



The Congress party is not part of the 'Gupkar Alliance' or the People's Association for Gupkar Declaration

RANDEEP SINGH SURJEWALA
CONGRESS CHIEF SPOKESPERSON

Kejriwal announces slew of measures to combat Covid

The Delhi govt's measures include increase in fine to Rs 2,000 for not wearing masks, reservation of 80 pc ICU beds in pvt hospitals, doubling of testing centres and deferment of non-emergency surgeries

SNS & PTI

NEW DELHI, 19 NOVEMBER

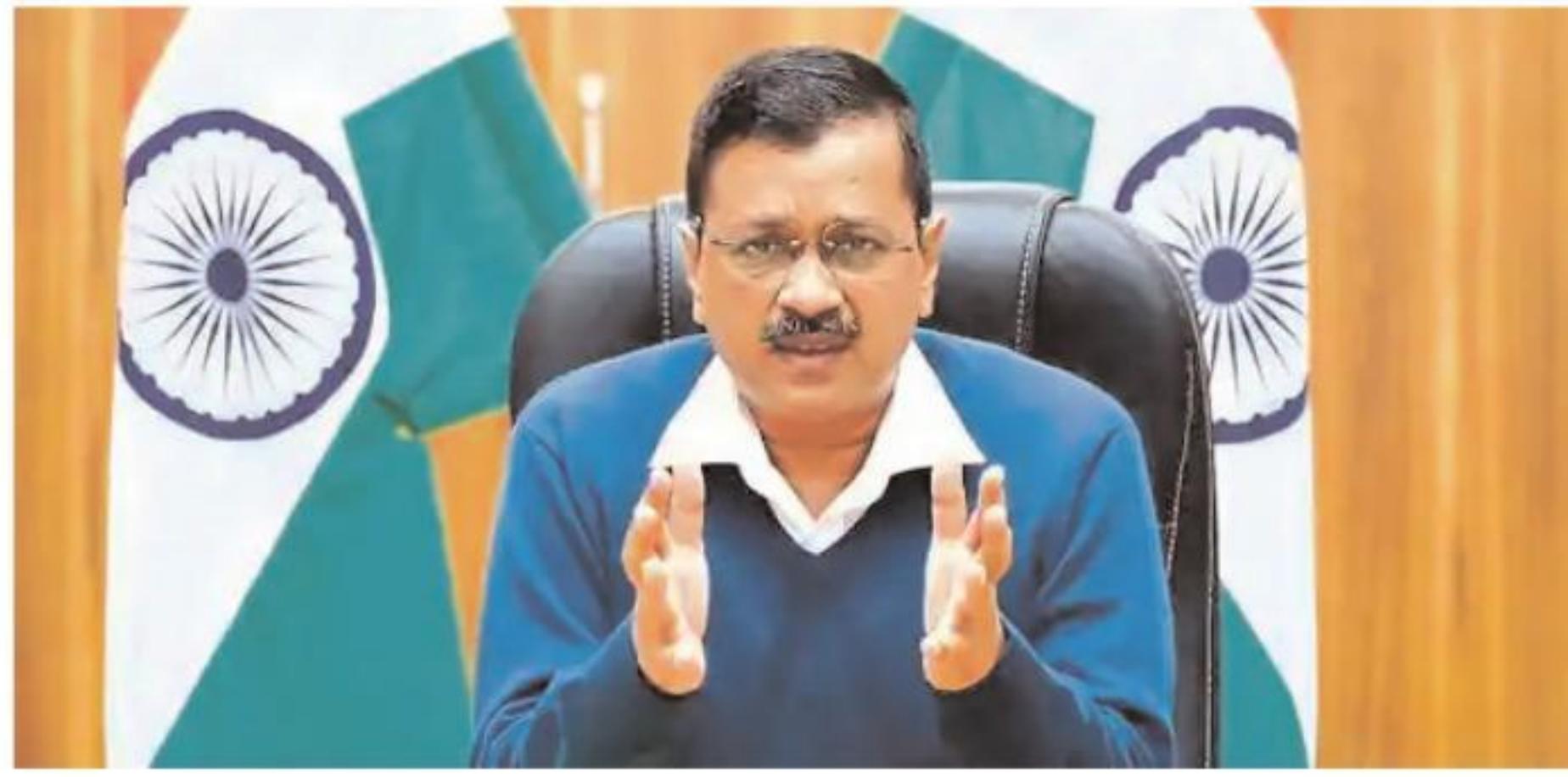
Battling the surge in coronavirus cases in Delhi, the AAP government today announced sweeping measures including a steep Rs 2,000 fine for not wearing masks, reservation of 80 per cent ICU beds in private hospitals, doubling testing centres in every district and postponement of non-critical surgeries at health facilities.

Private hospitals have also been directed to increase the percentage of non-ICU Covid-19 beds from 50 per cent to 60 per cent. The government will increase the number of RT-PCR test to 27,000 a day in the national capital and MBBS students and interns will be engaged to tackle the Covid situation.

Addressing an online media briefing, chief minister Arvind Kejriwal said the fine for not wearing masks in Delhi has been raised from Rs 500 to Rs 2,000. The hard line by the AAP government comes days after Kejriwal repeatedly appealed to Delhiites to wear masks amid a spike in Covid cases.

Today, the CM announced a slew of measures after meeting Lt Governor Anil Baijal and apprising him about the decisions taken by his government. He also appealed to political, social and religious organisations to distribute masks among people, pointing out that masks reduce the chances of coronavirus infection substantially.

The arrangements are being made for over 1,400 ICU beds, including 663 in Delhi government hospitals and 750 at a central government facility, Kejriwal said, adding that around 7,500 normal and 446 ICU beds



are currently available for Covid patients in Delhi.

"From today we have implemented the decision to reserve 80 per cent ICU beds in all private hospitals for Covid patients.

It will increase ICU bed availability by 300-400 for coronavirus patients in Delhi hospitals," the CM said.

The percentage of normal, non-ICU beds reserved in private hospitals for corona patients, are being increased from 50 per cent to 60 per cent till the peak of the pandemic is there, he said.

The CM also said that at today's all-party meeting all political parties agreed that non-emergency surgeries in hospitals be stalled or postponed for a few days in the wake

of a surge in coronavirus cases in the city. There was a consensus that politics should be kept aside during these times of the pandemic. Kejriwal appealed to the people of Delhi to perform Chhath Puja inside their homes so that they are not exposed to the risk of getting infected with Covid.

He said, "If around 200 people enter a water body together everyone will get infected even if one of them is a coronavirus patient. Experts say that coronavirus will be transmitted through the water that is bound to carry the deadly virus infection. We have only disallowed

fresh cases reported, while 131 new fatalities, the highest single-day death count till date, took the toll to 7,943.

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Chhath Puja in a public water body. Let's hold Chhath Puja by staying indoors."

The CM also said, "The all-party meeting was held to deliberate on the situation related to the spike in Covid cases in Delhi again. Some good suggestions were received from different parties. We will work on implementing their suggestions."

He said the Delhi government has taken several decisions to increase the number of ICU beds in the city. "As I said yesterday, we will increase around 663 beds in Delhi government hospitals in the next few days, and the central government has assured us an additional 750 beds in its hospitals. This means that we will have around 1,413 additional ICU beds in the next few days in Delhi."

Kejriwal appreciated the hard work done by doctors and healthcare workers for managing the Covid situation

in Delhi. Such Covid management has not been witnessed in any big city anywhere in the world, he claimed. There are no patients lying in hospital corridors or on roads in Delhi as was witnessed in a city like New York, he said.

According to Kejriwal, he received assurance of cooperation from various political parties at the all-party meeting on Delhi's Covid situation. He said that he urged them to distribute face masks to save people from the infection.

After the meeting, AAP MLA Saurabh Bharadwaj said the Delhi government will increase the number of RTPCR tests conducted daily from around 18,000 to 27,000 and that the CM will also meet market associations if any decision is taken on shutting markets.

Bharadwaj said he suggested that market associations should be given a chance to pre-

sent their views and take precautionary measures to check the spread of the virus.

Meanwhile, the Delhi government directed all district magistrates across the national capital to take steps to double the number of testing centres in their respective districts immediately.

The order issued by the Delhi health department also said that the human resource

required for the new testing centres "may be hired from open market, if required".

The city authorities have allowed all coronavirus facilities of the government here to engage MBBS students in fourth and fifth years, interns and others to assist doctors on duty at a fixed honorarium.

The number of available ICU beds equipped with ventilators is shrinking fast at several hospitals here, with zero vacancy at nearly 60 facilities.

According to the online Corona dashboard of the Delhi government at 12:30 pm on Thursday, only 131 Covid ICU beds were available out of 1,362 such beds at various facilities here.

There was no vacancy at Rajiv Gandhi Super Speciality Hospital (RGSSH), Max hospital's facilities at Saket, Patparganj and Shalimar Bagh, Batra hospital, Fortis hospital's facilities at Shalimar Bagh and Vasant Kunj and Fortis Escorts Heart Institute, and Venkateshwara Hospital in Dwarika, among others.

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I also suggested that the govt should boost testing and health facilities in view of surge in Covid cases, that it has failed to do so far

ADESH GUPTA
DELHI BJP PRESIDENT

The Statesman
NEW DELHI, FRIDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2020

03

HC raps Delhi govt over grim Covid-19 situation

Delhi HC asks AAP govt why it did not 'wake up' when the Covid cases started spiralling in the city and whether it could explain this to those who lost their loved ones during the last 18 days

PTI
NEW DELHI, 19 NOVEMBER

The Delhi High Court on Thursday asked the AAP government if it could explain to those who had lost their near and dear ones to COVID-19 in the last 18 days why the administration did not take steps when cases were spiralling in the national capital.

The high court, which also asked the government to look at the situation with a "magnifying glass", observed that it was "disheartening" to see that the number of daily deaths due to the virus has increased to 131 and fresh COVID cases have risen to 7,486.

Pulling up the Delhi government, a bench of Justices Hima Kohli and Subramonium Prasad asked why it waited till the court intervened to take steps such as reducing the number of people attending weddings to 50 to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

"You (Delhi government) saw from November 1 which way the wind was blowing. But you turn turtle now because we asked you some questions. The bell should have rung loud and clear when the numbers were spiralling. Why did you not wake up when you saw the situation was deteriorating? 'Why did we have to shake you out of your slumber on November 11? What did you do from November 1 till November 11? Why did you wait 18 days (till November 18) to take a decision. Do you know how many lives were lost during this period? Can you explain it to those who lost their near and dear ones," the bench asked.

It also noted that Delhi government should have been alive to the fact that RAT is not effective," it said. RT/PCR, short for Reverse



cases, to the press appear to be contrary to the submissions made in court.

Transcription Polymerase Chain Reaction, is a laboratory technique widely used in the diagnosis of genetic diseases and to measure gene expression in research.

The bench directed the Delhi government to file a status report, before the next date of hearing on November 26, indicating the funeral/burial arrangements, increase of ICU beds in its hospitals by an additional number of 663 and number of care homes for accommodating those who cannot home quarantine themselves.

On implementation of social distancing norms, prevention of spitting and wearing of masks, the court was not satisfied with the monitoring being done by the Delhi government in some districts where COVID-19 numbers were high. The bench also said the fines being imposed -- Rs 500 for first violation and Rs 1,000 for every subsequent violation -- did not appear to be a deterrent.

It said there appeared to be substantial disparity in monitoring and imposition of fines in certain districts as compared to others.

"What kind of monitoring and marshalling are you doing? Look at the situation seriously with a magnifying glass. You have crossed cities like New York and Sao Paolo," the court said.

The high court was hearing

a PIL by advocate Rakesh Malhotra seeking increase in the COVID-19 testing numbers in the national capital and getting speedy results.

The court on November 11 had pulled up the Delhi government for relaxing norms for public movement and gatherings even as COVID-19 cases were increasing with no household "left untouched", and sought to know if it had any policy or strategy in place to deal with the "alarming" situation.

It had directed the Delhi government to file a status report explaining steps taken by it in the last two weeks, when the COVID-19 cases have risen alarmingly, to contain the spread of the infection.

In its latest status report filed on Wednesday, the Delhi government has said that it was not allowing all the activities, like reopening of schools, higher educational institutions and swimming pools, that have been permitted by the Central government.

It also told the court that it banned bursting of firecrackers during Diwali with the view to prevent increase in air pollution and crowding of people and also prohibited celebration of Chhath Puja in public places, open grounds, river banks and temples.

The Delhi government also told the court that it has approached the Centre seeking its sanction for closing certain markets in the city during certain days or hours of a week.

It told the court that it was alive to the situation and was making every effort to arrest the spread of COVID-19.

However, the bench said that whatever the Delhi government was doing was not enough in the prevailing situation.

PICTURE POSTCARD



A view of Mahasu Peak after the first snowfall this winter season, at Kufri near Shimla early this week.

UHF scholar wins FAI award

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 19 NOVEMBER

Jagriti Thakur (in photo), a research scholar of Dr YS Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry (UHF), Nauni, has been conferred with the Fertilizer Association of India (FAI) Golden Jubilee Award for Outstanding Doctoral Research in fertiliser use.

The award carries a cash prize of Rs one lakh, a gold medal and a citation.

Jagriti had completed her PhD from UHF's Department of Soil Science and Water Management (SSWM) and was presently working as Senior Research Fellow at the university.

Jagriti had worked on

HP varsity teacher bags RULA Asia award



Himachal Pradesh University's International Centre For Distance Education And Open Learning (ICDEOL) Assistant Professor Chaman Lal Banga (in photo) has been conferred with Research Under Literal Access (RULA) Award under Asia Education Awards.

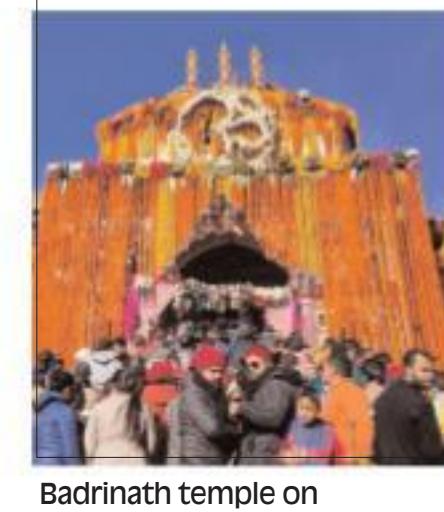
Banga has won the prestigious award title 'Outstanding Asian Faculty Award' for outstanding work in the field of Education, society and cultural aspect.

RULA is an international Award given for scientific innovation and betterment excellence.

SNS

Badrinath temple shuts for winter break

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
DEHRADUN, 19 NOVEMBER



Badrinath temple on Thursday.

tourism industry was hit hard by the Covid-19 pandemic. The arrival of tourists increased during Dussehra. Badrinath attracted over 1.45 Lakh pilgrims, 1.34 Lakh devotees came to Kedarnath, 23,837 visited Gangotri and 7,731 other came to Yamunotri this year.

developing efficient irrigation and fertigation schedules for adoption in high-density apple orchards raised on clonal rootstocks in the state.

She had established judicious irrigation and fertigation schedules for efficient use of fertilizers and scarce irrigation water through drip fertigation under the World Bank-funded Himachal Pradesh Horticulture Development Project's sub-component 'Improving Nutrient and Water Productivity for Sustainability and Profitability in Fruit Production in HP'. Jagriti will be presented with the award at the FAI Annual Seminar at New Delhi on 7th December 2020 and she had credited her parents, UHF faculty for guidance and support to achieve the feat.




