



NITISH ALLOCATES
CABINET PORTFOLIOS

WEATHER

Mainly clear sky. Mist fog in the morning. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 26 and 11 degrees Celsius respectively.

RAINFALL: Nil	
RELATIVE HUMIDITY	
Max: 96%	Min: 53%
TEMPERATURE	
Max: 26.0°C (-2)	Min: 13.0°C (+1)
SUN RISES	SUN SETS
06:47 hrs	17:27 hrs
MOON RISES	MOON SETS
11:00 hrs	20:28 hrs

THUMBNAILS



A migrant from New Zealand stages a silent protest against New Zealand government, demanding work visa extension as they are stuck in India due to Covid-19 pandemic, in the Capital on Tuesday.

DEEPAK

Centre caps withdrawal from Lakshmi Vilas Bank: The Central government on Tuesday placed the Tamil Nadu-based private sector lender Lakshmi Vilas Bank under a moratorium, capping withdrawals from its customers' accounts at ₹ 25,000 a month, the Ministry of Finance said in a statement. However, depositors will be allowed to withdraw more than ₹ 25,000 with permission from the Reserve Bank of India for purposes such as medical treatment, payment of higher education and marriage expenses.

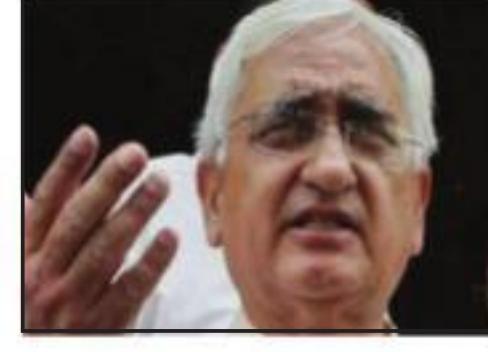
P8

Plea for waiver of exam fees quashed: The Supreme Court on Tuesday refused to entertain a plea seeking direction to the CBSE and the Delhi government to waive exam fees for students of classes 10 and 12 in the current academic year in view of COVID-19 and financial problems being faced by some parents. The petition was filed by NGO 'Social Jurist'.

SC refuses to entertain plea on Epidemic Act: The Supreme Court on Tuesday refused to entertain a plea challenging the constitutional validity of the Epidemic Act and questioned the petitioner as to why he has not moved the high court on the issue. The apex court said high courts have all the power to strike down Central Acts, like the Epidemic Act, and the petitioner should go there first.

Pangs of anxiety: Khurshid on Sibal criticism

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 17 NOVEMBER



odic pangs of anxiety".

Some senior Congress leaders including Kapil Sibal have called for introspection after the party's dismal performance in the recently held Bihar assembly polls, after which the ruling NDA returned to power in the state despite the main member of the grand opposition alliance, Rashtriya Janata Dal, putting up a strong show and emerging as the single largest party.

Quite a few leaders from the RJD as well as the Congress have blamed the grand old party's below-par performance for the opposition alliance missing the majority mark in the Bihar assembly elections.

Tariq Anwar, party's general

be prepared for a long struggle rather than look for short cuts to get back into power.

Citing the last Mughal ruler's couplet which talks about looking within for flaws that would make one not see others as flawed, he said Bahadur Shah Zafar's words might be a useful companion for many of our party colleagues who suffer "per-

sonal and a veteran leader from Bihar, had earlier this week acknowledged that there were shortcomings due to which the Congress performed worse than other 'Mahagathbandhan' constituents in the Bihar polls and asserted that the high command was serious about introspection as well as a thorough analysis of the results.

"When we do well, admittedly somewhat infrequently they take it for granted. But when we underperform, not even do badly, they are quick to bite their nails. By the looks of it there would be little of the nails left for future disappointments. Is it really a case of bad workmen quarreling with their tools?" Khurshid said.

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A bench headed by

Chief Justice SA Bobde told Solicitor General Tushar Mehta that the court is not happy with Centre's affidavit in the matter, as it skirts the powers of government under the Cable TV Network Act to hear such complaints.

The bench asked the Centre to specify how the Act can be used to control the content of Cable TV network.

"Your affidavit is silent on it. The other issue, what steps you can take to deal with such complaints."

"The mechanism ~ your affidavit is silent on it. Please put all this in your amended affidavit. You (the Centre) have the power under the Act," added the bench. The Chief Justice told the Centre why should the court refer to NBSA (News Broadcasters Association), and others, when the Centre has the authority to look into it.

"If it does not exist,

then you create an auth-

ority, or else we will hand it over to an outside agency,"

added the Chief Justice.

During searches, the CBI has recovered eight mobile phones, cash around eight lakh, sex toys, laptop, and other digital evidence carrying huge amount of child sexual abuse material, they said. It is alleged that the junior engineer was operational for the last 10 years, mainly contacting and sharing child sexual abuse material with other paedophiles globally using dark net and cloud services abroad, they said.

He is understood to have told the investigators that he used to bribe the children with mobile phones and other electronic gadgets to keep their mouth shut about his activities, they said.

The invitation by India to the Australian Navy for the exercise came two weeks after foreign ministers of the Quad member nations held extensive talks in Tokyo with a focus on enhancing their cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.

The Malabar exercise started in 1992 as a bilateral drill between the Indian Navy and the US Navy in the Indian Ocean.

Japan became a permanent member of the exercise in 2015.

Second phase of Malabar exercise begins in northern Arabian Sea

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 17 NOVEMBER

The Navies of India, the US, Australia and Japan on Tuesday began the second phase of the Malabar naval exercise in the northern Arabian Sea involving two aircraft carriers and a number of front-line warships, submarines and maritime reconnaissance aircraft, officials said.

The major highlight of the four-day exercise is participation of Indian Navy's Vikramaditya carrier battle group and the Nimitz strike group of the US Navy. The USS Nimitz is the world's largest warship.

The first phase of the Malabar exercise took place in the Bay of Bengal from November 3 to 6 and featured a number of complex drills including anti-submarine and anti-air warfare operations.

The Australian Navy has deployed its HMAS Ballarat, an Anzac-class frigate while the Japanese Navy has sent its leading destroyer JS Murasame for the exercise.

The mega exercise is taking place at a time India and China are locked in an over six-month-long bitter border standoff in eastern Ladakh.

