

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

COIMBATORE | TUESDAY 1 | DECEMBER 2020

## WEATHER



**Max:** 30°C  
**Min:** 18°C  
**Rainfall:** Nil

## ASTROGUIDE

**Sarvari:** Karthigai 16  
**Tithi:** Prathamai  
**Star:**Rohini/ Mrigashirsham  
**Rahukalam:**  
3 pm to 4.30 pm  
**Yamagandam:**  
9 am to 10.30 am  
**PRAYERS**

**Fajar:** 5.00 am  
**Zohar:** 12.03 pm  
**Asar:** 3.14 pm  
**Maghrib:** 5.40 pm  
**Isha:** 6.55 pm

**SUNSET TODAY** 5.41 PM  
**SUNRISE TOMORROW** 6.16 AM  
**MOONRISE TODAY** 6.31 PM  
**MOONSET TOMORROW** 7.44 AM

## CORONA COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+30,652)	(+471)
94,62,727	1,37,648

covid19india.org

### STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+ 1,410 )	
TN: 7,81,915	11,712

### WORLD CONFIRMED CASES

6,33,28,744

### DEATHS

14,69,684

COUNTRIES,  
AREAS WITH  
CASES

218

worldometers.info

## A R Rahman becomes Bafta Breakthrough India ambassador

**Mumbai:** Academy Award-winning music composer AR Rahman on Monday was announced as the ambassador for the British Academy of Film and Television Arts' (Bafta) 'Breakthrough Initiative'.

The initiative, supported by Netflix, aims to identify, celebrate, and support up to five talents working in film, games, or TV in India. Rahman said he is thrilled to work with Bafta to discover talent that the country has to offer.

## Delhi govt reduces RT-PCR test price to ₹800

**New Delhi:** The Arvind Kejriwal government on Monday ordered all private laboratories to reduce the price of RT-PCR tests in the national capital to ₹ 800 from ₹2,400. According to an order issued by the health department, private laboratories have been asked to charge Rs 800 for testing "samples collected by government teams and collected from collection sites by private sector labs as requisitioned by districts and hospitals".

## India does not need to import from China: Gadkari

**New Delhi:** Highlighting the role of MSMEs in enhancing exports and helping the country achieve self reliance, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari on Monday said India does not need to import from China. "Already in automobile sector, in many sectors now, in agriculture, automobiles, everywhere, we have already found the solutions. Now we don't need to import from China," said the minister.

### COUNTER

### POINT



**Believe me, these are local elections not Lok Sabha!**



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**Rahul discusses 2021 polls with TN leaders**



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**China, Pak talk regional security**

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**World Cup hero Diop dies at 42**



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### PROTESTERS CALL IT THEIR 'DECISIVE BATTLE'

# Farmers' protest against agri laws to continue

**SANJAY KAW AND BHASKAR HARI SHARMA | DC**

NEW DELHI, NOV. 30

Refusing to budge, the farmers protesting against the Centre's new laws on agricultural reforms at the Delhi-Haryana border said on Monday that they were in the nation's capital for a "decisive battle" and that their agitation will continue until their demands are met. Thousands of protesters who have been spending cold nights at the Singhu and Tikri borders for the past five days got a shot in the arm with some Haryana khap panchayats deciding to join their agitation from Tuesday.

The farmers' protests have not only affected vehicular movement across the Delhi-NCR region, but also hit the supply of essential commodities to the national capital. The blockade of NH 1 and 10, the two main links between Haryana and Delhi, at Singhu and Tikri border points for the past three days, has hit the supply of vegetables and milk to the city.

Soon after Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke in defence of the farm laws in Varanasi on Monday, a representative of the protesting farmers said they want him to listen to their "mann ki baat". "Our demands are non-negotiable," he added. The representative went on to say that the ruling party "will have to pay a heavy price" if it does not pay heed to their concerns. "We have come here to fight a decisive battle," he said. Farmers' leader Gurnam Singh Chaudhary said around 31 cases have been registered against the protesters so far to "suppress" their agitation. He said that the farmers will continue their agitation until their demands are met.

Reaching out to the farmers — who have accused the government of bringing in the new laws for the benefit of corporate groups — Mr Modi said: "I know that decades of falsehood do put apprehensions in the minds of farmers... I want to say this from the banks of Mother Ganga... we are not working with the intention of deceiving. Our intentions are as holy as the water of the river Ganga". ■ **PS**



Farmers gather at Singhu border during their ongoing Delhi Chalo protest against Centre's new farm laws, in New Delhi, on Monday.

— PTI

## Opposition is playing tricks, says Modi

**DC CORRESPONDENT**

NEW DELHI, NOV. 30

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, facing nationwide protests by farmers across the country against the recently introduced farm laws, on Monday blamed the Opposition's sustained misinformation campaign which, he said, was making farmers suspicious of the reformist laws introduced by his NDA government. Attacking the previous Congress-led governments for misleading farmers over the years, Mr Modi, while inaugurating the six-lane project of Varanasi-Allahabad highway in Varanasi, where he was on a day-long visit, said, "I know that decades of falsehood do put apprehensions in the minds of farmers. I want to say this from the bank of Mother Ganga — we are not working with the intention of deceiving. Our intentions are as holy as the water of river Ganga."

Mr Modi's clarification has come at a time when farmers from several states have launched massive protests against the three farm laws, demanding that they be scrapped.

## Cong launches social media campaign

**DC CORRESPONDENT**

NEW DELHI, NOV. 30

Throwing their weight behind the protesting farmers, Congress Party on Monday launched a social media campaign in their support even as former Party President Rahul Gandhi said when farmers raise their voice it resonates across the country.

"The Modi government has persecuted the farmer — first it brought black laws and then used lathis against them, but it forgot that when the farmer raises his voice, it resonates throughout the country. You also raise your voice against the exploitation of farmers and join the #SpeakUPForFarmers campaign," Mr Gandhi tweeted.

The Wayanad MP further said: "The farmer of the country has come to Delhi in the cold, leaving his home and fields, to voice his protest against the black agriculture laws. In this battle of truth and untruth, with whom do you stand - the 'Annadata' (food-giving) farmer or the PM's capitalist friends".

## Rajasthan ally asks NDA to withdraw laws

**Jaipur, Nov. 30:** Nagaur MP Hanuman Beniwal, an alliance partner of NDA, on Monday said he will have to reconsider his party's support to the Centre if the new agricultural reform laws are not withdrawn.

Beniwal, the convener of Rashtriya Loktantrik Party (RLP), appealed to Union home minister Amit Shah to withdraw the three farm laws immediately and implement all the recommendations made by the Swaminathan Commission.

"RLP is an alliance partner of NDA, but its strength lies in youth and farmers, and if prompt action is not taken in this matter in the interest of farmers, I will have to reconsider on being part of the NDA," he tweeted.

Beniwal's tweets came a day after chief minister Ashok Gehlot wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi demanding withdrawal of the farm laws.

Beniwal is the only MP of RLP party which has three MLAs in Rajasthan. — **PTI**

# Marina beach will open to public Dec. 14

**DC CORRESPONDENT**

CHENNAI, NOV. 30

Bringing in more relaxations to the lockdown, which would now continue till the end of 2020, Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami announced the opening up of all beaches in Tamil Nadu for the public on December 14 and also the reopening of colleges for some classes from December 7.

Undergraduate final year classes in all arts, science, technical, engineering, agriculture, fisheries and veterinary colleges and



classes for both undergraduate and postgraduate courses in medical and related colleges would open on December 7, an announcement from the Chief Minister said on Monday. Medical students admitted for their courses begin-

ning in the year 2020-21, however, would have to wait till February 1, 2021, for the classes to start and the hostels to open. Among the other relaxations to the lockdown, imposed on March 25, announced on Monday are opening of tourist spots, swimming pools for sports training and exhibition halls for business to business purposes.

Indoor gatherings with 200 participants or 50 per cent occupancy in halls would be allowed for social, political, entertainment and religious reasons during the month of

December provided the organisers obtained prior permission from the District Collector or the Chennai Police Commissioner.

Decision on allowing public gatherings in open air would be taken in due course, the announcement said, adding that e-registration for those coming from other states, excluding Puducherry, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, would continue. The ban on international flights and the restrictions in containment zones would also continue as usual. ■ **P3**

# Rajini to decide on political plunge 'as soon as possible'

**G. BABU JAYAKUMAR & D. SEKAR | DC**

CHENNAI, NOV. 30

Nothing emerged from the closed door meeting that actor Rajinikanth had with around 45 top level functionaries of Rajini Makkal Mandram, including 38 district secretaries, as the super star refused to answer the big question of whether he would enter politics or not.

Following the news of the meeting leaking to the media on Saturday night through a copy of a letter to the police department seeking protection for the event, the media went berserk with speculations on Rajinikanth's political plans. Apart from articles in newspapers and discussion on television channels, even social media was agog with posts.

The media hype also gave rise to hope among his supporters, fans and followers. Many of them turned up outside the Raghavendra Kalyana Mandapam in Kodambakkam, where the meeting was scheduled to be held at 10 am on Monday.

Leaving his Poes Garden residence at around 9.30 am, Rajinikanth arrived at the venue ahead of time to a cheerful welcome from the fans outside the hall, who hailed him as 'Future Chief Minister', and also showered him with flowers.

Inside the hall, where the chairs were arranged according to Covid-19 protocol with sufficient gaps between them, the actor is said to have listened to the participants without committing himself to joining politics. He elicited their views but did not reveal much about his plans.

The actor reviewed the working of the Mandram district branches and gave his opinion on the working of the secretaries. Only 18 of the secretaries, according to his assessment, had done exceedingly well, while 12 had just done what was told to them and eight had performed below par.

The secretaries had been entrusted with the tasks of enrolling more members, setting up booth committees and also doing social service in the times of the pandemic. The secretaries' performance was



Actor-turned-politician Rajinikanth gestures at his fans after meeting with the senior functionaries of Rajini Makkal Mandram to decide on political plunge, in Chennai, on Monday.

— DC

reportedly assessed based on these parameters.

No one was allowed to take mobile phones inside the meeting hall and the private security of the actor threw a ring around him. He left the hall at around 12.10 pm.

Speaking to the media outside the gates of his residence, he said the district secretaries had assured him that they would abide by his decision, which he had not taken so far. He would take the decision soon and convey it to them.

However, a pall of gloom descended among the gathering of fans and sup-

porters outside the Kalyana Mandapam. They had come expecting their matinee idol to make a dramatic announcement on his political entry.

Elsewhere, too, speculations were ripe on the decision that the actor was expected to take at the earliest. Though the earlier public perception was that he was not interested in launching his own party as there were concerns about his health, the fact that he called for the meeting suddenly gave a ray of hope to his followers. So they were disappointed when they did not hear a definite answer.

### GYCLONE BUREVI

**Heavy rainfall forecast in south TN on Dec. 2, 3**

**Chennai:** The depression over the Bay of Bengal is very likely to intensify into a deep depression over the next 12 hours and then further intensify into a cyclonic storm, named Burevi, during the subsequent 24 hours, Regional Meteorological Centre stated in Chennai. The storm is likely to cross Sri Lanka during the evening/ night of December 2. ■ **P4**

# US prez-elect names all-woman White House press team

**Washington, Nov. 30:** President-elect Joe Biden on Sunday named former State Department spokesperson Jen Psaki as the White House press secretary as he announced an all-women communications team for his administration. Kate Bedingfield, who served as the deputy campaign manager and communications director for the Biden-Harris Campaign, has been named as the White House Communications Director;



Karine Jean Pierre as the Principal Deputy Press Secretary; and Symone Sanders as the Senior Advisor and Chief Spokesperson for the Vice President.

Elizabeth E. Alexander has been named the

Communications Director for the First Lady; Pili Tobar the Deputy White House Communications Director; and Ashley Etienne the Communications Director for the Vice President. These diverse, experienced, and talented women demonstrate President-elect Biden's continued commitment to building an administration that looks like America and is ready to deliver results for working families on day one. — **PTI**

## Biden names Janet Yellen as Treasury Secretary, Neera Tanden as head of OMB

**Washington, Nov. 30:** US President-elect Joe Biden on Monday named Janet Yellen as his Treasury Secretary and Indian-American Neera Tanden as Director of Office of Management and Budget, as he announced key members of his economic team. If confirmed by the US Senate, Yellen, 74, will be

the first woman to lead the Treasury Department in its 231-year history, and the first person to have served as Treasury Secretary, Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers, and Chair of the Federal Reserve.— **PTI** ■ **P7**



Neera Tanden





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## OTHER STORIES

## Sub inspector dies in mishap

DC CORRESPONDENT  
ARIYALUR, NOV 30

A police officer was killed in a road accident at Ammakulam section road near Keelapalur in the district on Monday.

Police said the deceased, Selvaraj, sub-inspector of police, attached to the Keelapalur police station had gone to the Ariyalur court on duty on his two-wheeler. After work, he was on his way to Keelapalur when he was fatally knocked down by a car.

Ariyalur police removed the body of the deceased and sent it to the government medical college hospital here for post-mortem.