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-  Wash your hands with soap frequently & use hand sanitiser
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-  Use Aarogya Setu App

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Email: tourismmin-hp@nic.in ; Website : www.himachaltourism.gov.in
For accommodation and packages, visit : www.hptdc.in

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himachaltourismofficial

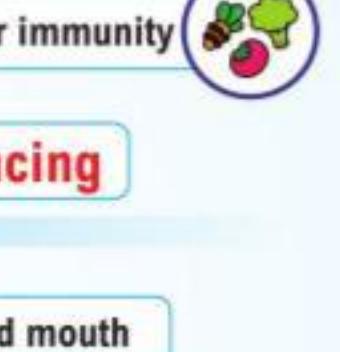
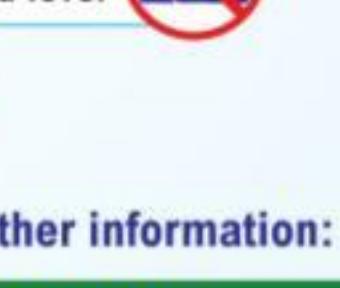


EAST DELHI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION



"JAB TAK DAWAI NAHI TAB TAK DHILAI NAHI"

Follow these simple steps to fight against Covid-19

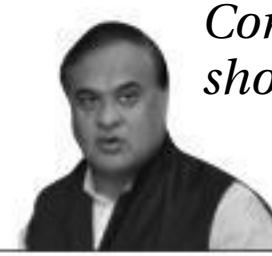
 <p>Wash hands with soap and water frequently or use alcohol based sanitizer</p>	 <p>Always wear mask in public</p>	 <p>Eat healthy to boost your immunity</p>
 <p>Maintain Social Distancing</p>	 <p>Don't Touch your eyes, nose and mouth</p>	 <p>Don't Spit in public</p>
 <p>Don't Shake Hands</p>	 <p>Don't have a close contact with anyone if you're experiencing cough and fever</p>	 <p>Don't Go out unnecessarily</p>

If you have any symptom and for further information:

Please call State helpline number 011-22307145 or
Ministry of Health & Family Welfare's 24X7 helpline number 011-23978046 or
Covid Helpline number 1075

Issued by the Directorate of Press & Information

RO No: D-06/DP/East/2020-21



Congress' alliance with Gupkar gang in J&K and AIUDF in Assam shows the party has a dubious and suspicious agenda.

ASSAM MINISTER HIMANTA BISWA SARMA

SAYING CONGRESS IS PLAYING A 'DANGEROUS' SEPARATIST POLITICS IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

THUMBNAILS



Karnataka CM BS Yediyurappa during the inauguration of 'Bengaluru Tech Summit 2020,' in Bengaluru by PM Narendra Modi through video-conferencing on Thursday.

IANS

3 criminals booked under NSA: District police booked criminals Tahir, Shaib and Furkan under the National Security Act for their involvement in various cases under the Prevention of Cow Slaughter Act and the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act in Meerut. The three are in jail. PTI

Manji sworn in as Bihar's pro-tem Speaker: Former Bihar CM Jitan Ram Manji was on Thursday sworn in as the pro-tem Speaker of the state Assembly, said a communication issued by the Raj Bhavan. PTI

Flyover case: The VACB on Thursday sought the constitution of a medical board to assess the health of former minister V K Ebrahim Kunju arrested by it in connection with alleged corruption in the flyover construction in Kochi during the previous UDF rule. PTI

In voice clip, Swapna claims ED pressure

Jail DGP orders probe into source of audio clip against CM



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, 19 NOVEMBER

'Cong, BJP targeting LDF govt'

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 19 NOVEMBER

Congress and BJP leaders in Kerala are "coordinating" with each other to target the CPI-(M)-led LDF government and CM Vijayan on the gold smuggling case, CPI (M) mouthpiece *People's Democracy* said today.

In an editorial, the journal said four Central agencies - the NIA, Customs, ED and the CBI, were deployed to investigate the smuggling case, and they were using it "as a springboard to extend their enquiries into various government projects

cial transactions. She further alleged that the probe agency did not allow her to read through her statements.

In the clip, the voice also claims that if statement was given against the chief minister, she would be made an approver in the case. The voice clip was released on an online Malayalam portal on Wednesday.

Responding to the development, KPCC president Mullaappally Ramachandran said the probe being conducted by the jail department is only a farce, a thorough probe is necessary to know as to who were behind the recording of the audio in the jail. BJP state

and schemes."

As the Assembly elections drew closer, Congress and BJP moved explicitly to widen the ambit of their attack on the government and conducted agitations against the government, utilizing the gold smuggling case, the editorial said.

The attacks on the developmental plans of the LDF government have widened with the report of the Comptroller and Auditor General on the Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board, the party write-up said.

president K Surendran alleged that Vijayan had used the power of the state to discredit investigations by the ED. He said the government has used prison authorities to record Swapna's statement to hit back at the Central agencies pursuing multiple leads in the gold smuggling and money laundering cases.

Minister of state for external affairs, VMurali Deeban said he doubts whether this was planned by CM Pinarayi Vijayan. "Swapna Suresh is in jail and jails are under the home department of the state which is helmed by the CM. The matter must be investigated," he said.

DMK alienated TN by not allowing Hindi learning: BJP

PTI
CHENNAI, 19 NOVEMBER

The DMK alienated Tamil Nadu by not allowing learning of Hindi, BJP's national women's wing chief Vanathi Srinivasan alleged on Thursday and said legendary Tamil women would be popularised in north India by her party.

After assuming office as the president of the saffron party's Mahila Morcha in Delhi, she said in a tweet that her is the "only party where an ordinary karyakarta (worker) from a humble background can reach the top most political office out of sheer merit."

Vanathi Srinivasan, who was with the Akhil Bharatiya Vidya Parishad in the 1980's later joined the BJP and had held various positions in the state unit of the party including that of vice-president and general secretary.

In a series of posts on her Twitter handle, in Tamil and English, she alleged it was the DMK which did not allow learning of Hindi in Tamil Nadu and thus alienated the state from the national mainstream.

Vowing to take the "pride of Tamil Nadu's valorous women" to north India in Hindi language, she posted her photograph with her colleagues displaying leaflets that portrayed personalities like Avvaiyar besides Goddess Andal.

WB BJP prez granted bail



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BURDWAN, 19 NOVEMBER

West Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh demanded NIA probe into last night's explosion in Malda where five persons were killed.

Ghosh appeared before the Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court in Burdwan today after the court had issued arrest warrant against him pertaining to a case filed by a policeman in November, 2019 bringing charges of delivering provocative speeches and hatred against Bengal police.

The court granted him bail within minutes of his appearance.

On 4 November, 2019, Ghosh attended a public meeting arranged by the local BJP at Seharabazar in Raina area in Burdwan (East)

where he had delivered the alleged 'provocative and hate speech' against the police. He'd stated: "To get recruited, the police in Bengal needs to pay bribe. They also need to pay cash for promotion and the booty is shared by the Superintendent of Police, Officer In-Charges of different Police Stations and also the share is dispatched to an address in Kalighat, Kolkata."

A policeman with the Seharabazar Police Investigation centre had lodged a complaint against Ghosh, bringing charges that his 'irresponsible' remarks has inflicted hatred against the police and the dignity of the policemen were hurt.

A case under Sections [153, 504, 505 (1)] of the IPC for wantonly giving provocation with intent to cause riot, intentionally causing insult and intent to incite against Ghosh was initiated.

Uttal Samanta - the Investigating Officer of Burdwan (East) police submitted charge-sheet against Ghosh on 28 last February and on 13 November the CJM court issued arrest warrant against him.

Today, Ghosh arrived the Court compound accompanied by BJP's district leaders and cadres mounted on motorbikes.

Later, he said: "What I had said was not intended to malign the police but to expose the corrupt system. In one year the plight of the policemen has deteriorated further and they are asked to sign papers though their Dearness Allowance remains due."

Pandemic poses challenges for next year's Gangasagar Mela

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 19 NOVEMBER

The Gangasagar Mela, which is the second largest congregation of people after the Kumbha Mela, will go online due to the Covid pandemic like Durga Puja and Kali Puja.

The state government has come up with e-darshan App wherein devotees will be able to experience a 'virtual tour' of Kapilmuni's temple from their homes. The events at the fair will be live-streamed via this App.

A decision in this regard was taken at a meeting to take stock of the mela preparations in Nabanna today. Chaired by state chief secretary Alapan Bandopadhyay, senior officials of many departments like rural development, power, urban development, fire services were present at the meeting. Among the Covid management initiatives that have been planned this time



include setting up medical camps at railway stations, testing facilities, safe homes, quarantine centres and isolation wards.

In view of the pandemic, there will be an increase in the number of buses within Sagar Island and Outram Ghat to Kadwip/Namkhana.

Two air ambulances and three water ambulances would be pressed to service this

time to help critically ill persons to reach the nearest medical facilities from the Gangasagar Mela.

Like in previous years, adequate number of CCTVs, drones and quick response teams would be deployed for monitoring the movement of pilgrims.

Every year hundreds of devotees take a holy dip at the confluence of river Ganga at the annual Gangasagar Mela in

Sagar Island on Makar Sankranti. However, conducting the fair by maintaining the Covid protocols is a tough challenge for the state administration this year.

"Unlike other places of pilgrimage, Gangasagar is not directly connected by rail or road. As a result, it often becomes difficult to ferry a large number of pilgrims to the Sagar Island," said an official.

Virtual meet held to export J&K saffron to US

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, 19 NOVEMBER

In a bid to promote Kashmir saffron, the New York-based Consulate General of India in association with Jammu & Kashmir Trade Promotion Organisation (JKTPO) and US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) on Thursday organised a virtual conference to promote export of Saffron.

The event was aimed to increase the export of this globally renowned spice in the US. The virtual promotion was attended by Manoj Kumar

Dwivedi, Commissioner & Secretary to the Government, Industries & Commerce Department, Randhir Jaiswal, Consul General of India (CGI), New York, Devi Prasad Misra, Consul (Trade), Anki-

ta Kar, Managing Director, J&K Trade Promotion Organization, Celebrity Chef Vikas Khanna, Dr. Nasheem Ashraf, Sr. Scientist, CSIR IIM, and food columnist Ramin Ganeshram and senior officials from J&K Government and CGI, New York along with important members of Saffron Exporting community of J&K and American Importers.

Manoj Dwivedi said, "JK is the largest producer of saffron in the world."

As we embark on to explore the potential markets, events like these will help us to reach

potential buyers in every country and will increase the brand value of our products in the international market.

"We are thankful to Government of Jammu & Kashmir for this initiative. We hope that both the markets will be mutually benefitted by this association. We want to get more of Indian Saffron to the US."

India is one of the leading producers of Saffron and we look forward to add value to trade and the production line," said Randhir Jaiswal, Consul General of India (CGI), New York.

'Sasikala's early release from jail will have no impact on AIADMK'

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHENNAI, 19 NOVEMBER

Chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami on Thursday said V K Sasikala's release from Parappana Agrahara Jail in Bengaluru would not have any impact on AIADMK.

His comment comes as Sasikala's lawyers have started the process of depositing a fine of Rs 10 crore on her behalf in the court, to facilitate her early release from prison.

Sasikala, closest aid of late AIADMK chief minister Jayalalithaa, has been serving her four-year sentence in prison since February 2017 after she was convicted in the Disproportionate Assets case.

Responding to a question on whether Sasikala's early release will have any impact on AIADMK, the CM said: "You tell us what changes will happen. As far as we are concerned, no changes will happen."

According to an RTI reply provided to Bengaluru-based lawyer and activist Narasimha Murthy, Sasikala is likely to be released from the prison in January 2021 if she paid a fine of Rs 10 crore. Otherwise, her release date could be pushed to February 2022.

Most political observers dismiss Sasikala as a political force which could topple the hold Edappadi has over the party. But the fact is Sasikala had chosen Palaniswami to take over as CM when the AIADMK split into two factions after Jayalalithaa's demise.

With the wealth and power she is still holding, Sasikala could spell a doom for Edappadi and team, say some close confidants and political analysts.

TENDER

NORTHERN RAILWAY CORRIGENDUM

Sub: Corrigendum to the NIT No. 230-Elect-RSO-08-HK for the work of "Comprehensive Housekeeping and other allied works at HNZM Old & New Running Room for the period of two years". Following changes in the subject NIT may kindly read and follow the future reference as below:

Description: Approx. cost of work as per Tender form-4 Rate sheet of section-6, page No. 58 of 96 & Schedule of items, Quantities and rates Section-7, page No. 60 of 96 of Tender document.

All other terms and conditions are remaining same; a copy of this notice is also uploaded on IREPS website for ready reference.

Tender Notice No.: 230-Elect-RSO-08-HK Dated : 19.11.2020

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Office of the Executive Engineer-M-IV
Shahdara South, School Block, Shakar Pur, Delhi - 110092

NIT No.: EDMC/E-E-(M)-IV/SH/S(T)/C/2020-21/08 Dated : 17.11.2020

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

For online tendering at percentage rate tenders are invited for the execution of the following works by the EDMC from approved and eligible contractor and will be received as per time table.

Last date of Download tender

: 27.11.2020 at 12:00 Hours

Last date of Bid Preparation

: 27.11.2020 at 14:00 Hours

Last date for close of Bid

: 27.11.2020 at 16:00 Hours to

Date of Re-encryption of Online

: 27.11.2020 at 16:00 Hours to

Opening of Financial Bid

: 01.12.2020 at 14:00 Hours

S. No. **Name** **Head of Account** **Tender Amount** **Earnest Money** **Cost of Tender** **Tender No.**

1. Construction of rooms and toilet block in Malaria Office of ward No. 15-E, Shakarpur in AC-58, Shahdara (South) Zone.

Xl-III-II Rs. 58,22,601/- Rs. 1,16,450/- Rs. 1000/- 319368

2. Improvement and up gradation of Dr. SPM Chest Hospital [--] by pdg. 0 from Patparganj work by pdg. Mud phaska, Kota Stone flooring on newly constructed ramp while washing and painting in OPD Block, General Block, Kitchen Block, Providing and fixing door windows for mosquito, damaged boundary wall along Govt. School in Patparganj Ward No. 12-E.

Xl-IX-II Rs. 59,07,468/- Rs. 1,18,150/- Rs. 1000/- 319369

Time of Completion : 04 Months, **Rate Hold good for :** 05 Months

The demand Draft for Tender cost & Earnest Money will be deposit in the office of EE-M-IV Shahdara (South) Zone, School Block, Shakarpur, Delhi-110092. Detailed NIT can be seen from the following website or from the office of the undersigned. <http://engineering.mcdtenders.com>, (WAP & SMS enabled tenders portal).

RO NO - 64/DPI/EAST/2020-21

Executive Engineer-M-IV

EDMC's Citizens Helpline No. 155303

EAST DELHI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION (ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT)

Office of the Executive Engineer-M-IV

Shahdara South, School Block, Shakar Pur, Delhi - 110092

NIT No.: EDMC/E-E-(M)-IV/SH/S(T)/C/2020-21/08 Dated :



Removal of Art 370 has demolished the speed breaker of redundant laws which had obstructed the development process in Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

WHILE ADDRESSING AN ELECTION RALLY FOR DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT POLLS IN KASHMIR'S KUPWARA DISTRICT

UNION MINISTER MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI

The Statesman
NEW DELHI, FRIDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2020

05

THUMBNAILS



Actor Sapna Choudhary during the launch of third season of AECL in New Delhi on Thursday.

'Sena's saffron flag needs purification': The Shiv Sena's saffron flag needs "purification" as the party has left the agenda of Hindu-dharma and joined hands with the NCP and the Congress, said Maharashtra BJP leader Ashish Shelar on Thursday. Shelar's remarks came in the backdrop of Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut's reported critical comments on the flag of the BJP, a former ally of the Uddhav Thackeray-led party which joined hands with the NCP and the Congress to form the Maha Vikas Aghadi government in November last year. PTI

Cong leadership needs to clear stand on Gupkar alliance: Yogi

Alleges Congress was playing with country's sovereignty & security; accuses it of 'dual character'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LUCKNOW, 19 NOVEMBER



party in the dock," Adityanath told news persons here.

The People's Association for Gupkar Declaration, a seven-party alliance in Jammu and Kashmir, has been pressing for restoration of J&K's special status and statehood. It comprises the National Conference (NC), PDP, CPI(M), CPI, People's Conference, Awami National Conference and the People's Movement.