This exercise is involving coordinated operations of

War games

►The major highlight of the four-day exercise is participation of Indian Navy's Vikramaditya carrier battle group and the Nimitz strike group of the US Navy

►The Navy said the exercise will include cross-deck flying operations and advanced air defence exercises by MIG 29K fighters of Vikramaditya and F-18 fighters and E2C Hawkeye from Nimitz



increasing complexity among the navies of the four countries which are part of the

Quad or Quadrilateral Coalition, officials said.

"The two carriers, along

with other ships, submarines and aircraft of the participating navies, would be engaged in high-intensity naval operations over four days," the Indian Navy said on Monday.

Archer battle group or carrier strike group is a mega naval fleet comprising an aircraft carrier, accompanied by a large number of destroyers, frigates and other ships.

The Navy said the exercise will include cross-deck flying operations and advanced air defence exercises by MIG 29K fighters of Vikramaditya and F-18 fighters and E2C Hawkeye from Nimitz.

Apart from Vikramaditya and its fighter and helicopter air wings, the Indian Navy is also deploying destroyers

Kolkata and Chennai, stealth frigate Talwar and fleet support ship Deepak in the exercise.

The Indian contingent is being led by Rear Admiral Krishnan Swaminathan, Flag Officer Commanding Western Fleet.

Last month, India announced that Australia will be part of the Malabar exercise which effectively made it a drill by all four member nations of the Quad which is primarily focusing on containing China's military expansionism in the Indo-Pacific region.

China has been suspicious about the purpose of the Mal-



Veerashaiva-Lingayats form a large community in the state, many of whom are economically, socially and educationally backward

B S YEDIYURAPPA
KARNATAKA CHIEF MINISTER

Delhi seeks power from Centre to lock down virus-hit markets

CM Kejriwal says his govt has also sent a proposal to LG Baijal to allow only 50 people to attend wedding ceremonies as against the earlier limit of 200 guests for such functions

SNS & PTI

NEW DELHI, 17 NOVEMBER

Amid a spurt in coronavirus cases in Delhi, chief minister Arvind Kejriwal today sought power from the Centre to impose lockdown in those markets which may emerge as Covid-19 hotspots, and decided to withdraw an order allowing 200 guests to attend wedding functions.

Addressing an online media briefing, Kejriwal said the Delhi government has sent a proposal to Lt Governor Anil Baijal to allow only 50 people to attend wedding ceremonies against the earlier limit of 200.

"As per directions and guidelines of the Centre, 200 participants were earlier allowed in wedding ceremonies due to decreasing number of coronavirus cases. Now, a proposal has been sent to LG Baijal for his approval to withdraw the previous order and bring the number of guests for wedding ceremonies back to 50 from 200," the CM said.



Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal during a virtual press conference in the Capital on Tuesday.

He said the Centre and all agencies were making "double efforts" to control the Covid situation in the national capital.

"We are sending a proposal to the Centre to give power to the Delhi government to impose lockdown in market areas which may emerge as Covid hotspots," Kejriwal said.

During Diwali, it was seen that many people were not wearing masks and were

violating social distancing norms due to which the coronavirus spread very much, the CM said.

"I hope the crowd in the markets will thin out and there will be no need to lock them down. However, if violations of mask wearing and social distancing are witnessed and there is chance of these markets becoming local coronavirus hotspots, these could be shut down as a preventive measure for some days," said Kejriwal.

Yesterday, Delhi health minister Satyendar Jain had said there was no chance of reimposition of lockdown in the national capital since the third wave of the coronavirus has peaked in the city. He had also said the virus could not be contained through lockdown and that people should protect themselves by wearing face masks.

Today, Kejriwal thanked the central government for helping people of Delhi in "such difficult times" and appealed to Delhiites to wear masks and follow social distancing norms.

The CM said the avail-

ability of Covid beds in government and private hospitals was "satisfactory" and thanked the Centre for its promise to arrange 750 ICU beds at a DRDO facility.

"All the stakeholders, including the Delhi government, the Centre and various agencies are making double efforts to bring Covid under control, but people need to wear masks and maintain social distancing," Kejriwal said.

The coronavirus does not differentiate between the rich and the poor and it can infect anyone, but some people think they may not contract the virus, he added.

Amid the festive season, increased gatherings, lax public behaviour, and rising air pollution, the national capital has witnessed a spike in coronavirus cases over the last few weeks.

The Covid cases in Delhi have been spiking since 28 October when the daily infection breached the 5,000-mark for the first time. It crossed the 8,000-mark on 11 November for the first time.

Covid-19: Delhi sees more than 1 lakh new cases, 1,200 deaths, 94,000 recoveries since 1 November

PTI

NEW DELHI, 17 NOVEMBER

Delhi recorded over one lakh new coronavirus cases and around 1,200 deaths between November 1-16 while nearly 94,000 COVID-19 patients recovered during the same period, according to official data.

The national capital has witnessed a sudden spike in coronavirus cases since October 28 when the daily rise breached the 5,000-mark for the first time and it crossed the 8,000-mark on November 11.

On November 12, 104 coronavirus-related deaths, the



highest in over five months, were recorded in the city.

According to health department data, 1,01,070 corona-

virus cases have been recorded so far this month.

Also, 1,202 people have died of COVID-19 while 93,885 coro-

navirus patients have recovered from the virus since November 1.

Delhi had recorded 5,664 cases on November 1 which increased to 8,593 on November 11, the highest single-day spike till date.

The city had recorded 7,053 new cases on November 12, followed by 7,802 (November 13), 7,340 (November 14), 3,235 (November 15) and 3,797 (November 16).

From November 11-16, the fatality count stood at 85; 104; 91; 96; 95 and 99 respectively.

Similarly, 7,606 COVID-19 patients had recovered on

November 15, the highest single-day recovery count this month.

On Wednesday, 7,264 people had recovered from virus while on Thursday, 6,462 people recovered. From November 13-16, the recovery count stood at 6,498; 7,117; 7,606 and 3,560.

On Monday, Delhi recorded 3,797 fresh COVID-19 cases, taking the infection tally in the national capital to over 4.89 lakh, even as 99 new fatalities pushed the toll to 7,713.

These relatively low number of fresh cases came out of the 29,871 tests conducted on Sunday. The active caseload on Monday stood at 40,128.

Earlier in the day, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal sought power from the Centre to impose lockdown in those markets which may emerge as COVID-19 hotspots, and decided to withdraw an order allowing 200 guests to attend wedding functions.

Kejriwal said the Delhi government has sent a proposal to Lt Governor Anil Baijal to allow only 50 people to attend wedding ceremonies against the earlier limit of 200.

