

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

COIMBATORE | SATURDAY 28 | NOVEMBER 2020

## WEATHER



Max: 28°C  
Min: 22°C  
Rainfall: 1.4 mm

## ASTROGUIDE

**Sarvari:** Karthigai 13  
**Tithi:** Thrayodashi/ Chaturtashi  
**Star:** Bharani  
**Rahukalam:**  
9 am to 10.30 am  
**Yamagandam:**  
1.30 pm to 3 pm  
**PRAYERS**  
**Fajar:** 4:57 am  
**Zohar:** 12 noon  
**Asar:** 3:13 pm  
**Maghrib:** 5:39 pm  
**Isha:** 6:54 pm  
**SUNSET TODAY** 5:56 PM  
**SUNRISE TOMORROW** 6:25 AM  
**MOONRISE TODAY** 4:36 PM  
**MOONSET TOMORROW** 6:10 AM

## CORONA COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+39,414)	(+438)
93,49,285	1,36,190

covid19india.org

### STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+1,442)  
**TN:** 7,77,616 11,681

### WORLD CONFIRMED CASES

6,16,31,826

### DEATHS

14,43,856

COUNTRIES AREAS WITH CASES  
217

worldometers.info

## Flightcrew member suffers mild heart attack before landing

**Chennai:** A cockpit crew member of an IndiGo airlines flight coming from Vijayawada suffered a "mild heart attack" before the aircraft landed at Tiruchirappalli airport on Friday, officials said. The crew member complained of chest pain at the time of landing and was rushed to a hospital where doctors diagnosed mild heart attack, an official of the airlines said. The aircraft landed safely but its onward journey to Chennai was cancelled. "The pilot was taken to a hospital and later diagnosed with a mild heart attack. He is expected to undergo an angioplasty tomorrow (in Tiruchirappalli)", the official said. The airlines declined to divulge any further details, including the number of passengers onboard the flight that arrived from Vijayawada. A Tamil Nadu minister among the passengers booked for Chennai reached Madurai by road and took a flight from there, airport sources said. The airline on its website said the Chennai-bound flight, scheduled to depart at 08.45 am and arrive at 09.55 am, was cancelled. — PTI

## COUNTER POINT



Lok Sabha, Assembly, municipal... all polls should be held at the same time so that we don't need to woo voters time and again!

R.VALAYAPATHY| DC PUDUKKOTTAI, NOV 27

The Tamil Nadu government is considering giving priority in government jobs to those who donated organs, health minister C. Vijayabaskar has said. Dr Vijayabaskar said the state government has made organ donation a people's movement and during the last 6 years 8,245 organs were received as donation from 1392 donors.

He was addressing a press conference after receiving through video conferencing the Union health ministry's award from Union health minister Harsh Vardhan here on Friday for coming to the sixth place in performing organ transplantations. Dr Vijayabaskar said the state's strong healthcare infrastructure helped it bag the award. He said tenders have been floated for introducing Air ambulance service in Tamil

● **Dr Vijayabaskar said Tamil Nadu government made organ donation a people's movement**

Nadu and Chief Minister Edappadi K.Palaniswami will launch the service shortly. Dr Vardhan said the Covid-19 pandemic has had a hugely negative impact on the deceased donor pro-

gramme and encouraged people to donate their organs. He said no age, caste, religion, community, belief should come as an obstacle in a task as divine as that of donating organs. "A large number of people die due to non-functioning of organs. According to the national health portal, about 5 lakh people die every year due to non-availability of organs. I also want to say here that no age, caste, religion, com-

munity, belief should ever come as an obstacle in a task as divine as that of donating organs," he was quoted as saying in a statement by the health ministry on the occasion of National Organ Donation Day. "If a person below 18 years of age wishes to donate organ, he can do so with the consent of his parents or guardian. The goal of this campaign is to remove the fear of organ donation," the minister said.

## STATE | 3

**PM speaks with CM; Centre, state announce relief**



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## WORLD | 5

**Iran's top nuclear scientist assassinated**



## SPORT | 8

**Smith, Finch shine in Australia win**



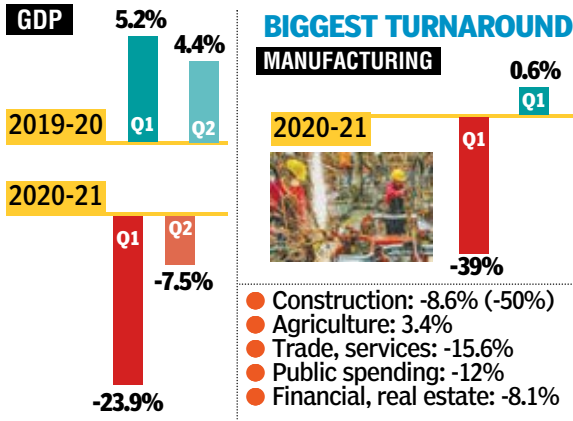
# Economy signals uptick, limits GDP fall to 7.5 p.c.

■ **Better showing compared with record plunge in Q1**

MADHUSUDAN SAHOO | FC NEW DELHI, NOV.27

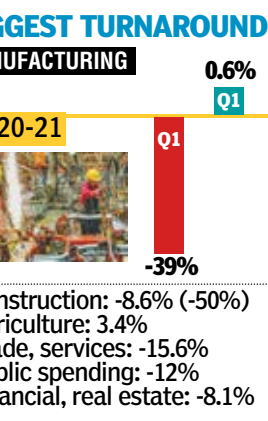
Amidst hopes of development of a corona vaccine, the Indian economy rebounded at a faster-than-expected pace in the July-September quarter, helped by a pick-up in manufacturing. The country's GDP contracted by 7.5 per cent during the quarter, lower than economists' projection of 8.5 per cent to 10.5 per cent and signalling a sharp recovery from the record plunge of 23.9 per cent in the previous June quarter.

"India's real gross domestic product (GDP) fell to 7.5 per cent in the July-September quarter compared to a contraction of 23.9 per cent in the three months ended June. The GDP at constant (2011-12) prices in Q2 of 2020-21 is estimated at Rs 33.14 lakh crores, as against Rs 35.84 lakh crores in Q2 of 2019-20, showing a contraction



of 7.5 per cent as compared to 4.4 per cent growth in Q2 of 2019-20," data released by the ministry of statistics and programme implementation on Friday showed.

Reacting to the latest GDP data, the government's chief economic adviser K. V. Subramanian said there is an 'upside potential' in the estimates about the economy during the current financial year as



recovery is taking the faster pace than expected. "I would say that given what we have seen in Q1 and Q2 and with the optimism that is being seen in the estimates, I do see upside potential in the estimate given the good recovery that is happening," he said, adding that food inflation is expected to soften in the third quarter and it is something which has to be tracked

## MANUFACTURING IS POSITIVE, FROM 39% CONTRACTION

FC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, NOV.27

The data on GDP for the second quarter showed that manufacturing, a segment that suffered the most during the pandemic, has shown some encouraging improvement due to removal of lockdown restrictions in a phased manner. "Manufacturing clocked a surprise 0.6 per cent growth in July-September after it had shrunk by a massive 39 per cent in the preceding quarter. Continuing its good showing, the agriculture sector grew by 3.4 per cent, while the trade and services sector showed lower-than-expected contraction at 15.6 per cent, the government said.

# Farmers brave cops, march to Delhi

SANJAY KAW AND BHASKAR HARI SHARMA | DC NEW DELHI, NOV. 27

Thousands of farmers on Friday braved batons, teargas and water cannons along the Delhi-Haryana border before the authorities allowed them to march towards the national capital as part of their "Delhi Chalo" protest against the Union government's new farm laws.

Punjab Chief Minister Capt. Amarinder Singh, accused by Haryana CM Manohar Lal Khattar of instigating farmers, was the first one to welcome the Centre's decision to allow the protesters to enter the city.

Soon after Capt. Singh urged the Centre to immediately initiate talks to address the farmers' issues, Union agriculture minister Narendra Singh Tomar reiterated that the government would hold talks next week. He said: "The government has



Police use tear gas to disperse agitating farmers who had gathered at Singhu border as part of their Delhi Chalo protest against Centres new farm laws, at Singhu Border in New Delhi, Friday. — PTI

always been ready to discuss issues with farmers. We have invited farmers' organisations for another round of talks on December 3. I appeal to them to leave the agitation in view of Covid-19 and winter."

After camping overnight near Delhi, the farmers clashed with the police for

the second day at the Tikri border near Delhi-Bahadurgarh highway. Carrying flags and shouting slogans, the farmers had gathered at various entry points into Delhi in a determined bid to push their way through as part of their march while the police blocked them with

barricades, teargas shells and baton charges.

Clashes broke out at multiple places and Delhi's borders resembled a virtual warzone with restless crowds of farmers, mostly from Punjab and Haryana, milling around and a sea of police personnel keeping them at bay. Drones circled the air and plumes of smoke from teargas shells could be seen from far.

Security was strengthened at the border and sand-laden trucks and water cannons were stationed. Barbed wire was also used for fencing at the Singhu border to prevent the protesters from entering the city earlier in the day.

The police resorted to a lathicharge for a brief time to control protesters who broke barricades. Hours later, they were given permission to enter Delhi and hold a peaceful protest at the Nirankari Samagam Ground at Burari in north Delhi.

# MiG-29K crashes, one pilot missing

**New Delhi, Nov. 27:** A MiG-29K fighter aircraft of the Indian Navy has crashed into the Arabian sea, and while one pilot has been rescued, a search operation is on for the second, who went missing after the incident, the Indian Navy officials said on Friday.

According to the officials, the Russian-origin jet had taken off from aircraft carrier *INS Vikramaditya*, and went down at around 5 pm on Thursday.

"MiG-29K trainer aircraft operating at sea ditched at about 5 pm on November 26. One pilot

safely recovered, search for the second pilot Cdr Nishant Singh, by air and surface units is in progress. An enquiry to investigate the incident has been ordered," a Navy spokesperson said.

The Navy has deployed a significant number of surveillance aircraft and ships to locate Commander Singh, officials said.

This is the third accident involving the Mig-29K aircraft in the last one year. A twin-seat fighter aircraft had crashed in South Goa district in November last year and both the pilots had ejected safely. — PTI

# Mamata's confidant leader quits cabinet

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, NOV. 27

Dealing a double blow to the Trinamul Congress ahead of next year's Assembly polls in West Bengal, rebel TMC minister Shubhendru Adhikari resigned from Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's cabinet on Friday, while another disgruntled party MLA Mihir Goswami reached New Delhi to join the BJP.

Both have distanced themselves from their party, fuelling speculation of their defection to the BJP, which has also kept the door open for them.

The TMC heavyweight, who was the face of Ms Banerjee's land movement in Nandigram during Left Front rule and later became an MP twice, was the minister of three key departments: transport, environment and water resources investigation and development.

Within hours of Mr Adhikari's resignation, Bishnupur BJP MP Soumitra Khan made a startling revelation, claiming over 58 TMC

MLAs, including state panchayat minister and Narada sting accused Subrata Mukherjee, were ready to defect to the saffron party.

Welcoming Mr Adhikari's step, Mr Khan said in North Bengal: "It was bound to happen. I now imagine what Rabi Babu (TMC MLA Rabindranath Ghosh) and Goutam Da (TMC minister Goutam Deb) will do. It is a matter of concern (sic). I feel that after Mr Adhikari, Subrata Mukherjee is next in the line. On January 9 in 2019, when I joined the BJP, Bhaipo (CM nephew Abhishek Banerjee) had said a lot. But today we have 18 Lok Sabha seats here."