## Cops detain protesting farmers

DC CORRESPONDENT  
TIRUCHY, NOV 30

Hundreds of farmers belonging to the Desiya Then Indhiya Nathigal Inaippu Vivasayeegall Sangam including their state president P.Ayyakannu were taken into custody by police here on Monday, when they attempted sending paper rockets to the collectorate here, and later lay siege to the campus.

Ayyakannu told newsmen that their Monday's protest was against the police who prevented them from leaving for New Delhi to join the nationwide farmers' stir, for which the association had spent a large amount of money booking railway tickets to Delhi.

Strongly condemning the state government for not permitting them to take part in the agitation at New Delhi, he said the farmers stir demanded withdrawal of the recent farm laws of the Union government, providing profitable prices for agricultural produce, and a few others. Meanwhile, a group of volunteers of the Tiruchy district unit of the CPI(M) were arrested by police as they attempted to stage a rail roko at the Tiruchy railway junction. Police sources said all those detained were released in the evening.

## Man gets double lifer for couple's murder

**Tirunelveli:** A farmer was sentenced to double life on Monday by the Tirunelveli district court in connection with the murder of a couple. The convict, Muthal Raj of Maipparai, Thiruvengadam near Sankarankoil, was arrested for fatally attacking his neighbour, Jeyaraman and Dhanalakshmi, as their son, Kannan eloped with his daughter in 2015.

The first additional district court of Tirunelveli, hearing the case sentenced Muthalraj to double imprisonment.

## Housing projects in low-lying areas cause floods, says CM

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV 30

Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami said the building of more and more houses in the low-lying areas of Ram Nagar, Madipakkam, Velacherry and surrounding regions, was the main reason for water-logging in south Chennai.

In the region where there were houses in only 20 per cent of the area in 2004, houses had come up in 80 per cent of the space, he said while speaking to the media after reviewing the work undertaken to pump out the water from inundated areas like Pallikaranai, Okkium Madu and Muttukadu.

Palaniswami listed the various projects the government had devised to ensure that water logging did not happen in future and said Chennai once had over 3,000 places where water stagnated



CM Edappadi K. Palaniswami at Pallikaranai marshland on Monday.

— DC

after rains. But now the number of spots prone to waterlogging has come down due to the efforts taken by the government.

Permission had been sought from the Centre for undertaking schemes costing Rs 581 crore to create pathways for the water to drain into the Buckingham Canal from

the Chemancherry, Perumbakkam, Pallikaranai, Perungudi and Velachery region, he said, adding that it would benefit 10 lakh people.

To channelize the water from the West Tambaram, Mudichur and Varadharajapuram area in alternative canals and also to strengthen the

banks of Adyar river, another scheme costing Rs 71.30 crore had been devised, he said. It would help eight lakh people when it was implemented, he said.

He said that he had come down to review the clearing of the inundated areas with a view to finding a lasting solution to the problem.

## DMK, TNCC support agitating farmers

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV 30

DMK president M K Stalin and TNCC chief K S Alagiri wanted the Prime Minister Narendra Modi to hold direct talks with the agitating farmers in Delhi and also accede to their demand for the repeal of the three anti-farmers laws enacted by the BJP government in Parliament recently.

In a joint statement on Monday, they said several lakhs of farmers representing over 500 farmers' associations from all over India had laid a siege of Delhi, placing their demands on behalf of the 62 crore farmers in the country.

The leaders wanted the Centre to allow the agitating farmers to hold their rally in Jantar Mantar. They also accused the AIADMK government in Tamil Nadu of being in league with the BJP government at the Centre and pointed out that similar law was recently passed in the state Assembly.



## Construction of Ooty medical college gathers momentum

B RAVICHANDRAN | DC  
OOTY, NOV 30

After the initial hiccup, work related to the construction of the government medical college-cum-hospital here has gained momentum, thereby bringing hope that the first medical college here would soon become a reality.

The Nilgiris lacked modern and hi-tech hospital facilities, forcing residents here to travel to neighbouring districts seeking better medical facilities, and tourists also had to travel to Coimbatore during medical emergencies. Hence,

the government's move to establish a medical college-cum-hospital here, was considered a gift to residents here.

Though its foundation was laid way back in July, there were some objections to the college coming up at present site at Indu Nagar. On the one side, a few objected the location of the hospital, and on the other, the administration of the defunct Hindustan Photo Films manufacturing company objected to handing over 25 acres of lands from its possession, for the medical college. Some 'greens' objected to the removal of nearly

1,800 eucalyptus trees in the proposed site.

However, with the intervention of the court, all objections have come to a halt. The high court permitted the removal of eucalyptus trees, as they are exotic ones. After the initial spade works and landscaping works were completed, work related to constructing the medical college has gained momentum as installing concrete structures to raise the building is underway. Sources said that the work will be completed at the earliest possible time to make the medical college functional by next year.

## Rahul discusses 2021 polls with TN leaders

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV 30

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi held discussions with leaders of TNCC on the strategies to be adopted for the 2021 Assembly elections and on the efforts to be made in strengthening the secular, democratic alliance in the state on Tuesday.

The meeting held through video conference between 4.30 and 6 pm, dwelled upon the anti-Tamil Nadu measures of the BJP government at the Centre and pointed out how the imposition of Neet on the students from the state had affected them, according to a press release from TNCC president K. S. Alagiri.

By taking the anti-Tamil Nadu policies of the BJP



to the people, support should be mobilized for the Congress and its alliance, it was decided in the meeting that also stressed on the need to provide relief for the people of the State from the AIADMK rule.

Rahul Gandhi pointed out that though the Congress was out of power in the State for over 50 years, it remained a robust organization with following. By putting in more efforts the party

could be made stronger, he said.

Among the leaders from the State who attended the video meeting were: P. Chidambaram, K. R. Ramasamy, A. Chellakumar, P. Manickam Tagore, E. V. K. S. Elangovan, S. Thirunavukarasar, M. Krishnaswamy, K. V. Thangabalu, E. M. Sudharshana Nachiappan, S. Jothamani, C. T. Meiyappan, Christopher Tilak, Pravin Chakraborty, K. Jayakumar, M. K. Vishna Prasad, Mayura S. Jayakumar and Mohan Kumaramangalam.

AICC leaders who participated in the discussions were: K. C. Venugopal, Mukul Wasnik, Dinesh Gundu Rao, Sanjay Dutt and Srivelli Prasad, the release said.

## PMK's protest for 20% quota begins today

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV 30

The first phase of the continuous agitation by the PMK to demand for 20 per cent exclusive reservation for Vanniyars begins on Tuesday with a protest in front of the Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission office in Chennai.

PMK founder Dr S Ramadoss had given the clarion call to the members of the Vanniyar community to take part in the agitation demanding 20 per cent reservation for the community in education and jobs in the State.

Apart from the demand for the reservation, Ramadoss also urged the government to release details of the community-wise representation in jobs and educational institutions, which was apparently aimed at explaining the need for the agitation. The head of the PMK's protest committee G K Mani would lead the agitation on Tuesday at 11 am.

## PLEA TO RE-OPEN COMMUNITY CENTRE

DC CORRESPONDENT  
TIRUCHY, NOV 30

Members of the GK Moopanar Nala Sangam, Tiruverumbur, led by their president Thoppi S Chelladurai and secretary Vichitra appealed to the district administration here to instruct the city corporation commissioner to open the community centre meant for Hindu Pallan community, which has been locked for the last one year by the corporation without valid reasons.

In their memorandum to Collector S Sivasar, they said due to the closure of the community centre, residents of the community were unable to hold meetings or functions. Thanks to the timely help of former Union minister and Rajya Sabha member, GK Vasan, the community centre was constructed using the MP development fund.

They also wanted the district administration to give free house site pattas for all 771 members of the Sangam, and arrange a house for them under the PM's housing scheme. The collector said he would look into their demands.



One of the temple tanks overgrown with weeds.

## Temple tanks in Kanchi remain dry

P.A JEBARAJ | DC  
CHENNAI, NOV 30

Although the city and suburbs recorded a steep rise in its water levels this monsoon, the temple tanks located in the temple town Kanchipuram, remains bone dry. The dried-out temple tanks in the district, despite the heavy downpour, raise questions over measures taken to conserve rainwater ahead of the monsoon.

For instance, the lake beds of the Ekambaranathan temple tank, Vaikunda Perumal temple tank, Rangaswamy temple tank, Astapooja Perumal temple tank were completely dry though the area recorded heavy rainfall. Residents visiting the temple tanks were disappointed as the heavy rains made no difference to the dry tanks.

One of the residents

said, how do you expect water to enter the tank if the municipality officials and the temple authorities have not even made one step till now to clean and maintain the tank. At least 10 temple tanks were empty with wild vegetation covering the bed. These places have turned into a tent for drug users and anti-social elements, the residents alleged.

Kanchipuram town is blessed with several temple tanks.

However, no attention was given to some long-term preparation and storage of rainwater. Why can't the various temple tanks in the city be cleaned up and made ready to receive the monsoon waters, as and when the rains come? The people in the district request the revenue department and the temple management to initiate immediate action.

## Protesters urge Tancem to honour its promise

DC CORRESPONDENT  
ARIYALUR, NOV 30

Tension prevailed for a while in the region when a section of villagers of Anandavadi, led by film director and founder of the Tamil Perarasu Katchi, Gowtham, staged a demonstration in front of the mines of the state-owned Tamil Nadu Cements Corporation Ltd., (TANCEM) at Kayalpath near here on Monday, demanding TANCEM to honour its promise of providing jobs to the 161 farmers who parted with their agricultural lands, for TANCEM mine.

According to Gowtham, farmers who gave 250 acres of their land to TANCEM in 1992 were assured that a job would be provided to a member of the farmer's family,

based on their education qualification. But even after 30 years, TANCEM did not honour its promise. However, following the continuous stir, TANCEM had last year provided jobs to 57 persons on contract basis. But the protesters had demanded that permanent jobs be given to each of the families of the 161 farmers, to halting employment to outsiders.

On information, a team of revenue officials led by RDO Poonthoai, Udayarpalayam, came to the spot and over phone contacted Industries minister MC Sampath, in which the minister promised Gowtham that action will be taken in the course of next week. Following this, the agitators dispersed, police added.



Medical counselling underway in Chennai on Monday after a break due to cyclone Nivar.

— DC

## State reports 1,410 new Covid cases, nine fatalities

**Chennai, Nov 30:** Tamil Nadu on Monday reported 1,410 fresh COVID-19 cases and the tally touched 7,81,915, while the toll stood at 11,112 with nine more fatalities.

The new cases include 385 and 146 from Chennai and Coimbatore respectively and the remainder was spread across Tamil Nadu, a health department bulletin said.

The 7.81 lakh plus tally covers the state capital's 2,15,360, the highest in Tamil Nadu. Two men aged 35 and 39, were among the deceased.

All the nine deceased had co-morbidities. The 11,112 deaths include 3,850 and 713 fatalities from here and nearby Chengelpet respectively, the bulletin said.

The number of active cases

dipped to 10,997 with 1,456 patients getting discharged from various hospitals.

Cumulatively, 7,59,206 people have got cured till date.

As many as 62,616 samples were tested (under the Reverse Transcription Polymerase Chain Reaction method) and in total 1,20,60,001 specimens have been examined (RT-PCR) in 220 labs in the state. — PTI

## Mom, two kids drown in river

K. SENTHIL NATHAN | DC  
VELLORE, NOV 30

Grief and sorrow struck the area as news spread about the tragic drowning of three persons including a mother and her two daughters, residents of Bodipettai water tank area, Modi Pettai road, Gudiyattam Buvaneswaripettai in Vellore district, on Monday.

Sources said, the Mordhana dam was filled to capacity due to the recent rains, and its excess water released into the Koundinya Mahanadhi river. Police and revenue officials had been warning people not to venture into the water.

Sources said the victims were locals and the river Koundinya Mahanadhi flowed just a few metres away from their back yard.

The family comprises Yuvaraj (father), wife Nadhiya (31), elder daughter Niveda (11) a class-6 student and her younger

sister Harshini (8), class-3 student. Yuvaraj worked in a local grocery store, near the Gudiyatham bus stand. He had come home for lunch on Monday noon and left the house, when the children urged their mother to take them to the river.

Nadhiya took them to a check dam, and after a while, noticing mud on the children's feet, she took them to a shallow part to wash their feet.

But they were dragged into deeper waters and Nadhiya who never knew swimming, jumped in the water to save her children. Though onlookers tried to rescue them, their efforts failed, and fire and rescue personnel who rushed to the spot retrieved only the bodies of the three.

Town police inspector Srinivasan sent the bodies to the Gudiyatham government hospital for autopsy. Deputy Collector, Sheik Mansoor M, visited the hospital and met the relatives of the deceased.

ARULOLI M | DC  
TIRUCHENDUR, NOV 30

All is not well between the DMK and the VCK in Thoothukudi (south) district, where the political strife between the two party leaders resulted in VCK district secretary,

Murasu Thamizhappan, lodging a complaint against the DMK south district secretary and Tiruchendur MLA, Anitha R Radhakrishnan, under the SC/ST (prevention of atrocities) Act.