Meanwhile, in view of the increasing cases of coronavirus, 20 ICU beds were earmarked for COVID-19 patients at Hind Rau Hospital on Tuesday.

Classified

SALE BY AUCTION

E-Auction Gypsy-2012, on 24-11-2020, at 11:00 Inspec

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Ensure welfare benefits for labourers promptly: Sisodia to officials

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, 17 NOVEMBER

Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Tuesday directed labour officials to ensure that city workers received the benefits of various labour welfare schemes within 72 hours of their application.

Sisodia said, "The Delhi government has made comprehensive plans to help the labourers, especially during these trying times of the

coronavirus-caused crisis. We know a worker only applies if he/she is needy, and so the government has directed that the amount he or she requires from welfare schemes such as those meant for children's Education, medical care, disability, marriage or maternity reasons should reach the workers' bank account within 72 hours."

He was doing inspection of the eastern and north-eastern sub-labour Com-

missioner's office at Shahdara. During this, he inquired about the process and status of various office functions. This included registration and verification of workers as well as cases regarding benefits from various welfare schemes.

During the inspection, both district offices saw a decrease in pending registration applications, and found the successful disposal of cases to be satisfactory. He also asked the

officials to speed up their application processing timeline by improving on their internal procedures, especially during the pandemic, to ensure that workers are able to avail themselves of the benefits in time.

Sisodia also inquired about the execution of the applications received in the office and checked the records of pending applications and pending files. At the office, he discussed the reasons for some two-

year-old pending cases with the officials. The officials said the delay in the approval process stemmed from the headquarters. Sisodia then instructed the officials to set up an effortless process to smoothly execute the applications within 72 hours.

The Deputy Chief Minister also added that the execution of all files should be done on a 'first-come, first-serve basis'. "If there are files relating to some select cases

and these are forwarded or favoured and the rest of the files are stopped in the system, strict action will be taken against the officers concerned," he warned.

Sisodia also directed the officials to put up notice boards outside their office to inform the workers about the benefits of registration and schemes so that the workers do not have to rely on brokers to get information or their work done.

Rain, winds help clean up Delhi's air; AQI in 'moderate' category

PTI

NEW DELHI, 17 NOVEMBER

The air quality in the national capital improved significantly on Tuesday as rainfall, along with stronger winds, helped clean up pollutants, authorities said.

According to Central Pollution Control Board's mobile application SAMEER, the air quality index (AQI) was recorded in 'moderate' category at 171 in the evening, while it was 168 in the morning, much better than the city's AQI on Monday which stood at 221 in 'poor' category.

The city's 24-hour average AQI was 435 on Sunday and 414 on Saturday (Diwali).

An AQI between 0 and 50 is considered 'good', 51 and 100 'satisfactory', 101 and 200 'moderate', 201 and 300 'poor', 301 and 400 'very poor', and 401 and 500 'severe'.

According to the Ministry of Earth Sciences' air quality monitor SAFAR, the overall air quality of Delhi was in the moderate category on Tuesday morning.

"Surface winds are west-southwesterly and energetic, very favourable for pollutant dispersion. Rainfall along with stronger winds under the influence of Western disturbance helped to clean the build-up of pollution in the Indo Gangetic Plain, it said. It also said that effective stubble fire counts with sufficient potential estimated from SAFAR-multi-satellite products are significantly reduced and are around 98.

"Boundary layer wind direction is north-northwesterly, however, since the fire-related emissions have significantly reduced, a significant impact is not expected. Stubble burning share

in PM2.5 in Delhi's air is almost negligible and estimated at a marginal three per cent for today, SAFAR said.

It, however, said that the significant AQI improvement is short-lived.

The AQI is likely to marginally deteriorate to the 'poor' category on Wednesday.

"AQI is forecasted to further deteriorate to the higher end of the 'poor' to 'lower end of the 'very poor' category on 19th and 20th November, it said.

In Delhi-NCR, the levels of PM2.5 -- which is about three per cent the diameter of human hair and can lead to premature deaths from heart and lung diseases -- were 73.7 microgram per cubic meter (g/m³) at 5 pm. The safe limit is 60 g/m³.

PM10 level stood at 130 g/m³ at 5 pm. PM10 levels below 100 g/m³ are considered safe in India and 50 g/m³ is the emergency threshold.

The neighbouring cities of Faridabad (172), Ghazi-

abad (166), Greater Noida (186), and Noida (178) recorded their AQI in moderate category. They recorded 'poor'

Hooda demands compensation for hailstorm-hit Haryana farmers



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 17 NOVEMBER

Former Chief Minister and Leader of Opposition Bhupinder Singh Hooda has demanded compensation for farmers across Haryana who suffered heavy losses due to hailstorm two days ago.

Hooda said farmers should be compensated at the earliest and special surveys should be carried out to assess the damage. "Many crops including mustard and cotton have been ruined by this hail and many farmers have also lost the livestock. Not only this, but farmers have also not received any compensation for the loss suffered due to the unseasonal rains and hailstorms in the last several crop seasons. The farmers should also be paid their pending compensation soon," he said.

The former CM said during the Bharatiya Janata Party government, farmers are being hit not only by harsh government policies but also bad weather. "During BJP's rule, farmers are neither getting compensation nor the proper rate of crops or the timely payment for their crops. Paddy payment of many farmers is still pending," Hooda said, demanding payment to farmers as soon as possible.

He also attacked the BJP government over the meagre increase in cane prices and said the increase of Rs 10 per quintal was a cruel joke on the farmers as they feel that the rise is way below the increase in input costs of the farmers.

"During the Congress government, the sugarcane rate was raised from Rs 117 to Rs 310. But in the six years of the BJP government, the cane rate has barely increased by Rs 30 to 40 while the cost of farming and inputs like petrol, diesel, fertilizer, seeds, medicines prices and taxes on farming equipment have increased drastically. Farmers' organizations say that sugarcane rate should be at least Rs 400 per quintal keeping in mind the cost," he said.

Hooda said it seems the BJP government has not learned any lesson, despite the defeat in Baroda by-poll and is not paying attention to the issues of farmers.

"Like Baroda, the farmers of Haryana want to teach this government a lesson through the power of their ballots. Looking at the public sentiment and the way this government is behaving, it seems they will get an opportunity soon. The government has fallen in the eyes of the people, it can not last long in power," he said.

HRERA sets up mediation forum for promoters and allottees

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 17 NOVEMBER

To help both promoters and allottees, Haryana Real Estate Regulatory Authority (HRERA) Gurugram has established a mediation forum.