Senior TMC MP Sougata Roy, who recently met Mr Adhikari twice to placate him on Ms Banerjee's instructions, said: "He is still an MLA of our party as he has not quit the post. He has also not tendered his resignation from our party's primary membership. He will remain a member of our party as long as he continues to be an MLA."



## MAHBOOBA UNDER HOUSE ARREST, CLAIMS DAUGHTER

**Srinagar, Nov 27:** Kashmir is an "open air prison" where no one has the right to express their opinion, PDP president Mehbooba Mufti said on Friday after the authorities barred her from holding a press conference at her residence here where she was allegedly placed under house arrest in the morning. The former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister said she was not allowed to visit the Pulwama residence of party leader Waheed Parra who was arrested by the NIA earlier this week. "Press has been barred from entering my residence in Srinagar. This despite no written orders explaining my arbitrary detention. Kashmir is an open air prison where no one has the right to express their opinion," Mufti said on Twitter. — PTI



## SHORT TAKES

**AoC visits IAF administrative college**

Coimbatore, Nov. 27: Air Marshal MSG Menon, Air Officer-in-charge of the air headquarters in Delhi, on Friday appreciated the training being carried out in the Air Force Administrative College (AFAC) here.

The Air Marshal, during his two-day visit which concluded on Friday, interacted with the personnel of the college and reviewed various upcoming infrastructural projects at the institute, an official release said. Menon, also the Commodore Commandant of AFAC, complemented all the staff involved for their continued hard work and dedication.

A ceremonial Guard of Honour was presented to him on his arrival at AFAC on Thursday, the release added. — PTI

**Assn: Govt lost ₹3,386.24 cr forex from quarries**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV. 27

The nation has lost ₹3,386 crore of foreign exchange and the state government ₹212 crore of revenue loss due to the closure of 175 stone quarries in Madurai district since August 2012, president of the Association of Southern Stone Industries (ASSI) P. Rajasekaran, said. He said the 30,00 workers had lost their jobs in the past nine years and the loss of economic activity had led to the accumulation of ₹500 crore Non-Performing Assets to the banks.

Rajasekaran wanted the government to look into the issue and help open the quarries by clearing all the hurdles.

**TN records 1,442 new Covid cases, 12 deaths**

Chennai, Nov. 27: Tamil Nadu on Friday logged 1,442 new Covid-19 cases, taking the infection count to 7,77,616, while 12 more fatalities pushed the death toll to 11,681. Recoveries continued to outnumber the fresh cases with 1,494 people being discharged from health care facilities, pushing the aggregate to 7,54,826, a health department bulletin said. Active cases in the state stood at 11,109. A total of 61,610 samples were tested today, aggregating to 1,18,64,177 specimens examined so far.

The state has been witnessing a decline in new cases and since November 13 daily new infections were below 2,000. Two districts, including the State capital, logged cases in triple digits today with Chennai adding 392 and Coimbatore 145, while the rest were scattered across other districts. Chennai continued to top the list of cases with 2,14,191 infections out of more than 7.77 lakh in the state.

Of the 12 fatalities reported, five succumbed to the virus in private hospitals and seven in government facilities. All the patients were suffering from chronic illness or co-morbidities. Six people who died were above 70, the bulletin said. Chennai also topped in the number of fatalities, accounting for 3,838 of the state's total 11,681 deaths. A private lab in Dharmapuri district was accorded approval for conducting Covid-19 tests, taking the number of facilities operating in the state to 220, of which 67 are run by the government. —PTI

# MP files writ in HC seeking replies from Centre in English

A. ARUL PALANI | DC  
CHENNAI, NOV. 27

Madurai MP S. Venkatesan on Friday filed a writ petition in the Madurai bench of the Madras high court seeking a direction to the Central Government officials to reply to letters from Tamil Nadu MPs in English.

In the petition, Venkatesan of the CPM stated that he was unable to understand the contents of a letter dated November 9, 2020, from Nityanand Rai, Union minister of state for home affairs, written in Hindi.

Venkatesan filed the petition demanding punishment for violating the

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Official Languages Act, 1976. "It was shocking that legal and procedural aspects have been violated by replying to my letter in Hindi," he said.

Venkatesan said he sent the letter on October 9, 2020, demanding examina-

tion centres in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry for the recruitment of CRPF paramedical staff.

He recalled that former prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru in 1963 gave an assurance that Hindi would not be imposed as an official language on non-Hindi speaking states including Tamil Nadu. There was a public debate on this question and consensus emerged that led to the assurance from Nehru. The assurance was reinforced again by Lal Bahadur Shastri in 1965 in the background of protests against Hindi imposition in Tamil Nadu and subsequently Indra Gandhi in 1967 amended

the Official languages Act. Venkatesan said the approach of the Union home ministry, by replying in Hindi is a clear violation of the Official languages Act.

He noted that the Section 5 of the office memorandum issued by the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions dated December 1, 2018, states that "wherever any letter from a Parliament is in English and the reply is required to be given in Hindi in terms of Act 1963 and the rules framed under, an English translation should also be sent along with the reply for the from non-Hindi speaking states.

## 2 die in sleep; generator gas leak suspected

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV. 27

In a suspected case of asphyxiation, two men and their pet dogs were found dead inside a house in Lathur block in Chengalpet district here on Friday.

They were suspected to have been asphyxiated, as the duo had left the generator on the whole night. Based on the preliminary investigations, police said the deceased, N.Rajesh (26) a native of Kulachal in Kanyakumari, and Rajesh (25) of Nagercoil, had gone to bed after switching on the generator on Thursday night.

Police said the duo was working in a private con-

**The police also found two dead dogs inside the room**

struction site in Lathur Block, Madurantakam and lived in a room nearby. Since none of them came out of the room on Friday morning, Arumugam (45), the security guard of the private property, tried calling them but to no avail.

He then informed the Anaicut police, who arrived and broke the door open. On entering the room, police found the two lying unconscious, and alerted an ambulance. A doctor declared the two dead. The police

also found two dead dogs inside the room.

The accident is believed to have been caused due to a gas leak from the generator.

Since there were no power in the area for the last three days, the duo might have used the generator to charge their mobile phones.

Police said it is not clear whether they were asphyxiated due to smoke/gas emanating from the generator or due to some electrical short circuit.

The bodies were sent to Chengalpet government hospital for post-mortem. Anaicut police have registered a case and are investigating.

## DVAC seizes unaccounted cash

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV. 27

A surprise raid by the Kanchipuram detachment of DVAC, Directorate of Vigilance and Anti-Corruption in the local town and country deputy director's office revealed unaccounted cash to the tune of ₹3,00,000 on Friday night.

The raids came after the police received repeated complaints of various malpractices being indulged in by the deputy director P.Kavitha, vigilance police, arrived at his office on Friday evening and also prevented the staff from either leaving or entering the premises. A search revealed the unaccounted cash up to ₹3 lakh. The raid is still on and more details are awaited.

## HC turns down advance bail plea of woman

J. STALIN | DC  
CHENNAI, NOV. 27

Pointing out that exercise of any right must be in consonance with the rights of all other citizens and in the event of any violation, question of detention as well as initiation of action arises, the Madras high court has declined to direct the police to issue notice to a woman, who apprehended arrest in connection with a cheating case, in the event of registering any case against her, enabling her to file anticipatory bail petition in advance before the court.

Justice S.M.Subramaniam dismissed the anticipatory bail petition filed by Vasantha, who apprehended arrest at the hands of the Pudukottai police for the offences punishable under sections 120 (b), 408, 409, 420, 468, 471 and 477 (A) read with 109 IPC.

When the petition came up for hearing government advocate submitted



that no FIR has been registered against the petitioner as on today and therefore, the question of granting anticipatory bail does not arise.

Citing two orders of the high court, counsel for the petitioner submitted that a similar order may be passed to issue notice under section 41 (A) of Cr.P.C to the petitioner in the event of registering any case against her, enabling her to file anticipatory bail petition in advance before this court.

The judge said section 41 (A) Cr.P.C was unam-

biguous that "where the arrest of a person is not required". Thus, the ingredients stipulated in the said provision was very clear that if arrest was not required, then, only notice was to be issued by the police officer in advance calling a person to explain with regard to the allegations set out in the complaint and certainly, not otherwise. In view of the said provision, the police officer concerned was expected to issue notice only in such of those cases, where arrest was not required and certainly not in all other cases where an arrest was imminent and warranted, the judge added.

The judge said in the event of directing the police authorities to issue notice under section 41 (A) Cr.P.C in all the cases without considering the facts and circumstances, there was a possibility of erroneous implementation of the orders by the police or likelihood of absconding

by the accused persons. If an accused person was allowed to abscond, it would be very difficult for the police officials to again arrest and investigate the matter to continue the prosecution. "It is a world of electronic advancement. Criminals are acting intelligently and, they are one step ahead of the technological advancement. Thus, on registration of cases the police officer must take a decision, whether an arrest is necessary or not. Ultimately an offender should not be allowed to escape from the clutches of law. Law enforcing agencies are to be doubly cautious, while dealing with such complex criminal activities prevailing in the society. Undoubtedly, procedures are to be followed scrupulously. However, the decision making powers must be vested with the police officer concerned in consonance with the code of criminal procedure and other laws in force.



Kolathur still remains under water.

— DC



In a bid to let floodwater flow freely into the sea, civic workers desilting the estuary near Marina beach.

— DC



Youngsters fishing in a canal near Thiruneermalai lake.

— DC

## No fresh corona fatality in Puducherry

Puducherry, Nov. 27: The union territory of Puducherry registered 16 fresh COVID-19 cases on Friday taking the overall tally to 36,856, a top Health department official said. In a welcome development, no fresh fatality was reported for the eighth day in succession on Friday, a release from the Director of Health and Family Welfare S Mohan Kumar said. — PTI

## IIT-M to run e-bus with innovative charging tech

New Delhi, Nov 27: Hitachi ABB Power Grids in India, Ashok Leyland and the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT-M) on Friday announced a partnership for an e-mobility pilot.

The tripartite partnership will run an electric bus (e-bus) pilot to support sustainable in-campus commuting by IIT-M's students and staff. The e-bus, which will incorporate Hitachi ABB Power Grids' innovative flash-charging technology – Grid-eMotion Flash, will be provided by Ashok Leyland, while IIT-M will host the infrastructure required to operate the flash-charging system for the e-bus, Hitachi ABB Power Grids in India said in a statement.

"With sound policy levers in place, this partnership – engaging some of the finest industry and academic minds in India – creates a truly sustainable framework for e-mobility," Hitachi ABB Power Grids in India managing director N. Venu said. The partnership will provide a zero-emissions mass public transportation bus system through the company's 'award-winning technology', localised for the Indian market, he added.

"Combination of our robust buses with electric propulsion technology and flash charging from Hitachi ABB Power Grids, can be the answer to the need for sustainable public transportation across the country," Ashok Leyland chief technology officer N. Saravanan said. IIT

Madras director Prof Bhaskar Ramamurthi said the development of India's e-mobility charging infrastructure and increased deployment of e-buses is key to meeting the demand for sustainable transport solutions across India's rural and urban areas.