"The senior leadership of the Congress party needs to clear its stand on the Gupkar declaration as its double standards will not only harm the nation's security and sovereignty but also put the entire

party in the dock," Adityanath asserted that it was not a part of the alliance and was contesting the district development council elec-

tions in the Union Territory to "expose" the BJP through democratic means.

Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala issued a statement saying the party was against any foreign intervention in the internal affairs of India, including in Jammu and Kashmir. "The Congress party is not part of the 'Gupkar Alliance' or the 'People's Association for Gupkar Declaration,'" he said.

Adityanath, however, said the presence of Congress leaders at meetings held in Jammu and Kashmir on the Gupkar alliance was a clear indication that the party's senior leaders

said something in Delhi and did something else in Jammu and Kashmir.

He said the Congress has shown a "dubious" and "dual character" on the Gupkar alliance and owed an explanation to the country.

"Congress Ka Haath, Alga-vad ke Saath (Congress is standing with separatist forces)," the UP chief minister said. In an apparent reference to a remark by NC chief Farooq Abdullah, he said, "Time and again these people can be seen inviting China for help," adding it was surprising that the Congress was so-called.

"(Congress) ruled the country for 70 years and did nothing for the development of J&K and now, it is trying to hinder the efforts that we (BJP) started," Adityanath said.

He alleged that the Congress was playing with the sovereignty and security of the country. Congress is the same party whose leaders P Chidambaram and Ghulam Nabi Azad spoke openly against abrogation of Article 370 and supported the cause of separatism and terrorist ideology, the chief minister claimed.

It is for the first time since the abrogation of Article 370 that development works are being initiated in the state through the local bodies, he said, adding the Gupkar alliance is a result of the fury of local political leaders who know that if there is development, people will become aware and raise their voices for their rights, and so, an "unholy" alliance came into being.

"We are trying to connect the people of J&K with development through local body elections, and the separatists are making all efforts to sabotage the process. They do not want the people of J&K to get associated with the process (of elections) and participate in development, and this alliance will further that cause," Adityanath said.

Modi to inaugurate 3rd global renewable energy meet on 26 Nov

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 19 NOVEMBER

ed by Britain's Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and President COP-26, Denmark's Minister of Energy Utilities and Climate Denmark among others. Both of them are also expected to address the conference.

The third 'RE-Invest 2020' aims to build upon the success of the first two previous conferences held in 2015 and 2018 and provide an international forum for investment promotion in renewable energy. It will also send signals to the global renewable community about India's commitment to the development and scaling up of renewable energy to meet its energy requirements in a sustainable manner, a government note further said.

The event also seeks to provide opportunity to various countries, states, business houses and organizations to showcase their strategies, achievements and expectations. The aim is also to facilitate collaboration and cooperation with key stakeholders in India. Ministerial Delegations from across the world, global industry leaders, and a large number of delegates are expected to participate in the event.

No alliance with AIMIM for GHMC polls: KTR

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD, 19 NOVEMBER

In a bid to counter the BJP's propaganda that TRS was resorting to appeasement politics the ruling party will contest all 150 seats in the upcoming civic polls in Hyderabad foregoing any pre-poll alliance with AIMIM.

The decision came at a time when BJP state president Bandi Sanjay Kumar launched a scathing attack on the TRS for its ties with AIMIM which was tariffed by him as "terrorists". TRS working president KT Rama Rao said: "TRS is contesting in all 150 seats in the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corpor-

ation (GHMC) elections and there is no alliance with AIMIM. Last time we won 5 seats but this time we are confident of winning 10 seats in old city."

However, the decision to contest alone seems to be a strategic one to divide Opposition votes in old city area which is the AIMIM bastion. Incidentally, in the Lok Sabha elections TRS and AIMIM were in alliance but even then the former put up a candidate in the Hyderabad seat against AIMIM candidate Asaduddin Owaisi.

Rao categorically denied that the party was going to handover the mayor's post to AIMIM and said TRS will offer

the mayor post to a woman corporator from the party.

Meanwhile, Sanjay Kumar has lodged a complaint with cyber crime wing of Hyderabad police alleging that the letter to the Election Commission purportedly written by the BJP state president to stop distribution of food relief amount was in fact a forgery and accused the TRS of masterminding it to damage his party's prospects in the GHMC polls.

Wondered if this signature could be forged what was the guarantee for properties of common people under the state government led by K Chandrasekhar Rao.

The state government has stopped the distribution of flood relief amount after the state election commission ordered it citing the model code of conduct. He also promised that if BJP wins the food relief amount will be doubled to Rs 20,000. Meanwhile, taking cue from chief minister K Chandrasekhar Rao TRS party leaders including the newly elected MLC from Nizamabad K Kavitha blamed the BJP for complaining to EC about flood relief distribution among the poor. The GHMC elections will be conducted using ballot papers instead of EVMs this time due to the pandemic as the latter will require more man power resources.

Telangana adds 1,058 new cases: Telangana reported 1,058 fresh coronavirus cases, taking the tally to over 2.6 lakh while four fatalities pushed the toll to 1,419, the state government said on Thursday, adds PTI.

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) accounted for the most number of cases with 168, followed by Medchal Malkajgiri (93) and Rangareddy (91), it said in a bulletin, providing details as of 8 PM on November 18.

As many as 12,682 patients are under treatment and 38,757 samples were tested on November 16. Cumulatively, over 50 lakh samples have been tested.

70-yr-old brutally raped & murdered in MP's Vidisha

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
Bhopal, 19 NOVEMBER



Unidentified assailants allegedly raped and brutally murdered a 70-year-old woman at her agricultural field in a village in Vidisha district of Madhya Pradesh on the intervening night of November 18-19.

According to police, the deceased's body was found without clothes and bearing injury marks with mud filled in her mouth today morning.

Sources said the family members of the victim told police that they had also found a piece of wood stuffed into the elderly lady's private part.

The gruesome incident was reported from the Olija village under the Gyaraspur police Station jurisdiction.

Police said the victim had taken the agricultural field on contract for farming and she had sown wheat there.

She used to go every night to the field to oversee the watering of the crop and she slept there at night to guard the crop. While giving information in this regard, the police station in-charge of Gyaraspur police station, Mahendra Shakya has said that after receiving information about the incident, the family of the deceased also reached the spot and identified it.

Shakya said the villagers and family members of the victim informed the police about the incident today morning. On reaching the spot, the police found the victim's body with no clothes and mud filed in her mouth. The police officer said that it appeared to be a case of rape and murder and the victim was brutally attacked. Police have registered a case of rape and murder against the unidentified accused, and efforts were being made to identify and arrest them.

The incident has sent shockwaves in the area, and angry residents of the village have urged the police to speed up the probe.

Police have questioned a few suspects, and further investigation is underway.

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Post bypolls, BJP regains lost glory in Guj Assembly

AHMEDABAD, 19 NOVEMBER

With eight newly elected legislators taking oath on Thursday, the strength of the ruling BJP in the 182-member Gujarat Legislative Assembly has touched 111.

All these eight MLAs have won the by-elections from as many seats which fell vacant due to resignations of their Congress legislators on the eve of Rajya Sabha elections from the State Assembly early this year and last year.

By touching the 111-figure in the 182-member House, the BJP has regained the glory it had lost for the first time in last quarter century by scoring only 99 in the assembly polls in December 2017.

In the six assembly polls since the BJP started its winning spree in Gujarat in 1995, it was the first time in December 2017 that the party had scored below the century mark.

That was also the time the Opposition Congress had won its highest 77 seats during the BJP's 25-year-rule in Gujarat. SNS

CANCELLATION / PARTIAL CANCELLATION / SHORT TERMINATION / SHORT ORIGINATION / DIVERSION OF TRAINS

CANCELLATION OF MAIL / EXPRESS TRAINS

Train No. & Name	Date of cancellation (from the Originating Station)
02425/02426 New Delhi-Jammu Tawi-New Delhi Rajdhani Special	20.11.2020
02462 Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra-New Delhi Express	20.11.2020
02461 New Delhi-Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Express	21.11.2020
02011/02012 New Delhi-Kalka-New Delhi Shatabdi Express	20.11.2020
02029/02030 Amritsar Jn.-New Delhi-Amritsar Jn. Swarna Shatabdi Express	20.11.2020
05211 Darbhanga Jn.-Amritsar Jn. Express	20.11.2020
05122 Amritsar Jn.-Darbhanga Jn. Express	22.11.2020
02053/02054 Hardiwar-Amritsar Jn.-Hardiwar Express	20 & 21.11.2020
04656 Firozpur Cantt Jn. - Patna Jn. Express	20.11.2020
04655 Patna Jn. - Firozpur Cantt Jn. Express	21.11.2020
02422 Jammu Tawi-Ajmer Express	20.11.2020
02421 Ajmer-Jammu Tawi Express	21.11.2020
02231 Lucknow - Chandigarh Express	20.11.2020
02232 Chandigarh-Lucknow Express	21.11.2020
04888 Barmer - Rishikesh Express	21.11.2020
04887 Rishikesh - Barmer Express	22.11.2020
04519 Delhi Jn.-Bhathinda Express	20.11.2020
04520 Bhathinda-Delhi Jn. Express	20 & 21.11.2020
02471/02472 Shri Gangapur - Delhi Jn. - Shri Gangapur Express	21.11.2020
02331 Howrah Jn. - Jammu Tawi Express	20.11.2020
02332 Jammu Tawi - Howrah Jn. Express	22.11.2020
09614 Amritsar Jn. - Ajmer Express	20.11.2020
02919 Dr. Ambedkar Nagar - Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Express	20.11.2020
02920 Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra - Dr. Ambedkar Nagar Express	22.11.2020

PARTIAL CANCELLATION OF SPECIAL TRAINS

Train No. & Name	Short Terminate at/ Short originate from	Partially Cancelled between Stations	Date of cancellation (from the Originating Station)
02903 Golden Temple Mail	at Ambala Cantt.	Ambala Cantt.-Amritsar	of 19.11.2020
02904 Golden Temple Mail	from Ambala Cantt.	Amritsar-Ambala Cantt.	20.11.2020
02925 Bandra Terminus-Amritsar Special Express	at Ambala Cantt.	Amritsar-Bandra Cantt.	of 19.11.2020
02926 Amritsar-Bandra Terminus Special Exp.	from Ambala Cantt.	Amritsar-Amritsar Cantt.	21.11.2020
02715 Sachkhand Express	at New Delhi	New Delhi-Amritsar	of 19.11.2020
02716 Sachkhand Express	from New Delhi	Amritsar-New Delhi	21.11.2020
03307 Dhanbad-Firozpur Exp.	at Ambala Cantt.	Ambala Cantt.-Firozpur	of 19.11.2020
03308 Firozpur-Dhanbad Exp.	from Ambala Cantt.	Firozpur-Ambala Cantt.	21.11.2020
04649/73 Jaynagar-Amritsar Sanyam Yatma Exp.	at Ambala Cantt.	Ambala Cantt.-Amritsar	of 19.11.2020
04650/74 Amritsar-Jaynagar Sanyam Yatma Exp.	from Ambala Cantt.	Amritsar-Ambala Cantt.	21.11.2020
02057 New Delhi - Una Himachal Janshatabdi	at Ambala Cantt.	Ambala Cantt. - Una Himachal	20.11.2020
02058 Una Himachal - New Delhi Janshatabdi	from Ambala Cantt.	Una Himachal - Ambala Cantt.	21.11.2020
02237 Varanasi-Jammu Tawi Festival Special	at Saharanpur	Saharanpur-Jammu Tawi	20.11.2020
02238 Jammu Tawi-Varanasi Festival Special	from Saharanpur	Jammu Tawi-Saharanpur	21.11.2020
04651 Jaynagar-Amritsar Jn. Express Clone Special	at Delhi Jn.	Delhi Jn. - Amritsar Jn.	20.11.2020
08237 Korba-Amritsar Jn. Express Festival Special	at Meerut City	Meerut City-Am	

Microwaves and psyops

Faced with a crack team of the Indian Army's mountain-war specialists and banned from opening fire under a longstanding Sino-Indian border protocol agreement, Chinese forces allegedly turned to a secret weapon in the eastern Ladakh stand-off with India. A report in The Times, London, claims China used "microwave weapons" that "turned strategic hilltops occupied by Indian soldiers into a microwave oven" forcing them back and allowing the Chinese to retake the positions without an exchange of conventional fire. The claim is made by academic Jin Canrong, professor of international relations at Renmin University, Beijing. The microwave attack, as it were, allegedly took place on 29 August. Calling out the report as "fake", an Indian official described it as "pure ~ and poor ~ psyops from China". The Indian Army issued a denial on Tuesday, emphasising that no such incident has taken place in Ladakh and noting that they remain in control of the high ground. Indeed, if for a moment credence was to be given to the very obviously state-backed Chinese academic's claim that "we didn't publicise it because we solved the problem beautifully and they (India) didn't publicise it either because they lost", it is moot why ongoing Sino-Indian military-to-military talks have the Chinese still asking India to withdraw from the heights it holds. What the claim does exhibit, however, is that seeding of fake news by China in international media outlets is very much part of Beijing's psyops, especially given the PLA has been under intense pressure from the Central Military Commission for being "careless" in allowing Indian forces to occupy the strategic heights in the Ladakh sector. That Beijing underestimated the robustness of New Delhi's response at the LAC is now widely accepted within the international strategic community. It would, however, be a mistake to dismiss the technology behind the claim ~ despite its B-grade sci-fi feel ~ of the weaponry allegedly used by China. The US was the first to develop microwave-style weapons. America's equivalent "heat ray," the Active Denial System, was unveiled in 2007 and deployed in Afghanistan but reportedly never used against hostile troops. The Pentagon has described it as "the first non-lethal, directed-energy, counter-personnel system with an extended range greater than currently fielded non-lethal weapons." The ethical concerns the weapons system raised, and fears of a political backlash given its possible use for crowd control, were thought to have contributed to its withdrawal from Afghanistan, although Washington said it complied with international law. The Chinese totalitarian state apparatus, as the record shows, is unlikely to be bothered by such piffling concerns as ethics and/or compliance with international law. Especially, because despite its massive standing army and sophisticated weapons systems, it does not have battle-hardened troops who have seen military action over the past four decades. This makes them susceptible to short cuts. India must, of course, counter the psyops; poor or not, as we know from Goebels there's always someone who will believe a lie if it's repeated incessantly. But we must keep track of the technology too.

Mouthwash, hogwash

When hand sanitisers were recommended as weapons against coronavirus, stocks of well-known brands vanished within days from shop shelves. And until large companies could ramp up production to meet demand, the gap was filled by several obscure brands, including some that repackaged industrial grade ethyl alcohol in small bottles at outrageous prices. Also gobbled up by anxious consumers were several products whose efficacy was dubious, to say the least. That phase mercifully is now behind us and a range of reputed products is now available to those who can afford them ~ each offering 99.9 per cent protection against the virus. New research carried out by the University of Cardiff in Wales that has preliminarily concluded mouthwash kills Covid-19 germs in saliva is likely to push sales of branded products and spawn lesser-known brands of mouthwash. With one difference ~ the product will be ingested and not rubbed on one's hands. The lead author of the Welsh study, Dr Richard Stanton, has said: "This study adds to the emerging literature that several commonly-available types of mouthwash designed to fight gum disease can also inactivate the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus (and other related coronaviruses) when tested in the laboratory under conditions that are designed to mimic the oral/nasal cavity in a test tube." The study will now extend to clinical trials ~ expected to be completed by early 2021 ~ to determine just how efficacious mouthwash can be in killing the virus in saliva. But although researchers have warned that mouthwash cannot treat coronavirus in the lungs or the respiratory tract, sales of these oral care products are bound to zoom if only because the world today is prepared to clutch at any straw to ensure protection against the dreaded virus. Indeed, such has been the alarm caused by the virus that manufacturers are getting away with claims that are at best questionable but could possibly be dangerous. Feeding on fears, one toothbrush claims to protect against the spread of the virus while several brands of plywood now claim to have been treated with chemicals that kills the virus on contact. A brand of paint makes a similar claim, saying it has anti-viral properties. The list of products promising protection against the virus grows by the day, and extends today to aromatic oils, anti-viral immunity boosters, umpteen surface disinfectant sprays, at least one spray to disinfect clothes, dozens of herbs and combinations of herbs, floor cleaners, toilet wipes, a brand of tea and an air sterilisation card that claims to "shut out" the virus. While it is unfair to bracket the Welsh research on mouthwash with products that dubiously seek to exploit fear, concern must be voiced at how in the absence of intervention by the government's consumer protection agencies and the Advertising Standards Council of India, consumers are being taken for a ride.