In its proceedings on 16 November, an expert mediation panel was able to take up 36 cases amicably and judicially within a day, an official spokesman of HRERA said.

He said that long-pending complaints before the Authority against the promoter EMAAR were referred for mediation as initiated by the promoter and were heard during the first session, as mentioned earlier. Likewise, all the 36 cases dedicated for the day were taken up and heard project-wise by the panel.

The HRERA chairman KK Khandwala said the Authority is overburdened by the long list of complaints pending before it and where the Authority deems it right that such cases which can be resolved through few sittings of the mediation, must be given a chance.

The spokesman further informed that promoter M/s EMAAR came forward to assist allottees for an amicable resolution to resolve their grievances with the help of an expert panel appointed by HRERA.

During the mediation, the compensation of Delay Possession Charges (DPC) was given to those who booked their flats in various projects of EMAAR but could not get possession of the same.

Both the promoter and allottees agreed on a common platform by arriving at a mutual decision of resolving their issues in a win-win situation. Hence the very first session of the Mediation forum of the HARERA Gurugram was a great success.

"The mediation is a new process for the allottees and I feel they need to come with a positive mindset and make best use of this process," said Deepa Malik, a member of the expert panel.

FESTIVAL SPECIAL TRAINS-2020

In order to clear extra rush of passengers during ongoing Festival Season, Northern Railway has planned to run the following fully reserved Festival Special Trains as per the schedule given below:-

LIST OF FESTIVAL SPECIAL TRAINS ORIGINATING/TERMINATING IN NORTHERN RAILWAY

Spl. Train No.	Station From	Dept Time	Station to	Arr. Time	Frequency / Day	Period
04998	Bathinda	20:50	Varanasi Junction	16:30	SUN	Up to 29.11.20
04997	Varanasi Junction	21:20	Bathinda	16:50	MON	Up to 30.11.20
04612	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra	23:30	Varanasi Junction	23:35	SUN	Up to 29.11.20
04611	Varanasi Junction	06:35	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra	06:50	TUE	Up to 01.12.20
04422	Anand Vihar Terminal	20:20	Lucknow	04:20	WED, FRI, SUN	22, 25, 27 & 29.11.20
04421	Lucknow	21:20	Anand Vihar Terminal	05:45	MON, THU, SAT	23, 26 & 28.11.20
04924	Chandigarh	23:15	Gorakhpur	16:00	THU	Up to 26.11.20
04923	Gorakhpur	22:10	Chandigarh	14:15	FRI	Up to 27.11.20
04090	Anand Vihar Terminal	16:55	Bhagalpur	11:00	MON, WED, FRI	Up to 30.11.20
04089	Bhagalpur	13:30	Anand Vihar Terminal	08:20	TUE, THU, SAT	Up to 01.12.20
04012	Anand Vihar Terminal	07:30	Jogbani	08:30	TUE, FRI	Up to 27.11.20
04011	Jogbani	20:00	Anand Vihar Terminal	21:00	WED, SAT	Up to 28.11.20
02237	Varanasi Junction	12:40	Jammu Tawi	11:05	Daily	Up to 30.11.20
02238	Jammu Tawi	14:00	Varanasi Junction	12:30	Daily	Up to 01.12.20
02231	Lucknow	22:25	Chandigarh	10:05	Daily	Up to 30.11.20
02232	Chandigarh	21:05	Lucknow	08:30	Daily	Up to 01.12.20
04092	New Delhi	09:20	Jaynagar	11:15	WED, SAT	Up to 28.11.20
04091	Jaynagar	15:30	New Delhi	19:30	THU, SUN	Up to 29.11.20
04030	Delhi Junction	13:45	Muzaffarpur Junction	08:00	WED, SAT	Up to 28.11.20
04029	Muzaffarpur Junction	15:30	Delhi Junction	10:30	THU, SUN	Up to 29.11.20
04624	Amritsar Junction	05:45	Saharsa Junction	10:30	WED, SAT	Up to 28.11.20
04623	Saharsa Junction	14:30	Amritsar Junction	19:45	THU, SUN	Up to 29.11.20
04656	Firozpur Cantt	19:00	Patna Junction	21:25	FRI	Up to 27.11.20
04655	Patna Junction	23:25	Firozpur Cantt	23:55	SAT	Up to 28.11.20
04084	Delhi Junction	23:00	Katihar Junction	22:00	FRI	Up to 27.11.20
04083	Katihar Junction	23:50	Delhi Junction	22:50	SAT	Up to 28.11.20
04401	New Delhi	23:50	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra	11:35	MON, THU	23, 26 & 30.11.20
04402	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra	23:30	New Delhi	11:15	TUE, FRI	24, 27, 11.20 & 01.12.20
04418	H. Nizamuddin	21:35	Pune	21:25	TUE	Up to 24.11.20
04417	Pune	05:15	H. Nizamuddin	05:35	THU	Up to 26.11.20
02422	Jammu Tawi	18:10	Ajmer Junction	12:20	Daily	Up to 30.11.20
02421	Ajmer Junction	14:05	Jammu Tawi	08:15	Daily	Up to 01.12.20
04041	Delhi Junction	22:25	Dehradun	08:25	Daily	21.11.20 to 30.11.20
04042	Dehradun	21:20	Delhi Junction	07:25	Daily	22.11.20 to 01.12.20
02448	H. Nizamuddin	20:10	Manikpur Junction	08:45	Daily	Up to 30.11.20
02447	Manikpur Junction	17:05	H. Nizamuddin	05:25	Daily	Up to 01.12.20
04515	Kalka	12:10	Shimla	17:20	Daily	Up to 30.11.20
04516	Shimla	10:40	Kalka	16:10	Daily	Up to 01.12.20
04854	Jodhpur Junction	09:10	Varanasi Junction	10:30	MON, THU, SAT	Up to 30.11.20
04853	Varanasi Junction	17:15	Jodhpur Junction	18:50	MON, WED, SAT	Up to 30.11.20
04864	Jodhpur Junction	09:10	Varanasi Junction	08:45	TUE, FRI, SUN	Up to 29.11.20
04863	Varanasi Junction	18:15	Jodhpur Junction	18:50	TUE, FRI, SUN	Up to 01.12.20
04866	Jodhpur Junction	09:10	Varanasi Junction	08:50	WED	Up to 25.11.20
04865	Varanasi Junction	18:15	Jodhpur Junction	18:50	THU	Up to 26.11.20
05115	Chhapra	11:15	Delhi Junction	11:20	SAT	Up to 28.11.20
05116	Delhi Junction	14:00	Chhapra	13:20	SUN	Up to 29.11.20
02581	Manduadih	22:30	New Delhi	12:15	Daily	Up to 30.11.20
02582	New Delhi	22:35	Manduadih	11:10	Daily	Up to 01.12.20
06229	Mysore Junction	07:20	Varanasi Junction	12:00	TUE, THU	Up to 26.11.20
06230	Varanasi Junction	21:05	Mysore Junction	02:15	THU, SAT	Up to 28.11.20
07232	Hubballi Junction	17:50	Varanasi Junction	12:00	FRI	Up to 27.11.20
07234	Varanasi Junction	21:05	Hubballi Junction	13:00	SUN	Up to 29.11.20
02587	Gorakhpur	14:20	Jammu Tawi	13:10	MON	Up to 23.11.20
02588	Jammu Tawi	22:45	Gorakhpur	20:30	SAT	Up to 28.11.20
05097	Bhagalpur	14:30	Jammu Tawi	06:00	THU	Up to 26.11.20
05098	Jammu Tawi	08:00	Bhagalpur	22:55	TUE	Up to 24.11.20
05251	Darbhanga Junction	03:25	Jalandhar City	05:10	SAT	Up to 28.11.20
05252	Jalandhar City	09:50	Darbhanga Junction	11:35	SUN	Up to 29.11.20
02397	Gaya	14:15	New Delhi	04:30	Daily	Up to 30.11.20
02398	New Delhi	12:10	Gaya	03:20	Daily	Up to 01.12.20
03255	Patliputra	20:35	Chandigarh	17:35	WED, SUN	Up to 29.11.20
03256	Chandigarh	21:30	Patliputra	18:50	MON, THU	Up to 30.11.20
02355	Patna Junction	07:25	Jammu Tawi	10:37	TUE, SAT	Up to 28.11.20
02356	Jammu Tawi	17:45	Patna Junction	20:55	WED, SUN	Up to 29.11.20
02595	Gorakhpur	20:00	Anand Vihar Terminal	08:50	MON, TUE, THU	Up to 30.11.20
02596	Anand Vihar Terminal	20:00	Gorakhpur	07:50	TUE, WED, FRI	Up to 01.12.20
02331	Howrah Junction	23:55	Jammu Tawi	13:10	TUE, FRI, SAT	Up to 28.11.20
02332	Jammu Tawi	22:45	Howrah Junction	11:30	MON, THU, SUN	Up to 30.11.20
02819	Bhubaneswar	15:40	Anand Vihar Terminal	20:50	WED, SUN	Up to 29.11.20
02820	Anand Vihar Terminal	07:05	Bhubaneswar	12:20	TUE, FRI	Up to 27.11.20
02549	Kamakhya	10:00	Anand Vihar Terminal	19:20	Daily	Up to 30.11.20
02550	Anand Vihar Terminal	06:45	Kamakhya	16:35	Daily	Up to 02.12.20
02530	Lucknow Jn.	05:00	Patliputra Junction	14:50	Except SUN, THU	Up to 30.11.20
02529	Patliputra Junction	15:50	Lucknow Jn.	02:35	Except SUN, THU	Up to 30.11.20</