"We hope to study and understand how the right technology can enable an efficient transport system without damaging the environment. We are delighted to have partnered with the best in the industry for this endeavor," he added. Hitachi ABB Power Grids' flash-charging system quickly tops up the battery while passengers get on and off the bus. On arterial roads, an e-bus with this solution can reduce the need to take the vehicle out of service for recharging every few hours or having a replacement bus ready, the company said. With India targeting to scale up EV adoption to 30 per cent by 2030, the mass public transport segment is largely untouched, the company said adding for bus operators, the switch to electric has previously presented challenges. "That is because with battery-operated buses it is difficult to maximize passenger load carrying capacity and running time while making the whole operation economically viable. An e-bus with flash-charging technology can solve that problem while improving the quality of life through reducing pollution in densely populated urban areas," it added. — PTI

# History had been unkind to BJP in TN



G. Babu Jayakumar

**Just spamming**

The recent hullabaloo over Tamil Nadu BJP's attempt to take out a Vetrivel Yatra, which, to put it otherwise, is a van ride by party state president L. Murugan, holding aloft a spear, evoked mixed reactions. While supporters of the BJP and the Yatra felt that the exercise, purportedly displaying the party's devotion to Lord Murugan, would endure itself to the masses, the detractors decried it as a sign of the party's desperation to gain popular acceptance in Tamil Nadu.

But the BJP had been indulging in such political gambits for decades, but to no avail. If the party hopes to evoke public sentiments through Lord Murugan,

who is considered by many as the God of Tamil people, in 2020, it was the Tamil language in the year 2000. Looking back, the then general secretary of the state BJP L. Ganesan went about trying to prove to the people that his party had more love for the Tamil language than others in many ways.

One was his request to the then Union Human Resources Development Minister Murali Manohar Joshi to declare Tamil as a Classical Language and also accord it an official language status. Well, it took another four years for Tamil to gain the Classical Language honour and it is doubtful if the BJP would revive the demand for official language status now.

But then, that was the time when Ganesan thought that he could prove his love for Tamil to the people and thus popularize his party in the State.

He wanted the year 2000 to be declared as the year of the Tamil Language, evoking the same kind of guffaws that L. Murugan's persistence in taking out the Vetrivel Yatra 20 years later is giving rise to. Well, that was not all. When the DMK government under M. Karunanidhi passed a contentious order, which was later struck down by the Madras high court, on Tamil or the child's mother tongue to be the medium of instruction in primary schools from the year 2000, Ganesan was there cheering the government, extending full support to the move.

"This is a bold step taken by the Tamil Nadu government to save the age-old Tamil...this is not merely a language issue but an issue of self-respect. Whatever be the opposition to the government order, we shall stand by the order," he had

said. The BJP leader also assured the support of his party if the government were to make Tamil the medium of instruction even in colleges.

Ganesan, at that time, even went to the extent of narrating his personal stories in the public domain to prove that his love for Tamil was real. He wrote in Kumudam, the weekly Tamil magazine that when he was young he and his friends had competitions on speaking in pure Tamil. He narrated the evening outing that he and his friends would have, going around the Big temple in Thanjavur in the 1960s, when the competition was held. Till they left the temple complex, all of them had to talk only in Tamil without mixing English words. In the around 45 minutes they took to go around the temple conversing, every English word used was counted and the one who used the most number of English words would groundnut packets for everyone in the group.

He even claimed that he did not compromise his love

for Tamil even after becoming an employee of the state revenue department. He said that he would put his signature in Tamil and when an officer told him that he would not be able to give his salary because he had signed in Tamil, he walked away with a retort: Keep your money. He also recounted conducting elocution competitions in Tamil among the RSS cadre.

Recounting these multifarious expressions of love for Tamil by Ganesan, in an article for the Economic & Political Weekly in August, 2012, well known social scientist from Tamil Nadu the late M S S Pandian commented, 'While all these moves are a sign of the desperation of the Hindu right, they have failed to yield much political dividends.' Pandian also referred to another incident. When the 133 feet tall statue of Tamil saint-poet Tiruvalluvar was unveiled by the then Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi at Kanyakumari, Ganesan became emotional, pointing out that the people were not using Tamil.

"Let us speak in Tamil, let us write our names in pure Tamil, our lack of interest in Tamil is regrettable..." he went on and on.

Tiruvalluvar, whose celebrated appropriation bid by the BJP turned out to be a washout in 2016 when one of its leaders Tarun Vijay took a statue of the venerable poet to Haridwar and could not install it as he had promised the people of Tamil Nadu, drew the attention of the party much earlier. In 1999 when the BJP held its national executive committee meeting in Chennai, the venue was named after Tiruvalluvar. Also 100 couples from Tirukkural, the literary work of Tiruvalluvar, were displayed at the venue in English and Hindi translation.

So, going by the past fiascos of the state BJP in its bids to appropriate Tamil identity as its own, it is doubtful if L. Murugan would be able to make the impact he aspires for in the state even if he were to pierce his cheek for real as a penance to Lord Murugan.



## SHORT TAKES

## Directive operative only for current yr

From P1

To super specialty medical Courses for the academic year 2020-2021 shall proceed on a date to be fixed by the competent authority without providing for reservations to in-service doctors. It reiterated that the direction would be operative only for the current academic year i.e. 2020-2021.

"The process for admissions to super specialty medical courses started on August 3, 2020, and it was made clear to all the competing candidates that there shall be no reservation. As the admission process is at the final stages, we cannot permit reservation for in-service doctors for this year," the bench also comprising Justices Hemant Gupta and Ajay Rastogi said.

Additional solicitor general Sanjay Jain had argued that there can be no reservation in super specialty courses.

## 'Resume fishermen grievance redressal meetings'

DC CORRESPONDENT  
THOOTHUKUDI, NOV. 27

The fishermen in Thoothukudi have demanded the resumption of the monthly fishermen grievance redressal meeting that has been kept under suspension for last two years.

Having around 15 percent of the total fishermen population of 11 lakh in the state, Thoothukudi is one of the major fish harvesting districts in the state. However, the monthly grievance day meeting got suspended following the police firing at the May 22, 2018, anti-Sterile protest that claimed 13 lives. "Though the district administration and the fisheries department officials said that the meetings had been suspended temporarily, the monthly meetings remained suspended for two years.

## Harvard affiliate Beth Israel establishes Sathguru center in US

**Coimbatore:** Harvard Medical School affiliate Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center's department of Anesthesia, Critical Care and Pain Medicine, Boston, has established the Sathguru Center for a Conscious Planet with the objective of improving the health of patients and the broader community through scientific research in three connected areas of consciousness, cognition and compassion. BIDMC's mission is to teach technologies for inner wellbeing and raise every human being to the peak of their potential. The initiative is part of Sathguru's mission to establish global platforms that will raise individual human consciousness to accelerate the journey towards creating a conscious planet, according to a press release.

## Aruna Jegadeesan probe panel report early next year

DC CORRESPONDENT  
THOOTHUKUDI, NOV. 27

The Aruna Jegadeesan commission, probing into the police firing that killed 13 participants of a rally against Sterlite in Thoothukudi on May 22, 2018, will submit its report likely by the first quarter of next year, said its advocate, Arul Vadivel Sekar.

Speaking to the media after completing the 22nd phase of the enquiry for four days from November 23 in Thoothukudi, Mr Sekar said that the commission could have completed its enquiry and submitted the report to the state government had it not got delayed for 8 months due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"The commission recorded the statements of 547 witnesses till its 22nd phase of enquiry and received 724 documents pertaining to the police firing," said the advocate, who added that 400 more witnesses are to be heard in the coming sessions. In the next session, scheduled to be held from December 14 to 18, the panel will record the statements of the police personnel on duty during the incident. "The then district collector, Venkatesh, and the district police superintendent, Mahendran, will be summoned in the final phase of the enquiry as without their statements the enquiry will not be complete," said Mr Sekar, who added that no fresh summons has been issued to actor Rajinikanth, who got an exemption from appearing before the commission in person to present his version.



DMDK leader Premalatha Vijayakanth visits cyclone affected area in Chennai on Friday. — DC



Visitors admire the 'Festival of Lamps' exhibition cum sale at Poompuram showroom on Anna Salai ahead of Karthigai Deepam festival. — DC

## PM speaks with CM; Centre, state announce relief

New Delhi/Chennai, Nov 27:

An ex-gratia of ₹2 lakh each will be given to the next of kin of the deceased and ₹50,000 each to those injured in the wake of cyclone Nivar and heavy rainfall in Tamil Nadu, the Prime Minister's Office said on Friday after Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke with Chief Minister K Palaniswami.

The PMO said the monetary assistance to the next of kin of the deceased and injured will be provided from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund (PMNRF) and central teams are being sent to the state to assist in the rescue and relief work. In the state, about 2.30 lakh people have been accommodated in relief camps following the cyclone, Chief Minister Palaniswami had said. "PM @narendramodi spoke to Tamil Nadu CM Thiru @EPSTamilNadu and discussed the situation in the wake of the

cyclone and heavy rainfall in parts of the state. Central teams are being sent to Tamil Nadu to assist in rescue and relief work," the PMO tweeted. "PM @narendramodi expressed condolence on the loss of lives and prayed for a quick recovery of the injured," it said. An ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh each would be given to the next of kin of the deceased and Rs 50,000 each to the injured, from the PMNRF, the PMO said. Meanwhile, CM Palaniswami announced Rs 10 lakh each to the families of the victims. Apart from uprooting 2,064 trees in the affected districts, including Chennai, Cuddalore, Chengalpattu, Vellore and Nagapattinam, it caused damage to about 108 power transformers and over 2,927 electric poles, Palaniswami said in a statement here.

The work to clear the fallen trees and restore the transformers was being taken up on a war-footing, he said. "The state government swung into action immediately after receiving an alert about the cyclone from the Indian Meteorological Department. Strict measures were put in place to prevent casualties due to the cyclone." Palaniswami expressed his deepest condolences to the victims' families and said he has ordered financial assistance of ₹10 lakh each ~ ₹4 lakh from the State Disaster Relief Fund and Rs 6 lakh from the Chief Minister's Public Relief Fund.

Also, he announced compensation for the loss of 61 cows, five bulls, 65 calves and 114 goats in the storm to cattle owners, ranging between ₹3,000 and ₹30,000. About 302 huts and 38 tiled houses were completely damaged and 1,439 huts and 161 tiled houses suffered partial damage. Assistance would be provided. — PTI

## TN wins award for third year

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV. 27

Tamil Nadu has won the award for the Best Performing Big State in overall and inclusive development for 2020, given by the India Today Group, for the third consecutive year.

Originally scheduled to be presented at the India Today e-State of States Conclave on Friday, the award would now be given away on December 5, a release from the India Today Group said.

Scoring 123.1 points out of the total of 2000, the state bagged the award that it had won in 2018 and 2019 for creating job opportunities and an amiable business environment, besides improving people's lives.

The state had fared well in various indices like economics, agriculture, education, public health, provision of basic amenities, law and order; good

## Palaniswami thanks SC for declaring leave for Pongal

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV. 27

Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami thanked the Supreme Court for its historic announcement declaring holidays for the courts on January 14 and 15 to mark the Pongal festival.

Welcoming the announcement on behalf of the people of Tamil Nadu, Palaniswami, in a statement on Friday, said the harvest festival reflected the culture and traditions of Tamils.

governance, entrepreneurship and environment to come on top of the pack.

The most urbanized and industrialised state has a robust foundation for pro-



He said former Chief Minister J. Jayalalithaa had wanted Tamil to be the official language of courts and that his government too would like to stress on the demand.

## Why govt not implementing directions relating to tribunals: SC

**New Delhi:** Disturbed over the trend of government not implementing repeated directions issued by it to ensure that tribunals should not "function as another department" under the control of executive, the Supreme Court Friday said it is high time that this practice was stopped.

The apex court said dispensation of justice by tribunals can be effective only when they function independent of any executive control and this renders them credible and generates public confidence. "We have noticed

a disturbing trend of the Government not implementing the directions issued by this court.