AI in education

Personalised learning, universal access and smart tutoring should be on the agenda of the new normal education and AI-driven tools are there to enhance the teaching-learning experience



It may sound nagging that Covid-19 has created the largest disruption of the education system in history affecting an estimated 1.6 billion learners across the world. But the fact of the matter is that coronavirus has come to stay for a long time. Hopefully, technology rushes in where man fears to tread. The entire education sector has been seeing for a decade or so remarkable uses of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies. It is high time that we reap their benefits in both teaching and learning technologies. AI may be embraced as an enhancement of human thinking and augmentation to the educational process.

Robots can produce digital content of a quality akin to what different service providers can create. Smart content includes virtual content, too, like video conferencing. AI systems are already using traditional syllabi to create customized textbooks for certain subjects. Textbooks have been digitized and new learning interfaces created to help students at all stages. Cram101 can use AI to make textbook content more comprehensible whereas Netex Learning can enable teachers to create an electronic curriculum.

The role of AI is significant in creating adaptive teaching-learning techniques. With its advanced applications, educators can set contents as per the local requirements of the learners in different parts of the country. Education can be offered through virtual contact like lectures, video conferencing, etc. Teachers would not exactly be replaced; they would be in a position to perform much better by offering personalised recommendations to students. They may be able to condense lessons into smart study guides and flashboards.

Through machine learning, adaptive programs can be developed that can cater to individual needs of students. AI is being applied in all levels of technology. So, in the education sector, vari-

ous AI-powered applications may help students in assessing customised responses in getting their doubts cleared from teachers. It can help in playing a role in designing personal conversation and educational assistants who can help in assignment tasks. The voice assistant could allow students to converse with educational materials of teachers ~ rather than traditionally printed handbooks or complicated websites for assistance with their educational needs.

AI can automate basic activities in education such as grading. Teachers can be enabled to automate grading for almost all kinds of MCQ and fill-in-the-blank testing.

Automated grading of students may also be easily done. Students could get additional support from AI tutors. Some tutoring programs based on AI can help students through basic mathematics, writing and other subjects. Students and educators both may be given helpful feedback through AI-driven programs. It may allow students to get support from teachers who, in turn, would be able to find areas where they can improve instructions for the students.

AI can change the role of the teacher. AI systems may be programmed to provide expertise for the students to ask questions and get information or could even take the place of teachers for providing basic course materials. It could offer students a way to experiment and learn in a relatively judgement free environment, especially when AI tutors can offer solutions for improvement.

AI powered education may equip students with fundamental IT skills. A wide range of courses may be made available

online and students might be enabled to learn from wherever they are. AI technology will improve IT processes and impart in them new proficiencies. Educational applications like Thinkster Math, Brainly, Content Technologies, MaTHiaU and Netix Learning may be applied to improve learning and skill development of students and the educators' performance as well.

In January 2019, the Wall Street Journal carried an article highlighting how some higher education institutions can use machine learning to infer prospective students' level of interest in attending classes.

Schools can utilize machine learning in students' guidance. They may help them automatically schedule their course loads and recommend courses and career paths. The institutions can use the data about students to give them timely financial support. Instructional support to them may involve creating

systems that respond to an individual's programs. Software relating to education can assess students' progress and recommend or deliver specific parts of e-courses for students to review, or additional resources to consult. These are, in fact, personalised learning platforms for serving remedial students, advanced students and students with special needs.

An intelligent tutoring system may be able to understand, in the same way as human tutors, the style of learning preferred by students. Even immersive experience can be created which is required to get students hooked to their classes. In this regard, game technique and simulation can play a major role. AI technology can make it easy for educators to keep track of how well or

poorly the students are performing with the help of data that can be handled by a machine. It might also be possible to scan the students' facial expressions, which can help in changing the lessons depending on their needs. AI can provide opportunities for students who speak different languages or have visual or hearing problems. Presentation Translator is an AI-based solution that can create subtitles in real time mode to make students learn in their native language.

AI technology may enable human capabilities ~ understanding, reasoning, planning, communication and perception ~ to be undertaken by software effectively and at a lower cost. As this technology is computer based, it can be connected to different classrooms all over the globe, thus fostering greater cooperation, communication and collaboration among institutions and nations. Whereas managing a large class of students makes personalised learning unfeasible, AI can provide a level of differentiation that customises learning specifically to an individual student's weaknesses and strengths. Affective Robot Tutor Integrated Environment (ARTIE) in Spain is playing a role in identifying the emotional state of a student through keyboard stroke and mouse action, and by running an algorithm that chooses the proper intervention required to give personalised educational support to a student. There is also potential for AI to improve the enrolment and admission process. AI can provide comprehensive information to teachers which can help them improve their learning of complex programming techniques. When combined with curriculum and programs, AI can become a purposeful tool. With the right educators using it, AI can do wonders. Personalised learning, universal access and smart tutoring should be on the agenda of the new normal education and AI-driven tools are there to enhance the teaching-learning experience.

A K GHOSH
The writer, a former Associate Professor, Department of English, Gurudas College, Kolkata is presently with Rabindra Bharati University



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

editor@thestatesman.com

Valid demand

SIR, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's attempt at getting Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's birthday on 23 January declared as a national holiday as reported by you is laudable. May her noble effort meet with success.

Subhas Chandra Bose was the greatest leader of India's freedom movement on several counts. He was imprisoned by the British eleven times. The way he escaped from incarceration befooling the rulers and reached the enemies of the

British undergoing an extremely tortuous journey, was a marvellous feat.

And the way he single-handedly organized the INA and fought the British, was unparalleled in world history. Miss Banerjee has also

know what had happened to their beloved leader.

Netaji is a forgotten hero in India. It is a fact, however, that while he was active in Indian politics, Subhas Chandra enjoyed popularity even greater than that of Gandhi. He had contested for the presidency of the Indian National Congress for the second time against the wishes of Gandhi. In that election Subhas Chandra had defeated Gandhi's nominee by a sizeable margin of 205 votes.

Yours, etc., Sanjat Ghatak, Narendrapur, 19 November.

A DISGRACE

SIR, This refers to your report "Declare Netaji's birthday as national holiday: Mamata to PM," published today. I am sorry to say that it is a matter of disgrace for the people of Bengal to repeatedly request the Centre to declare January 23 as a national holiday. All the time the requests were turned down without assigning any reason. The birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore was also not declared a national holiday.

I fully agree with Mamata Banerjee when she said that a national holiday

on January 23 would be an appropriate recognition of Netaji, "who is an epitome of determination, courage, leadership, unity and love for the motherland".

Unfortunately, the government at the Centre has not considered this demand with the seriousness it deserves. This is audacious indifference.

Yours, etc., Arun Gupta, Kolkata, 19 November.

BENGALI HERO

SIR, Reacting to your report today, I would like to say that all of Bengal stands behind Mamata Banerjee in support of her demand to declare 23 January as a national holiday. Her other demand ~ to unveil the mystery behind Netaji's disappearance ~ is equally valid and all Bengalis deserve to know what happened to their hero.

Yours, etc., A K Deb Biswas, Hooghly, 19 November.

SO INDIAN

SIR, This is with reference to the report, "Senior leaders miffed over Mamata's over-reliance on Abhishek" (17 November). Why are senior leaders miffed over this attitude of Miss Banerjee? This

SCHOLARSHIPS

SIR, It is a fact that budgetary allocations in the field of higher studies and research in our country are insufficient even though the government has emphasised the need for innovation and research in the National Education Policy. But in the premier institutes of our country, there is a dearth of good academicians and researchers because of insufficient scholarships and poor allocation of funds.

The Education Ministry should think about this basic necessity to motivate brilliant young students to pursue higher studies.

Yours, etc., Krishna Ray, Chinsurah, 18 November.

has been the tradition of Indian politics in free India. And the Nehru-Gandhi family has the credit for setting the tradition. Likewise, Miss Banerjee too has the ambition of perpetuating dynastic rule and over reliance on Abhishek is to that end.

Yours, etc., K K Roy Choudhury, Kolkata, 19 November.

HELP HAWKERS

SIR, This refers to the report, "Bans on hawkers inside stations crush hope of economic revival" (18 November). After a prolonged suspension of local train services in the wake of lockdowns, operations commenced on 11 November. But hawkers

were denied entry into platforms and within the coaches. The decision of the Railway authority appears to be insensitive as well as inhuman.

It has practically shattered their hopes and aspirations. Trains are the main source of income of thousands of hawkers. If they are not allowed to resume their sales within the station premises and coaches, the fate of

thousands of families would be in peril, and many would starve to death. Civilized society cannot remain a mute spectator to this pathetic state of affairs.

Yours, etc., Dilip Kumar Sengupta, Birati, 18 November.



urged the Prime Minister to unveil the mystery of Netaji's disappearance. Why should the government still hold the documents relating to Netaji's disappearance as 'classified' and not bring them in the public domain? People of India have every right to

DILIP DATTA

After a complete nationwide lockdown, which was necessary for breaking the chain of novel coronavirus, our country is in the unlocking phase now. But has the lockdown affected various sections of the society proportionately? Certainly not. While the comparatively rich and privileged have the resilience to absorb the financial uncertainty brought about by the pandemic, the poor and vulnerable have been driven by the distress of survival. The case in discussion in this article is of sex workers who constitute a vulnerable community and are left to live at the fringes of society. The status of sex workers was not the same in the past as it is today. In ancient time, they were the devadasis of temples commanding social respect. Indian history mentions the existence of such an esteemed institution of sex work. Oftentimes, they have been gradually relegated to the margins under the colonial hegemony of moral politics. Our society avails of their services but casts them out publicly playing on the politics of shame.

Before we discuss the economic fallout and distress caused to sex workers, let me place a few important facts. Although literature on sex workers is substantial, primarily focussing on health intervention programmes, there is no authentic data on their numbers and their distribution in various states of India. However, a survey by the United Nations Programme on AIDS (UNAIDS) in 2016 indicates presence of 657,870 sex workers in India. From another source, we find that there are more than 1,100 red-light areas in India, falling within the range of plausible hotspots of the ongoing pandemic. These areas, mostly ghettos are ignored from the socially insensitive narratives of the Covid-19 crisis and thus have been deprived of any income during the complete lockdown period.

A scholarly research work on sex workers indicates nearly half are home-based sex workers and a majority of them (56 per cent) are between 26 and 35, with median age of 30. More than half are non-literate and two-thirds are married. Nearly 60 per cent of them live with a spouse or a female partner. One in every 10 sex workers lives alone. Just 3 per cent

Spare a thought for sex workers



reside in rural areas. One in every four is exclusively involved in sex work. One in every five does not have a cell phone. A majority of them did not have savings in the previous year, and a third had taken loans. Forty-five per cent have financial autonomy and 89 per cent of them are not ashamed to be identified as sex workers. Most are members of community-based organisations. During the nationwide lockdown, about 20 per cent had left for their native places. The others were left without any work and had to rely on the police and NGOs even for their daily meals.

In this backdrop, the economic fallout of Covid-19 on sex workers can be addressed. Sex work in India is one of the unrecognised economic sectors where most of the work is informal and unprotected. Sex workers are either exploited victims or fallen women and are not legally categorised as workers. Although, in recent times, efforts have been made by NGOs and social workers to include sex workers in the labour

markets and for bringing them within the ambit of financial inclusion, the ambiguous position in Indian laws and codes has exacerbated their precarious position both socially and economically during the pandemic. Commercialised sex was criminalised soon after India's independence in 1956 under the Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act (SITA). Under pressure of constitutional challenges regarding the right to profession, this act was amended in 1986 as the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act (ITPA), and it partially decriminalised sex as a profession for adults, putting sex workers across India in a legally vague position. The activities needed for sex work like keeping a brothel, "soliciting in public places," "living off the earnings of prostitutes," "seduction of persons in custody," etc, are all under criminal provisions.

The Union Cabinet recently approved the Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2018. It is also not clear and comprehensive about sex work-

ers' rights, since the bill is coupled with the ITPA 1986 with extensive emphasis on strategies of raids and rescue that hardly pay heed to consenting sex between adults resulting in "human rights violations". Although the Supreme Court of India recommends entitlement rights of sex workers as per the norms of Article 21 of the Constitution, which urges states to provide willing sex workers a conducive situation to continue their profession, sex workers often face harassment and are abused by police, agents, clients and goons.

A decade ago, a Supreme Court panel recommended to the Central government and Election Commission to issue sex workers voter ID cards relaxing verification norms and appealed to states and local institutions to promote ration cards to them. Till date, sex workers are often denied the basic entitlements of ration cards and health cards. This lack of documentation provides grounds to exclude sex workers in broader forms of social and economic sectors and

increases vulnerabilities amidst this pandemic. Sex workers' profession is still away from the loop of standard labour-protection measures, and thereby, their work is the most informal among India's informal economy where the ongoing crisis hit hard, leaving them with no income.

Nirmala Sitharaman, our Finance Minister, in response to the lockdown, announced relief packages for the benefit of workers in informal sectors. These include doubling of ration entitlements free of cost under the National Food Security Act, giving Rs. 500 per month directly to "Jan Dhan Yojana" bank accounts of female workers, disbursing a pension amount of Rs. 1,000 for the coming three months to widows, old persons, and persons with disabilities. The government has also announced free liquefied petroleum gas cylinders for three months to the beneficiaries of "Ujjwala Yojana." However, it is not clear whether sex workers would be eligible for this relief. Moreover, Aadhaar number has been made mandatory for getting these benefits. Most sex workers do not have an Aadhaar card. They work mostly with cash and do not feel any urge to open a bank account.

Their clientele is also passing through a cash crunch due to lockdown resulting in sharp decline in footfalls in red-light areas. Since sex workers often have no savings and the lockdown has blocked their source of income, they are unable to pay rent and are left at the mercy of house owners. Even with gradual unlocking, they may not get many customers because of social distancing norms and the fear of getting infected.

Where do they stand? The clandestine nature of sex work and the stigma surrounding it restricts access to banks for availing of financial assistance and for financial inclusion. But what would be the social cost for their financial inclusion?

Policymakers should design appropriate programmes for empowerment of sex workers. It also suggests there is an urgent need to strengthen linkages with formal banking institutions for financial inclusion of sex workers which will ultimately help their empowerment.

The writer is Director & CEO, Sayantan Consultants Pvt. Ltd., Kolkata

100 YEARS AGO

OCCASIONAL NOTE

Amongst other matters of interest in the triennial report of the Zoological Survey of India is a note on the fauna of the Matlah river. Notes previously published have made us acquainted with the resemblance, observed in the course of some investigations by Dr. S.W. Kemp, between a number of the fish and crustaceans found in the Matlah and similar creatures which are dredged up from the deep sea. In the Zoological Survey's present report Dr. Annandale remarks that the resemblances were in most species quite superficial, depending mainly on colouration, outline, and the production of "elongate filamentous appendages with a sensory function" - that is, long feelers. One instance, however, is noted in which there was a close resemblance in form to deep-water species. This was in the case of our ancient and fish-like friend the "Bombay Duck," which, as everybody knows, is not a bird but a fish or the dried remains of a fish. In explanation of these curious resemblances it is pointed out that the fish in the Matlah and those in the deep sea grow in environments which have in common the factors of a very soft muddy bed and low visibility; and Dr. Kemp regarded the resemblances as mainly due to "convergence or parallel evolution." Perhaps there is no greater mystery about it than there is in the case of eels or other fish whose life histories are divided between the deep sea and the river.