Himachal govt is working with dedication and the BJP govt would again get their mandate in 2022 Assembly polls.

HIMACHAL PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER JAI RAM THAKUR



ADDRESSING A PUBLIC MEETING IN KANGRA DISTRICT AFTER LAYING FOUNDATION OF VARIOUS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

India

CAG report: Kerala Opp demands Issac's resignation

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
17 NOVEMBER

Opposition parties in Kerala sought state finance minister Thomas Isaac's resignation alleging the minister has violated the constitutional principles and oath of secrecy by publicising CAG audit report before presenting it in the Assembly.

Opposition leader Ramesh Chennithala demanded the resignation of finance minister Thomas Isaac, as he

disclosed the contents of the CAG report violating the constitutional principles.

"A minister, who must adhere to the principles of the Constitution, has committed a serious offence by violating his oath and the Constitutional guidelines. Thomas Isaac, who lied publicly and violated the Constitutional principles and oath of secrecy, should resign. He has lost his right to remain in the post," Chennithala said. He claimed Isaac lied about the CAG report on KIIFB.

TENDER



NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed tenders are invited from the reputed firms for providing services of Cleaning & Housekeeping at National School of Drama, Bahawalpur House, Bhagwandas Road, New Delhi- 110001. Tender Documents can be downloaded from NSD's website <http://www.nsd.gov.in>. The last date for submission of the tender is 11 December 2020 till 1500 hours.

Registrar



NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed tenders are invited from the reputed firms for providing of Security services at National School of Drama, Bahawalpur House, Bhagwandas Road, New Delhi-110001. Tender Documents can be downloaded from NSD's website <http://www.nsd.gov.in>. The last date for submission of the tender is 10 December 2020 till 1500 hours.

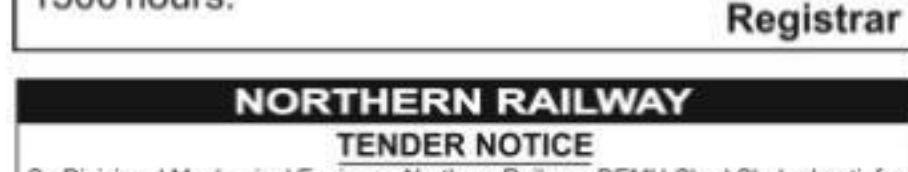
Registrar



NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed tenders are invited from the reputed firms for providing services of Un-skilled manpower at National School of Drama, Bahawalpur House, Bhagwandas Road, New Delhi-110001. Tender Documents can be downloaded from NSD's website <http://www.nsd.gov.in>. The last date for submission of the tender is 9 December 2020 till 1500 hours.

Registrar



TENDER NOTICE

Sr. Divisional Mechanical Engineer, Northern Railway, DEMU-Shed Shakurbasti, for and on behalf of President of India, invites E-Tender for the under noted work.