Therefore, it is crucial that these tribunals are run by a robust mix of experts,

"To ensure that the tribunals should not function as another department under the control of the executive, repeated directions have been issued which have gone unheeded forcing the petitioner (Madras Bar Association) to approach this court time and again," said a bench headed by Justice L. Nageswara Rao. — PTI

T. SUDHEESH | DC  
CHENNAI, NOV. 27

The mentally challenged people in the state, who are living in mental health institutions, will get independent community living options. The initiative, titled 'Home Again', launched by Hans Foundation, a public charitable trust that provides funds to non-governmental organisations in India, will ensure social inclusion of 250 individuals from Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra in 45

"It was launched as people who have recovered from mental illness are often excluded from meaningful participation in work, family and community. They face widespread discrimination and abuses in terms of their human rights. Providing them proper housing facilities would improve participation in social and mental activities" homes.

According to Ms Shweta, chairperson of the foundation, they have launched the initiative based on last

## Flood warning issued to villages along Palar river

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV. 27

Owing to the increased inflow of water into Palar river, Kanchipuram district collector Mahe-shwari Ravikumar issued a flood warning to the villages along Palar on Friday.

The flood warning has been issued since the inflow into the river has been increased to 20,000 cusecs so far and is set to go up to 40,000 cusecs in due course.

In Kanchipuram district, the villages that received flood warnings are, Perumbakkam, Muthuvadu, Sevilimedu, Orikkai. In Walajabad, the villages that received flood warning area, Kuruvimalai, Avaloor, Uthiramerur, Thirukukoodal, Pinaayur, OruKaattupettai. People from about 40 villages along the river banks were advised to stay safe and urged them to follow all precaution and safety measures.

Due to heavy rains, 6,000 cusecs of water is being released from Thandara dam across Cheyyar river in Tiruvannamalai district. The surplus water will reach the river near Perunagar village in Kanchipuram district.

## STALIN REMEMBERS VP SINGH

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV. 27

DMK president M. K. Stalin called upon the people to take a pledge to usher in reservation in all departments on the occasion of the death anniversary of former Prime Minister V. P. Singh, describing him as the protector of social justice.

Though born into privilege, Singh thought about and strove for developing the lives of people in the lowest rung of society, Stalin said in his Facebook post on Friday.

Singh spread the social justice of Tamil soil all over the nation, he said.

## Govt urged to give up salary cut for engineers

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV. 27

TNCC president K. S. Alagiri urged Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami to give up the government's plans to cut the salary of engineers working in about a score of departments, including highways, PWD and rural development.

The news of the government move to cut up Rs 15,000 from the pay of the engineers was shocking and unacceptable as these engineers undertook Rs 50,000 crore worth developmental projects in the state by being on the field, Alagiri said in a statement on Friday.

He said the government was victimizing the engineers because they sought legal redress for pay parity with doctors and said that it was unfair.



Minister K.C. Veeramani showers flower petals to welcome Palar river, Walajapet. — K. Senthil Nathan

Hence, the officials have requested the people living near Perunagar are advised to not cross the causeway across Cheyyar river. People have been advised to not get into the regulator or try to cross it and bath or wash clothes there. Parents have been asked to ensure that the children don't go near the place. The police department

on Friday evening stopped transportation on Kanchipuram-Perunagar-Vanthavasi road.

**CATTLE RESCUED:** Despite warnings by the collector, a farmer from Sevilimedu village in Kanchi took his cows to Palar river bank for grazing. Due to a sudden flood in the river, the cows were unable to cross the river banks. Police and fire

department officials were informed about the situation. The officials who arrived at the spot used ropes to rescue the cattle. The police officials also found a 35-year-old drunk man stuck in the river banks. He was also rescued by the team. The drunk man and the farmer were let off by the police after a stern warning.

## Now, surplus water from Poondi reservoir released

**Chennai, Nov. 27:** Authorities on Friday discharged about 1,000 cusecs of water from the Poondi reservoir, among the chief sources of drinking water supply to the metro, after its level neared full capacity in the wake of good inflows.

The reservoir in neighbouring Tiruvallur district has seen good inflows recently due to rains, including during the

Nivar cyclone that crossed the Tamil Nadu coast on Thursday and from the Krishna river in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh. On Friday, following inflows of about 9,722 cusecs, the reservoir level stood at 33 feet against its full level of 35 feet, Water Resources Department (WRD) officials said.

With the water being released into the Kosa-thalaiyar river, the distr-

ict administration asked people living in low lying areas and those on its banks to move to safer places. Earlier, officials had on Wednesday released water from the Chembarambakkam lake, another key drinking water source for the city, after its level reached 22 feet out of the total 24 feet, with the sluice gates being opened for the first time in five years. — PTI

## Special Haj help desk at Tiruchy passport office

DC CORRESPONDENT  
TIRUCHY, NOV. 27

A special Haj help desk will function at the regional passport office at Tiruchy for extending necessary services to the Haj aspirants, according to R. Anand, regional passport officer.

In a release at Tiruchy on Friday, he said the applicants may contact the help desk in person/mail/telephone for expeditious issuance of passports or for any issues relating to their passport applications. The desk will be operational until December 10.

The Haj committee has informed that the last date for submission of Haj application along

with valid passport details has been fixed as December 10. Only those applicants who possess machine readable passports valid upto 11-01-2022 would be permitted to apply for Haj 2021, he added.

He added that all Haj aspirants are advised to check the validity of their passports and apply for reissue of the passport well in advance.

Any Haj aspirant, who has already applied for an issue of passport and has not received the same (even after their police verification is completed), may come to the regional passport office to enquire about the status of their application, he added.

## Tiruchy Gandhi Market reopened

DC CORRESPONDENT  
TIRUCHY, NOV. 27

The Gandhi Market at Tiruchy, shut since March due to Covid-19, was reopened on Friday after the Madurai bench of the Madras high court lifted its interim stay on opening of the market.

It might be recalled that Krishnamoorthy moved the Madurai bench seeking a direc-

tion to shift the market to the suburb Kallikudi where the agriculture marketing department constructed a market complex. The court on his petition granted interim stay for the functioning of the Gandhi market in the existing congested place in Tiruchy city.

Various traders' organisations continuously agitated for the reopening of the Gandhi Market in the existing place.

## Mentally challenged people to get 'Home Again'

T. SUDHEESH | DC  
CHENNAI, NOV. 27

The mentally challenged people in the state, who are living in mental health institutions, will get independent community living options. The initiative, titled 'Home Again', launched by Hans Foundation, a public charitable trust that provides funds to non-governmental organisations in India, will ensure social inclusion of 250 individuals from Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra in 45

"It was launched as people who have recovered from mental illness are often excluded from meaningful participation in work, family and community. They face widespread discrimination and abuses in terms of their human rights. Providing them proper housing facilities would improve participation in social and mental activities" homes.

According to Ms Shweta, chairperson of the foundation, they have launched the initiative based on last

year's report 'National strategy for inclusive and community based living for persons with mental health issues' prepared by the foundation along the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences and Tata Institute of Social Sciences.

"It was launched as people who have recovered from mental illness are often excluded from meaningful participation in

work, family and community. They face widespread discrimination and abuses in terms of their human rights. Providing them proper housing facilities would improve participation in social and mental activities," she said.

The study had found that as many as 612 people in Tamil Nadu have been living for more than a year in mental health institutions. Of the 13,610 patients surveyed, nearly 5,000 have been staying in mental health facilities for over a year. Out of which, 54.3

percent are women. Only Maharashtra (1,358) and West Bengal (971) had patients who are having longer stay at mental health institutions than Tamil Nadu.

At least 41.9 percent prefer to return to families while 14.4 wish to stay back. People with severe disabilities accounted for 46.1 percent. A whopping 93.5 percent of mentally challenged patients never stepped out of hospital while 86.5 percent never had a visitor and 94.8 percent never visited anyone

out of the hospital.

Nearly 50 per cent of long-term residents lived in institutions for between one and five years. The report also found that 11.4 per cent had been in the shelter homes for over a quarter of a century.

'Home Again' began with 2,200 individuals with varying degrees of disability (plus an additional 1,000 with more complex needs). The aim is to place four to five individuals per home leading to setting up 400 to 600 community homes in the country.



IN BRIEF

NAVY'S MIG-29K CRASHES, PILOT MISSING

From Page 1

To super specialty medical Courses for the academic year 2020- 2021 shall proceed on a date to be fixed by the competent authority without providing for reservations to in-service doctors. It reiterated that the direction would be operative only for the current academic year i.e. 2020-2021.

"The process for admissions to super specialty medical courses started on August 3, 2020, and it was made clear to all the competing candidates that there shall be no reservation. As the admission process is at the final stages, we cannot permit reservation for in-service doctors for this year," the bench also comprising Justices Hemant Gupta and Ajay Rastogi said.

Additional solicitor general Sanjay Jain argued that there can be no reservation in super specialty courses. Senior advocate Jaideep Gupta, appearing for Kerala, argued it might not be possible to implement the reservations for in-service candidates at this stage for the academic year 2020-2021 as the admission process has already commenced.

PTI

BID TO CAP SURGE PRICING BY CAB AGGREGATORS

New Delhi, Nov. 27: The government on Friday proposed to cap surge pricing charged by cab aggregators like Ola and Uber at 1.5 times of the base fare. The development assumes significance in the backdrop of a long-pending demand of citizens to cap the pricing of ride-hailing services.

"The aggregator shall be permitted to charge a fare 50 per cent lower than the base fare and a maximum surge pricing of 1.5 times the base fare," said the Motor Vehicle Aggregators Guidelines, 2020 issued by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

This will enable and promote asset utilisation which has been the fundamental concept of transport aggregation and also substantiate the dynamic pricing principle which is pertinent in ensuring asset utilisation in accordance with the market forces of demand and supply, the ministry said.

The driver of a vehicle integrated with the aggregator shall receive at least 80 per cent of the fare applicable on each ride and the remaining charges for each ride shall be received by the aggregator.

In states where the city taxi fare has not been determined by the state government, an amount of ₹25/30 shall be the base fare for the purpose of fare regulation, the guidelines said.

Similar fare fixation shall be done by the state government of other vehicles integrated by aggregators with the relevant state, the ministry said.

Research firm RedSeer said that the guidelines for cab aggregators which seek to cap surge pricing at 1.5X among other provisions are expected to have mixed impact for the sector that will benefit from improved safety regulations but could have "negative" fallouts for drivers' earnings.

● **THE DEVELOPMENT** assumes significance in the backdrop of a long-pending demand of citizens to cap the pricing of ride-hailing services.

● **THE MOVE** will enable and promote asset utilisation which has been the fundamental concept of transport aggregation and also substantiate the dynamic pricing principle which is pertinent in ensuring asset utilisation in accordance with the market forces of demand and supply.



Protesters pelt stones during the Delhi Chalo march by members of various farmer organisations over the farm reform laws at Singhu border in New Delhi on Friday.

PTI

# Farmers say their agitation is people's movement now

North Delhi becomes nerve centre \* Farmers stage sit-in in Uttar Pradesh too

New Delhi/Chandigarh, Nov. 27 Hundreds of farmers entered the national capital on Friday to hold peaceful protest at a north Delhi ground after facing tear gas and water cannons and clashing with security personnel while thousands remained at border points, undecided whether to go to the demonstration site identified by police.

Farmer leaders from Punjab and Haryana said the stir has now become a "people's movement", drawing support from various sections of society.

Meanwhile, Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar appealed to the protesting farmers to end their agitation and said the government is ready to discuss all issues with them.