In his complaint to Tiruchendur ASP, Harsh Singh, Murasu Thamizhappan complained that

Anitha R Radhakrishnan spoke ill of him and sent four men threatening to kill him if Thamizhappan indulged in politics against 'Annachi' (Anitha Radhakrishnan). Murasu had also sought protection of his life from Anitha Radhakrishnan.

Anitha Radhakrishnan, however, denied Murasu's allegations.

The issue between the DMK and VCK erupted as south Tiruchendur village panchayat president,

Maharajan, a sole VCK party man in Thoothukudi district, to win the local body elections last year,

joined the DMK on

November 24 in the presence of DMK president MK Stalin. VCK leaders in Thoothukudi district accused Anitha Radhakrishnan of 'fishing' VCK cadres to join the DMK.

Anitha R Radhakrishnan is also faulted for poking his nose in the internal affairs of the VCK in the district.



## OTHER STORIES

Low occupancy  
cancels five  
domestic flightsDC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV 30

Five domestic flight services were cut down significantly at the Chennai airport due to lack of patronage, airport officials said. They said that the cancelled flights had less than half the number of passengers and the services had to be cancelled. According to airport officials, passenger traffic has been much lower than usual on Monday and only a few flights have a reasonable number of passengers. Three flights, a 6:55 am flight to Delhi, a 7 am flight to Ahmedabad and a Kochi flight scheduled to depart from the Chennai Airport on 8:45 am were cancelled on Monday due to less occupancy. Similarly, two Chennai-bound flights from Ahmedabad and Kochi were also cancelled.

Man erecting  
AIADMK flagpole  
electrocuted on ECRDC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV 30

A 33-year-old man who was erecting flagpole was electrocuted when it came into contact with an overhead power cable on the outskirts of Chennai on Monday. Police identified the deceased as Tyagarajan (33) a resident of Navalur in Chengalpattu district. Tyagarajan and other workers employed by the AIADMK were installing flagpole on the East Road Coast ahead the visit of Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami's visit to Muttukadu estuary on Monday evening.

Sources told while Tyagarajan was installing the flagpole, it came in contact with an overhead live cable. He was thrown off and died on the spot. Kanathur police registered a case. His body has been sent to Royapettah government hospital for post-mortem.

## Playing in water



Children playing in the water overflowing from Pammathukulam lake in Tiruvallur district.

—DC

IIT Madras sees growth  
in pre-placement offersSANGEETHA G | DC  
CHENNAI, NOV. 30

Notwithstanding the pandemic impact, Indian Institute of Technology Madras continued to see a growth in pre-placement offers this year.

Ahead of phase-1 of campus placements starting on December 1, as many as 182 pre-placement offers were received by IIT Madras students this academic year compared to 170 offers last year. IIT-M students have been witnessing a rising trend in pre-placement offers for the past few years. The pandemic did not disturb that.

In 2017-18, the institute saw PPOs almost doubling to 114 against 73 in the previous year. In 2018-19, it further grew to 135. Information Technology



accounted for 46 per cent of PPOs, core sectors and R&D, 29 per cent, analytics, consulting and finance, 19 per cent and FMCG, 6 per cent.

Texas Instruments, Microsoft, Qualcomm, Goldman Sachs and American Express are some of the key companies that offered higher numbers of PPOs.

According to IIT Madras, a major factor behind the rise in PPOs is the internship programme, which was conducted completely online

this year, for the first time in its history, to overcome the logistical restrictions.

"We have been observing a direct correlation between internships and pre-placement offers ever since the internship office was created. Internships provide an excellent opportunity for students to understand the working culture and expectations of the companies that they work for and for the companies to realise the potential of our students during that short period. When interests and expectations of interns and companies match, it culminates in pre-placement offers," said N.V. Ravi Kumar, advisor (internships), IIT Madras. As many as 93 companies had provided 415 offers for internships this year.

## Heavy rainfall forecast in south TN

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV 30

The depression over the Bay of Bengal is very likely to intensify into a deep depression over the next 12 hours and then further intensify into a cyclonic storm during the subsequent 24 hours, stated Regional Meteorological Centre in Chennai.

The Regional Meteorological Centre on Monday forecast isolated rain and thunderstorms

in south Tamil Nadu and isolated rain in the north of the state.

"The depression lay centred at 1130 hrs IST of today over the same region near Lat. 7.8° N/Long. 87.4°E, about 680 km east-southeast of Trincomalee (Sri Lanka). Very likely to intensify further into a deep depression during next 12 hours and into a CS (cyclonic storm) during subsequent 24 hrs," read a tweet by the India Meteorological

Department (IMD).

The cyclonic storm is likely to cross Sri Lanka during the evening/night of December 2.

"It is very likely to move nearly westwards thereafter and emerge into the Comorin area on December 3 morning," stated the bulletin.

The system will bring heavy to very heavy rainfall at a few places with isolated extremely heavy falls very likely over south Tamil Nadu, such

as Kanyakumari, Tirunelveli, Thoothukudi, Tenkasi, Ramanathapuram and Sivagangai on December 2-3, stated IMD.

North Tamil Nadu, Pudukcherry and Karaikal receive heavy to very heavy rainfall at isolated places during December 2-3 and isolated heavy rainfall on December 1 and 4. Fishermen have been advised not to venture into southeast Bay of Bengal.

Gold concealed in  
nail cutters, face  
cream boxes seized  
by customsDC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV 30

The customs department here has seized ₹ 14.12 lakh gold being smuggled into the city.

In a statement issued here on Monday, commissioner of customs, Chennai International Airport, said a total of ₹14.12 lakh worth gold weighing 286 grams were seized in the early hours of Monday.

Based on intelligence, Syed Nadeem Ur Rehman (33) of Chennai who had arrived by Indigo flight 6E-66 was intercepted at the exit on suspicion of carrying gold as he was hurrying through the green channel.

He was questioned but as he was evasive in his reply, his check-in bag was taken up for examination.

On examination 11 round gold cut pieces were found concealed in tiger balm glass bottles and cream bottles and 3 gold pieces were found in the bottom of mini toy cars. The nail cutters he had on close examination were found to be multifunctional and having bottle opener and small knife attachments.

Four knife and bottle openers recovered were found to be made of gold. Further, on his search, one gold cut bit was recovered from his pant pocket.

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV 30

Six years after a government servant met with an accident, the Motor Accident Claim Tribunal directed an insurance firm to pay him a compensation of Rs 2.7 lakh. The Tribunal has deducted 10 percent of total compensation for not possessing a driving licence, at the time of accident.

In the petition, AV Gopalakannan, a clerk working in the state secretariat, submitted that he was riding his motorcycle on Chetpet Mangalapuram road in December 2014 when a rashly driven bike hit his vehicle. He sustained injuries and was admitted at hospital. Pondy Bazaar traffic investigation wing police registered a case.

In the petition, he had sought compensation of Rs 12 lakh from the owner of the bike and insurer of the two-wheeler company for



his injuries. In reply, the insurer of the other motorcycle stated that the accident happened only due to the rash and negligent riding of Gopalakannan.

On completion of trial, the tribunal held that a perusal of the FIR filed by the Pondy Bazaar traffic investigation wing police showed that the petitioner had not submitted a copy of his driving license. Hence, in the view of this tribunal, the petitioner rode the motorcycle without a driving license, and he also contributed some factors to the cause of the accident. The tribunal slapped 10 per cent as contributory

negligence for not possessing driving license.

Medical records showed that the petitioner had suffered fracture on his foot and the assessment by the regional medical board stated that he had suffered 30 percent disability due to injuries sustained in the accident. Considering factors like loss of amenities, medical bills and others, the tribunal arrived at an amount of Rs 3 lakh as compensation, the tribunal said.

After deducting Rs 30,000 as contributory negligence, the tribunal directed the insurance firm to pay Rs 2.7 lakh to the petitioner.

## COFFEE-BREAK

Your day today By Dr C.V.B. Subrahmanyam



**Aries:** Take advice but decide on your own. If you're not stable, wait for more information. Hectic work may make it difficult to meet your schedule, preventing mental peace.



**Taurus:** Those momentarily overwhelmed by new work aspects, do not hesitate in seeking help. Your financial position is satisfactory. Change your approach to enhance love.



**Gemini:** Stay away from fights. You may meet an old friend. Respect your partner's feelings. Consider new ideas but avoid commitments. Be firm but don't lose your cool.



**Cancer:** A diplomatic approach works best around work issues. Objective discussions and letting go of unrealistic expectations reduce stress in love life. Be assertive.



**Leo:** Spending time and conversations with loved ones will help you feel better. Review your commitments carefully; make changes to make them feasible.



**Virgo:** Discussions could get intense sometimes, but remain open and you'll find interesting insights. You may feel rundown due to work and family. Take some time off. Taking some time off will help you relax.

## You share your b'day with

**Sivamani with his prominent stage name Drums Sivamani is an Indian musician. He is also a Padmasri award winner and is affiliated with Chennai Super Kings**



**Libra:** Distractions interfere while focusing on your tasks. Brainstorming will bring clarity on sensitive issues. Clarity of thought is the hallmark of your interactions.



**Scorpio:** Listen to your health; don't neglect symptoms. Learn new skills. Your positivism rubs off on those around you. Verify all the relevant information before taking action.



**Sagittarius:** Chance encounters could bring valuable insights. You prioritise domestic commitments and may splurge on loved ones. Good time for an image makeover.



**Capricorn:** You'll focus on meeting deadlines. Organising your resources and manpower helps you play a greater role in decision-making. Not a good day for you, so take important decisions tomorrow.

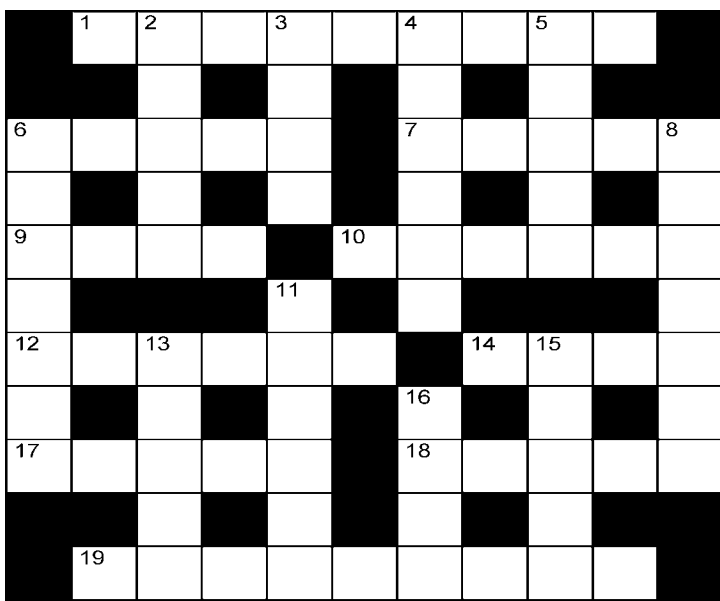


**Aquarius:** Some find property-related news. People notice your creative flair. You'll engage in work-related travel, combining with pleasure. Success depends on your approach.



**Pisces:** Group work can frustrate, but it's good. You've more ideas than you can use; others help pare your vision into something efficient. A tension between you and a friend isn't dissipating despite your giving it time and being good.

## QUICK CROSSWORD



## Across

1. Personally satisfying (9)
6. Explosion (5)
7. Rowing team (5)
9. Paper money (4)
10. Suppinate (6)
12. Sporadic (6)
14. Small island (4)
17. Hearing (5)
18. Burst (5)
19. Tramp (9)

## Down

2. Precise (5)
3. Play divisions (4)
4. Motor fuel (6)
5. Darkness (5)
6. Advantage (7)
8. Deluge (7)
11. Cotton fabric (6)
13. Pollute (5)
15. Reject (5)
16. Swerve (4)

## YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

Across: 1. Kindling, 7. Adapt, 8. Viola, 9. Abates, 10. Cede, 12. Lack, 14. Pastel, 17. Shade, 18. Trout, 19. Children.

Down: 1. Koala, 2. Nutmeg, 3. Lava, 4. Noose, 5. Cataclysm, 6. Satellite, 11. Garter, 13. Coach, 15. Thorn, 16. Feel.

## Word Mine

W  
N  
O  
R  
D  
F  
I  
T  
STODAY'S RATINGS: 17 AVERAGE; 19  
GOOD; 21 OUTSTANDING

How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown in today's puzzle? In making a word, each letter may be used once only. Each word must contain the letter at the top of the pyramid. There should be at least one nine letter word. Plurals, foreign words and proper names are not allowed.

North  
♦ Q J 10 3  
♦ 4 3  
♦ 10 3 9 3 2  
West  
♦ 7 5 2  
♦ K Q 8 4  
♦ Q 2 7 6 5  
♦ 9  
South  
♦ 8 8  
♦ 10 5 3  
♦ A 10 4  
♦ A 10 8 7 6  
Dealer: West  
Vulnerable: Both  
South West North East  
Pass 77  
Opening lead: ??