Tender No.	258661 DSLSBB(R)
Name of work	Provision for Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract of SLI (Safe Load Indicator) system of 140T BD Cranes No. 142271 at DEMU-Shed, Shakurbasti working over DLI division for a period of three years.
Approximate cost	₹ 9,55,800/- including GST @18%.
Ernest money	₹ 19,200/- (Note: It should be in the form of net banking or gateway only. Note: FDR not be accepted as EMD for tender invited on IREPS as per Railway Board letter no. 2015/CR-II/CT/51 dated 31.08.2016)
Completion period of the work	03 years
Cost of tender document	₹ 2360/-with GST @18% (Note: It should be in the form of net banking or gateway only. Note: FDR not be accepted as EMD for tender invited on IREPS as per Railway Board letter no. 2015/CR-II/CT/51 dated 31.08.2016)
Date and time for submission of tender and opening of tender	Upto 15:00 hrs. on 08.12.2020 Opening of Tender at 15:00 hrs.
Website particulars notice board location complete details of tender can be seen	Above tender is available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in
No.-258661DSLSBB(R) Dt. - 13.11.2020	2567/2020

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE



No. 128-W/260/Tender Notice/NIT 29, 30, 31, 32 & 33-W/V/20-21 Date: 17.11.2020

The Sr. Divisional Engineer-IV, Northern Railway, Delhi Division for and on behalf of President of India invites E-Tender on prescribed form for the following work.

Invitation of tender through E-Tendering(E-Procurement System)

1. Name of work with its location	1. CTR(P) 0.80 KMs from DN KM 14,700 to 15,500 and TR(P) 1.00 Km from DN KM 24,000 to 25,000 on Delhi-Bhatinda section under Sr. DEN/IV. (NIT 29-20-21-W-IV)
2. Approx. cost of work:	2. TR(P) of 23.286 KMs from DN KM 32,766 to 36,857, KM 54,000 to 57,830, KM 58,500 to 61,000, KM from 64,440 to 68,380, KM 60,500 to 87,079 and UP KM from 69,154 to 71,500 = 23.286KMs on DLJ-BTI section under Sr.DEN/IV. (NIT 30-20-21-W-IV)
3. Earnest money:	3. Through Ballast Removal of 90,855 KMs on Delhi-Bhatinda Section under Sr. DEN-IV. (NIT 31-W-IV-20-21)
4. Date and Time of submission of tender and opening of tender:	4. Repair to broken boundary wall by U/S PRC sleepers to prevent trespassing and minimize CRO cases under ADEN/JHI and Provision of Mosquito proof steel door & windows for gate lodge, Gang Huts, and staff quarters in the section of SSE/W/JHI under ADEN/JHI. (NIT 32-W-IV-20-21)
5. Website particulars, published e-tender, notice location etc. complete details of tender can be seen and web site where the tender form can be downloaded	5. Providing/Laying 400 mm dia DI carrier pipe through 600 and 800 mm dia MS casing pipe for water (Non-pressure pipe) below Track at km 283/4 on ROK-RE section (F/PN Div.3, Jhajjar) (NIT 33-W-IV-20-21)
6. Approx. cost of work:	1. Rs. 28,56,083.22 (2) Rs. 80,71,376.48 (3) Rs. 4,73,41,149.55 (4) Rs. 1,37,01,220.61 (5) Rs. 21,25,145.50
7. Ernest money:	1. Rs. 57,100.00 (2) Rs. 1,61,400.00 (3) Rs. 3,86,700.00 (4) Rs. 2,18,500.00 (5) Rs. 42,500.00
8. Date and Time of submission of tender and opening of tender:	Bidding Start date for work no. Up to 15:00 hrs. on 27,11,2020 opening of e-Tender at 15:00 hrs. on 11,12,2020.
9. Website particulars, published e-tender, notice location etc. complete details of tender can be seen and web site where the tender form can be downloaded	Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Nitish allocates Cabinet portfolios

Bihar new Dy CMs are Tar Kishore Prasad and Renu Devi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PATNA, 17 NOVEMBER



reflects in the composition of the new Cabinet.

A 14-member council of ministers was sworn in here by Governor Phagu Chauhan on Monday and the BJP bagged seven berths. Five ministers were from the JD(U) while one each was from two smaller allies - the Hindustani Awam Morcha and the Vikassheel Insaan Party. Mangal Pandey, a senior BJP leader who was the health minister in the previous government, has retained power, prohibition and excise besides getting planning and development, and food and consumer protection.

Mewa Lal Chaudhary, a multiple-term JD(U) MLA who has been inducted into the ministry for the first time, has got education, while Sheekh Kumar who has been sworn in upon her electoral debut has been given transport. Other BJP ministers are Amarendra Pratap Singh (agriculture, cooperatives and sugarcane industry), Rampreet Paswan (public health engineering), Jibesh Kumar (labour, tourism and mines), Ram Surat Kumar Rai (revenue, land reforms and law).

Vikassheel Insaan Party (VIP) founding president Mukesh Sahni has been given animal husbandry and fisheries. Santosh Kumar Suman, has been given water resources and Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes Welfare.

water resources and information and public relations department.

Ashok Choudhary, the JD(U)'s state working president, has retained building construction besides getting science and technology, social welfare and minorities affairs.

Bijendra Prasad Yadav, a former state unit chief of the JD(U), has retained power, prohibition and excise besides getting planning and development, and food and consumer protection.

Mewa Lal Chaudhary, a multiple-term JD(U) MLA who has been inducted into the ministry for the first time, has got education, while Sheekh Kumar who has been sworn in upon her electoral debut has been given transport. Other BJP ministers are Amarendra Pratap Singh (agriculture, cooperatives and sugarcane industry), Rampreet Paswan (public health engineering), Jibesh Kumar (labour, tourism and mines), Ram Surat Kumar Rai (revenue, land reforms and law).

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Jai Ram claims BJP would again win in next HP assembly polls



HP CM Jai Ram Thakur addressing a public meeting at Jaswan Paragpur in Kangra district on Tuesday.

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 17 NOVEMBER

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur on Tuesday said the state government was working with dedication, which has increased the faith of the people on it, claiming that the BJP government would again get their mandate in 2022 assembly polls.

Addressing a public meeting at Jaswan Paragpur in Kangra district after laying foundation of various development projects, Thakur said a small scale event would be organised on completion of three years of the state government on 27 December, 2020.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi has visited the state several times and the first event in which he was physically present during corona pandemic was the inauguration of Atal Tunnel, Rohtang and also addressed the public meetings. PM Narendra Modi has spe-

cial affection towards people of the state and the Centre government has provided financial assistance of crores of rupees which has helped in accelerating pace to development in the state," he added.

He said it was a matter of pride for the state that the national BJP chief Jagat Prakash Nadda and Union Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs Anurag Thakur are from Himachal Pradesh.