Asserting that the new farm laws will bring tremendous improvement in the lives of farmers, he said the government was already engaging with various farmers' organisations and they have been called for discussions on December 3.

Around 600 farmers headed to Sant Nirankari Ground, one of the biggest in the national capital, following several hours of confrontation with the police at different border points with Haryana.

After a meeting between farmer leaders and senior police officers, the Delhi Police allowed the protesters to hold demonstration peacefully at Nirankari Ground, but senior farmer leader Darshan Pal later said they would stay put at border points on Friday night and a decision on whether to go to the identified protest site or not will be taken on Saturday.

At the Tikri border, some groups of farmers were escorted by police personnel around 3 pm amid tight security and taken towards the identified protest site. But those gathered at the Singhu border, one of the main routes used to access the city from Punjab, had not entered the city till late evening.

As more Punjab farmers crossed the state's

border with Haryana, by evening, all police barricades at the border with Punjab and along the highway to Delhi were lifted, allowing traffic to run as before.

In Uttar Pradesh too, farmers staged sit-ins and demonstrations at many places, including Lucknow.

In Muzaffarnagar, Meerut, Baghpat and Gautam Budh Nagar in western UP, besides Jhansi and Jalaun in Bundelkhand region, protests on various roads resulted in considerable blockades and traffic disruptions.

Earlier in the day, carrying flags and shouting slogans, protesting farmers at the Delhi-Haryana Singhu border pelted stones and broke barricades as they clashed with Delhi Police which used tear gas shells to disperse them. The security personnel baton charged the protesters for a brief time. Around three police officials were also injured.

Angry farmers, who were denied entry into the national capital for their 'Delhi Chalo' march

against the farm laws, managed to break the first layer of barricading, at the border.

Plumes of smoke were seen as security personnel used multiple rounds of tear gas to disperse the farmers at the Singhu border.

A multi-layer barricading was in place at the Singhu border to prevent farmers from entering the national capital.

At the Tigri border, security personnel used water cannons to disperse farmers trying to gain entry to Delhi.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government on Friday denied permission to the Delhi Police to convert the city's stadiums into temporary jails in view of the protest by farmers against the new farm laws.

While rejecting the police's request, Delhi Home Minister Satyendra Jain said every Indian citizen has the constitutional right to protest peacefully for which they cannot be put in jails.

In a letter to the principal home secretary, Jain

said the central government should accept the demands of the protesters and added that putting farmers in jails is not the solution.

Meanwhile, Delhi Metro services resumed on all lines on Friday evening after they were disrupted for a few hours at multiple places because of the 'Delhi Chalo' march.

"Services normal at all corridors from 5:35 pm onwards," the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) tweeted, adding that the services will be regular on all lines on Saturday.

Due to protest, vehicles moved bumper-to-bumper on key roads after the Delhi Police closed several border points with Haryana in view of the protest march on Friday. Punjab farmers, representing over 30 farm bodies, had announced they would go to Delhi through several routes - Lalru, Shambhu, Patiala-Pehowa, Patran-Khanauri, Moonak-Tohana, Ratia-Patehabad and Talwandi-Sirsa.

PTI

## DDC elections in J&K today

Jammu, Nov 27: The first phase of the DDC election and panchayat bypolls will be held in Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday, with 1,427 candidates in the fray and seven lakh voters eligible to exercise their franchise, officials said.

State Election Commissioner K.K. Sharma said 2,146 polling stations have been set up for the smooth conduct of elections of phase-I.

"As many as 7 lakh voters shall use their right to vote in phase I of polling tomorrow. Out of 7 lakh voters, more than 3.72 lakh are from the Kashmir division and 3.28

lakh are from the Jammu division," Mr Sharma told reporters here.

On the District Development Council (DDC) elections, the SEC said a total of 280 constituencies are in the Union Territory of J&K (14 in each district), out of which voting will be conducted in 43 constituencies from 7 am to 2 pm in phase-I. He said 296 candidates are in the poll fray, comprising 207 males and 89 females for DDC elections in Phase-I. Mr Sharma said the sarpanch election will be conducted in 94 constituencies and a total of 279 candidates are in the fray.

PTI

## Border clashes spread, two more jawans killed

DC CORRESPONDENT SRINAGAR, NOV. 27

The renewed intermittent clashes between the facing armies along the Line of Control (LoC) that began in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district earlier this week spread to neighbouring Rajouri district on Friday, leaving, at least, two more Indian soldiers dead.

The Army said that the Pakistani troops resorted to "unprovoked ceasefire violation" in Suderbani area of Rajouri early Friday.

"Pakistan Army resorted to unprovoked

● **ON THURSDAY**, a Junior Commissioner Officer Subedar Swathantra Singh was killed and a local resident was injured along the LoC.

cease fire violation on the LoC in Sunderbani sector of district Rajouri on November 27," Lt. Col. Devender Anand, the Jammu-based defence spokesman said.

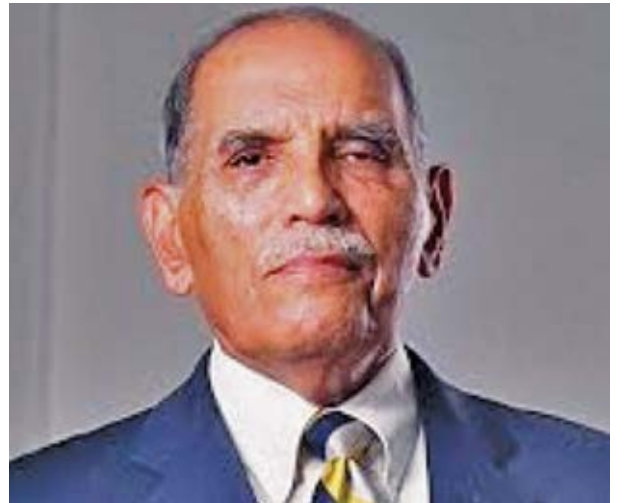
He added, "Our troops responded immediately to the enemy fire. In the ensuing fire, two jawans of the Indian Army Naik Prem Bahadur

Khatri and Rifleman Sukhbir Singh got critically injured and later succumbed to their injuries."

He said Naik Prem Bahadur Khatri and Rifleman Sukhbir Singh were "brave, highly motivated and sincere soldiers".

On Thursday, a Junior Commissioner Officer Subedar Swathantra Singh of 16 Garhwal was killed and a local resident Muhammad Rashid was injured in Pakistani artillery and small arms fire along the LoC's Kirni and Qasba sectors in Poonch district.

# When father of Indian software ind. was asked to 'show' software



SRIRAM KARRI IDC HYDERABAD, NOV. 27

In the cold January of 2005, Hyderabad was gearing to hold a mega IEEE national conference, marked by several other events, including talks, paper submissions, interviews, panel discussions, industry interactions and awards night supported by the NASSCOM, the Computer Society of India (CSI), the Hyderabad Software Exporters Association (HYSEA), STPI, India, with the largest software company of India, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) as the principal sponsor.

The prestigious event had the global chairman of IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers) amongst the guests, besides top CEOs of Indian software industry. President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam was to link digitally to give a speech.

TCS, which had just gone public a few quarters prior, had set the Indian tech industry abuzz with excitement with its campaign - software put India on the global map, but who put software on India's map? Of course, TCS the company did, but the contribution and achievement had to be personified, it was its founding CEO, Faqir Chand Kohli (popularly called F.C.Kohli, or even FCK lovingly by colleagues and juniors).

As head of marketing and communications of TCS, Hyderabad region, it was my responsibility to ensure the conference was a success in terms of its marketing, branding and communications. But the biggest challenge was an initiative, against which I was warned adequately by TCS regional head, Rajesh Nambiar, (now Chairman and Managing Director, Cognizant India), was to anchor a conversation with F.C. Kohli.

"Be warned, he is a ferocious tiger. Unpredictable," Rajesh Nambiar told me. I can handle any tiger, I thought, and went ahead.

Employees of the Tata Group pride the number one (1). Its former Chairman, J.R.D. Tata was India's first pilot, whose license was number #1. TCS was India's first software company. Its development centre in Hyderabad, decapark, has the address #1, Software Technology Parks.

F.C. Kohli was TCS' and India's technology industry visionary #1. An alpha male.

As the news spread, not just the employees of TCS, but software professionals from other companies

began assembling on the lawns by 9.30 am. Security was going crazy. People were abuzz with excitement.

The white tiger arrived. Thousands stood up. I tried to begin my anchoring act, and announced into the mike - ladies and gentlemen, the founder of TCS, and the Indian software industry... may I welcome, and introduce... F.C. Kohli.

Even before reaching the stage, the 82-year-old man, ramrod straight personality, hollered aloud. "No need to introduce me. I will do it myself. I know more about me than you." The interaction of over 90 minutes will stay etched in memory forever.

When someone asked him about stock options, he replied, "you an idiot who wasted his parent's money and did an MBA. You should have remained an engineer and designed great products. What a waste."

When a lady tried her luck through flattery, asking him to share secrets of his success, he dismissed it, saying, "this is the first time in my life anyone has accused me of being successful."

Yesterday afternoon, the post-graduate from MIT, the man who joined Tata Power four years of India's independence and part of the first team to install and manage our first computer system to run a power line between Mumbai-Pune, creator of TCS, one of the world first three to transform a power utility firm to computer-based operations, and the man who retired as CEO at the age of 75, passed away. He was 96.

I had a win when I asked him if he recalled anything unusual or funny about the starting days of the software industry in India. He recalled one for me. He was called late one night by the customs office over a crate imported into India with \$2,500 clearance. When he rushed there, officials told him, "Sir, because of our respect for you, we called. We would have booked a case if it was anyone else. This document says you have imported hardware and software items. We can see the hardware... but where is the software?"

Bureaucrats could not see, but he saw, clearly, not some invisible to naked eye software, but a future. If Steve Jobs created a near trillion dollar worth Apple, FCK created an even bigger Indian software industry.

Let me stop now, enough said. A word more, and he will scream from the grave... what a pathetic obituary you write... I deserve better.

## Nitish, Tejashwi trade barbs in Assembly

NAYEAR AZAD IDC PATNA, NOV. 27

Bihar Opposition leader Tejashwi Yadav's speech in the Bihar Assembly session on Friday enraged Chief Minister Nitish Kumar so much that he launched a frontal attack on the young RJD leader.

The situation occurred after Tejashwi Yadav called Nitish Kumar "a murder accused" and made personal remarks against him in his speech. Enraged over these allegations by Mr Yadav in the Assembly, Mr Kumar demanded an investigation. "Till now I have been silently listening to all his lies and baseless allegations because he is like my

son. His father is of my age. I know all about him and what he has been doing. I also know everything about his father", Mr Kumar said while replying to Mr Yadav's allegations.

"Who made you the deputy chief minister? Are you even aware who had made your father legislative party leader? You are chargesheeted and yet you have been making all these baseless allegations against me. I know everything about you," Mr Kumar told Mr Yadav. He then added: "Why he didn't clarify his position on the charges against him in 2017 that led to the fall of Mahagathbandhan government?"

BIG | RELIEF

Valuer to assess damages caused in order to calculate the compensation amount

# Kangana bungalow demolition wrong: HC

DC CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI, NOV. 27

In a relief to actor Kangana Ranaut, the Bombay High Court on Friday quashed and set aside the September 9 order issued by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) directing demolition of alleged alterations carried out at her Bandra office in Mumbai. HC said the demolition action was bad in law and the demolition was carried out on wrongful grounds.

A bench of Justices S.J. Kathawalla and R.I. Chagla

was hearing a petition filed by Ranaut, seeking that the partial demolition of her Pali Hill bungalow carried out by the BMC be declared illegal.