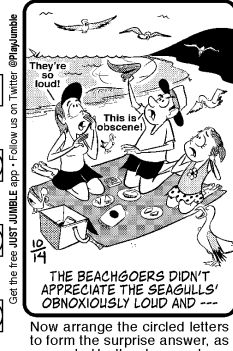
## Jumble

ALGED  
NGROP  
SCAWEH  
FLYUEE

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Yesterday's Jumbles: EXUDE FLOSS LOTION CANNED

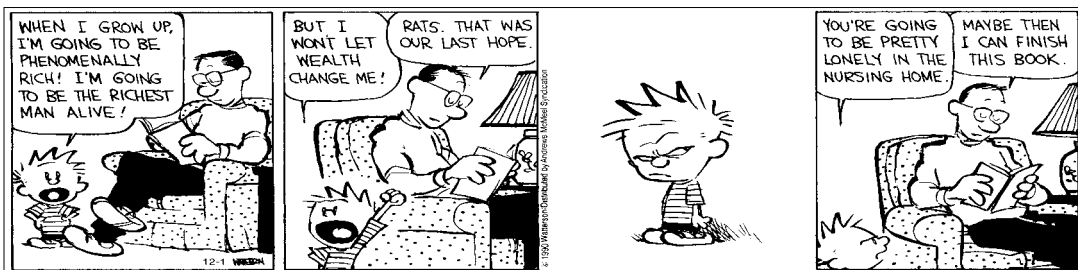
Answer: When he ran over the fire spikes, his front tires lost air in — ONE SECOND FLAT



THE BEACHGOERS DIDN'T APPRECIATE THE SEAGULLS' OBNOXIOUSLY LOUD AND ---

(Answers tomorrow)

CALVIN AND HOBBS | Bill Watterson



THE WIZARD OF ID | Parker and Hartsd



ARCHIE | Bill Henry Scarpelli &amp; craig boldman



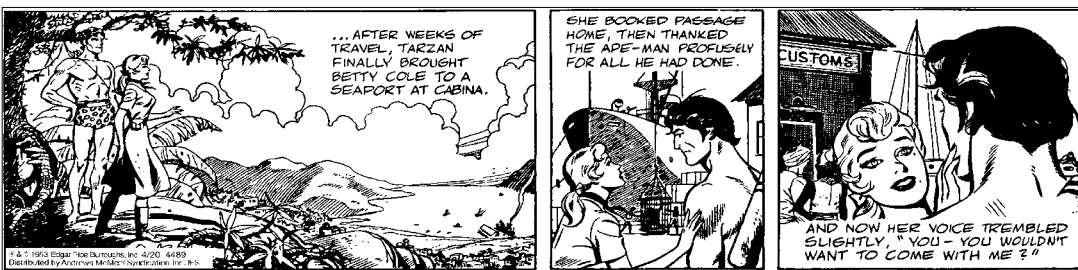
BLONDIE | Dean Young and John Marshall



ANDY CAPP | Reg Smythe



TARZAN | Edgar Rice Burroughs



**bridge**  
**PHILLIP ALDER**

**JUST WHEN YOU THINK YOU HAVE SEEN IT ALL**

Laurence J. Peter, who was a Canadian educator and "hierarchyologist," wrote, "An economist is an expert who will know tomorrow why the things he predicted yesterday didn't happen today."

Get out your crystal ball, then predict the final contract and opening lead on this deal from a Bridge Base Online table.

After West passed, I (North) had a choice. I could have passed or opened one to a black suit. 10 high-card points

suggested a pass, but only six losers counseled opening. If I were going to bid, in the old days, I would have started with one club to save space in trying to describe my hand. However, these days, most players open one spade -- show those majors.

After an opening by me, East would surely show his hearts. Even if I passed, he would presumably open one heart, being allowed to bid a little light in the third position.

After pass - pass - one

heart, South would presumably overcall two clubs, which would interest me greatly. I could then make a three-spade fit-showing jump. By a passed hand, a jump shift shows length in the bid suit, length in partner's suit and a maximum.

By now, no doubt, you have worked out who can make what. Despite only a combined 21 high-card points, North-South can make six clubs and six spades with the aid of the winning club

finesse. East-West would go down five, minus 1400, in seven hearts doubled, which would be good in a duplicate if the world were scoring 1430 in six spades. However, that is unlikely, I think.

Did you correctly predict what happened at my table? The auction went pass - pass - pass - pass! So there was no opening lead!

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## SHORT TAKES

CASTING DIR.  
BOOKED FOR  
SEXUAL ASSAULTSAURABH JOSHI | DC  
MUMBAI, NOV. 30

A 26-year-old television actress registered a case of sexual assault against a casting director alleging that he targeted her on multiple occasions under the pretext of marrying her. The complainant claimed that the incident took place at multiple places. The Versova police station has filed a case and are investigating the case further.

The officials said that the victim approached them last week and revealed of her ordeal following which the officials filed a case of rape against the accused and have initiated a probe in the case. The accused is also 26-year-old, confirmed the police and had met the victim two years ago over professional assignment.

"The actress submitted an application accusing the casting director of raping her at various locations in the city after promising marriage," said an officer.

The accused established physical relations with her and kept promising marriage however after years of relationship he refused to marry her and later stopped responding to her calls and messages. The police will also scan through their mobile phones and other gadgets to get further leads in the case.

The police have filed a case against the accused under sections 376 (rape) as per the Indian Penal Code and will summon him for questioning soon. The police have begun preliminary probe in the case and may record the statements of the common contacts of the duo and witnesses in case of any.

OVER 60 JUMBOS  
CREATE HAVOC  
IN ODISHAAKSHAYA KUMAR  
SAHOO | DC  
BHUBANESWAR, NOV. 30

Around 60 wild elephants have reportedly been creating havoc in Binika area of Sonepur district for two weeks now causing damage to property and destroying standing paddy crops in several acres of land.

Locals said that due to the fear of the jumbos, they were forced to sleep on the terraces of their houses even as the night temperature in the district plummeted below 15 degrees Celsius.

As per reports, the elephants sneaked into Jharapada village last night and damaged three houses. They also ate up over three quintals of rice stored inside one villager's house.

"The elephant herd has been tormenting us for two weeks now. We are forced to sleep on the terrace of our neighbour. The animals barged into the house last night by damaging the walls and ate over three quintals of rice. We request the district administration to take measures to drive away the elephant from the region," said a villager of Jharapada.

"It's been over 12 days, the jumbos are entering the village repeatedly from the forest and have been damaging property and standing paddy crops in the area," said another villager.

DELHI SEES  
COLDEST NOV.  
IN 71 YRSDC CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, NOV. 30

November was the coldest in the national capital in 71 years, with the mean minimum temperature dropping to 10.2 degrees Celsius, according to the India Meteorological Department.

Delhi had recorded a mean minimum temperature of 10.2 degrees Celsius in November 1949. The mean minimum temperature for November was 9.6 degrees Celsius in 1938; nine degrees Celsius in 1931 and 8.9 degrees Celsius in 1930, according to IMD data.

Normally, the mean minimum temperature for November is 12.9 degrees Celsius. The mean minimum temperature was 15 degrees Celsius last year, 13.4 degrees Celsius in 2018 and 12.8 degrees Celsius in 2017 and 2016.

Delhi also braved four cold waves in November — on the 3rd, 20th, 23rd and 24th.

For the plains, the IMD declares a cold wave when the minimum temperature is 10 degrees Celsius or below and is 4.5 notches less than normal for two consecutive days.

SHEHLA'S DAD  
DEMANDS  
PROBE AGAINST  
HER NGOS

Jammu, Nov. 30: Abdul Rashid Shora, the estranged father of student activist Shehla Rashid, on Monday levelled serious allegations against her, demanding that a probe be initiated into her NGOs and also accused her of having taken a huge amount of money for joining politics in Kashmir valley, a charge denied by her.

Shehla termed her father's statement "absolutely disgusting and baseless" and said this was his reaction after a court barred him entry into their Srinagar house on November 17 in response to a complaint filed by the family against him under domestic violence.

Releasing a three-page letter addressed to the Director General of Police at a press conference here, Shora claimed that he is facing a threat to his life from Shehla, her security guard, sister and her mother.

"She had taken Rs three crore to join politics in Kashmir from (former MLA) Engineer Rashid and (businessman) Zahoor Watali (both of whom were arrested last year by the National Investigation Agency for their alleged involvement in terror funding case)," Shora claimed.

Shehla, a former JNU student leader, joined politics and became a founding member of JK Political Movement floated by IAS topper turned politician Shah Faesal. However, she later announced her "dissociation with the electoral mainstream in Kashmir" last year.

He also demanded a probe into the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), being run by Shehla, and the bank accounts of his daughters and their mother.

However, Shehla tweeted a detailed response saying "Many of you must have come across a video of my biological father making wild allegations against me and my mum and sis. To keep it short and straight, he's a wife-beater and an abusive, depraved man. We finally decided to act against him, and this stunt is a reaction to that."

Termining the allegations "absolutely disgusting and baseless", she said the fact of the matter is that they have filed a complaint of domestic violence with a court in Kashmir against her father and it has passed an order restraining his entry into their home.

"My mother has tolerated abuse, violence and mental torture all her life. She has kept quiet for the sake of respect for the family now that we have started speaking up against his physical and mental abuse, he has started abusing us too," she said, requesting everyone not to take him seriously. — PTI

MODI INTERACTS  
WITH MORE  
TEAMS WORKING  
ON VACCINE

New Delhi, Nov. 30: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday held a virtual meeting with three teams working on developing and manufacturing Covid-19 vaccine, and urged them to take extra efforts to inform people in simple language about the vaccine and related matters such as its efficacy.

Bhopal, Nov. 30: Madhya Pradesh has lost 290 tigers over the last 19 years but the central Indian state still has more than 675 tigers, including 125 cubs, in the designated reserves and in the wild, a top Forest department official said on Monday.

Elementary schools in Assam  
to reopen from January 1

The government will soon release detailed Standard Operating Procedure

MANOJ ANAND | DC  
GUWAHATI, NOV. 30

In a significant move, Assam education and health minister Himanta Biswa Sarma here on Monday announced that the state government has decided to re-open classes for students of nursery to class VI from January 1, 2021. The detailed Standard Operating Procedure (SOPs) regarding the opening of elementary school will be released soon.

Informing that in view of the significant improvement in the Covid-19 scenario, all the temporary Covid testing centres have been closed, the minister told reporters that state government has decided to reopen schools from classes nursery to VI for both government and private schools but it will be left to parents if they want to send their children to school or not.

Earlier, this month the state government had allowed schools to be reopened for students of Class 6 and above. To minimise the risk, schools were asked to follow an odd-even system. The education department has decided that students of classes 6, 7, 9 and 12 will have classroom teachings on Mondays,



A 60-year-old Covid-19 patient in critical condition being airlifted for treatment to Chennai, at the airport in Indore on Monday.

— PTI

Wednesdays and Fridays of every week while those of classes 8, 10 and 11 will come to school on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

The state government said that students of Class 6 and above can attend school, but only after consent from their parents.

The minister also announced that the state government has also allowed the college hostels to re-open from December 15 but only the final year students can come to the hostel.

Pointing out that instructions have been given to the college principals to

clean the hostels which were closed due to Covid-19 the minister said that the decision to reopen elementary schools from Nursery standard to Class VI with effect from January 1, 2021 was taken after discussions with the Prathamik Sikshak Sammilani (Primary teachers association).

‘Bengali Pride’ to be TMC’s  
poll plank to counter BJP

TMC plans to emerge as protector of Bengali culture and identity

Kolkata, Nov. 30: Buoyed by the “positive” response to its ‘insider versus outsider’ campaign, the TMC leadership has decided to embrace ‘Bengali pride’ as its main poll plank for the 2021 assembly polls to counter the BJP’s aggressive Hindutva campaign in West Bengal.

The Mamata Banerjee-led party, which has often been mocked by opponents for not having a well-defined ideological plank, seems to have finally found one in Bengali sub-nationalism, as a section of top party leaders feels only an “inclusive message of regionalism, which the Bengalis can identify with, will counter the aggressive nationalism and Hindutva practised by the saffron camp.”

“During the next assembly polls, apart from development, Bengali pride will be our main poll plank. Bengali pride is not just about Bengalis, it appeals to all sons of the soil. This philosophy will help counter BJP’s attempts to import leaders from outside to control the people of the state,” senior TMC leader and MP Sougata Roy said.

According to TMC sources, much like the regional parties of Tamil Nadu, which are proponents of Tamil pride, and Shiv Sena in Maharashtra, which harps on Marathi ‘Ashmita’ (pride), the TMC plans to emerge as the protector of Bengali culture and identity.

“The JD(U) in Bihar had talked about ‘Bihari versus Bahari’. Even the BJP, which boasts of nationalism, had campaigned on the poll plank of Gujarati ‘Ashmita’ during the 2007 Gujarat elections. So if we do the same, we think no one should complain about it,” another TMC leader said.