The Centre government and state government are working as a team for development of Himachal Pradesh. Besides, an assistance of Rs 40,623 crore has been provided to the state by the Centre government," he added.

Union Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs Anurag Thakur thanked the Chief Minister for dedicating and laying foundation stone of various developmental projects for the area.

Anurag Thakur said inspection for Central school had been conducted and Rs 500 crores has been sanctioned for Central University.

The Centre government and state government are working as a team for development of Himachal Pradesh. Besides, an assistance of Rs 40,623 crore has been provided to the state by the Centre government," he added.

State Industries and Transport Minister Bikram Singh, Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Sarveen Chaudhary, Deputy Chairman State Planning Board Ramesh Chand Dhawala, MLA Arun Kumar, former MLA Naveen Dhami were also present on occasion among others.

T'gana SEC announces civic polls in Hyderabad on 1 Dec, BJP cries foul

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD, 17 NOVEMBER

As thousands flocked to register their names today to avail the flood relief amount of Rs 10,000 the Telangana state election commission announced that the civic polls in Hyderabad will be held on 1 December, leading BJP to allege that the dates have been decided according to the convenience of ruling TRS.

The state election commission today notified the date of election for Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation and the last date of submitting nomination will be 20 November and the Opposition BJP which considers it has a good chance of winning the board this time is furious because of the short time available for submitting the nominations.

"Telangana State Election Commission is working like a puppet in the hands of CM K Chandrasekhar Rao and TRS. Election commission is an independent institution and is supposed to function without

any external intervention. However, Telangana SEC seems to be running on whims and fancies of KCR and his party TRS. BJP strongly denounces the method of functioning of SEC in Telangana," tweeted the state BJP spokesperson Krishna Saigara Rao who went on to add that the poll dates were "politically convenient" to the TRS and BJP will complain to Central Election Commission.

Meanwhile, thousands thronged to Mee Seva centres to register themselves for availing state's temporary relief of Rs 10,000 for the flood affected families. After allegations of scams and discrimination as TRS party members distributed the cash amount initially, going door to door, the state government has now asked the people to register themselves at Mee Seva centres to get the financial assistance directly credited to their bank accounts leading to huge crowds and scuffles outside most of the centres. Mee Seva Centres are also allegedly charging Rs 100 to Rs 200 as processing fees.

AP local body polls
Trouble is brewing in Andhra Pradesh between the state election commission (SEC) and the state government over conducting local body elections. While state election commissioner N Ramesh wants to hold the gram panchayat elections in next February after Covid cases dip in numbers CMY Jagan Mohan Reddy's advisor Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy has ruled it out saying the government was not ready for polls.

Nauni varsity starts online booking of fruit plants

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 17 NOVEMBER

To facilitate the smooth sale and ensure strict compliance of the guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19, Dr YS Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry (UHF), Nauni in Solan district of Himachal Pradesh has started online booking of planting material prepared by the university and its Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) and research stations.

A release here said the annual sale of the planting material of apple, plum, apricot, peach, kiwi, pear, pomegranate, persimmon, etc. will be held in the first week of January 2021. The farmers will have to submit their demand to the university/KVKs/research stations on or before 5 December.

The university has advised the farmers to download the demand form from the university website (www.yspuniversity.ac.in). The demand form contains information about the fruits and the available varieties along with other important information. The

duly filled demand form, mentioning the variety and the number of fruit plants required, need to be emailed to the university on or before 5th December 2020. The form can also be sent to the university by post. The demand form can be sent to the university through email on uhf.seed@gmail.com.

The form can also be sent to the university by post to The Head, Department of Seed Science & Technology, Dr YS Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry, Nauni.

The release said the farmers are required to fill in their email and WhatsApp number in the form so that they can be informed about the allotted plants by the university based on the availability. In addition, applicants will also have to mention the place and the Khasra number of the land where the planting is to be carried out, so the scientists of the university/stations can visit the plantations to inspect the health of the plants.

The farmers can also submit the demand for planting

material at the research stations and the Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) of the university located at different places in the state. The demand forms can also be sent by email or post to these stations. The email and postal addresses of different stations of the university are available on the university website.

Meanwhile, the University has invited applications for its one-year Vocational Training Course on Horticulture Management (Self-Employment) for the session 2020-21.

THUMBNAILS



Actor Kunal Khemu at Excel Films office at Khar in Mumbai on Tuesday.

Yogi Utkhand tour ends: UP chief minister Yogi Adityanath concluded his three-day Uttarakhand trip on Tuesday. On his last day of the tour, Yogi visited Badrinath in Chamoli and offered prayers at the shrine dedicated to Lord Vishnu. He visited Mana village on the Indo-China border and other tourist attractions near it.

SNS

Suspected JeM terrorists held: Delhi Police Special Cell has arrested two suspected JeM terrorists from Sarai Kale Khan in southeast Delhi, officials said on Tuesday. Two semi-automatic pistols, 10 live cartridges have been recovered from them.

PTI

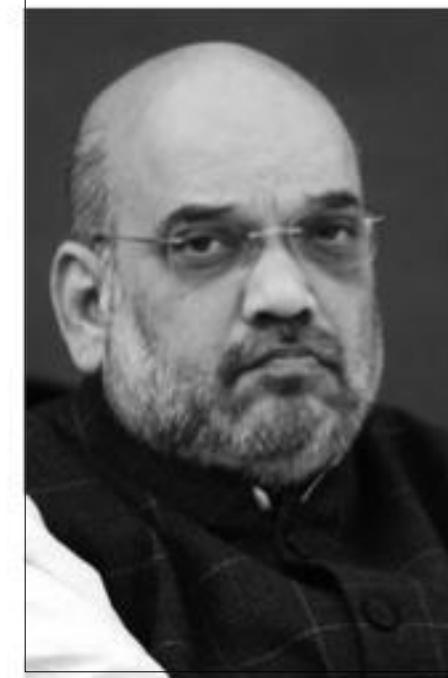
Bengaluru violence: Defending the Congress following the arrest of former mayor Sampath Raj in connection with Bengaluru riots, its Karnataka unit president D K Shivakumar on Tuesday accused the ruling BJP of 'misusing' the law to defame his party.

PTI

Gupkargang wants to take J&K back to era of terror: Shah

He terms People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration an 'unholly global alliance', gets sharp Opp reactions

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI/SRINAGAR,
17 NOVEMBER



Sounding the poll bugle ahead of local body elections in Jammu and Kashmir, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday termed the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration an "unholly global alliance" that along with the Congress wants to return to the era of terror and turmoil.