Ranaut had sought ₹2 crore as compensation from the BMC. On the issue of compensation, the bench said it was appointing private firm M/S Shetgiri as the valuer to assess the damages caused in order to calculate the compensation amount due to Ranaut. It further said that the valuer would hear the petitioner and the BMC on monetary damages caused to her due

to the demolition and pass appropriate order before March 21. Court also made it clear that the fees of the valuer would be borne by Ranaut.

"The BMC order actuated by legal malice. There is material in pleadings that smacks of malafide and was done to cause substantial losses. We would be perfectly justified to order compensation against respondents," the bench said in its order.

The court also allowed Ranaut to take steps to make her property habitable in accordance with the

approved plan. If an application is made to BMC for approval, it will be decided within 4 weeks, the court order said.

The bench also asked Ranaut to show restraint in her social media posts and noted, "We do not accept allegations made by the petitioner in view of the alleged atmosphere in the state or film industry. The petitioner is suggested to maintain restraint on public platforms. Irresponsible statements made by the citizens are best ignored."

The BMC had denied the allegations of malafide

action against the actor and said that the actor had carried out illegal work at the bungalow and its officials had therefore acted in accordance with the law in carrying out the demolition work.

The bench, however, said that the photographs of the site, BMC's attempts at denying Ranaut's allegation, the comments made by Shiv Sena's Sanjay Raut and the editorial in party mouthpiece *Saamana* following the demolition made it clear that the civic body had acted out of malice. On October 5, the court

had reserved its verdict on the plea after days of extensive arguments from all sides. It had also made Sanjay Raut a party to the case and disapproved his tweets and his interview to a TV news channel threatening to teach Ranaut a lesson for her tweets comparing law and order situation in Mumbai to PoK in a tweet. Welcoming the court's decision, Ms Ranaut tweeted, "When individual stands against the government and wins, it's not the victory of the individual but it's the victory of democracy."



— AFP



DECCAN  
Chronicle  
28 NOVEMBER 2020

Logistical posers loom as vaccine race nears finish

Humanity's race to come up with a vaccine for Covid-19 has had a chequered history over the last 10 months. Many researchers and pharma companies have made steady and spectacular progresses, kindling the hopes of millions of people for an early end to the miserable life they live under the shadow of threat the microorganism poses to all. The last fortnight saw them on a roller-coaster ride of hope with about five vaccine candidates announcing various degrees of efficiency. The one from Oxford University, being jointly developed by pharmaceutical major AstraZeneca, was leading the race when it announced their inexpensive, easy-to-produce vaccine reported an average efficacy of about 70 per cent.

The good run received a setback now with the manufacturers acknowledging an error in the vaccine dosage received by some participants. As per reports, the manufacturers were silent as to why some study participants did not receive as much vaccine in the first of two shots as expected. It was also found that the group, which received a lower dose, looked better protected than those who got two full doses. It has also come out that no one in the test group with the highest efficacy rates was over 55. Reports pointed at other irregularities and omissions, too, triggering questions about the preliminary results of the trials.

It has now been decided that AstraZeneca will run an extra trial. Notwithstanding the averments by the company that the trials were conducted to the highest standards, the UK government has now asked the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency to see if the vaccine meets rigorous safety standards.

Scientists who work on the vaccine and the people who look forward to its arrival need not lose their hearts on the temporary setback. Science has designed its procedures in such a way that truth ultimately triumphs; the anomalies that have come out now are part and parcel of the process and there are inbuilt mechanisms to identify and correct them in time. The only impact it will have on the entire project is a delay, perhaps of days or weeks, in the authorisation of the vaccine for public use.

Governments and the public must look at a more serious issue on hand — on the just and equitable distribution of the vaccine. Health experts have already issued warnings against the rich countries reserving the entire stock of early production of about three billion doses of the vaccine, leaving the poor nations and their more vulnerable people at bay. Intellectual property laws could hinder the way of the vaccines to the poor countries and a group of British lawmakers have already demanded a waiver of the rules and authorise generic manufacturers with its production. Some of the vaccines demand cold chains, which are nearly impossible to install in certain climatic conditions. Every single issue will have an impact on all the people and their fight against the pandemic and hence be addressed collectively by all nations. Science has its way of correcting itself; it's harder to accomplish the same in politics.

Bull runs for Oscars

The jury to choose an Indian feature film for the Oscars (April 25, 2021) must be complimented for picking the Malayalam film *Jallikattu*. The title may resonate with the sporting bulls of Tamil Nadu but the theme is startlingly different with the 'protagonist' being a bull that escapes from a butchery in a remote village in Kerala and becomes the subject of a hunt portraying some of the worst aspects of human beings who are so prone to violence. It will compete in the 'Best international feature film' category in which Indian movies have not made much headway over decades, with not a single one even being short-listed among five for the coveted prize.

The movie, appreciated at the Toronto international festival where its director Lijo Jose Pelliserry was awarded and India's festival, may have edged out 26 others on various entertaining themes released in the year of the pandemic that has proved inhibiting for theatrical releases. But if the film has been chosen for its content and its screenplay as an ode to the art of film making it may far better than many of the choices made by juries based on their understanding of popular content in the Bollywood tradition to please the masses. This point is well borne out by the short shrift the aesthetic creations of a filmmaker of the calibre of Satyajit Ray received in terms of nominations to the Oscars.

Many films aim to be a metaphor melded from the complexity of human emotions, which *Jallikattu* manages with certain raw quality displaying a freshness of approach. Opinions may vary wildly when it comes to judgements in subjective situations like movie appreciation, just as it has in this case when *The Disciple* lost out. And yet, somehow, the story of a bull must draw empathy considering how man's depredation of the plant has already led to ecological disasters, including the coronavirus pandemic caused by a pathogen crossing species. The Oscars hinge on many factors, including lobbying, but cinematic excellence is invariably rewarded, much as the South Korean film *Parasite* scored a path-breaking win at Oscars this year.

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Subhani



High hopes over vaccine:  
Are we being unrealistic?



Shobhaa's Take

I am writing this a day after the anniversary of the horrific 26/11 terror attacks on Mumbai in 2008, that not only shook the metropolis like nothing ever had, but shook the rest of India and the world as well, as shockwaves reverberated across continents at the audacity of the operation. It's been 12 years since that ghastly day when the bone-chilling events were played out live on television channels globally. I guess time has a way of making us forget even the greatest of tragedies. This year, the significant date went by without much notice. The local media in Mumbai gave it scant, passing coverage — if at all. A couple of pictures appeared the next day in a few dailies, featuring police officers paying tributes to their slain colleagues and all the other victims of the terror strike. Only one prominent obituary in a leading daily served as a reminder of what families had endured when their loved ones were brutally gunned down by ruthless criminals from across the border. Not so surprisingly, the pandemic deaths have overtaken and overwhelmed us to such an extent that we neglected to honour the memories of all those we tragically lost more than a decade ago.

While we wait breathlessly for the magic vaccine, here's my prediction for what it is worth: our great Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, will be the first, high-profile citizen to take the vaccine today when he visits the Serum Institute in

Pune. He is scheduled to fly into Hyderabad and Ahmedabad on the same day to take stock of vaccine development work at facilities in these three cities. Will he... won't he? Take the shot, I mean? I think he will. This is nothing more than a gut feeling, while figuring out the mind of one of the shrewdest leaders in the political sphere. For one, a bold gesture such as this one will send out a powerful signal to the rest of the world that India has beaten everyone else in the vaccine race. For another, it will be more than a mighty booster shot for his personal ego. Besides, with two key state elections to consider, his party, the BJP, will try and flatten any curve in its path — not just the Covid one. India's global image as a pharma leader will be further bolstered if NaMo goes for it. And frankly — history will be made by this one gesture of this one man! Narendra Modi has both — an uncanny sense of timing, besides an obsession to create personal history. If he indeed does take the vaccine before any other major international political personality, he will be hailed as the "Hero of the Pandemic 2020". Catch him passing up on such an opportunity!

**When the scenario is this cynical, it's hard to stay optimistic and believe by this time next year everything will be 'back to normal', or 'back on track'**

**Nothing is ever going to be the same again — that's a given. But we cannot carry on without investing in hope for a better tomorrow.**

The question that is worth asking is this: Are we pinning unrealistic hopes on the vaccine "saving" humanity? People are still dropping like flies, particularly in America... while the Covid-19 statistics in India continue to be alarming. We are expecting miracles once the vaccine gets marketed — and there are still four or five months to go without that happening. Yes, we must place our faith in experts and scientists at this point and pray for deliverance. Will that happen because we desperately want it to? Or will we be dealing with a fresh set of problems? As of now, the world is in need of instant solace and reassurance. We hang on to every tiny scrap of positive news and breakthroughs. We are too close to the pandemic to have sufficient distance to make informed choices about the vaccine. At the moment, I am sitting on the fence, and not committing to taking it as and when it's here. I have zero knowledge about its side effects, zero knowledge about its long-term efficacy, and zero knowledge about its overall behaviour. In that sense, we are all guinea pigs, ready to try whatever it is that appears, because we are scared and numbed by fear. Fear of the unknown. I am asking myself silly questions like: "What if I do take the vaccine and my body revolts against it? What if I avoid contracting Covid but my kidneys fail? Or my liver packs up?" The thing about the pandemic is how it has generated a fear psychosis on an

unprecedented level, as we scramble to grab every little straw that offers relief from the dreaded virus, without thinking about repercussions.

Till then, we have little choice but to go along with the official info, which may or may not be accurate. Rumour mills are in overdrive, about who is making how much selling masks that are substandard, and how easy it is to get licences to import masks if the person puts down ₹45 lakhs — no scrutiny, no testing, no questions asked. When the scenario is this cynical, it is hard to stay optimistic and believe by this time next year everything will be "back to normal", or "back on track". Nothing is ever going to be the same again — that's a given. But we cannot carry on without investing in hope for a better tomorrow. Whether or not schools reopen next year, whether or not our hospitals and health-care systems can cope down the line, whether or not there will be a third, fourth and fifth wave... babies will continue to be born, people will get married, lovers will find a way to celebrate romance. Poets will write moving verse, painters will give expression on canvas, musicians will compose melodies — nothing will stop the creative impulse, least of all a microbe.

Christmas is but a few weeks away. Santa Claus and his reindeers will arrive in a safe bubble and he will greet children with a lusty "hohoho" from behind a sturdy face shield and mask — so be it! The world will continue to spin, and the stars will still shine. 'Tis the season to be jolly — why deprive ourselves?

Readers can send feedback to [www.shobhaade.blogspot.com](mailto:www.shobhaade.blogspot.com)

LETTERS

DIGGING SPREE

This refers to the report that residents in some parts of Chennai were put to great hardship for want of internet connectivity. No internet connectivity for hours in the city. The worst sufferers were students whose online classes had been disrupted. The service providers have blamed the electricity board as the underground cables were cut by their workmen during the maintenance operation. Rain or shine, this kind of inconvenience has become common these days, thanks to the various government/private agencies not paying due attention while on a digging spree. The Chennai corporation should penalise the agency concerned whose negligence is responsible for causing inconvenience to the public.