NEWS ITEMS

HOOP IRON CONTRACT

At the High Court yesterday, Mr. Justice Buckland disposed of the case of J.J. Headwards and Co. v. Meyohas and Co., Mr. S.N. Bannerjee appearing for the plaintiffs and Mr. Langford James for the defendants. This was a suit to recover Rs 3,500, being the damages alleged to have been sustained by the plaintiff firm for difference in the price of hoop iron between the contract rate and the market rate, or for such other order as the Court thought fit, and they also asked for a return of the earnest money (Rs 101) deposited. His lordship, in delivering judgment in favour of the plaintiffs, said that in his opinion there was a breach of warrants, and that the plaintiffs were entitled to reject the goods.

CHAOS IN GREEK CAPITAL

The news coming from Athens is at present conflicting and it is obvious that the situation is still complicated. The only definite fact is that Venizelos has finally resigned, and the Rhallis Cabinet will be sworn in tomorrow. M. Rhallis is assuming the portfolio of Foreign Affairs. The majority of leaders speak of the reinstatement of ex-King Constantine as an accomplished fact, and it is stated that the Queen-Mother Olga will assume the regency in place of Admiral Conduoriotis. A later message says that indications are that the new Greek Government intends to defy the French and British Governments by requesting Constantine to reascend the throne. This is made clear by the statement of M. Gounaris, who is quoted as saying, Constantine is our rightful sovereign.

BOLSHEVIKS IN TURKISTAN

Allahabad, Nov 19
Recent arrivals in Peshawar from Ferghana give significant accounts of the successes achieved by the anti-Bolshevik party in that province of Turkistan according to the Pioneer. The Mullahs appear to have begun to preach Jihad against the Russians, and men are flocking to join the counter-revolutionary forces. The Bolsheviks have been compelled to disband their Muslim troops, fearing they might be affected by the attitude of their co-religionists. Anti-Bolshevik forces are said now to have reduced the area under Bolshevik control to a few large towns along the railway between Khojent and Andijan. The railway line is only kept open with the greatest difficulty, and frequent raids carried out on it by rebels have several times delayed the arrival of reinforcements from Tashkent, with disastrous consequences for the Bolsheviks.

INDIANS IN KENIA COLONY

The question of the immigration of Indians into the Colonies and Protectorates was raised in the House of Commons this evening by a question by Mr. Bennett with regard to the recent visit of Sir Benjamin Robertson to the Kenia Colony and Uganda to enquire into the position of Indians there. Mr. Montagu replied that he had received the views of the Government of India on Sir Benjamin Robertson's report and Lord Milner and he was giving urgent attention to the matter. Sir William Johnson Hicks suggested that the doctrine of self-determination should be applied to the Crown Colonies with regard to the influx of Indians where they were not wanted. Mr. Montagu, in reply, emphasised that the views of the Indian, as well as of the British and native, inhabitants of the Colonies ought to be taken into account.

SAJITHA PREMATHUNGA

There's a lot of pressure on FLOTUS, especially since she has to live up to a 231-year tradition and measure up to the legacies of former First Ladies, the likes of Jacqueline Kennedy and Michelle Obama. This might not prove to be difficult for a first lady with four degrees; Bachelor of Arts in English from the University of Delaware in 1975; Master of Education from West Chester State College in 1981; Master of Arts in English from Villanova University in 1987 and doctoral degree in education from the University of Delaware in 2007.

Breaking tradition, Jill Biden will be doing double duty as FLOTUS and college English professor, after Joe Biden is sworn in, while also being actively involved in education policy. According to Professor Katherine Jellison of Ohio University, quoted in USA Today, no previous FLOTUS has been 'allowed' to be like most modern American women, with both a work life and a family life.

But this is not the first time she has broken tradition. Jill was the first person to hold a non-political, non-legal, outside-the-Beltway job while serving as the second lady. She taught at Northern Virginia Community College during her husband's tenure as vice president. She famously asked her Secret Service security detail to dress like students and carry laptops in order to blend in.

In fact, she delivered her national convention speech while standing in the empty classroom where she taught English at Delaware's Brandywine High School in the early 1990s. Her illustrious teaching career, in which she taught at a community college, at a public high school and even at a psychiatric hospital for adolescents, is evidence enough for her versatility as an educator. She also served on the education taskforce for the Biden campaign and helped develop policy proposals. "Teaching is not what I do. It's who I am," she is supposed to have tweeted once.

Getting to know FLOTUS



advancement in community colleges and support for LGBTQ equality.

In other philanthropic work, Jill has played an active but under-the-radar role in advocating girls' and women's rights and welfare in Zambia, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sierra Leone and also focused on women's educational opportunities on a tour of Asia that took her to Japan, Korea and Vietnam.

In addition to being an educator and a 'military mom,' Jill is also a published author. She wrote the children's book 'Don't Forget, God Bless Our Troops,' based on her granddaughter, Natalie's experience of her father, Beau's deployment in Iraq. Her 'Joy: The Story of Joe Biden,' about her husband's formative years that laid the groundwork for his political career, is peppered with interesting anecdotes about his childhood. Older readers will find quite interesting Jill's 2019 memoir, 'Where the Light Enters:

Building a Family, Discovering Myself.' She also co-founded the Book Buddies program.

Jill is known for her empathy, often keeping in touch with people dealing with personal loss or those undergoing chemo she had met on the campaign trail. According to White House experts she has demonstrated qualities that would allow her to achieve what is assumed to be the first lady's number one goal, humanizing her husband and promoting his agenda. Born Jill Tracy Jacobs on 3 June 1951 in the state of New Jersey, Jill was the oldest of five sisters and grew up in Willow Grove, Pennsylvania. It is interesting to know that she is not all American, as far as her Sicilian paternal grandparents are concerned. Jill Biden is an infamous prankster with a penchant for running. Her daily exercise regime includes a five-mile run five days a week, along with weight training for good measure,

according to Runner's World in 2010. Jill finished the 1998 Marine Corps Marathon and has done several half-marathons and 10-mile races, according to Women's Health magazine.

The Bidens have been married since 1977. As the story goes that Jill had been in the process of getting a divorce from her high-school sweetheart when she met Joe in 1975. According to reports, Jill used to do a bit of local modelling and Joe, nine years her senior and widowed at the time with two young sons, had seen a picture of her in an advert, on a bus shelter and became smitten.

He was a senator at the time and she was still in college. It was Joe's sons, Beau and Hunter, at the ages of 7 and 6, respectively, who urged him to marry Jill. It took five proposals from Joe for Jill to accept him.

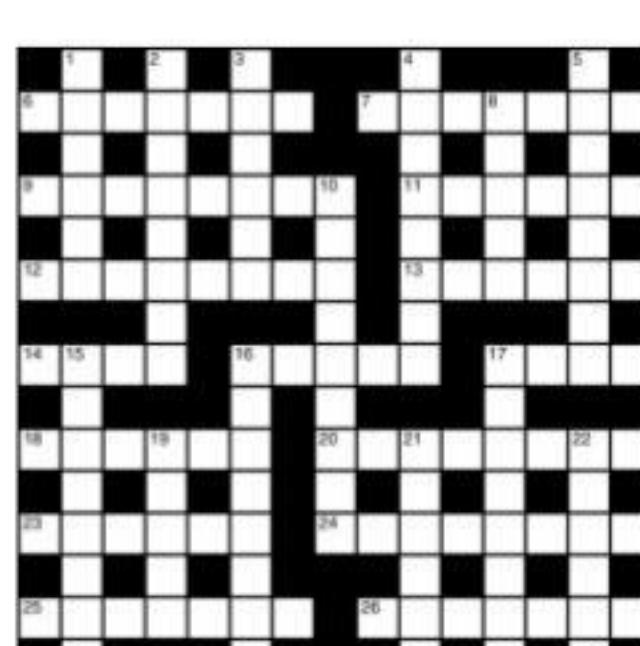
Joe Biden's first marriage to Neilia Hunter ended in tragedy, when Neilia and Naomi 'Amy' Biden, their one-year-old child, were killed in a car crash in 1972, only days after he was first elected to the US Senate. Their two sons, Hunter and Beau, were also seriously injured. Joe and Jill Biden had daughter Ashley in 1981 and raised the children in Wilmington, Delaware. As a senator, Joe famously commuted and from Washington to Wilmington daily so he could spend time with Jill and the children. "She gave me back my life," Biden said in his 2007 memoir 'Promises to Keep.' "She made me start to think my family might be whole again."

She helped put the broken family together, after the death of Joe Biden's first wife and daughter, when she raised Beau and Hunter as her own. But can she help Biden put together a country broken by racial and political division. "How do you make a broken family whole?" she asked. "The same way you make a nation whole. With love and understanding, and with small acts of kindness. With bravery. With unwavering faith," she said in one of her campaign videos.

The Island/ANN.

NO 28140

CROSSWORD



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

ACROSS

- 6 Leave off perhaps to participate in country dance (7)
- 7 Trainee in hospital department following boss (7)
- 9 Studios swallowed stories about Republican (8)
- 11 Queen in two types of gold: a wondrous sight at night (6)
- 12 Young lady entering bank carelessly (8)
- 13 Female wrong to bring about murders (4,2)
- 14 Retiring after one becomes grey (4)

- 16 Admission of guilt recalled in respect of cracking weir (2,3)
- 17 Statement of conditionality is accepted by province (4)
- 18 Get back? American in African country must get back (6)
- 20 Attitude presented by flight attendants identifying part of plane (8)
- 23 Wandering about, retreating before storm (6)
- 24 Cliff plant: each should be protected by covering (3,5)
- 25 Flower, hardy at odd times, product of Eire (7)

- 26 What may herald soldier infiltrating plantation in film? (7)
- 1 Company distributed a lot of steak ribs (6)
- 2 Criminal behaviour in breaking into house and yard (8)
- 3 King entering valleys to do for alien invaders? (6)
- 4 Exhibiting various lines without support? (8)
- 5 Redesign of latrines revealing internal material (8)
- 8 Lament overthrow of

- 10 Tree coming up in season possibly producing protein-rich food (4,5)
- 15 They fleece audience after start of show (8)
- 16 Cruel people, endlessly severe in scene of battle (8)
- 17 Nathaniel will pen cryptic clue with a distinct core (8)
- 19 Gather Welsh politician's a fool (5)
- 21 Ungrateful daughter throttling a former president (6)
- 22 Child no longer consuming right milk (6)

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



By way of 'Mission Purvodaya', we are building an integrated steel hub in eastern India, which would facilitate regional development with job creation...

DHARMENDRA PRADHAN
UNION STEEL MINISTER

THUMBNAILS

Elevator pays over ₹9L for settlement charges: Elevator Builders has settled with markets regulator Sebi a case of alleged violation of market norms with respect to change in its shareholding in Negotium International Trade Ltd, by paying over Rs 9 lakh towards settlement charges.

FeedingBillions to feed 1 mn meals annually by '22: Food tech company FeedingBillions on Thursday said it is planning to serve one million meals annually in Mumbai by 2022, through its contract catering brand Feasty. Feasty, which has now entered Mumbai, is currently serving at six locations in Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Gujarat and Rajasthan along with metropolitan cities of Delhi-NCR, the company said in a statement.

Remdesivir: Use of Remdesivir at an early stage can reduce the mortality rate of Covid patients, finds a study conducted by doctors at Apollo Super Specialty Hospital, Jayanagar in Bangalore. "Remdesivir is the current recommended anti-viral treatment in moderate-to severe Covid. However, data on several aspects of its use such as the impact of timing of therapy, efficacy, and safety in this severity category are limited," the study reads. The findings indicate a treatment window and reinforce the need for earlier Remdesivir initiation in moderate-to-severe Covid infection, said a Press release statement.

HMSI launches Repsol Honda editions of Hornet 2.0, Dio: Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India (HMSI) on Thursday launched 'Repsol Honda' limited editions of its motorcycle Hornet 2.0 and scooter model Dio. While the Hornet 2.0 Repsol Honda Edition is priced at Rs 1,28,351, the Dio Repsol Honda Edition is tagged at Rs 69,757 (all prices ex-showroom, Gurugram), the company said in a statement.

Moody's ups FY'21 India growth forecast

Govt's latest stimulus to boost manufacturing, job creation and shift focus to longer term growth, says rating agency

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 19 NOVEMBER

Moody's Investors Service on Thursday upped India's growth forecast to (-) 10.6 per cent for the current fiscal, from its earlier estimate of (-) 11.5 per cent saying the latest stimulus prioritises manufacturing and job creation, and shifts focus to longer-term growth.

Last week, the government announced a new fiscal package amounting to around Rs 2.7 lakh crore, which included production-linked incentive scheme for manufacturing units and enhanced credit guarantee programme for small businesses.

Moody's said the latest measures aim to increase the competitiveness of India's manufacturing sector and create jobs, while supporting infrastructure investment and is "credit positive" as it presents potential upside to growth forecasts.

"We have revised our real, inflation-adjusted GDP forecast for fiscal 2020 (April 2020-March 2021) to a 10.6 per cent contraction, from a 11.5 per cent drop previously," Moody's said.



In September, the global agency had projected Indian economy to contract 11.5 per cent this fiscal. For fiscal 2021-22, India's growth is projected at 10.8 per cent, as against the previous estimate of 10.6 per cent, Moody's said adding that the growth is likely to settle around 6 per cent. "The country's mixed track record on revenue-raising measures lowers prospects for fiscal policy-driven budget consolidation. A sustained increase in GDP growth would therefore likely be a major driver of any durable future fiscal consolidation," it said. Moody's forecasts government debt to increase to 89.3 percent of GDP

in fiscal 2020 and decline to 87.5 percent in fiscal 2021, from 72.2 per cent in fiscal 2019. According to Moody's fiscal deficit would reach around 12 per cent of GDP, with some upside risk, in fiscal 2020 and narrowing to about 7 per cent of GDP over the medium term, still above the deficit of 6.5 percent of GDP in 2019. Moody's, however, said that consumer confidence in India remains relatively low amid a continued elevated number of daily new coronavirus cases, although this has come down from a peak in September.

"Stronger nominal GDP growth over the medium term would make it easier for India's government to address its weak fiscal position, which the coronavirus has exacerbated," Moody's said.

Earlier this month, Moody's had revised upwards the growth forecast for calendar year 2020 to (-) 8.9 per cent, from (-) 9.6 per cent predicted earlier.

The government had last week provided incentives for new job creation, additional fertiliser subsidy, announced tax relief on select home sale deals, and expanded support for infrastructure investment, totalling to Rs 2.65 lakh crore.

This took the cumulative stimulus package announced since the lockdown to almost Rs 30 lakh crore, or 15 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

NDB, India sign \$500 million loan deal for NCR rapid transit system

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 19 NOVEMBER

The RRTS will carry many times more people at high speed while occupying just 3 metres of space thus reducing congestion on the roads. Overall it will significantly reduce the total emissions from the transport sector in NCR.

Delhi and Meerut in Uttar Pradesh by road during peak hours. Rapid growth in vehicular traffic has made NCR one of the most polluted regions in the world. By 2030, NCR is projected to become the most populous urban agglomeration in the world, which will increase pressure on basic infrastructure such

as housing, water supply, electricity and transport," reads the press statement.

The agreement was signed by Baldeo Purushartha, Joint Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance on behalf of the Government of India; Janardan Prasad on behalf of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Vinay Kumar Singh, Managing Director on behalf of the National Capital Region Transport Corporation Limited and Xian Zhu, Vice-President, Chief Operations Officer on behalf of the NDB.

"Seamless high speed connectivity will result in balanced economic development across the Region leading to economic benefits to all strata of society and many nodes of economic activity happening at one place," Baldeo Purushartha.

The environment friendly RRTS will carry many times more people at high speed (average speed 100 kmph) while occupying just 3 metres of space on land thus reducing congestion on the roads. Overall it will significantly reduce the total emissions from the transport sector in NCR.

"Fast transit system will support in achieving the goal of sustainable urban development in NCR region including National Capital Territory of Delhi. It will activate processes which will enable sustainable economic and social development with environmental protection, for future generations," reads the press release from the finance ministry.