A senior leader of the

BJP MP alleges delay  
in CAA implementationRAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC  
KOLKATA, NOV. 30

Close on the heels of suffering a jolt to its ‘Gorkhaland’ card in poll-bound West Bengal, the BJP has landed in a fresh soup after its own MP face in the Matua community, Shantanu Thakur complained of delay and deprivation of the implementation of its key promise, Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) to the sizeable votebank of Hindu refugees who supported the saffron party’s rise in the last Lok Sabha Election in the state, hoping to avail the law.

Reminding the BJP leadership to fulfill its promise ahead of the CAA’s first anniversary, the Bongaon parliamentarian from North 24 Parganas also warned them of the Matuas’ alienation from the party in the next year’s Assembly Election to highlight his community’s growing anger due to a prolong wait for the

**OUR COMMUNITY** is still deprived. The Matuas’ aspirations are not being met. They have stood up without any other community’s help

SHANTANU THAKUR,  
MP

CAA implementation. “Our community is still deprived. The Matuas’ aspirations are not being met. They have stood up without any other community’s help,” alleged Mr Thakur, the joint president of the community’s apex forum All India Matua Mahasangh, after his month-long campaign in the state for immediate CAA implementation by the Centre.

To mount pressure on the BJP, the grandson of Matua matriarch late Binapani Devi, asked, “So why will it be unusual for the Matuas to have a political stand in future? CAA is our right. We are also occupants and resi-

dents of India like others. We have demanded our citizenship. But why isn’t the CAA implemented in the society?”

His dissent assumes significance as the Matua community accounts 16.33 per cent of the state population spread in four districts, North 24 Parganas, South 24 Parganas, Nadia, Malda and Coochbehar and commands influence in around 70 assembly constituencies out of 294.

State food and supplies minister and Trinamul Congress North 24 Parganas district president Jyotipriyo Mullick said, “I thank Shantanu for speaking the truth finally. What he said is right. The BJP really did not do anything for the Matuas other than making false promises. If Shantanu quits the BJP, he can join us. I will ask Mamatabala Thakur (former TMC MP who lost to his nephew Shantanu) to fight shoulder to shoulder with him.”

Mamata Banerjee-led party, who was a part of a select group of the members that formulated this ideological plank, said “divisive politics and religious polarisation could never be countered with development politics.

Only sub-nationalism and regionalism can do that.” Born in the womb of the Congress, the TMC, which rose to power after a long fight against the CPI(M)-led Left Front, had initially adopted the slogan of ‘Maa Mati Manush’ (Mother, Land and People), carefully blending socialism and

secularism — a powerful concoction that countered the communists and their doctrines well.

The party tasted success in 2011 and continued its winning streak in 2016 assembly polls.

The rise of the BJP in Bengal’s political map, however, has made the TMC realise that its socialist slogan was not all enough to offset ‘Hindutva’, especially at a time when it has been branded as a party “that favours only minorities” by the saffron camp.

According to TMC sources, after the elec-

toral reverses in the Lok Sabha polls last year, and with the emergence of the BJP as a prime contender for power, the TMC initially tried to shed the ‘anti-Hindu’ tag and embrace ‘soft Hindutva’, but it soon realised that it could never beat the BJP in its own game.

The party then took a cue from the results of the final phase of the Lok Sabha polls in Bengal, where the saffron party, which, despite its spectacular performance in the previous phases, drew a blank in all nine seats that went to polls towards

BJP MLA DIES  
AFTER TESTING  
COVID POSITIVE

Jaipur, Nov. 30: BJP leader and MLA from Rajsamand in Rajasthan Kiran Maheshwari, who had tested positive for Coronavirus, died at a hospital in Gurgaon. She was 59.

Maheshwari, a three-time MLA from Rajsamand, was undergoing treatment at Medanta hospital for the past few days. She passed away late Sunday night.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, Assembly Speaker CP Joshi, BJP state president Satish Poonia and other leaders condoled her demise.

“Saddened to know of the untimely demise of BJP leader & Rajsamand MLA Kiran Maheshwari ji. My heartfelt condolences to her family members & supporters in this most difficult time,” Gehlot tweeted. — PTI

SHIV SENA TO  
ORGANISE AZAAN  
COMPETITIONBHAGWAN PARAB | DC  
MUMBAI, NOV. 30

In a bid to woo Muslims, the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena has decided to organise an ‘Azaan Recitation Competition’ in Mumbai. The move is seen as an attempt to neutralise its anti-Muslim image.

The competition has been announced by Shiv Sena South Mumbai division head Pandurang Sakpal. He said, “Azaan is held just on the lines of Maha Aarti and it also provides peace of mind. Hence, a competition will be held to encourage Muslim children to recite Azaan. Shiv Sena will reward the winners of the contest.”

The BJP has slammed the move saying that competition is a sign that the Shiv Sena has abandoned its ideology for the sake of power. Praveen Darekar, BJP leader and a leader of opposition in Maharashtra Vidhan Parishad, said, “Late Balasaheb Thackeray had always criticised the use of loudspeakers for offering Namaz. But Shiv Sena has now given up its Hindutva,” he said.

However, NCP spokesperson Nawab Malik has hit back at Mr Darekar saying it was not always proper to look at arts and performance through the eyes of religion. “In districts like Solapur, Muslim girls have topped the ‘Geeta Recitation Competition.’

In movies, actors like Dilip Kumar, Shah Rukh Khan, Salman Khan have done several scenes in temples, but it does not they have changed their religion,” said Mr Malik.

CONG LAUNCHES  
SOCIAL MEDIA  
CAMPAIGN

FROM PAGE 1

Asking people to provide the protesting farmers food whenever they can, he said the question is why is the farmer is out on the roads, travelling thousands of kilometers and is stalling traffic.

“PM Modi says the three farm laws are in favour of the farmer, but if these laws are in the farmer’s favour, why is he not happy and why is he protesting,” asked the Congress leader.

Congress General Secretary in-charge of Uttar Pradesh, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra also joined the #SpeakUpForFarmers campaign and shared a video highlighting the plight of the farmers.

“In the name of farm laws, all billionaire friends are benefitting. How can farm laws be framed without even talking to farmers? How can the interests of farmers be ignored?” she said in a tweet.

The party also demanded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi announce the suspension of the three farm laws and take back all 12,000 FIRs filed against farmers without any preconditions.

A host of party leaders, including P. L. Punia, Tariq Anwar, Shashi Tharoor, Salman Khurshid, Mohan Prakash and Sunil Jakhar also spoke in support of the farmers.

The protest against the three central laws entered the fifth day on Monday, with the farmers staying out at the Delhi borders.

## MP lost 290 big cats in 19 yrs

## HUGE LOSS

Bhopal, Nov. 30: Madhya Pradesh has lost 290 tigers over the last 19 years but the central Indian state still has more than 675 tigers, including 125 cubs, in the designated reserves and in the wild, a top Forest department official said on Monday.

Claiming that the population of tigers has actually “gone up”, he said Madhya Pradesh will continue to remain the “tiger state of India”.

The official said only five per cent of the deaths of big cats had occurred due to poaching or in man-animal

conflicts. Most of the deaths of the tigers occurred either in territorial fights or due to natural causes, he added.

“Madhya Pradesh has lost 290 tigers so far since 2002,” Principal

Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) Alok Kumar said.

However, there are 550 big cats in tiger reserves in Kanha, Bandhavgarh, Pench, Satpura, Panna and Sanjay Gandhi reserve and in the wild, he said, adding that there are 125 cubs in the parks.

Kumar said about 10 to 20 more tiger cubs might be roaming in the wild.

“They can’t be captured as they might be deep inside the jungles. When they turn young and venture out, we would be able to see them,” he added.

— PTI

<p><b>TAMIL NADU ADIDRAVIDAR HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (TAHDCO),</b> Teynampet, Chennai – 18.</p>	
<p>Tender Notice No : 4/2020-2021 <b>Lumpsum Contract - 16 Works (First Call)</b></p>	<p>Date: 27.11.2020</p>
<p>TAHDCO is inviting sealed tenders for construction works in 10 districts for the welfare of SC &amp; ST to a total value of Rs. 1894.25 Lakh. Sealed tenders are invited from the registered Contractors of TAHDCO/Government Departments and Government Under taking departments both from Central and State Government. <b>Only TAHDCO registered SC&amp;ST Contractors alone can participate in the tender.</b> For Further details please refer <a href="http://www.tahdcoco.com">www.tahdcoco.com</a></p>	
<p>Tender Notice No:05/ 2020-21 <b>Two Cover System - 03 Works (First Call)</b></p>	<p>Date: 27.11.2020</p>
<p>TAHDCO is inviting sealed tenders for construction works in 03 districts for the welfare of SC &amp; ST to a total value of Rs.822.32 Lakh. Sealed tenders are invited from the registered Contractors of TAHDCO/Government Departments and Government Under taking departments both from Central and State Government. <b>Only TAHDCO First class registered SC&amp;ST Contractors alone can participate in the tender.</b> For Further details please refer <a href="http://www.tahdcoco.com">www.tahdcoco.com</a></p>	
<p>DIPR/4440/Tender/2020</p>	<p>GENERAL MANAGER (TECH)</p>



# DECCAN Chronicle

1 DECEMBER 2020

## Mend ties in region, try to counter China

We are glad of the flurry of in-person, “non-virtual” diplomacy effected by India in recent weeks in order to pay greater attention to neighbourhood contours that have been allowed to languish of late for want of foresight, although it is time to ponder how this will be rated on the adequacy scale. India’s immediate neighbourhood is “Saarc Plus” if we take into account Myanmar to the east, China to the north, and Iran and the Gulf Arab states to the west. Of these, the prickly or difficult ties have traditionally been with Pakistan and China, which too need engagement of another kind. Regrettably, however, for some time we have lost sight of the value of ties within Saarc, Afghanistan being the exception, and the neighbourhood too if Iran and the Gulf are excluded.

The relationship with Beijing has now grown tense, with China having militarily encroached into our territory in Ladakh this summer, with India responding to save face by amassing forces inside our own borders to face the People’s Liberation Army. Our northern neighbour’s repeated attempts to encircle us on the Bhutan and Sikkim side has added gravity to the way we think about China.

China’s military incursion into Indian territory adds many layers of complexity to an already complicated dynamic, whose key characteristic was persistent Chinese efforts over a fairly long period to cut us off from our South Asian neighbours, one by one, by lavishing vast sums of money on these countries in the form of investments and infrastructural installations, besides buildup of defence facilities. It’s no exaggeration to say that Beijing has got pretty far in that game, and it is to this reality that the Narendra Modi government has finally woken up.

Thus, we had the foreign secretary heading to Bangladesh in August. A few weeks later, in early October, he was in Myanmar along with the Army Chief. In October-November there has been a cluster of visits. The external affairs minister headed to Bahrain, the UAE and Seychelles in the Indian Ocean. The Army Chief and the RAW chief showed up in Kathmandu, followed up by the foreign secretary. Relations with Nepal have dipped with Kathmandu eating into Indian territory, redrawing boundary maps and getting this endorsed by its legislature. There is considerable lost political ground to cover even as India is going about promising development aid for infrastructure, connectivity and education. The national security adviser was in Colombo for the fourth meeting of the India, Sri Lanka, Maldives trilateral maritime security conference, which had been dormant for some time.

On the whole, however, there is a sense that these are bit moves to compensate for lost time in which the Chinese have made deft manoeuvres. Even as our foreign secretary left Kathmandu, the Chinese defence minister landed there for follow-up action. Our eastern Himalayan neighbours are extremely valuable in dealing with the Chinese. In the Narendra Modi government’s six years, foreign policy has mainly meant being worshipful of the US to the extent of showing partisanship with President Donald Trump in domestic US politics. This is not just amateurish but also harmful. The neglect of neighbours, breaching the first principles of diplomacy, has been another feature of our recent policy. It is time to rethink priorities and have a few good, grand ideas in a rapidly changing environment.

## A long way still to go

India’s economy, according to a set of numbers released by the government last week, has shrunk by 7.5 per cent in the quarter that ended on September 30. The contraction in the size of the economy for the second successive quarter has technically got the Indian economy into recession for the first time in its history. A decline in economic growth for two consecutive quarters indicates a recession, or economic stagnation. The silver lining, however, was that the degree of contraction in the economy has reduced in the July-September quarter, compared to the April-June quarter.

While economic activity picked up pace in the second quarter of financial year 2020-21, there is no consensus about the durability of this economic growth. Industrial activity witnessed in the July-September quarter could be to address pent-up demand during the festive season. While people have slowly started resuming their normal activities, business transactions in the touch-heavy sectors have still not reached their pre-Covid levels — a key prerequisite for India’s economic growth re-entering the positive territory.

According to data released by the ministry of statistics, key indicators such as cargo handled at seaports and airports, production of cement, sale of commercial vehicles, and exports continued to underperform and remain in a two-digit contraction. The inter-city movement of people — as shown by data of airports and the railways — has not reached normal levels yet. Unless such a big component of the GDP does not resume its activity, the real economic growth will not be seen.