P.G. Menon,  
Chennai

PROMISED LAND

Former US president Barack Obama's new memoir *A Promised Land* has reportedly sold close to 9 lakhs copies in the US within a day of its release and is on track to be the best-selling presidential memoir in modern history. *A Promised Land* is extraordinarily intimate and introspective as Obama is candid about the balancing act of running for office as a Black American, bearing the expectations of a generation buoyed by messages of "hope and change" and meeting the moral challenges of high-stakes decision-making. He is frank about the forces that opposed him at home and abroad, open about how living in the White House affected his wife and daughters, and unafraid to reveal self-doubt and disappointment. The 768-page book is said to be the most alluring memoir because of the quality of writing than for any possible revelations. And no wonder, Obama has been described as the most literary president of the US since Abraham Lincoln.

R. Sivakumar,  
Chennai

Farrukh Dhondy  
Cabbages & Kings



*"Faith is a wraith  
Promising paradise for the soul  
Hope is the rope  
That lets you climb out of a hole  
Charity should spell clarity —  
Returning the wealth you stole..."*  
— From *Dhoka Cola* by Bachchoo

My parents first took me to Khajuraho on a cultural holiday trip when I was about eleven years old. We went from Kanpur to Madhya Pradesh and spent some time looking at the display of erotic carvings in the temples. A late beginner, I suppose, I didn't quite appreciate the erotic dimension of the sculptures, though I observed my dad and mum studying them with a distanced, yet acute, curiosity.

Without protesting any form of innocence or naivete, gentle reader, I promise I have never opened the pages of the *Kama Sutra*, even though there have been at one time or other two editions, one pictorially endowed, on my bookshelves in my short and happy life. I know that they are eighth century depictions of sexual possibilities, some in extreme yogic distortions which

promise erotic pleasure, but I have never felt the need to take instruction in these instinctive urges from man, beast or book. One ploughs one's own furrow, so to speak.

Apart from Khajuraho in Madhya Pradesh, there are at least twelve and perhaps a hundred surviving Hindu temples which include in their sculptural representations acts of human sexual coupling. And some of the central symbols of Hindu cosmic creativity are the lingam of Shiva and the universal Yoni which symbolises birth and perpetuity. Hinduism has, from the Vedas onwards, never been prissy about human love, sex and procreation. The Temple of Surya in Konarak in Odisha has some of the world-famous exemplars of erotic sculpture. In Maharashtra, the Markandeshwar temple and the depiction of love in Ellora are also a glorious part of India's heritage.

Hence it came as an absolute article of bewildered wonder that some idiot, or some misguided organisation, is suing Mira Nair's depiction in the Netflix series adaptation of Vikram Seth's universally acclaimed novel *A Suitable Boy* in a Madhya Pradesh court for a scene

in which two characters kiss near a temple. In the name of Krishna and the gopis, of Shiva and Parvati, of Vishnu and Lakshmi, Ram and Sita — and of the Khajuraho temples of Madhya Pradesh, are these misguided Victorian puritan protesters saying that love and its active manifestations are anything to object to? Are they anti-Hindu-history-and-heritage bigots?

Surely Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his entire Cabinet and the philosophy of his party are dedicated to the upholding of Hindu heritage and India's inherited values and traditions!

This absurd puritanism, which objects to a scene in a fictional drama of two characters kissing — not even in an act of fornication so graphically celebrated in revered Hindu temples — is surely some imperial hangover which we can do without?

Hinduism is much more philosophically explorative and wider than the Semitic monotheisms of Judaism, Christianity and some interpretations of Islam. There is no puritan tradition in Hinduism which would forbid the depiction of two lovers kissing outside a

Kentucky Fried Chicken shop or a temple. The people who are attempting to bring this case against Netflix ought to be, Your Honour, sent to re-education classes about the ethics of dharma, etc, in Hindu teachings! (*Don't get carried away, you idiot, this is a column, not an address to the court — Ed. Of course, boss! Sorry — fd*)

I would like to address the people in Netflix who face these absurd charges, but I have no conduit to them. I would say to them have some faith in Indian justice because I have faced similar legally enlisted assaults and have prevailed.

The first was against a film I had commissioned and wrote called *Bandit Queen*. A group of people tried to stop the film being released for several reasons, not all idealistic, but they didn't succeed.

Then there was the case against a film I wrote called *Mangal Pandey, The Rising*.

Some people claimed that they were the descendants of Mangal Pandey and the film had represented him in an unfavourable light. The judge ruled that it was a waste of court time and threw the case out. I am now told that judges have

changed, that there has been some ideological adjustment on the juridical benches. Gentle reader, living in London, so far away from home, I know nothing of this. I feel confident that the barristers who defend this very peripheral right to freedom of depiction, even using the arguments I have posed above, will convince a judge who knows his Hinduism.

Freedom of expression and the right to any, even those considered dissenting, opinions are an absolute requirement of democracy. Regimes in today's Turkey and Iran have suppressed free expression as the right of the state to exclusively disseminate information, both in the name of their exclusive interpretations of Islam. I don't know, but perhaps they censor scenes on Netflix of couples kissing outside mosques.

Of course, the Madhya Pradesh court should treat the case against the kissing next to a *mandir* with the contempt it deserves. And that would be a precedent in universal law pronouncing the freedom of depiction which doesn't transgress decency, tradition or in the case of the kiss outside a temple, explicitly







## SHORT TAKES

## Bagan beat Bengal in derby

**Vasco, Goa:** Fijian striker Roy Krishna continued his prolific goal-scoring form as he helped ATK Mohun Bagan prevail over SC East Bengal 2-0 in the first ever Indian Super League derby here on Friday.

Krishna, who had scored ATKMB's lone goal against Kerala Blasters in their campaign opener, struck in the 49th minute before Manvir Singh killed the contest in the 85th minute with a solo effort.

With two wins on the trot, ATK Mohun Bagan led the table with six points, followed by Northeast United FC.

It was a typical Antonio Lopez Habas' style of play that panned out on the field as ATKMB were slow to get off the blocks before taking control of the game.

Their defence, helmed by Tiri, put up a disciplined show to return with a clean slate for their second successive match in the league. — *PTI*

## Belgium on top in FIFA rankings

**Zurich:** With Belgium still at No. 1, FIFA released its final rankings list for 2020 on Friday and set the seedings for the European portion of the World Cup qualifying draw. Defending World Cup champion France is in second place, with Brazil third and England fourth. European champion Portugal rounds out the top five, with Spain in sixth. FIFA will host the European draw on December 7. The 10 top-seeded teams include Italy, which was seeded second four years ago and failed to qualify for the 2018 tournament in Russia after ending up in a group with Spain. The Netherlands, ranked 14th, took the last top-seeded place, dropping No. 16 Switzerland into pot 2. — *AP*

## Badminton League off due to Covid-19

**New Delhi:** The sixth edition of the Premier Badminton League (PBL) was on Friday postponed to next year, keeping in mind the health and safety of the players amid the raging Covid-19 pandemic. The league, which is one of the highest prize money badminton tournaments in the world, was initially scheduled to take place in the last week of December in Delhi, Mumbai and Pune. — *PTI*

## Para athletes in TOPS scheme

**New Delhi:** The Sports Ministry has included eight para athletes, including four who have qualified for the Tokyo Paralympics, in the Target Olympic Podium Scheme. The decision was taken by the Mission Olympic Cell at its meeting on November Thursday. The eight athletes are from athletics, shooting, badminton and table tennis. From para-athletics, Vinod Kumar and Ajit Kumar Panchal (both men's discus throw) and Praveen Kumar (men's high jump) have been included in the scheme. — *PTI*

## Live on TV

## CRICKET

**Women's Big Bash League:** Final — Melbourne Stars vs Sydney Thunder from 1.40 pm on Sony Six

**Lanka Premier League:** Kandy vs Dambulla from 3.30 pm; Galle vs Colombo from 8 pm on Sony Six

## FORMULA ONE

**Bahrain Grand Prix:** Practice 3 from 4.25 pm; Qualifying from 7.25 pm on Star Sports Select 2, HD

## FOOTBALL

**English Premier League:** Brighton vs Liverpool from 6 pm; Manchester City vs Burnley from 8.30 pm; Everton vs Leeds United from 11 pm; West Brom vs Sheffield from 1.30 am (Sunday) on Star Sports Select 1, HD

**Indian Super League:** Bengaluru vs Hyderabad FC from 7.20 pm on Star Sports 2, 3

**Italian League:** Sassuolo vs Inter Milan from 7.30 pm; Benevento vs Juventus from 10.30 pm; Atalanta vs Verona from 1.15 am (Sunday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

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## SMITH HEREENS

## Finch, Smith centuries blow India away in opener

**Sydney, Nov. 27:** Hardik Pandya's career-best effort wasn't good enough to compensate for a forgettable bowling effort as India slumped to a 66-run defeat against Australia in the first ODI, making a rather unimpressive start to the tour, here on Friday.

Virat Kohli's men started exactly on a note they wouldn't have liked, giving away 374 runs in 50 overs with rival captain Aaron Finch (114 off 124 balls) and his illustrious predecessor Steve Smith (105 off 66 balls) hitting contrasting hundreds.

A pitch that looked docile during the first half suddenly came to life in the second as Josh Hazlewood (3/55) bounced out the Indian top-order, including Kohli and a frightened Shreyas Iyer, who got himself into a tangle.

Pandya's 76-ball 90 and a 128-run stand with senior opener Shikhar Dhawan (74 off 86 balls) delayed the inevitable but it was always a catch-up game after the team was reduced to 101 for 4 inside 14 overs.

Big-hearted leg-spinner Adam Zampa (4/54 in 10 overs) dismissed Shikhar Dhawan and Hardik Pandya in quick succession as India surrendered to scoreboard pressure finishing at 308/8 after 50 overs.

India's eternal nemesis Steven Smith seems ready to torment them a lot in next two months if his 11 fours and four sixes were any indication on Friday. Not for once was he troubled by the Indian bowlers, who were already under the pump after a 156-run opening stand between Finch and David Warner (69).

As far as Indian innings is concerned, a high percentage of dot balls (148) in the Indian innings also showed how the mighty Australian team dominated the proceedings.

## INDIANS JOIN AUSSIES IN ANTI-RACISM MOVE

The Indian cricketers on Friday joined their Australian counterparts in forming a barefoot circle on the ground to support the anti-racism movement and acknowledge the culture of indigenous people of the host country.

The barefoot circle ceremony was held before the start of the opening One-day International between the two teams here.

— *PTI*

## SCORECARD

**Australia:** D. Warner c Rahul b Shami 69, A. Finch c Rahul b Bumrah 114, S. Smith b Shami 105, M. Stoinis c Rahul b Chahal 0, G. Maxwell c Jadeja b Shami 45, M. Labuschagne c Dhawan b Saini 2, A. Carey not out 17, P. Cummins not out 1, Extras (B-1, LB-6, NB-2, W-12) 21. **Total (for six wickets in 50 overs) 374.**  
**ForW:** 1-156, 2-264, 3-271, 4-328, 5-331, 6-372.

**Bowling:** Shami 10-0-59-3, Bumrah 10-0-73-1, Saini 10-0-83-1, Chahal 10-0-89-1, Jadeja 10-0-63-0.  
**India:** S. Dhawan c Starc b Zampa 74, M. Agarwal c Maxwell b Hazlewood 22, V. Kohli c Finch b Hazlewood 21, S. Iyer c Rahul b Hazlewood 2, K.L. Rahul c Smith b Zampa 12, H. Pandya c Starc b Zampa 90, R. Jadeja c Starc b Zampa 25, N. Saini not out 29, M. Shami b Starc 13, J. Bumrah not out 0. Extras (LB-2, NB-3, W-15) 20. **Total (for eight wickets in 50 overs) 308.**  
**ForW:** 1-53, 2-78, 3-80, 4-101, 5-229, 6-247, 7-281, 8-308.