BPCL could pay for itself, but how will Vedanta secure funding: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 19 NOVEMBER

Metals-to-oil conglomerate Vedanta's interest in buying Bharat Petroleum Corp Ltd (BPCL) is a natural progression towards downstream integration that will hedge its margins but there are doubts over its promoters' ability to raise finances for such acquisition, analysts said.

While BPCL dividends could easily cover the cost of debt of any acquisition, "the question we have is how would Vedanta Ltd secure funding, given the worries on leverage at Vedanta and the parent?", JP Morgan said in a report. Buying a 75 per cent stake in BPCL would cost Vedanta Rs 64,200-97,600 crore depending on the price (Rs 395 to 600 per share).

"Assuming that Vedanta



sells down the equity stake (BPCL has) in Indraprastha Gas Ltd and (LNG importer) Petronet LNG Ltd, the net cost of the acquisition would be Rs 52,200 crore to Rs 85,500 crore. At 8 per cent interest cost, the interest cost would range from Rs 4,100 crore to Rs 6,800 crore. "On our conservative FY23 standalone earn-

ings estimates, even at a 75 per cent dividend payout, this would service the debt cost even assuming the dividend income is taxed at 25 per cent," it said.

This does not take into account any additional divestments such as Mozambique LNG stake sale, additional profits if BPCL acquires man-

agement control of Bina refinery and any further asset sales. "However the question is how would Vedanta secure any funding?" JP Morgan said. "While Vedanta on a consolidated basis is not very levered, the key question has been the leverage at the unlisted parent and inter-company loans to the parent (currently at USD 1 billion). In this context, we struggle to know how Vedanta secured funding."

"But an SPV structure which is ring-fenced and services the debt from dividends from BPCL could be possible, it said. PTI reported that a special purpose vehicle of BSE-listed Vedanta and its London-based parent

Vedanta Resources had earlier this week placed a preliminary expression of interest for buying the government stake in BPCL.

It said the contraction in the Gross Value Added at basic prices is expected to have

DPE freezes additional DA for CPSE executives

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 19 NOVEMBER

The Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) on Thursday announced freezing of additional instalments of dearness allowance for executives and non-unionised supervisors of central public sector enterprises (CPSEs) drawing salaries under certain pay scales till June 30, 2021.

"In view of the crisis arising out of COVID-19, it has been decided that additional instalment of dearness allowance payable to employees of CPSEs drawing pay as per 2017, 2007, 1997, 1992 and 1987 IDA pay revision guidelines, due from October 1, 2020, shall not be paid," the DPE said.

Further, the additional instalments of the DA due from January 1, 2021, and April 1, 2021, will also not be paid.

NSE imposes ₹1.88L penalty on NDTV for delay in appointing board director



NEW DELHI, 19 NOVEMBER

News broadcaster New Delhi Television Ltd (NDTV) on Thursday said the NSE has imposed a penalty of Rs 1.88 lakh on the firm for delay in appointing the sixth director on the board. On Wednesday, BSE too levied a fine of Rs 1.88 lakh on the company for the same reason. "The National Stock Exchange of India Ltd (NSE) has imposed a penalty on the company of Rs 1,88,800 for the alleged delay in appointing a sixth director to the board of the company, as required by Regulation 17(1)(c) of SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015," NDTV said in a regulatory filing.

This penalty pertains to the period July 1-August 1, 2020. NDTV said since the alleged non-compliance was solely on account of the COVID-19 pandemic, the company shall file an application within 15 days to seek waiver of the penalty imposed by NSE in accordance with the carve-out policy, which allows for waiver of fines. It said on March 30 and June 29 this year, the company wrote to SEBI, explaining its difficulty in finalising a candidate for the appointment of the sixth director on account of the pandemic. "The company has still not received any response to, or acknowledgement of, these letters which sought an extension of time to appoint the sixth director.

It is pertinent to note that this letter was sent to SEBI ahead of the deadline of April 1, 2020 for appointment of a sixth director," NDTV added.

Mastercard, USAID join hands for Project Kirana

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 19 NOVEMBER

Global payments technology major Mastercard has joined hands with development agency USAID for the Project Kirana that will help increase revenue streams, expand financial inclusion and digital payments adoption of kirana shops that are owned or operated by women. To begin with, as many as 3,000 such women are targeted to be enrolled under this project in certain places in Uttar Pradesh. Mastercard said that around the world, gender inequality limited women-owned businesses' ability to launch, grow and thrive. To address these gaps, Mastercard and the United States Agency for International Develop-

ment (USAID) have partnered under the Women's Global Development and Prosperity Initiative (W-GDP) to launch Project Kirana, it added. "It is a really powerful initiative. It is the extension of what we are doing in many markets and we have committed in a large part of India. Globally, we have committed USD 250 million towards supporting SMEs (small and medium enterprises)," Porush Singh, division president (South Asia) of Mastercard, said while announcing the partnership at a virtual event on Thursday. He added that in India, the company has committed USD 33 million. "It is a large chunk...to help bring SMEs and empower women entrepreneurs for the next five years." Recently, Mastercard

announced a commitment of Rs 250 crore (USD 33 million) to help reboot Indian SMEs and enable business recovery amid the COVID-19 pandemic. As part of the commitment, the company has launched multiple initiatives in India in helping small businesses go online by growing digital payments. The initiatives will also drive inclusive growth by enabling small merchants and kirana stores with access to credit and empower women entrepreneurs by increasing their business acumen.

Project Kirana will work to increase revenue streams, expand financial inclusion and digital payments adoption of kirana shops that are owned or operated by women, Mastercard said. The two-year Pro-

ject Kirana programme will be implemented by DAI and ACCESS Development Services in select cities of Uttar Pradesh, including Lucknow, Kanpur and Varanasi. The programme

will focus on building financial and digital literacy skills on banking, digital payments, saving, credit and insurance. "Creating equal opportunities for women in business is not only a question of gender equality but also an economic priority. At Mastercard, we believe in levelling the playing field for women entrepreneurs," said Alison Eskesen, vice-president of

Mastercard Center for Inclusive Growth. He added that it becomes imperative to help women unlock their potential, strengthen their skills and enhance their participation in business. Karen Klimowski, acting India mission director of USAID, said the partnership between USAID and Mastercard is an example of the US government's commitment to collaborating with the private sector in achieving sustainable development outcomes, such as women's economic empowerment.

USAID has a global network of more than 186 gender advisors who work to accelerate USAID's gender work worldwide. "Global prosperity will remain out of reach if we exclude half the population. At USAID, we believe investment in women is key to unlocking human potential on transformational scale," said John Barsa, acting administrator of USAID, in the release.



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Countries' willingness to commit to tougher emissions limits shows... that the target set in Paris is a possibility

UN'S CLIMATE CHIEF PATRICIA ESPINOSA

AS COUNTRIES SET DEADLINES TO END GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

The Statesman
NEW DELHI, FRIDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2020

09

Oz forces illegally killed Afghans

Australian special forces allegedly committed up to 39 murders, according to a military report into war crimes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MELBOURNE, 19 NOVEMBER

There is "credible information" that at least 19 serving and former Australian special forces allegedly committed up to 39 unlawful murders during the conflict in Afghanistan, according to a long-awaited military report into war crimes released on Thursday.

Australia launched the inquiry in 2016, amid reports from whistle-blowers and in the local media of the alleged killing of unarmed men and children in Afghanistan.

The four-year inquiry by NSW Court of Appeal Justice Paul Brereton found there was "credible information" of 23 incidents where Aus-



Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel were involved in the serious crimes, either carrying out the offences or at least being "accessories" to the incidents.

There was "credible information" that 39 Afghans were allegedly murdered by Australian special forces in 23 incidents. There were also two incidents could be classified as the war crime of "cruel treatment", the report

said.

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

The inquiry found evidence some Australian troops in Afghanistan carried "throw-downs" such as weapons,

radios and grenades not issued by the ADF but planted next to the bodies of Afghan civilians to suggest they were a "legitimate target" in any post-incident investigations.

"This practice probably originated for the less egregious though still dishonest purpose of avoiding scrutiny where a person who was legitimately engaged turned out not to be armed," Brereton said.

Issuing an apology to Afghanistan people while releasing the report in Canberra, Australia's Chief of Defence Force Angus Campbell said: "These findings allege the most serious breaches of military conduct and professional values. The killing, the unlawful killing, of civilians and prisoners is never

acceptable."

Campbell also apologised to the Australian people, saying he was sincerely sorry for any wrongdoing by members of the Australian Defence Force.

Campbell said the report discloses a "disgraceful and a profound betrayal of the Australian Defence Force's professional standards and expectations".

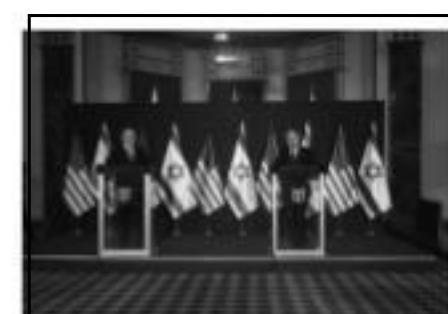
"Today the Australian Defence Force is rightly held to account for allegations of grave misconduct by some members of our special forces community on operations in Afghanistan," he said.

The public summary of the inquiry, released on Thursday morning, based partly on evidence given by eyewit-

nesses interviewed under oath, also found that Australian soldiers summarily executed non-combatants and prisoners.

Brereton wrote, "when what the inquiry has found is taken collectively, the answer to the question, 'Is there substance to rumours of war crimes by elements of the Special Operations Task group' must sadly be, 'Yes, there is'."

Brereton, who was appointed by the Inspector-General of defence in 2016 to investigate the allegations of war crimes in Afghanistan between 2003 and 2016, found commanders higher up the chain should bear a "moral command responsibility" for a culture that allowed the alleged crimes to take place.



Israel seized the West Bank and the Golan Heights in the 1967 Mideast war and later annexed the Golan in a move that not recognized internationally.

Pompeo had earlier announced the US will regard the Palestinian-led boycott movement as "anti-Semitic" and cut off government support for any organizations taking part in it, a step that could deny funding to Palestinian and international human rights groups.

"We will regard the global, anti-Israel BDS campaign as anti-Semitic," Pompeo said, referring to the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement.

"We will immediately take steps to identify organizations that engage in hateful BDS conduct and withdraw US government support for such groups," he said, adding that all nations should "recognise the BDS movement for the cancer that it is."

Pompeo spoke at a press conference with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who said the Israel-U.S. alliance had reached "unprecedented heights" under the Trump administration.

Netanyahu thanked the administration for moving its embassy to contested Jerusalem, abandoning the US position that Israeli settlements are contrary to international law, recognizing Israel's annexation of the Golan Heights and taking a hard line against Iran.

Pompeo visits West Bank, announces major policy shift

ASSOCIATED PRESS
JERUSALEM, 19 NOVEMBER

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Thursday became the first top American diplomat to visit an Israeli settlement in the occupied West Bank as the State Department announced that products from the settlements can be labeled "Made in Israel" in a major policy shift.

The two moves reflected the Trump administration's acceptance of Israeli settlements, which the Palestinians and most of the international community view as a violation of international law and a major obstacle to peace.

Pompeo also announced that the US would brand the international Palestinian-led boycott movement against Israel as "anti-Semitic" and bar any groups that participate in it from receiving government funding.

"It was not immediately clear which groups would be affected by the move.

In a Twitter post, Pompeo confirmed his visit to the Psagot winery, located in a settlement near Jerusalem. Reporters were not allowed to accompany him. "Enjoyed lunch at the scenic Psagot Winery today," he tweeted. "Unfortunately, Psagot and other businesses have been targeted by pernicious EU labeling efforts that facilitate the boycott of Israeli companies.

The US stands with Israel and will not tolerate any form of delegitimisation."

The European Union, like most of the world, opposes Israeli settlements and requires imports from the occupied territory to be labeled as such.

Pompeo later was expected to visit the Golan Heights.

Iran launches aircraft-carrying ship amid US tension

TEHERAN, 19 NOVEMBER

Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard said it launched a heavy warship Thursday capable of carrying helicopters, drones and missile launchers amid ongoing tensions with the US.

Photographs of the ship, named after slain Guard naval commander Abdollah Roudaki, showed it carrying truck-launched surface-to-surface missiles and anti-aircraft missiles.

It also carried four small fast boats, the kind the Guard routinely uses in the Persian Gulf. Sailors manned deck-mounted machine guns. The Guard said the ship has a length of 150 metres (492 feet).

'Stop undermining rights of people of Hong Kong'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

WASHINGTON, 19 NOVEMBER

A group of five countries led by the US has called on China to stop undermining the rights of the people of Hong Kong to elect their representatives, asserting that Beijing's action appeared to be a part of a concerted campaign to silence all critical voices in the global financial hub.

The other countries include Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

In a joint statement, the foreign ministers of these five countries reiterated on Wednesday their serious concern regarding China's imposition of new rules to disqualify elected legislators in Hong Kong.

Following the imposition of the National Security Law and postponement of September's Legislative Council

elections, this decision further undermines Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy and rights and freedoms, they said.

"We call on China to stop undermining the rights of the people of Hong Kong to elect their representatives in keeping with the Joint Declaration and Basic Law. For the sake of Hong Kong's stability and prosperity, it is essential that China and the Hong Kong authorities respect the channels for the people of Hong Kong to express their legitimate concerns and opinions," the joint statement said.

"As a leading member of the international community, we expect China to live up to its international commitments and its duty to the people of Hong Kong. We urge the Chinese central authorities to re-consider their actions

of speech, the statement said.

Resolution condemning 'human rights abuses': The US House of Representatives has unanimously passed a resolution condemning China's "human rights abuses" and undermining of fundamental rights and freedoms in Hong Kong.

Passed by a voice vote, the resolution condemns acts by the Chinese government and alleged they violate fundamental rights and freedoms of Hong Kong residents as well as undermine their high degree of autonomy. The resolution, among other things, also advises the United States to coordinate with allies to respond to developments in Hong Kong, including by providing Hong Kong residents who face well-founded fears of persecution an opportunity to emigrate from the region.

Bipartisan resolution on Tibet

WASHINGTON, 19 NOVEMBER

A bipartisan resolution recognising the cultural and religious significance of an autonomous Tibet and seeking peaceful solutions to the conflict was passed by the US House of Representatives.

The resolution recognised the significance of the genuine autonomy of Tibet and the Tibetan people, and the work done by 14th Dalai Lama to promote global peace, harmony and understanding.

The resolution was passed by a voice vote. PTI

Imran meets Ghani, bilateral ties discussed

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

ISLAMABAD, 19 NOVEMBER

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Thursday met with President of Afghanistan Ashraf Ghani in Kabul and the two leaders explored ways to deepen the bilateral ties and discussed the Afghan reconciliation process, amidst an uptick in violence that has strained the peace push in the war-torn country.

Khan was received by Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Adviser on Commerce Abdul Razak Dawood, ISI chief Lt. Gen. Faiz Hamid, Foreign Secretary Sohail Mehmood and Special Representative for Afghanistan Muhammad Sadiq. The two leaders discussed ways to further strengthen the bilateral relations, the peace process and regional economic development and connectivity.

Xi: China will avoid decoupling amid tension with US, Europe

ASSOCIATED PRESS
KUALA LUMPUR, 19 NOVEMBER

China's President Xi Jinping on Thursday spurned suggestions that his country might decouple or separate itself from the US and other trading partners, amid tension with Washington and Europe over technology and security.

Speaking by video link from Beijing to a meeting of Asia-Pacific CEOs, Xi promised to open China's market wider but announced no initiatives to respond to complaints the ruling Communist Party improperly subsidises and shields technology and other industries from foreign com-

petitors.

Xi rejected suggestions Beijing might respond to US sanctions on its fledgling technology companies by trying to separate their industries from global trading partners.

The ruling Communist Party has promoted its own standards for mobile phones and other technology, which would encourage customers that adopt them to use Chinese suppliers.

That has prompted fears world markets might split into smaller segments with incompatible industry standards, hurting productivity.