The government, which was expected to step in to restore demand normality in the economy, has in fact reduced its revenue expenditure. The government’s final consumption expenditure, according to the ministry of statistics, has come down by over ₹1 lakh crore at ₹3.62 lakh crores in the second quarter of fiscal 2020-21 compared ₹4.65 lakh crores in the second quarter of fiscal 2019-20. In a scenario, where the government tries to escape its responsibility by blaming an act of God, one could only hope that God gives Indians strength to beat the coronavirus and help them resuscitate the ailing economy.

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Subhani



# Will our farmers force arrogant govt to yield?



Parsa Venkateshwar Rao Jr

The march of the Punjab farmers to New Delhi, accompanied by their counterparts from Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and other parts of northern India, despite all the attempts by the BJP-ruled Haryana government, and the refusal of the leaders of the farmers’ unions to abide by the conditions laid down by Union home minister Amit Shah to move to a specified protest site before talks with the government could begin, and more basically rejecting the home ministry’s intervention and insisting that the talks will be held with the agriculture ministry, is a clear rebuff to the self-righteous and arrogant Narendra Modi government one-and-a-half years into its second term. The farmers are not willing to buy the spin of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Cabinet and party colleagues that the three farm reform laws rushed through the two Houses of Parliament during the Monsoon Session in September through a voice vote was to strengthen the position of farmers.

The issue is no longer about the merits and demerits of the laws shaking off the shackles of the local mandis and apparently freeing the farmers to sell where they choose, of giving a backdoor entry to corporates into engaging farmers to grow what they need for their commercial purposes and lifting the “essential commodities” tag from food-grains and other commodities, enabling corporate groups to store the produce.

There is enough to discuss there, and the government may have a point or two, but it does not matter if the people affected by them remain suspi-

cious and hostile, and the government do not have any convincing arguments.

What is at issue is the Modi government’s conviction that it can do no wrong, and that the farmers in this case should grasp the good being done for them. The attitude is not that of a democratically elected government, but that of a paternalist state which believes that people should accept the government’s decisions in good faith and not raise impertinent questions.

The Modi government has been getting its way in the last six-and-a-half-years, but now it has come up against the farmers’ formidable barricades. The Haryana and Delhi police, with the latter falling under the Union home ministry, have tried to barricade the farmers’ march but there was no stopping the farmers. The Union government had to get off its high horse, and Mr Shah was forced to plead with the farmers that the government was ready to talk to them and that they should move to the Nirankari Grounds at Burari on the outskirts of the national capital. It appears that Mr Shah has no option but to yield further ground.

There is of course the fact that this is also a political tussle between the BJP and its erstwhile ally in Punjab, the Shiromani Akali Dal. The farmers form the core

**By freeing the mandis, the Centre is not enabling the farmers to sell their produce where they want to because 90 per cent of them are marginal farmers**

**There is enough to discuss there, and the government may have a point or two, but it does not matter if the people affected by them remain suspicious and hostile, and the government do not have any convincing arguments.**

constituency of the Akali Dal, and it is alleged that the Agriculture Produce Marketing Committees (APMC), or the mandi committees in the state, are controlled by the first family of the party, Prakash Singh Badal and his son Sukhbir Singh Badal.

The BJP under Mr Modi has been on the warpath of weakening its allies in the National Democratic Alliance — the Shiv Sena in Maharashtra, the Akali Dal in Punjab, and Janata Dal (United) in Bihar. The Shiv Sena and Akali Dal have sensed the danger and they are hitting back, though the JD(U) is not in a position to do so now.

Prime Minister Modi seems to have miscalculated the horse sense of the farmers. The hard-nosed men and women of the soil are not going to be overwhelmed by the PM’s rhetoric and sweet talk. His “one nation, one farm market” idea does not fool them.

They know their problem is different from that of their counterparts in other parts of the country, and they know the problems they face on the ground more than any government which pretends that it knows best. The issue of minimum support price is only one part of the problem. By freeing the mandis or grain markets, the Centre is not enabling the farmers to sell their produce where they want to because 90 per cent of them are small and marginal farmers owning not more than two acres of land, but it is enabling the corporates to enter the mandis.

The Prime Minister’s

positive spin turns out be a bluff, and the farmers have seen through this. The Prime Minister and the government have been forced on to the backfoot. They will have to take greater pains to explain the hidden benefits to the farmers that would flow from the new laws, or they will have to promise to address the concerns of the farmers and incorporate them into the laws through necessary amendments.

More than anything else, Mr Modi and his colleagues need to learn, quickly, that they are not infallible, that they mean to do the right thing but yet go wrong, and that even without any evil intention they may do things that harm people more than benefiting them. Their desire to change the country overnight based on a parliamentary majority reveals political immaturity. Farm reforms may be necessary but for them to be successful it is not enough to pass new laws. There is need to connect with the people and win their trust and consent, or at least of a majority of them. The BJP has come to believe in the mantra of “Modi hai toh mumkin hai”. It is not. Even Mr Modi must persuade and convince the people. He cannot simply have his own way. Mr Modi and the BJP might chomp at the reins of democratic controls exerted by the people. But they must learn to hold back and reconsider all issues. There is an urgent need to change the style of governance from that of the presidential to the parliamentary. Had the government sent the bills for review by a joint select committee, as the Akalis and the Opposition parties had so vociferously urged, there would have been time and scope enough to respond to the concerns of the farmers and to incorporate the necessary changes before they became law.

*The writer is a Delhi-based commentator and analyst*

## LETTERS

### RAJIV CASE CONVICTS

Congress MP Karti Chidambaram is absolutely right in condemning the various political parties of Tamil Nadu, including the ruling dispensation, for clamouring for the release of the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case convicts. Several policemen, who were part of the security ring for the late Prime Minister, had also lost their lives in the blast triggered by the suicide bomber. Why don’t these leaders think of the fate of the bereaved members? In fact, quite a few cops were the only bread-winners in their family. Has anybody bothered to find out in what condition their kith and kin are living today? One fails to understand why the Rajiv case convicts should be treated differently from other murderers, many of whom are languishing in jail even without a trial.

**P.G. Menon, Chennai**

### IRAN ASSASSINATION

THE ASSASSINATION of Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, a prominent nuclear scientist who was the mastermind of Iran’s nuclear programme and a member of its elite Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, has raised the spectre of fresh confrontation between Iran and its adversaries in West Asia. Iranian leadership had immediately pointed to the role of Israel and the blessings of Trump in the assassination of Mohsen Fakhrizadeh. Imposition of punitive economic sanctions against Iran and the assassination of Iran’s top military commander, Qassem Soleimani through a drone strike in January had pushed Iran to pursue its ambitious nuclear programme with renewed vigour. No doubt, the assassination of Mohsen Fakhrizadeh in all likelihood will complicate president-elect Joe Biden’s efforts to revive the nuclear deal with Iran. Battered by crippling economic sanctions, Iran may not have the option of engaging in a full-blown military confrontation with its foes, but it can strike back with its asymmetrical warfare capabilities. Sustained dialogue and diplomacy and not the military confrontation holds the key to resolve the nuclear imbroglio with Iran.

**M. Jeyaram, Sholavandan**

### BLAME THE SYSTEM

THIS REFERS to the report that the Income-Tax department has discovered a tax evasion of ₹450 crore from an IT SEZ developer and a stainless steel supplier based in Tamil Nadu. One has to blame the system too for undisclosed income/ property or non-compliance of tax laws. It’s germane to quote former US President Ronald Reagan’s words: “If it moves, tax it; if it still moves, regulate it; and if it stops moving, subsidise it”.

**S.Ramakrishnasayee, Chennai**

Aakar Patel



## Looking at the future in fear as economy goes into ‘de-growth’

India’s economy had contracted for another three months, we were told late last week. Meaning that, as a nation, we produced less in goods and services than we did in the same period last year. Meaning also that Indian families in the numbers of lakhs and perhaps crores got pulled into poverty. India’s economy has contracted for six months since Prime Minister Narendra Modi called for the harshest lockdown in the world. This has brought the nation into what economists call a recession, whose definition is two straight quarters of de-growth.

We know we are in a recession because of the media.

The Prime Minister has not tweeted out the numbers his government has put out. The finance minister has not done so either. The Niti Aayog’s head says he was “pleasantly surprised” that the numbers were not worse than had been expected. The chief economic adviser professes “cautious optimism” about the data. He had previously predicted growth in the two quarters from April to September. It turned out that instead of growth we had a contraction of 23.9 per cent. He describes himself as inter-

ested in “deep thinking and research”. In the economic survey, he used Wikipedia as a source. News about the third quarter is not good. Bank credit is lower in the current period than it was in the one when the economy contracted. The core sectors (steel, cement, electricity, coal, oil, refining and fertilisers) shrunk in October. If you do not know this, it might be because the Prime Minister and the finance minister have not tweeted about it. If they ignore something, then it doesn’t exist. The data is all from the corporate sector. We have no idea what is happening to the unorganised and small sectors where most Indians are employed. The weak and the poor cannot “work from home”. They must toil every day to eat. We do know that the lockdown, like the earlier demonetisation, like GST, has taken work away from the small and the poor and given it to the corporate sector. The stock market is at a historic high for this reason.

Elsewhere, the capital of our nation is facing farmers’ protests. They want the government to take back the laws that will gut procurement and affect their livelihood. The government’s agents have said

the protesters are anti-national and separatists. The standard line that is used for anyone — academics, minorities, farmers, dissident industrialists — who points out that what the government is doing is wrong. It is like children and name-calling. That is the level of maturity in our national debate.

On the Ladakh front, China has refused to go back from the spaces they have occupied on our border and the Indian Army has to spend the winter in spaces that have not been prepared for such an eventuality. Our jawans were issued sleeping bags that have been previously found to be “unfit for use in glacier and super higher altitude areas”. But they must make do because the political establishment has decided it does not want to deal with the problem. The Prime Minister tweeted that he had an “excellent discussion with my friend Boris Johnson”, the British Prime Minister, about climate change and other matters. He has not found the time to have a discussion with his friend Xi Jinping about his Army going back from our borders. Again, if you don’t talk about the problem, it doesn’t exist. His right hand man, the home

minister of India, has said that the implementation of his pet project, the Citizenship Amendment Act, has been postponed for now. He says this is because of Covid-19 and he will only implement the CAA after the pandemic ends. Why Covid-19 should affect India’s giving citizenship to those non-Muslims who came to India illegally before December 2014 is not known. No other law has been paused because of it. But after an aggressive campaign against those he called “termites”, Amit Shah is now hesitant to take India down the road of religious discrimination. It might help to understand why by looking at what our ambassador in the United States is up to.

He has spent the last two weeks sweet talking those American leaders who had previously condemned India’s actions on the CAA, the National Register of Citizens and on Kashmir.

He has been tweeting out the details of the meetings without saying why India was now engaging with those who did not like the actions of the Narendra Modi government. The reason of course is that Mr Modi’s friend Donald Trump has been defeated in the

presidential election and a Democrat will become America’s new President in two months’ time. The Democratic Party has been very vocal about its concern that India is heading in the wrong direction under Mr Modi and is damaging itself by indulging in overt majoritarianism and harassing and bullying its own minorities. We will see what the effect of India’s outreach to the Democrats is soon enough.

Meanwhile, there has been no let-up in the conduct of the ruling party. In Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and elsewhere, laws have been passed that will jail Muslim men for 10 years if they marry Hindu women. In Hyderabad, the BJP has said in the campaign for the local elections that a vote for Muslims is a vote against India. Ten years ago, this would have produced outrage, but today it is normal and is accepted because it has become normalised. This is what is going on in our country today. It is hard to see any of it without a sense of dread and fear for what is happening and what may lie ahead.

*The writer is a columnist and a senior journalist*



## SHORT TAKES

NEPAL INTEGRITY  
SAFEGUARD GETS  
CHINA THUMBS UP

Beijing, Nov. 30: China's Defence Minister Gen. Wei Fenghe has lauded Nepal's leadership for resolutely pursuing the 'one-China' policy and offered firm support to the Himalayan country in safeguarding its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, the defence ministry said here on Monday.

Wei, who is also a State Counsellor, met Nepal PM K P Sharma Oli and exchanged views on matters of mutual interest and held talks with Army chief Gen. Purna Chandra Thapa on ways to resume military cooperation and training impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic during his one-day visit to Nepal on Sunday.

China, Pak talk  
regional security

Islamabad, Nov. 30: China's Defence Minister Gen Wei Fenghe on Monday held talks with Pakistan Army chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa and discussed regional security issues and signed an agreement to deepen defence cooperation between the all-weather allies.

"During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, regional security and enhanced bilateral defence collaboration were discussed," said the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the media wing of Pakistan's Army, after the meeting between the two generals. "An MoU (Mem-

orandum of Understanding) was also signed for enhancement of defence cooperation between both the Armies," the statement said. The details of the MoU were not shared.

Gen Bajwa thanked Gen Wei for China's unwavering support to Pakistan on all key issues at regional and international forums, saying that the Pakistan Army greatly values the "time-tested and brotherly relations" with China.

