limited-overs skipper Aaron Finch slipped to the fourth spot. -PTI

Kohli rues DRS miss in last tie

Sydney, Dec. 9: Captain Virat Kohli wasn't happy that his team lost out on a perfect DRS call just because replay of the delivery bowled to Matthew Wade was shown on giant screen before the permissi-

ble limit of 15 seconds. India lost the third T20 International by 12 runs and one of the reasons could be attributed to the fact that Wade, who could before off T Natarajan at a score of 50, got a lucky reprieve and added 30 more runs

"That lbw was a strange one because we were still discussing whether the ball was going down and within the 15-second time, they showed the replay on the screen. We decided to go for the review but the umpire said they have already shown the replay on the screen," Kohli said. In fact had the review been taken, TV replays showed that the umpire

would have been forced to

reverse his decision.

That Ibw was a strange one because we were still discussing whether the ball was going down and within the 15-second time, they showed the replay on the

— VIRAT KOHLI Indian cricket captain

(Tucker, the umpire) and said: 'what do we do in this situation' and he said 'nothing can be done. It's a mistake from TV'," Kohli narrated the incident.

He said the Indian team management had made its displeasure clear with the authorities, saying a mistake of this magnitude in an international game is unacceptable. "I thought from the management perspective, a message has to be passed that this can't be done at the highest level because in a very impor-tant game, it can be very costly," he said.

Gopi delves into athletes' minds

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, DEC. 9

Badminton guru Pullela Gopichand has stepped up his training by a notch, and has decided to delve into the minds of his trainees. On Wednesday, champion coach launched Dhyana for Sports, an app that measures mental aspects via meditation and helps achieve emotional fitness.

Vouching for its mechanism, Gopi termed the application a 'game changer' and stressed on the importance of mental training. As many as 10 meditation sessions designed, voiced by him-self and inspired from his on-ground training sessions will now be available on the app that tracks

mindfulness. The 10 sessions in the 'Dhyana for Sports' section in the app — Uniting Your Innerself, Forgive, Winner Gratitude, Visualisation, Stillness, Strengthen Discipline, Pre-Workout.

and End of the Day — cater

Post-Workout

sport, you need to be a war rior and possess killer instinct. This is what we talk about in the app — the winning attitude,' chief national coach said. adding, "I am so proud to be associated with it.' Athletics coach N. Ramesh echoed Gopi's

to athletes and assist them

in monitoring and analysing their state of

meditation in order to help

inculcate a champion's

guided sessions will prove

to be fruitful to anyone

wanting to become the best

version of themselves. In

"I am certain that these

mindset.

opinion. "This is a huge olus for track and field athletes, who have verv little time to recover between the heats and the finals, when strength comes into play," he said. "Physical abilities can

make you a national champion but if you want to excel on the international stage and stay there, mental ability is a must," the Dronacharva awardee added.

Parthiv announces his retirement

Parthiv Patel, one of the youngest to have played Test cricket for India at the age of 17, on Wednesday announced his retirement from all forms of the game, three month's short of his 36th

birthday. The baby-faced Parthiv, who made his Test debut under Sourav Ganguly, aged 17 years and 153 days, played 65 international games for the country, which included 25 Tests, 38 ODIs and two T20

Internationals. "Today, I announce retirement from all forms of cricket and as I bring down curtains on this 18 he was sent to England after having played for India A in South Africa year-old cricketing jour-

gratitude for many," the 35-year-old Parthiv said in a statement on his official twitter and instagram account

target.

The left-handed batsman scored nearly 1700 runs (1696) across formats with 934 runs (6 half centuries) coming in the longest for-

In ODIs, he scored 736 runs with four half-centuries and a highest score of 95. He effected 72 dismissals in Tests, which include 62 catches and 10 stumpings Parthiv burst onto the

scene in early 2002, when



erous amount of confi-

dence and faith in a 17-

year-old boy to play for

India. I have enormous gratitude towards them

for guiding me and hand

tive years of my young career," Parthiv further stated.

In fact, he played his first Ranji Trophy after he was dropped from the India squad in 2004 due to below-par glovework on tours of Australia and Pakistan.

He was thankful to all his captains and "especially Dada", referring to BCCI president Sourav Ganguly

Parthiv Patel called his first Test captain Sourav Ganguly a "leader in true sense" along with the legendary Anil Kumble and said their influence in his life went beyond the cricketing arena.

Sourav Ganguly as a leader in true sense with his man management skills. Sourav and Anil Kumble were great leaders and they made me the kind of person I am,' Parthiv said. "I still have the Test cap

with my name wrongly printed 'Partiv' that Dada gave me. The victories at Headingley (2002) and Adelaide (2003-04) and the half-century opening the innings at Rawalpindi will be my favourite mem-

ories. He said that retirement was on his mind for the last one year and that the timing couldn't have been