We will never go back in history by seeking to decouple or forming a 'small circle' to

keep others out," Xi said.

Thursday's event came ahead of a meeting of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation leaders hosted by Malaysia.

The meeting Friday is due to be conducted via internet due to the pandemic.

Xi's comments followed Sunday's signing of the world's largest free trade agreement, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, by 14 other Asian neighbours.

The Chinese-initiated RCEP appeals to other developing countries because it reduces barriers to trade in farm goods, manufactured goods and components, which make up most of their exports.

It says little about trade in services and access for companies to operate in each other's economies, which the United States and other developed countries want.

The Trump administration has cut off Chinese tech giant Huawei's access to most US components and technology on security grounds.

Washington has shut Huawei and a rival Chinese telecom equipment vendor, ZTE, out of the US market.

The White House is pressuring the Chinese owner of video service TikTok to sell its US operation, which American officials say is a security risk.

Xi promised to cut tariffs

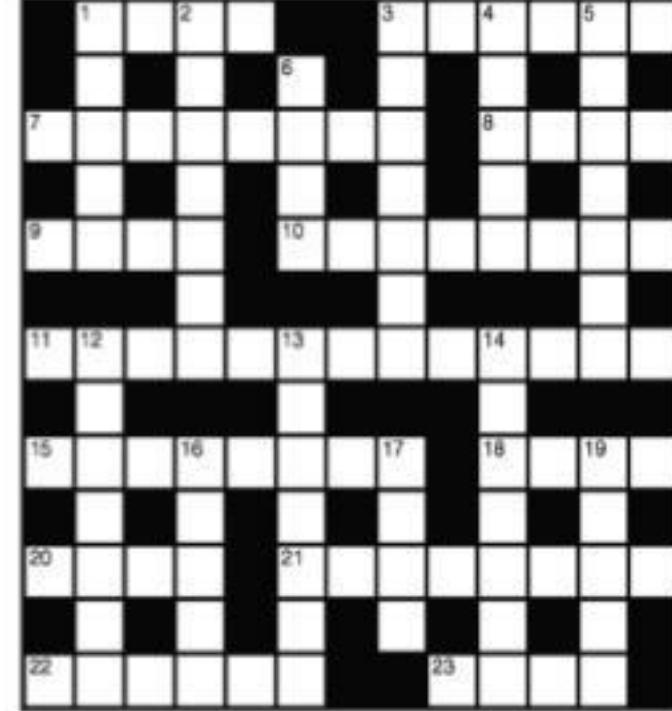
but gave no details.

We will further reduce tariffs and institutional costs, cultivate a number of import trade promotion innovation demonstration zones, and expand imports of high-quality products and services from various countries," he said.

China's repeated promises to set up trade zones and ease import restrictions prompt complaints by the United States, Europe, Japan and other trading partners that Beijing is using such isolated steps to avoid complying with promises made when it joined the World Trade Organization in 2001 to allow foreign companies to compete freely in its economy.

LEISURE

10 MINUTE CROSSWORD

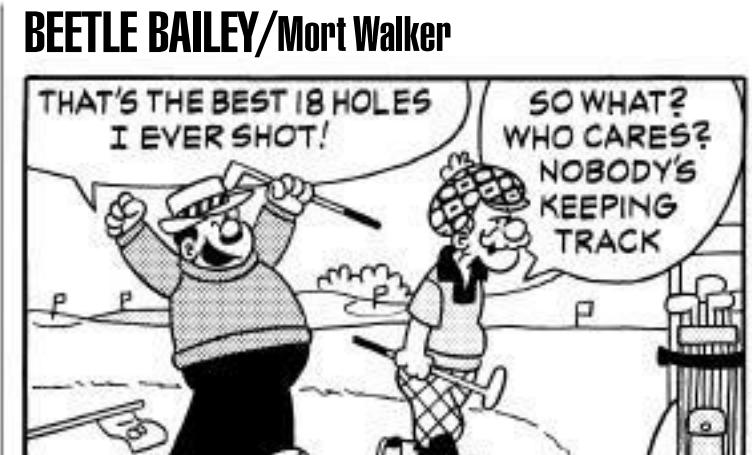


ACROSS

- 1 Exhale audibly (4)
- 3 Greek region (6)
- 7 Slightly altered (8)
- 8 Standard (4)
- 9 Cry (4)
- 10 Refuge (8)
- 11 Road-rail intersection (5,8)
- 15 Reasonable (8)
- 18 Elephant's tooth (4)
- 20 Travel permit (4)
- 21 Brow (8)
- 22 Shooting star (6)
- 23 Adhesive (4)
- 26 Grandmaster, 16 Empower, 18 Dope, 20 Slime, 21 Tsumami, 22 Damp, 23 Hoe, 26 Agglomerate, 27 Fret, 28
- 29 Solutions to yesterday's crossword
- 30 DOWN
- 1 Honest, 2 Sure, 3 Supplemented (5,2), 4 Brief bikini (5), 5 Substance (6), 6 Type of tree (7), 12 Inspect (7), 13 Replica (5), 14 Schoolbag (7), 16 Furious (5), 17 Escapade (4), 19 Digging tool (5)
- 31 Across: 16 Empower, 18 Dope, 19 Beach, 20 Slime, 21 Tsumami, 22 Damp, 23 Hoe, 26 Agglomerate, 27 Fret, 28
- 32 Red Eye (5)
- 33 DADDY DAZE (5)
- 34 BEETLE BAILEY/Mort Walker (5)
- 35 RED EYE/Bill Yates & Mel Casson (5)
- 36 DADDY DAZE/John Kovaleski (5)

By arrangement with The Independent
Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required

BEETLE BAILEY/Mort Walker



NEED TO KNOW

HOSPITALS

- AIIMS 26588500, 26588900
- Moolchand Medcity (formerly Hospital) 42000000 & 24-hour Chemist Shop 42000447
- Vidyasagar Institute for Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences 26924300, 26924304
- Batra Hospital & Medical Research Centre 29051280, 29958747
- Deen Dayal Upadhyay 25496320, 25494403
- Guru Tegh Bahadur 23717473, 23325320

RAILWAY INQUIRY

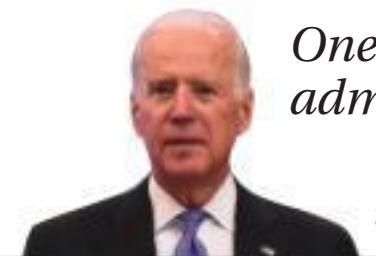
- General Inquiry 139
- Toll Free Nos. 1800121511
- SMS Inquiry Nos. 57886, 54959, 5676747

ROADWAYS INQUIRY

- ISBT (General Inquiry): 23868836, 23865181
- Haryana Roadways 23861262, Call centre 09910383383, 18001803838, Reservation 43513186; Indigo Airlines 23717473, 23325320

SCRABBLE BRAND

R	A	O	R	V	B	H
I	S	T</td				



One of the problems that we're having now is the failure of the administration to recognise...who the winner is

US PRESIDENT-ELECT JOE BIDEN

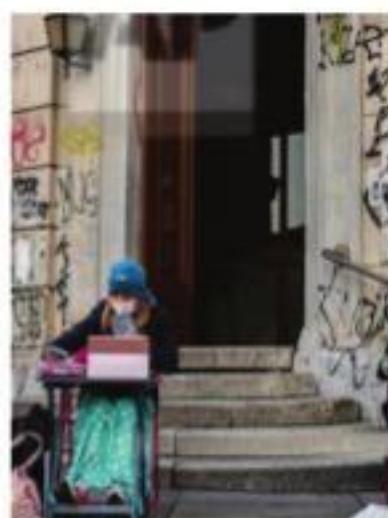
World

WEATHER

CITY	MAX (°C)	MIN (°C)
SINGAPORE	31	25 H
HONG KONG	26	21 H
TOKYO	23	18 H
LONDON	10	4 H
DUBAI	28	23 CL
SAN FRANCISCO	16	10 H
NEW YORK	8	-2 H
MOSCOW	2	-3 H

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

THUMBNAILS



Anita Iacovelli sits in front of the Italo Calvino school in Turin, Italy on Thursday. Piedmont was declared 'red zone' because of Covid-19 infections, and therefore schools were closed. Anita started her protest, following remote lessons in front of the closed school.

AP

Brexit talks suspended: The Brexit trade negotiations have been suspended at a crucial stage because an EU negotiator has tested positive for the coronavirus. EU chief negotiator Michel Barnier said that together with his UK counterpart David Frost we have decided to suspend the negotiations at our level.

AP

Pakistan reports 2,500 new cases: Pakistan has reported over 2,500 new cases of coronavirus, taking the total number of infections in the country to 365,927.

PTI

Prince William welcomes new probe into 1995 Diana interview

LONDON, 19 NOVEMBER

Prince William has tentatively welcomed an independent investigation into the circumstances surrounding a BBC interview in 1995 with his mother, Princess Diana, royal officials said Thursday.

William, who is second in line to the throne, said in a statement that the probe is a step in the right direction."He added that it should help establish the truth behind the actions that led to the interview as well as subsequent decisions taken by those in the BBC at the time.

The BBC announced Wednesday it has appointed a retired senior judge to lead an investigation into the 1995 interview after Diana's brother, Charles Spencer, made renewed complaints this month that journalist Martin Bashir used false documents and other dishonest tactics to convince Diana to agree to the interview.

The 1995 interview, in which Diana famously said there were three of us in this marriage referring to Prince Charles' relationship with Camilla Parker-Bowles, was watched by millions of people and sent shockwaves through the monarchy.

AP

Trump targets vote certification in late bid

The battle is centered in the battleground states that sealed Biden's win where Trump and his allies seek to upend the electoral process

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, 19 NOVEMBER



balking at signing off on vote tallies in a rural county.

The moves don't reflect a coordinated effort across the battleground states that broke for Biden, local election officials said. Instead, they seem to be inspired by Trump's incendiary rhetoric about baseless fraud and driven by Republican acquiescence to broadsides against the nation's electoral system as state and federal courts push aside legal challenges filed by Trump and his allies.

Still, what happened in Wayne County, Michigan, on Tuesday and Wednesday was a jarring reminder of the dis-

ruptions that can still be caused as the nation works through the process of affirming the outcome of the Nov. 3 election.

There is no precedent for the Trump team's widespread effort to delay or undermine certification, according to University of Kentucky law professor Joshua Douglas.

"It would be the end of democracy as we know it," Douglas said. "This is just not a thing that can happen."

Certifying results is a routine yet important step after local election officials have tallied votes, reviewed procedures, checked to ensure votes were counted correctly and investigated discrepancies. Typically, this certification is done by a local board of elections and then, later, the results are certified at the state level.

But as Trump has refused to concede to Biden and continues to spread false claims of victory, this mundane process is taking on new sig-

nificance.

Among key battleground states, counties in Michigan, Nevada and Wisconsin have all made it through the initial step of certifying results. Except for Wayne County, this process has largely been smooth. Arizona, Pennsylvania and Georgia still haven't concluded their local certifications.

In Wayne County, the two Republican canvassers at first balked at certifying the vote, winning praise from Trump, and then reversed course after widespread condemnation. A person familiar with the matter said Trump reached out to the canvassers, Monica Palmer and William Hartmann, on Tuesday evening after the revised vote to express gratitude for their support. Then,

on Wednesday, Palmer and Hartmann signed affidavits saying they believe the county vote "should not be certified."

Time is running short for Trump. Across the nation,

Trump pursues recount of two Wisconsin counties

ASSOCIATED PRESS
MADISON, WISCONSIN (US), 19 NOVEMBER

President Donald Trump filed for a recount of Wisconsin's two largest Democratic counties, paying the required \$3 million cost and alleging that they were the sites of the worst irregularities although no evidence of illegal activity has been presented.

The recounts in Mil-

waukee and Dane counties will begin Friday and must be done by December 1.

Georgia to release report on hand tally: Georgia election officials expect to release a report Thursday on a hand tally of the presidential race, and they have repeatedly said they expect it to affirm Democrat Joe Biden's narrow lead over Republican President Donald Trump.

campaign's general counsel, said last week the campaign was trying to halt certification in battleground states until it could get a better handle on vote tallies and whether it would have the right to automatic recounts. Right now,

Trump is requesting a recount in Wisconsin in two counties, and Georgia is doing a hand audit after Biden led by a slim margin of 0.3 percentage points, but there is no mandatory recount law in the state. The law provides that option to a trailing candidate if the margin is less than 0.5 percentage points.

Some in the Republican president's orbit have held out hope that by delaying certification, GOP-controlled state legislatures will get a chance to select different electors, either overturning Biden's victory or sending it to the House, where Trump would almost surely win.

But most advisers to the president consider that a fever dream. Trump's team has been incapable of organising even basic legal activities since the election, let alone the widespread political and legal apparatus needed to persuade state legislators to try to undermine the will of their states' voters.

US records more than 250,000 Covid deaths

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WASHINGTON, 19 NOVEMBER

The US has recorded over 250,000 deaths from COVID-19, a bleak milestone as cases soar once again across the country, worst-hit by the deadly infectious disease that has claimed over 1,349,000 lives across the world.

According to Johns Hopkins University, the US has now reported 250,537 deaths and over 11.5 million confirmed cases.

It has more reported infections and a higher death toll than any other country worldwide.

The coronavirus is now killing at least one American every minute of the day, bringing the country to another horrific milestone on Wednesday.

"On average, two to three weeks ago, we were seeing 70,000 to 80,000 (new) cases per day. Yesterday, there were about 155,000 (new) cases. So if you're alarmed at the 1,700 deaths today, two to three weeks from now, we're going to see 3,000 deaths a day," Reiner said.

While some hospitals are running out of health care workers, the US once again set a new record for hospitalised COVID-19 patients -- 76,830 on Tuesday, according to the Covid Tracking Project.

"The horrible death count

VIRUS SCARE

► According to Johns Hopkins University, the US has now reported 250,537 deaths and over 11.5 million confirmed cases

► The coronavirus is now killing at least one American every minute of the day, bringing the country to another horrific milestone on Wednesday

► The situation is only going to get worse, warned Dr Jonathan Reiner, a professor at George Washington University School of Medicine



that we saw yesterday in the United States ... reflects the number of people who were being infected three weeks ago, two to three weeks ago, because that's the lag," Reiner said on Wednesday.

In an interview on the BBC News channel, Fauci warned about the new surge in cases leading to more deaths.

At the end of March - when the US had recorded 2,200 deaths - Fauci, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, predicted the pandemic could kill up to 200,000 Americans and infect millions more.

"It's a very serious situation because there are lagging indicators," the 79-year-old physician said.

"So when you see the massive increase in cases as we're

seeing now particularly as more and more people are doing things inside, we're in a very difficult situation," he said.

Fauci repeated his call for people to "double down" on public health measures, such as wearing face coverings, physical distancing and avoiding crowds.

"They sound so simple and we know they can work. But there's a degree of Covid fatigue - people just are worn out with these restrictions," he said.

He urged people to "hold out for just a little longer because help is on the way" in the form of vaccines.

While there's great news on the vaccine front, most Americans probably will not be able to get vaccinated until the middle of next year.

The Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine is 95 per cent effective and has shown no serious safety concerns, Pfizer said on Wednesday. BioNTech said it plans to request emergency use authorisation from the US Food and Drug Administration on Friday.

Another vaccine, from Moderna, is 94.5 per cent effective against coronavirus, according to early data released this week. The company says its vaccine did not have any serious side effects.

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson will lay out the biggest programme of investment in British defence since the end of the Cold War in Parliament on Thursday, pumping in an extra 4 billion pounds a year over the next four years.

The mega investment plan will fund space and cyber defence projects and is expected to create thousands of new jobs, Downing Street said.

A new agency dedicated to Artificial Intelligence, the creation of a National Cyber Force and a new "Space Command", capable of launching the first rocket in 2022, are among the areas for the investment focus.

"I Have Taken This Decision In The Teeth Of The Pandemic Because The Defence Of The Realm Must Come First," said Johnson.