"We have been standing together all along, and our relations will be no different in wake of future challenges," Gen Bajwa said. — PTI

Yellen is Biden's Treasury  
Secy, Tanden head of OMB

Prez-elect announces economic team members, to introduce them today

Completed Wisconsin recount  
confirms Biden's win over Don

Washington, Nov. 30: US President-elect Joe Biden on Monday named Janet Yellen as his Treasury Secretary and Indian-American Neera Tanden as Director of Office of Management and Budget, as he announced key members of his economic team. If confirmed by the US Senate, Yellen, 74, will be the first woman to lead the Treasury Department in its 231-year history, and the first person to have served as Treasury Secretary, Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers, and Chair of the Federal Reserve. She has previously been confirmed by the Senate on four separate occasions. Tanden, 50, if confirmed by the Senate, would be the first woman of colour and first Indian-American to lead the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

Tanden's career has focused on pursuing policies designed to support working families, foster broad-based economic growth, and curb rampant inequality. "Another proud day for Indian-Americans to see Neera Tanden be nominated for a Cabinet level position in the next administration. This position at OMB is a wide-ranging role with broad powers to manage trillions of dollars of the US budget. If anyone had any doubts that our community has arrived politically, this election cycle is proof enough," Indiaspora founder M R Rangaswami, and an emi-

Madison (US), Nov. 30: Wisconsin finished a recount of its presidential results on Sunday, confirming Democrat Joe Biden's victory over President Donald Trump in the key battleground state. Trump vowed to challenge the outcome in court even before the recount concluded.

Dane County was the second and last county to finish its recount, reporting a 45-vote gain for Trump. Milwaukee County, the state's other big and overwhelmingly liberal

county targeted in a recount that Trump paid \$3 million for, reported its results Friday, a 132-vote gain for Biden.

Taken together, the two counties barely budged Biden's winning margin of about 20,600 votes, giving the winner a net gain of 87 votes.

"As we have said, the recount only served to reaffirm Joe Biden's victory in Wisconsin," Danielle Meli, who led Biden's campaign in Wisconsin, said. Trump campaign spokeswo-

man Jenna Ellis said in a statement that the Wisconsin recounts have "revealed serious issues" about whether the ballots were legal, but she offered no specific details to validate her claim.

"As we have said from the very beginning, we want every legal vote, and only legal votes to be counted, and we will continue to uphold our promise to the American people to fight for a free and fair election," Ellis said. — AP

WATCH OUT FOR  
SCAMS AS COVID  
VACCINE NEARS

Washington, Nov. 30 : Homeland Security Investigations officials are preparing for a crush of new scams when the coronavirus vaccine is approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, which could come in a few weeks.

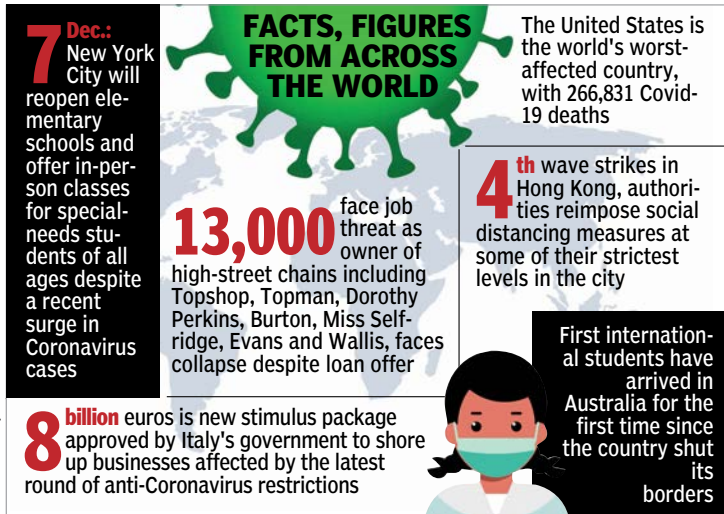
A few things to keep in mind to avoid falling victim: — Always consult a licensed medical professional to obtain a COVID-19 vaccine or treatment. — Make sure your doctor has been approved to administer the vaccine. — Do not buy COVID-19 vaccines or treatments over the internet. — Do not buy COVID-19 vaccines or treatments through an online pharmacy. — Ignore large, unsolicited offers for vaccinations and miracle treatments or cures. — Don't respond to text messages, emails or calls about vaccines and treatments. — Be wary of ads for vaccines and treatments on social media. — Any suspicious activity can be reported to: covid19investigations@dhs.gov. Source: Department of Homeland Security. — AP

Lankan prison riot: Eight  
inmates killed, 37 hurt

Colombo, Nov. 30: At least eight prisoners were killed and 37 others injured when a riot broke out on Sunday at a prison on the outskirts of Sri Lanka's capital when some inmates tried to force open a door and escape, prompting the authorities to use force, police said on Monday.

Police spokesman Ajith Rohana said inmates created "unrest" at the Mahara prison located about 15 kilometres north of Colombo and prison officials took steps to control the situation. The incident comes as pandemic-related unrest has been growing in Sri Lanka's overcrowded prisons.

Inmates have staged protests in recent weeks in several prisons as the number of confirmed Covid-19 positive cases spiked in the country's overcrowded jails. "The incident was started by a set of



remand prisoners when they tried to force open a door and escape following which the authorities had to use force," Rohana said. He said during the entire incident at least 37 more, including two jailors, were injured and all of them were transferred to the near-

by Ragama hospital.

The residents near the prison said smoke was coming out of the premises due to fire. Prisons authorities said the rioters had set fire to the kitchen and a record room of the prison. — PTI

## MERRIAM -WEBSTER'S TOP '20 WORD: PANDEMIC

New York, Nov. 30: If you were to choose a word that rose above most in 2020, which word would it be? Ding, ding, ding: Merriam-Webster on Monday annou-

nced "pandemic" as its 2020 word of the year. "That probably isn't a big shock," Peter Sokolowski, editor at large for Merriam-Webster, said. "Often the big news

equal chance to get ahead, the transition said.

The choices reflect Biden's commitment to building an administration that looks like America, draw-

ing on diverse backgrounds and experiences of some of the foremost economic experts, it said. "As we get to work to control the virus, this is the team that

will deliver immediate relief to Americans during this economic crisis and help build our economy back better than ever," Biden said. — PTI

uary when the first US deaths and outbreaks on cruise ships occurred. On March 11, when the World Health Organisation declared the novel Coronavirus outbreak a global pandemic, lookups on the site for pandemic spiked hugely. — AP

FINANCIAL  
Chronicle

TUESDAY | 1 DECEMBER 2020 | COIMBATORE

quick  
BITES

INDICATORS	%
Sensex	44,149.72 -0.25
Nifty 50	12,968.95 -0.14
S&P 500*	3,612.84 -0.70
Dollar (₹)	74.03 -0.19
Pound Sterling (₹)	98.84 -0.12
Euro (₹)	88.14 -0.23
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	47,483.142 0.29
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	47.53 -0.65
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.911 0.039
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.847 0.005

\* As of 8:30 PM IST

Ex-GM executive  
to head Ola's  
global electric biz

Ola said it has appointed former General Motors executive Jose Pinheiro, who managed 16 GM industrial complexes in nine countries, as head of global manufacturing and operations for its electric business. In this role, Pinheiro will spearhead Ola's ambitions to build world-class manufacturing facilities, starting with the world's largest scooter factory, and then expanding to multiple such facilities across India.

■ All-stock deal biggest after Refinitiv's  
S&P to acquire IHS  
Markit for \$39 bn

MATTHEW MONKS,  
ISHIKA MOOKERJEE &  
VIREN VAGHELA  
NOV. 30

S&P Global Inc has agreed to buy IHS Markit Ltd for about \$39 billion in stock, a deal that accelerates the wave of consolidation among Wall Street's biggest data providers.

S&P is offering 0.2838 shares for each IHS Markit share, at about 4.7 per cent premium to IHS Markit's last close. After the deal, S&P shareholders will own about 67.75 per cent of the combined company on a fully diluted basis.

The tie-up of S&P with IHS Markit, a research firm with more than 5,000 analysts, data scientists, financial experts and industry specialists, is part of a race for scale as the industry's largest players try to capitalise on surging demand for data and analytics in increasingly computerised financial markets. This follows London Stock Exchange Group Plc's \$27 billion agreement last year to acquire Refinitiv.

A statement said Douglas Peterson, chief executive officer of S&P, will serve as CEO of the combined company. Lance Uggla, CEO of IHS Markit, will stay on as a special advisor to the company for one year after the deal is closed.

The acquisition has an enterprise value of about \$44 billion, including the assumption of \$4.8 billion in net debt. "This is a huge consoli-

S&P RETAINS FY21  
GROWTH AT -9%

New Delhi, Nov. 30: S&P Global Ratings on Monday retained its forecast of 9 per cent contraction in the Indian economy for the current fiscal, saying though there are now upside risks to growth but it will wait for more signs that Covid infections have stabilised or fallen. — PTI

dation of financial data bases and services," said Gary Dugan, chief executive officer of the Global CIO Office, an investment firm in Singapore. "S&P probably gathered that expansion incrementally wouldn't work and instead has gone for a major acquisition, which will deepen their product range and relevance."

Bloomberg LP, the parent of Bloomberg News, competes with IHS Markit and S&P Global in providing financial analytics and information.

The deal would be the world's second-largest

acquisition of 2020, second only to the \$56 billion set of transactions among China's biggest oil and gas companies to sell their pipeline networks to a new national carrier, according to data compiled by Bloomberg.

Markit was famously founded in a UK barn by Uggla, a Canadian who spotted an opportunity to provide pricing for the opaque world of credit default swaps just as trading of the derivatives was taking off in the early 2000s. Uggla built up the company through a break-neck series of acquisitions, culminating in the 2016 merger with IHS. A 2014 IPO of Markit valued it at about \$4.5 billion.

Regulatory scrutiny could pose one risk for the tie-up, given the overlap between the firms' data offerings, according to Craig A. Huber, founder of Huber Research Partners. The LSE is still negotiating with EU regulators over its deal for Refinitiv, with competition authorities expressing concerns over how some companies' control of data can make them gatekeepers for an industry. — Bloomberg

Trump to add  
SMIC, CNOOC  
to defence  
blacklist

ALEXANDRA ALPER,  
HUMEYRA PAMUK  
WASHINGTON, NOV. 30

The Trump administration is poised to add China's top chipmaker SMIC and national offshore oil and gas producer CNOOC to a blacklist of alleged Chinese military companies, according to a document and sources, curbing their access to US investors and escalating tensions with Beijing weeks before President-elect Joe Biden takes office. Reuters reported earlier this month that the Department of Defense (DOD) was planning to designate four more Chinese companies as owned or controlled by the Chinese military, bringing the number of Chinese companies affected to 35. A recent executive order issued by President Donald Trump would prevent US investors from buying securities of the listed firms starting late next year.

It was not immediately clear when the new tranche, would be published in the Federal Register. But the list comprises China Construction Technology Co Ltd and China International Engineering Consulting Corp, in addition to Semi-conductor Manufacturing International Corp (SMIC) and China National Offshore Oil Corp (CNOOC), according to the document and three sources. — Reuters

Upward revision in growth  
to force rate pause this time

FALAKNAAZ SYED  
MUMBAI, NOV. 30

Early economic recovery amidst stubbornly high inflation may make the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to keep interest rates on hold on Friday while continuing with an accommodative monetary policy stance. Economists have ruled out a rate cut for the remaining part of the fiscal and expect the central bank to revise up the GDP and inflation numbers for the rest of the year.

The six-member rate setting panel headed by RBI governor is scheduled to meet for two days starting December 2, and the resolution of which would be announced on December 4. This is the fourth bi-monthly monetary policy for the current financial year and the second meet under the newly formed MPC.

The country's economic growth outturn so far has evolved much stronger than the RBI projections (of -9.8 per cent year-on-year in Q3 and -5.6 per cent in Q4). The GDP growth rate was (-) 7.5 per cent in Q2 FY21, a notable improvement from the (-) 24 per cent fall in Q1 FY21, suggesting that the resumption of economic activity has been gathering pace. Economic growth was however sharply lower than the 4.4 per cent growth in Q2 FY20, being in the negative zone. The gains in the domestic economy in Q2 FY21 was powered by the manufacturing, electricity, and agriculture sectors, all of which witnessed positive growth rates.



On the other hand, inflation has also surprised on the upside, remaining above the upper tolerance level of 6 per cent every month (barring March 20) this year, accompanied by sticky core inflation. Food added the most to the headline, however, it was not the only source of price pressures. Inflation was high mainly due to supply-side factors, such as unseasonal rains (resulting in high prices for vegetables and pulses), labour shortages, higher services prices, higher oil, and higher taxes. Retail inflation rose to a nine-month high of 7.6 per cent in October 2020, supported by a sustained broad-based increase across the various segments of the Consumer Price Index. Core inflation (excluding food and fuel) for October stood at 5.7 per cent, which was the highest level in two years and 16 basis points higher than month ago.