**Bowling:** Starc 9-0-65-1, Hazlewood 10-0-55-3, Cummins 8-0-52-0, Zampa 10-0-54-4, Stoinis 6.2-0-25-0, Maxwell 6.4-0-55-0.



Australia's captain Aaron Finch hits a six as India's wicketkeeper K. L. Rahul watches during their One-Day International cricket match at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Friday.

— *AFP*

Steve Smith of Australia celebrates after scoring a century against India in their ODI match at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Friday.

— *AP*

## NUMBERS GAME

● Australia recorded their highest total against India by making 374 for 6 in 50 overs. Their previous best was 359, recorded four times. Overall, it is the third-highest total by any team against India in One-Day Internationals.

● Steven Smith recorded third fastest hundred for Australia by completing 100 runs off 62 balls during his 105-run knock. The quicker ones are Glenn Maxwell's 51-ball century against Sri Lanka at the 2015 World Cup, also at Sydney and James Faulkner's century in 57 balls against India in Bangalore in 2013.

● All five Indian bowlers except Mohammed Shami, conceded 60-plus runs, only the second such instance for India. The first such instance was against West Indies at Guwahati in 2018.

## HIGHEST TOTALS AGAINST INDIA IN ODIs

Score	Opponent	Venue	Date	Result
438-4	South Africa	Mumbai	25-10-2015	India lost
411-8	Sri Lanka	Rajkot	15-12-2009	India won
374-6	Australia	Sydney	27-12-2020	India lost
366-8	England	Cuttack	19-01-2017	India won
365-2	South Africa	Ahmedabad	27-02-2010	India lost

## FASTEST HUNDREDS FOR AUSTRALIA IN ODIs

Balls (score)	Batsman	Opponent	Venue	Date
51 (102)	Glenn Maxwell	Sri Lanka	Sydney	08-03-2015
57 (116)	James Faulkner	India	Bangalore	02-11-2013
62 (105)	Steven Smith	India	Sydney	27-12-2020
66 (101)	Matthew Hayden	S. Africa	St Kitts	24-03-2007
67 (122)	Adam Gilchrist	Sri Lanka	Brisbane	14-02-2006

## FASTEST HUNDREDS AGAINST INDIA IN ODIs

Balls (score)	Batsman	Team	Venue	Date
45 (102)	Shahid Afridi	Pakistan	Kanpur	15-04-2005
57 (116)	James Faulkner	Australia	Bangalore	02-11-2013
57 (119)	AB de Villiers	S. Africa	Mumbai	25-10-2015
58 (102)	AB de Villiers	S. Africa	Ahmedabad	27-02-2010
62 (105)	Steven Smith	Australia	Sydney	27-12-2020

— *S. PERVEZ QAISER*

## Kohli rues first defeat

**Sydney, Nov. 27:** India skipper Virat Kohli on Friday questioned his team's body language after the opening ODI loss to Australia and said Hardik Pandya not being fit to bowl is affecting the side's balance as he doesn't have enough all-rounders at his disposal.

India made a dismal start to their tour of Australia, losing the first ODI by 66 runs here, chasing a mammoth 375-run target after Aaron Finch and Steve Smith smashed hundreds for the hosts.

"Everyone needs to show the intent in the entire 50 overs. Probably, we played 50 overs after a long time that could have an affect...but having said that we have played so much ODI cricket that it is not something we don't know how to do," Kohli said in the post-match presentation.

"I think the body language in the field wasn't great after around 25

## INJURED ISHANT OUT AS ROHIT WAITS TILL DEC. 11

**Sydney, Nov. 27:** India's senior-most fast bowler Ishant Sharma has been ruled out of the upcoming Test matches against Australia as he will not be match-fit in time while Rohit Sharma's hamstring will be assessed finally on December 11, BCCI secretary Jay Shah said on Thursday.

BCCI issued a short injury update of the two senior players after a fiery online media interaction by Virat Kohli, who made his displeasure clear about lack of communication and clarity on the whole issue. While Kohli had raised a question as to why Rohit didn't do his rehabilitation in Australia along with Wriddhiman Saha, Shah in his press note clarified that Rohit had come back to country to attend his ailing father after which he reported to the NCA.

"Rohit Sharma had to come back to Mumbai after the IPL to attend to his ailing father. His father is now recuperating well and that has allowed him to travel to the NCA and start his rehabilitation," Shah said.

— *PTI*

overs. It was a disappointing part. If you don't take your chances against a top-quality opposition they'll hurt you and that is what happened today,"

the Indian skipper added.

Kohli said his bowlers couldn't pick wickets regularly and it allowed the Australians to post a big total in the end. — *PTI*

## INJURED STOINS DOUBTFUL FOR SECOND ODI

**Sydney, Nov. 27:** Australia all-rounder Marcus Stoinis could be in doubt for the second ODI against India after he sustained an injury during the series opener here on Friday.

Stoinis grimaced in pain after delivering the second ball of his seventh over of India's run chase. He left the field immediately and Glenn Maxwell completed the over. According to *cricket.com.au*, the 31-year-old suffered a "left-side pain" and will have scans to determine the extent of the injury. Stoinis' injury may put all-rounders Cameron Green and Moises Henriques in contention for the second ODI on Sunday. Steve Smith said the team is keeping its fingers crossed on Stoinis' situation. — *PTI*

## Brazil mourns Diego's demise

**Sao Paulo, Nov. 27:** Brazil and Argentina are long rivals for football supremacy in South America, and Brazilians naturally think of their own Pele as the best footballer in history. But they are putting aside the argument to mourn the death of Argentine superstar Diego Maradona.

Ex-presidents, author Paulo Coelho and former competitors were among Brazilians paying tribute to Maradona for his influence on the game and charisma off the field. Brazilian newspapers that only put sports in their top headline when the national team wins a World Cup had Maradona's death in that position Thursday.

A mural of Maradona was even painted on a wall in the Vila Cruzeiro favela in Rio de Janeiro, an honor that proud and soccer-crazy Brazilians rarely, if ever, give to foreigners.

"He was an example of persistence and perseverance because he grew in life as a human being," said graffiti artist Angelo Campos, who painted an energetic Maradona in a blue shirt under an inscription with his nickname, "El Pibe de Oro" (the Golden Kid).

The Neo Quimica Arena in Sao Paulo displayed a triumphant Maradona image on a giant screen by its main entrance. That is the same stadium where most Brazilian fans cheered against Argentina in the 2014 World Cup semifinal against Holland.

Argentina won on penalties but lost final to Germany 1-0. All top-tier Brazilian clubs paid tributes, including Santos, where Pele played nearly all of his career. — *AFP*

## POLICE CLASH WITH FANS IN ARGENTINA

**Buenos Aires, Nov. 27:** Riot police fired rubber bullets and tear gas in clashes Thursday with football fans near the wake for Argentine football legend Diego Maradona in Buenos Aires.

Officials earlier ordered Maradona's coffin to be moved to another room inside the presidential palace after fans took over an inner courtyard and disrupted his lying in state.

The government had early announced a three-hour extension to the wake to allow time for fans to pay their respects.

Tens of thousands of people had queued from early morning to file past the star's coffin, draped in the Argentine flag and the player's No.10 jersey, at the presidential palace. Many of the mourners were in tears, and some wore replicas of the World Cup winner's jersey as they gathered at the Casa Rosada palace to see his coffin.

But as the day wore on, fans queueing outside the palace grew increasingly impatient and some took over a courtyard inside the palace, where they chanted slogans.

At the same time, riot police clashed with stone throwing fans on streets around the palace, and several people were arrested. — *AFP*



Players of Napoli (in blue) and Rijeka observe a minute's silence in homage to Maradona prior to their Europa League match at the San Paolo stadium in Naples on Thursday as a screen displays a photo of late Argentinian legend, who had played for Napoli in the 1980s.

— *AFP*

## Napoli dedicate win to Maradona

**Paris, Nov. 27:** Napoli honoured the memory of Diego Maradona with a 2-0 win over Rijeka which allowed them to go top of Europa League Group 'F' in the first match since the death of their Argentine icon.

Gennaro Gattuso's side entered the field all wearing the number 10 jersey of Maradona, who won Napoli's only Serie A titles in 1987 and 1990 as well as the 1989 UEFA Cup.

"Diego is a legend and will never die," Gattuso said after the match. "Since yesterday you could see that the city breathed a different atmosphere. We hope to dedicate something important to him and win a trophy," he added.

Napoli are now two points ahead of AZ Alkmaar and Real Sociedad following their goalless draw in the Netherlands.

Roma made their way into the last 32 with a 2-0 win at Romanian side Cluj, while Hoffenheim joined them after ensuring their respective passages into the next round from L.

Earlier Jame Vardy's last-gasp leveller in a thrilling 3-3 at Braga sent Leicester City through to the knock-out rounds, where they were also joined by Arsenal thanks to their 3-0 win at Molde.

Leicester looked dead and buried when Fransergio put the hosts 3-2 ahead in the first minute of added time, but Vardy stole in at the back post shortly after to tap in the goal that put the Premier League side into the Last 32. — *AFP*

## INCRG FINAL ROUND

## POISED ON KNIFE-EDGE

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV. 27

The abridged MRF MMSC fmcsi Indian National Car Championship 2020 draws to a close with the third and final round being held at the MMRT this weekend behind closed doors due to the prevailing pandemic with government-mandated Covid-19 protocols in place. The two-day, seven-race programme, kicks-off on Saturday November 28 and concludes the following afternoon. The track, which received a drenching from cyclone Nivar earlier in the week, has recovered well for the races to be held as scheduled.

The titles in all four categories — the premier Indian Touring Cars, Super Stock, Formula LGB 1300 and the MRF Saloon Car series — are up for grabs with very little separating the contenders, both individual and team championships.

As for the Championship stakes, the ITC class has Coimbatore's Arjun Balu (Race Concepts) enjoying a 35-point lead over Goan Keith D'Souza (FB Motorsport) going into this weekend's triple-header with a maximum of 75 points on offer.

Neesham were looking dangerous when Pollard broke their 77-run partnership when Conway was caught on 41.

But Neesham, who scored 48 from 24 balls, steered the New Zealanders home. — *AFP*

**Brief Scores:** West Indies 180/7 in 16 overs (K. Pollard not out 75, Fletcher 34; Lockie Ferguson 5/21 lost (D/L) to New Zealand 179/5 in 15.2 overs (Neesham 48, Conway 41; O. Thomas 2/23).

## Kiwis down West Indies in 1st T20

**Auckland, Nov. 27:** Paceman Lockie Ferguson unleashed a devastating five-wicket barrage as New Zealand downed the West Indies in a roller coaster Twenty20 series opener in Auckland on Friday.

The match — the first international cricket played in New Zealand for almost nine months — produced a nail-biting finale as the Black Caps

reached 179-5 in the final over after being set a target of 176.

Persistent showers meant the innings were reduced to 16 and many players, particularly the tourists, were rusty after only emerging from Covid-19 quarantine on Thursday.

But there were outstanding individual performances on both sides, particularly man of the

match Ferguson and West Indies captain Kieron Pollard's unbeaten 75 from 37 balls.

Ferguson claimed a career-best haul of 5-21 to put the brakes on a flying start from the West Indies, saying the short boundaries at Eden Park helped his cause.

Pollard almost swung momentum back to the West Indies single-handedly, clubbing eight sixes

and four fours to ensure his team set a competitive target.

The tourists were even more brutal against Hamish Bennett, plundering 29 runs from a night-mare over for the fast bowler.

They were 58 without loss before Ferguson broke through and clean-bowled Fletcher on 34.

The Black Caps' Devon Conway and Jimmy