"The international situation is more perilous and more intensely competitive than at any time since the Cold War and Britain must be true to our history and stand alongside our allies. To achieve this, we need to upgrade our capabilities across the board," he added.

In a speech to the House of Commons, he will set out a 16.5 billion-pound increase above the Conservative Party manifesto commitment over four years. Downing Street said the new plan takes into account the changing nature of adversaries since the Cold War era of tensions with Soviet Union in the 20th century.

"Rather than being confined to some distant battlefield, those that seek to do harm to our people can reach them through the mobile phones in their pockets or the computers in their homes. To protect our citizens, UK defence therefore needs to operate at all times with leading, cutting-edge technology," Downing Street said.

This will be underpinned by a "record investment" of at least 1.5 billion pounds extra and 5.8 billion pounds in total on military research and development and a commitment to invest further in the Future Combat Air System. These projects are expected to create up to 10,000 jobs annually across the UK. "This settlement secures UK jobs and livelihoods, allows us to invest in our fantastic shipyards and aerospace industry, spreading prosperity to every corner of the UK," said UK Defence Secretary Ben Wallace.



"This is our chance to end the era of retreat, transform our armed forces, bolster our global influence, unite and level up our country, pioneer new technology and defend our people and way of life," he added.

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"This weekend's summit of leaders from the Group of 20 stands out more for what it is not than for what it is. Held online this year because of the coronavirus, the gathering of leaders of the world's preeminent rich and developing nations will not be an opportunity for kings, presidents and prime ministers to conduct the intimate diplomacy of closed-door meetings or pose for memorable photo-ops."

Without red carpet arrivals, it will not be an occasion for its Saudi hosts to dazzle the world's media.

And it is not expected to yield a globally unified response to the worst pandemic in decades. While billions of dollars have been pledged for medicines and vaccines, G-20 countries have mostly focused on securing their own supplies.

A virtual summit does spare Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman the possibility that some leaders may have stood him up in Riyadh, two years after Western intelligence agencies said he bears ultimate responsibility for the killing of writer Jamal Khashoggi in Turkey by Saudi agents, a slaying he's denied any involvement in.

But an online meeting also deprives the Saudis of a media spectacle to tout their position in the world.

Beyond putting a kink in Saudis plans, the pandemic has offered the G-20 an opportunity to prove how such



against SARS-CoV-2 [COVID-19] must be effective in older adults, the researchers note.

The team is also testing whether the vaccine stops people developing COVID-19 in larger Phase 3 trials and early results from this crucial stage are expected in the coming weeks.

These findings are encouraging because older individuals are at disproportionate risk of severe COVID-19 and so any vaccine adopted for use

immune responses to those seen in younger volunteers, said Dr Maheshi Ramasamy, an investigator at the Oxford Vaccine Group. "The next step will be to see if this translates into protection from the disease itself," she said.

This means there are now four promising vaccines on the horizon after Pfizer-BioNTech, Sputnik and Moderna already reporting good preliminary data from Phase 3 tri-

als.

The UK has already ordered

100 million doses of the Oxford vaccine, being manufactured by pharma major AstraZeneca.

The vaccine also has a tie-up with the Serum Institute of India.

Professor Andrew Pollard, the head of Oxford's vaccine trial team, said he is "absolutely delighted" with the latest results.

Crucially, the study also found no suspected unexpected serious adverse reactions during this stage of the trial. The 560 healthy adult volunteers who took part in the phase two trials were given two doses of the vaccine candidate, or a placebo.

"Inducing robust immune responses in older adults has been a long-standing challenge in human vaccine research,

said Dr Angela Minassian, an

investigator at the University of Oxford and honorary consultant in infectious diseases.

"To show this vaccine technology is able to induce these responses, in the age group most at risk from severe COVID-19 disease, offers hope that vaccine efficacy will be similar in younger and older adults," she said.

Thursday's report on data

from the Phase 2 trial of the ChAdOx1 nCoV-19 vaccine

shows that volunteers in the

trial demonstrate similar neutralising antibody titres, and T cell responses across all

three age groups - 18-55, 56-70, and 70+.



The next big thing

Given the Covid times, rehabilitation, counselling and therapy have emerged as the need of the hour and opened up possibilities for future psychiatrists and psychologists

SHRUMITA KAKKAR

Since its outset, the Covid-19 pandemic has brought the world to a jolting halt. Once the lockdown was lifted, people were gradually starting to adapt to a new lifestyle as nothing was going to be the same, at least not in the near future. Apart from job losses and uncertainty, what also magnified were the stress and anxiety levels and deterioration in the condition of those with existing mental health issues. It was just three years ago that the World Health Organisation declared India as the "most depressed country in the world". This was perhaps substantiated by the fact that the Indian Psychiatry Society reported a 20 per cent rise in mental illness issues just within one week of the lockdown. With

one in every seven people in the country suffering from these issues, it is not surprising that even corona positive patients who have recovered may not be able to return to a normal mental state for a long time.

Evidently, rehabilitation, counselling, and therapy have emerged as the need of the hour and opened up possibilities for future psychiatrists and psychologists. Psychology is emerging as the next big thing to watch out for given how it is not only a well-paying career option but also one that is emotionally fulfilling - the fact that these professionals are able to help a person come out of a certain mental state is a positive. A single counselling session costs around Rs 700 to 1000 in Delhi alone and this is only going to go up.

Currently, there are only around 9000 psychiatrists in India, which is a huge gap that can only be filled when more professionals enter this space. Psychological advice is needed in every aspect of one's life given how the times are today. Whether it is one's professional life or because someone is already going through mental trauma, the study of human behaviour and mental processes has never been more pertinent than it is now.

Psychology is an immensely diverse field with many specialisations - clinical, educational, occupational, forensic, sports and more. While research psychologists study and analyse individual behaviour, applied psychologists help solve problems and offer counselling and

therapy. The subject is different from psychiatry, which entails prescribing medications for treating mental disorders. One who is interested to take up psychology as a career may approach by opting for a postgraduate degree in psychology along with other specialised certifications and training.

Job opportunities for psychologists are manifold today. From employee assistance programmes and counselling services in organisations, assessment and counselling services at institutes, to application of knowledge of human behaviour and even developing games, educational aids and other AI interfaces, there is a lot to explore. There are also options such as psychometry and development of tools for the

purpose of assessment, career counselling, and engaging in research and development.

Psychology may be a study, terminology, reading and research intensive course but the opportunities are expanding. It is a multidisciplinary profession, which has an integral role in business, international relations, artificial intelligence and even advertising. This game changer of a career has a lot of scope in making lives and the world a better place going forward. The need of the hour is to raise awareness on these aspects and encourage more people to explore their humane side, where lies the root of this area of study.

The writer is founder, United We Care

PLUS POINTS

Empowering graduates



Prodevans Technologies announced the launch of their unique and collaborative internship programme "Leap" that will enable young graduates from small-town (tier III or IV) to work on projects like PDCloudEX and IVentura.

Leap is an online/virtual internship programme and is the only research-based internship programme in India. It is designed by COSS INDIA, in association with education partners Red Hat Academy, Red Hat Global Learning Services and technology partner Prodevans Technologies. The duration of the programme is for eight weeks. The interns will spend four hours a day, which consists of two hours of training and two hours of project work. To provide the young professional with internship opportunity and ensure a constant supply, Prodevans Technologies tied up with around 100 engineering colleges across the country.

Enlightening learners



Indian School of Business and Finance (ISBF), New Delhi held a virtual inaugural ceremony for the country's first EMF Club at a school level, an initiative to provide students with a platform to learn more about higher studies and careers in the inter-related EMF fields.

The club has been established in partnership with Yuva Bharathi Public School, Coimbatore, in a virtual inauguration ceremony that was attended by more than 350 students from classes 10, 11 and 12, along with senior members of both institutions. The session started with an inaugural address by Aryapriya Ganguly, associate professor, ISBF, who, along with Chirag Mehta, associate director, ISBF, briefed students about the growing relevance of EMF in the world of work and the benefits they can reap from the club.

Supporting students



The Priyamvada Birla Scholarship instituted and funded by the Madhav Prasad Priyamvada Birla Apex Charitable Trust is inviting applications. The scholarship is meant for meritorious needy students, who are studying in the first year of an undergraduate degree course at any college in West Bengal and whose annual family income from all sources is less than Rs 75,000.

Launched in the 2013-14 academic session, this scholarship is awarded to 25 fresh aspirants every year. A sum of Rs 24,000 is paid to the recipients every year till the completion of their undergraduate course. The last date for application is 31 December till 5 pm. For details visit: www.pbs.southpoint.edu.in

Tests ahead



T.I.M.E. has announced All-India Free Mock for CLAT and IPM on 22 November. The test will be conducted in two slots viz., 10 am and 6 pm. Students can choose to write the test on only one course i.e., CLAT or IPM in any one slot. Attractive performance-based fee waivers will be available for the students. For registration, visit: <https://www.time4education.com/local/atticcms/page.php?id=4876>

NISCHAL SHETTY

The Corona virus pandemic has severely affected every sector in our economy. Industries that had been thriving until recently are now facing a steep challenge of keeping themselves afloat. Moreover, the consequences have been dire for millions of workers who have either received salary cuts or lost their jobs. On the bright side, crypto and blockchain

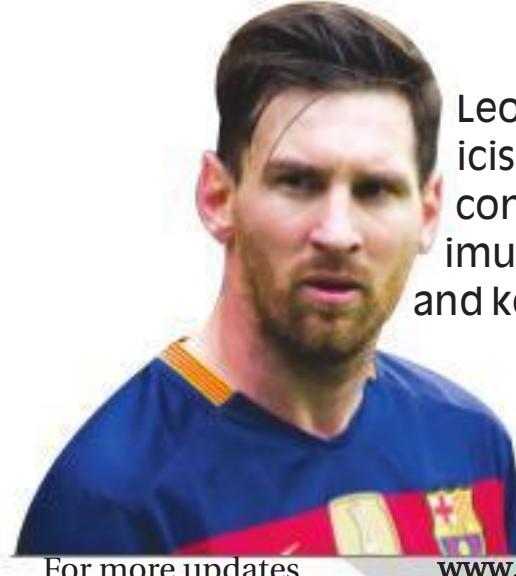
are among the few sunrise sectors that are hiring today. With an estimated market size of \$354 billion, the potential for innovation, growth, and creation of new job roles is tremendous.

Blockchain technology has been revolutionising industry 4.0, and the demand for ancillary skills around blockchain is likely to increase across the globe. In 2019, blockchain was the most searched or demanded skill as per a LinkedIn survey. Moreover, scores of profes-

sionals are learning about blockchain, as they view it as a stepping stone towards pursuing a more successful career. As more mainstream companies like JP Morgan, Reliance Jio, Facebook, etc. dive into blockchain, the requirement for talent in this sector will continue to multiply.

Unlike other tech-related knowledge and skills, learning opportunities in the crypto and blockchain ecosystem do not remain limited to engineers or coding enthusiasts. The diversity

The writer is CEO, WazirX

For more updates www.thestatesman.com

THUMBNAILS

Salah out: Liverpool's Mohamed Salah has had a second positive test for the coronavirus while on international duty. Salah, who first tested positive on Friday, missing Egypt's Africa Cup of Nations qualifier against Togo, is out of Liverpool's game with Leicester.

Pak prize: The players of Karachi Kings, who won the fifth edition of the recent Pakistan Super League, has been awarded a flat each by the franchise-owner, claim media reports. On Tuesday evening, Karachi Kings defeated Lahore Qalandars by five wickets.

Tour announced: England will visit Pakistan for the first time in 16 years when they play two Twenty20 Internationals in October 2021, the England and Wales Cricket Board said on Wednesday. The tour will serve as a build-up to the Twenty20 World Cup in India.

Gayle pull-out: Chris Gayle will not be in the first edition of the Lanka Premier League. Gayle was set to join Irfan Pathan, Munaf Patel, and England fast bowler Liam Plunkett among others at Kandy Tuskers. On Wednesday, Tuskers said Gayle had opted out.

Sharma tune-up: Ishant Sharma, undergoing rehabilitation after sustaining an injury at the National Cricket Academy, has bowled at his customary pace at practice in Bangalore. A video, over a minute long, showed Sharma bowling off his usual run-up.

Ashwin useful: Off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin, picked only for the Test series against Australia starting next month, can still be a valuable asset for India in Twenty20 Internationals, said Delhi Capitals' assistant coach Mohammed Kaif on Wednesday.

Easwaran's ordeal: Bengal captain Abhimanyu Easwaran, who played in the Ranji Trophy final against Saurashtra in March, has tested positive for the coronavirus, the Cricket Association of Bengal said on He is, however, asymptomatic and is now quarantined.

Busquets injured: Barcelona's Sergio Busquets has been ruled out of Saturday's La Liga clash away to Atletico Madrid owing to a knee injury sustained on international duty with Spain. Barca confirmed that Busquets had strained his knee ligaments on Saturday.

Guardiola's extension: Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola has signed a two-year contract extension, the English club said Thursday. The new deal runs through the end of the 2022-23 season. Guardiola is in his fifth season at City, longer than he stayed at Barcelona (four) and Bayern Munich (three).

Bindra roped in as event ambassador: India's only individual Olympic gold-medalist shooter Abhinav Bindra was on Thursday named event ambassador of the 16th Airtel Delhi Half Marathon, scheduled to be held on November 29. Bindra had won the gold medal in the 10m air rifle event at the Beijing Olympics in 2008.

East Bengal hires forensic psychologist: Liverpool legend and SC East Bengal head coach Robbie Fowler has added forensic psychologist Nicola McCallion to team's support staff, just a week ahead of their high pressure derby against arch-rivals ATK Mohun Bagan. Nicola's addition makes it an eight-member strong backroom staff for Fowler who also has a set piece coach – Terence McPhilips – a first for an Indian club.

IN SELF-DEFENCE

Leo Messi (in photo left), having provoked recent criticism that he is not really playing as good as he should considering his reputation, has said: "I try to give maximum and I see myself able to do it to help the group and keep fighting for the (Argentinian) shirt. I feel good."

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
SYDNEY, 19 NOVEMBER

Cheteshwar Pujara (in photo), who has not played competitive cricket since March, had an extensive net session here on Thursday and looked comfortable facing the fast bowlers as he geared up for what promises to be a gruelling Test series against Australia next month.

"He has to undergo a 14-day quarantine as per the local government guidelines. After that, he will join the team," said a BCCI source.

'Indian players will feel extra pressure without Kohli'

India will "not be clear in their own mind" about their batting order after the departure of talismanic captain Virat Kohli at the end of first Test Down Under, feels Australian great Ricky Ponting.

The 32-year-old Kohli has been granted paternity leave by the BCCI to be with his wife for the birth of their first child.

"India will feel that without Kohli there (for three Tests), for his batting and leadership, that'll put all sorts of pressure on different players," Ponting was quoted as saying by cricket.com.au.

"You'd think (Ajinkya) Rahane will take over the captaincy, which will put extra pressure on him, and they've got to find someone to bat at that really important No.4 spot.

"I don't think they'll be clear in their own mind, even now,



what their batting order will look like for the first Test. Who's going to open, who'll bat at four when Kohli goes?" Ponting added.

The Indian bowling attack will comprise Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami in lead roles. The tourists will call on Ishant Sharma if he recovers from the side injury sustained at the IPL while Umesh Yadav and Navdeep Saini are also part of India's Test squad.

With so many options, Ponting feels India will have to answer more questions than the hosts. "The questions that are being asked around Australia

with Pucovski and Green, I think India have got a few more questions to answer. "Shami, Jasprit Bumrah will be shant, will be Umesh Yadav, will be a young guy like Saini or Siraj?" They've got a lot of questions to ask as well. And which spinner? They've got a few spinners in their squad and they've got to figure out which one to pick for the pink ball game in Adelaide," Ponting said. India made history by winning their first Test series on Australian soil in the 2018-19 series. However, the hosts were then without their star batsmen David Warner and Steve Smith, who were serving bans for their involvement in the 2018 ball-tampering incident.