"In light of this upside surprise, we expect the RBI to revise up its inflation projection by more than one percentage point to 5.5-6.9 per cent in H2 FY21 (from 4.5-5.4 per cent) and a new H1 FY22

forecast of 4.2-4.8 per cent. In view of these upward revisions, the MPC is likely to vote unanimously to remain in wait-and-see mode. Despite the growth recovery, we expect the RBI to adopt a cautious tone, flagging uncertainty about the resilience of demand after the festive season and downside risks due to rising infection cases in developed economies and parts of India," said Sonal Varma, chief India economist at Nomura Holdings.

"We now expect the RBI to stay on hold through 2021 (vs our previous forecast of a 50 bp cut), as inflation has remained stubbornly high, closing the window for policy easing...we expect the RBI to revise upwards both its growth and inflation projections, but retain the dovish forward guidance," added Varma.

"Rates are likely to be on hold in rest of FY21. We expect the RBI MPC to stay focused on anchoring rates through reiteration of strong forward guidance and path ahead for open market operations, including for state developmental loans," said DBS India.



## SHORT TAKES

## NorthEast United frustrate FC Goa

**Goa:** NorthEast United extended their unbeaten run to three games after frustrating FC Goa in a 1-1 draw in their Indian Super League Season 7 encounter at the Fatorda Stadium on Monday. Goa are yet to record three points this season. Idrissa Sylla (40') scored the opening goal before Igor Angulo (43') equalised just before the break. Brandon Fernandes was handed his first start of the season along with Albanbha Kuper Dohling as Goa boss Juan Ferrando made three changes to the side which had suffered a defeat to Mumbai City FC. Jorge Ortiz Mendoza started with James Donachie benched. NorthEast made as many as five changes to the side which came from behind to hold Kerala in a thrilling 2-2 draw. — *Agencies*

## 4 Olympic-bound boxers in TOPS

**New Delhi:** Four Olympic-bound Indian boxers — two men and as many women — have been included in the sports ministry's Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS), the Sports Authority of India said on Monday. World bronze-medallist Simranjeet Kaur (60kg), Asian medallist Pooja Rani (75kg) joined M.C. Mary Kom in the elite group. Asian silver-winner Ashish Kumar (75kg) and Asian Games bronze-winner Satish Kumar (+91kg) have been included in a group which already featured Amit Panghal (52kg), Manish Kaushik (63kg), and Vikas Krishan (69kg) among the Tokyo-bound. Lovlina Borgohain and Kavinder Singh Bisht are also part of the core group. "Nikhat Zareen (51kg), Sonia Chahal (57kg) and Shiva Thapa (63kg) were moved to the TOPS developmental group from the Core Group," the SAI said. — *PTI*

## Clash of heads as Wolves win

**London:** The sound of the thud from a clash of heads just added to concern. The game was only five minutes old when Wolverhampton forward Raul Jimenez and Arsenal defender David Luiz collided while jumping for the ball. Concerns grew as Jimenez appeared motionless and was eventually wheeled off the field with an oxygen mask on. "I knew straight away that something was wrong," Wolves manager Nuno Espirito Santo said. "Everyone called 'red, red,' which means it's a bad situation. You see the panic in their eyes." By the time the game ended with Wolves beating Arsenal 2-1 there was a more encouraging update from the hospital with Jimenez said to be conscious and talking. — *AP*

## Liverpool, Man U look to advance

**Washington:** Chelsea and Manchester City are already through to the Champions League knockout phase with two games to spare. Now it's the turn of Manchester United and Liverpool off the back of a challenging weekend in the Premier League.

## Live on TV

## CRICKET

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

**South Africa vs England:** Third T20 from 9.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

## FOOTBALL

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

**Champions League:** Shakhtar Donetsk vs Real Madrid from 11.25 pm on Sony Ten 2; Monchengladbach vs Inter Milan from 1.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 3; Atletico Madrid vs Bayern Munich from 1.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 1; Liverpool vs Ajax from 1.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 2; Porto vs Manchester City from 1.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Six, HD

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## WARNING BELL

## Setback for Oz as injured David out of ODI, T20 series

**Sydney, Nov. 30:** Star opening batsman David Warner faces a battle to be fit for the India Test series after Cricket Australia said Monday he will miss the last one-day international and the three-match Twenty20 series next month.

Warner limped out of Sunday's one-day international against India after straining his groin while fielding as Australia secured the series 2-0 in Sydney.

After a typically swash-buckling innings of 83 on Sunday, Warner fell awkwardly and had to be helped from the field.

Warner will miss Wednesday's final ODI and all three Twenty20 internationals beginning Friday in Canberra to undergo rehab in an effort to ready for the Test series which begins on December 17 in Adelaide.

Opening batsman D'Arcy Short has been called up to the Twenty20 international squad as a replacement.

Cricket Australia also announced that leading pace bowler Pat Cummins will be rested for the remainder of the white-ball matches against India, putting pressure on an out-of-form Mitchell Starc.

"Pat and Davie are critical to our plans for the Test Series," head coach Justin Langer said.

"Davie will work through his injury rehab and in Pat's case it is important all of our players are managed well to keep them mentally and physically fit throughout what is a challenging summer."

"The priority for both is being fully prepared for one of the biggest and most important home Test Series we have played in recent years, especially with World Test Championship points up for grabs."

Left-hander Short plays cricket for Western Australia and was the Twenty20 Big Bash League's leading run-scorer in 2017-18 and 2018-19.

No replacement has been announced for Cummins, with Australia to rely on Josh Hazlewood, Starc and allrounder Marcus Stoinis to provide the main seam bowling options. — *AFP*



Australia's David Warner (centre) is assisted from the Sydney Cricket Ground after injuring himself while fielding during the second one-day international match against India in Sydney on Sunday. — *AP*

## Marnus feels Oz have advantage

**Sydney, Nov. 30:** Australia's rising star Marnus Labuschagne believes that the home team will enjoy a slight advantage going into the Test series against India as most of their top-order players will be coming in after having played a fair amount of first-class cricket.

Labuschagne, who contributed a solid 70 off 61 balls in the second ODI which Australia won by 51 runs on Sunday, has scored two hundreds in three Sheffield Shield matches.

"It definitely helps to have a few games under your belt just to get the pace and the timing of the game from T20s to one-dayers to four-day cricket," he replied to a query from PTI during a virtual media interaction

## SMITH SCORED 2ND TON DESPITE ACUTE VERTIGO

**Sydney, Nov. 30:** Top Australian batsman Steve Smith has revealed that he suffered a "bad dose of vertigo" ahead of the second one-dayer against India and was not sure of playing the game in which he struck a series-clinching hundred.

"I didn't know I was playing today. I had a really bad dose of vertigo this morning and I was struggling until ... I came down early to have a hit and a bit of a run around," Smith told *cricket.com.au* after receiving his second successive Man of the match award.

Smith said it was team doctor Leigh Golding, who relieved him of the symptoms by performing Epley maneuver which involves a series of head movements used to treat benign paroxysmal positional vertigo (BPPV), a condition caused by a problem in the inner ear. — *PTI*

facilitated by series' official broadcaster Sony. The Indian players, who

and will only have two three-day games to get into the groove.

"But a lot of these (Indian) players we're talking about, they've been doing it for a long time, they're not new to the changes of format. I'd be surprised if they didn't shift back into gear very quickly."

"I will say that it's a slight advantage, four out of our top six have been playing Shield cricket and got that rhythm as a batting group."

With David Warner ruled out of the last ODI as well as the upcoming T20 series, Labuschagne won't mind a chance to open the innings if he is asked about it. "Certainly, if I got asked to open the batting absolutely. It's an opportunity that I would enjoy taking." — *PTI*

## KIWIS POCKET SERIES AS 3RD T20 CALLED OFF

**Mount Maunganui (New Zealand), Nov. 30:** New Zealand on Monday claimed the T20 series against the West Indies 2-0 after the third and final match of the rubber was washed out here.

Persistent rain played spoilsport to left-arm spinner Mitchell Santner's debut as New Zealand's T20I captain and the final match of the series was called off after just 2.2 overs.

The Kiwis were without Tim Southee, Ross Taylor and Kyle Jamieson, who had been given a break for the third game and were replaced by Daryl Mitchell, Scott Kuggeleijn and Hamish Bennett.

Sent into bat, West Indies were off to a brisk start with openers Andre Fletcher and Brandon King scoring 12 runs off the first over. — *AFP*

## World Cup hero Diop dies at 42

**Washington, Nov. 30:** Papa Bouba Diop, the tall Senegal midfielder who scored the goal that delivered one of the greatest upsets in World Cup history, has died. He was 42.

"FIFA is saddened to learn of the passing of Senegal legend Papa Bouba Diop," the sport's governing body said on Sunday.

Diop was the hero when Senegal shocked defending champion France 1-0 in the opening game of the 2002 World Cup in Japan and South Korea.

It was Senegal's World Cup debut and the win sent the West Africans on a run to the quarterfinals to match the best performance at the tournament by an African team.

"Once a World Cup hero, always a World Cup hero," FIFA said in its tribute on Twitter.

Diop was first called up to play for his country at the age of 21 and made more than 60 appearances for Senegal from 2001-08.

He played club soccer in Switzerland, France and Greece and for four teams in England: Fulham, Portsmouth, West Ham and Birmingham.

● **Papa Bouba Diop was first called up to play for Senegal at the age of 21 and made more than 60 appearances for his country between 2001 and 2008.**

Diop was 6-foot-5 (1.96 meters) and nicknamed "Wardrobe" because of his commanding presence. He was loved in Senegal because of that goal against the French, the former colonizers of Senegal, but also for his likeable personality off the field along with his skill on it.

The 2002 Senegal team is still loved at home and Liverpool's Senegalese forward Sadio Mane wrote of Diop on his official Twitter page: "It was with a broken heart that we learned of your departure. Know that you will remain in our hearts forever, even if you left without saying goodbye to us."

The Premier League expressed its condolences, as did Diop's former clubs, "Rest well, Wardrobe," Fulham said. — *AP*



## Maradona's doc under scanner

**Buenos Aires, Nov. 30:** Diego Maradona's surgeon responded to the launch of an investigation for involuntary manslaughter by saying he "everything he could, up to the impossible" for an "unmanageable" patient.

Earlier in the day prosecutors in San Isidro, near Buenos Aires, said they were investigating Leopoldo Luque while Argentine television showed police raiding the doctor's surgery and home.

The probe was triggered by concerns raised by Maradona's daughters Dalma, Gianinna and Jana over the treatment he received for his heart condition at his home in Tigre, north of Buenos Aires, judicial sources said.

Maradona died of a heart attack on Wednesday aged 60, and was buried on Thursday at the Jardin de Paz cemetery on the outskirts of the Argentine capital.

"Our investigations are ongoing, we are talking to witnesses including mem-

bers of the family" of Maradona, a source close to the San Isidro inquiry said.

"The clinic had recommended that he go elsewhere to be hospitalised, but the family decided otherwise. His daughters signed for him to be discharged from the hospital," said a family member, on the condition of anonymity.

Later in the day, Luque, who is in no relation to Maradona's former Argentine team-mate of the same name, gave an emotional televised news conference.

"You want to know what I am responsible for?" the 39-year-old doctor asked between sobs. "For having loved him, for having taken care of him, for having extended his life, for having improved it to the end."

Luque said he did "everything he could, up to the impossible" and considered himself a "friend" of Maradona and saw him "as a father, not as a patient". — *AFP*

## RAMACHANDRAN IN WORLD TRIATHLON AUDIT COMMITTEE

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV. 30

Former Indian Olympic Association (IOA) president N Ramachandran has been elected as a member of the World Triathlon Audit Committee.

Ramachandran, who is the CEO of Indian Triathlon Federation, was elected to the committee at the XXXIII World Triathlon Congress elections held virtually for the first time on November 29, a press release said.

He is the first Indian to be on this panel and was among the five elected from a total of 11 delegates.

"It is truly an honour to be elected as a member on the World Triathlon Audit Committee," Ramachandran said.

"I am humbled by the support given to me by national triathlon federations. I shall ensure transparency and governance in all transactions of the World Triathlon Audit Committee," he added.



## Grosjean to miss next race after fiery crash

**Sakhir (Bahrain), Nov. 30:** French driver Romain Grosjean will sit out next weekend's Formula One race after escaping a fiery high-speed crash in the Bahrain Grand Prix with just burns to his hands, his team Haas said on Monday.

Grosjean walked away from the wreckage after he collided with Daniil Kyvat's Alpha Tauri on the first lap of Sunday's race, causing the Haas car to split in half and burst into flames as it smashed through the safety barriers at 225kph.

Haas said treatment for the burns that 34-year-old

Grosjean suffered was "going well" and he was expected to be discharged from hospital on Tuesday.

Grosjean escaped alive thanks to the integrity of his car's survival cell, his 'halo' device, which deflected the ruptured Armco metal barriers away from his head, his own presence of mind in remaining calm as he extricated himself and the rapid skilled assistance of F1's medical staff and track marshals.

"Hello everyone, I just wanted to say I'm okay, well, sort of okay," the Frenchman said in an Instagram post. — *AFP*



A steward reacts as officials put out a fire on Haas F1 driver Romain Grosjean's car following a crash during the Bahrain Grand Prix in Sakhr on Sunday. — *AFP*