The statement evoked angry reactions from the Congress, NC and the PDP, which dismissed the remarks as baseless and hit out at the minister. In a series of tweets, Shah also labelled the PAGD, a newly formed conglomerate of political parties, the "Gupkar Gang" that is going global and wants foreign forces to intervene in Jammu and Kashmir.

"Congress and the Gupkar Gang want to take JK back to the era of terror and turmoil. They want to take away rights of Dalits, women and tribals that we have ensured by removing Article 370. This is why they're being rejected by the people everywhere," he said. Shah's comments came ahead of the first phase of District Development Council elections on November 25, the first political exercise since the Centre revoked Jammu and Kashmir's special status under Article 370 on August 5 last year and bifurcated the state into the union territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

The minister said Jammu and Kashmir was, and will always be an integral part of India and the people of the country will no longer tolerate

an unholy global gathbandhan against India's national interest.

The home minister also questioned Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi on whether they support the PAGD. "The Gupkar Gang also insults India's tricolour. Do Sonia Ji and Rahul Ji support such moves of the Gupkar Gang? They should make their stand crystal clear to the people of India," he said.

Hitting back, the Congress said it strongly refutes his "concocted and baseless" assertions. In a two-page statement posted on Twitter, its chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala accused Shah of making mischievous statements on Jammu and Kashmir.

Congress Party has entered seat sharing at certain places that too at local district level, the statement said, adding that it strongly condemns the baseless allegations and urges him to refrain from dirty politics.

Omar, Mehbooba hit back at Amit Shah for his 'Gupkar gang' remarks

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, 17 NOVEMBER

Former chief ministers of J&K, Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti, on Tuesday hit back at the union Home Minister Amit Shah for his "Gupkar gang going global" remarks.

"We are not a 'gang' Amit Shah ji, we are a legitimate political alliance having fought & continuing to fight elections, much to your disappointment," Omar Abdullah, who is vice-president of the National Conference, reacted in a series of tweets.

"I can understand the frustration behind this attack by the Hon'ble Home Minister. He had been briefed that the People's Alliance was preparing to boycott elections. This would have allowed the BJP & newly formed King's party a free run in J&K. We didn't oblige them," he said in another tweet.

Omar further reacted; Only in J&K can leaders be detained & called anti-national for participating in elections & supporting the democratic process. The truth is all those who oppose the ideology of the BJP are labelled "corrupt & anti-national."

Mehbooba Mufti, who is president of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), while reacting to Shah's remarks, tweeted: "Old habits die hard. Earlier BJPs narrative was that the tukde tukde gang threatened India's sovereignty & they are now using 'Gupkar Gang' euphemism to project us as anti-nationals. Irony died a million deaths since its BJP itself that violates the constitution day in & day out."

Questioning the BJP's criticism of the alliance partners of the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD), she said fighting elections in an alliance "is also anti-national now." "BJP can stich as many alliances in its hunger for power but somehow we are undermining national interest by putting up a united front."

"The BJP's stale tactic of dividing India by projecting themselves as saviours and political opponents as internal and imagined enemies is far too predictable now. Love jihad, tukde tukde & now Gupkar Gang dominates the political discourse

instead discourse instead of like rising unemployment & inflation," Mehbooba remarked.

Reacting to Shah's remarks, several National Conference leaders in a statement said; "Seeing imminent drubbing in the ongoing DDC elections and having been snatched of the biggest propaganda tool, the leaders said the assertions made by the home minister were quite anticipated. Amit Shah has woken up late in the day to attack the PAGD because it seems that contesting elections in Jammu & Kashmir is a crime and is unconstitutional. The frustration on his part is quite understandable because the BJP and its newly constituted team B in J&K were quite certain that PAGD will boycott the elections and allow them a free run in J&K. They were in the process of launching a vicious campaign against us," they said.

attack on permanent members of the Security Council, Tirumurti (*in photo*) said, "The same countries who shed crocodile tears for small and medium states are the same ones denying them even the basic courtesy, which is to help them keep official records of discussions."

He said, "What happens here has no record and we start again the next year as if nothing has happened. And of course, we don't even have a single negotiating text."

The Inter-Governmental Negotiations (IGN) on reform have become like a platform for debate in a university, said T.S. Tirumurti, India's Permanent Representative to the UN, at the 75th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in hard-hitting remarks against the UN systems.

The Indian diplomat further said, "Inside the IGN, nothing has moved for more than a decade except hearing passionate statements on the need for reform. In fact, it has not progressed since it is not only informal but it has no rules of procedure and has no records. For a decade it has remained that way. We are forced to keep our own notes placing a tremendous burden on all small and medium states."

In an indirect but scathing

attack on permanent members of the Security Council, Tirumurti (*in photo*) said, "The same countries who shed crocodile tears for small and medium states are the same ones denying them even the basic courtesy, which is to help them keep official records of discussions."

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Tirumurti recalled that the last IGN session was cut short unexpectedly due to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, though other UN bodies and processes did manage to adapt to the changed scenario and to continue their deliberations using innovative formats.

"We hope that in this session, the excuse of the pandemic is not used to stall the IGN again by insisting on in-person meetings only," he added.

BJP sends 5 national leaders for 2021 poll in WB

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 17 NOVEMBER



To bolster preparation for 2021 Bengal Assembly poll, BJP's five senior national leaders have been assigned by party's top brass to come up with election strategy and tactics for encourage party workers.

BJP IT cell chief Amit Malviya has arrived in Bengal last night and took charge as co-in-charge of Bengal BJP.

Suniti V Deodhar, who played a vital role in BJP's Tripura victory has reached Bengal today. He will supervise Hooghly, Howrah and Midnapore strategies. Senior leaders like national vice president Mukul Roy, party's state president Dilip Ghosh, senior leader Rahul Sinha along with other senior leaders today held a meeting with Deodhar and Malviya to discuss poll preparation.

Three other senior leaders including BJP MP and national president of BJP's SC Morch Vinod Kumar Sonkar, MP Harish Dwivedi and Rajya Sabha MP Dushyant Kumar Gautam will be joining their colleagues soon. They will supervise several zones like Midnapore, Burdwan, Purulia, North Bengal, Kolkata, North and South 24 Parganas and Nadia.

BJP national general secretary (organisation) B.L. Santosh is also scheduled to arrive here on Tuesday to hold meetings with the state leadership.

"Five zones-Midnapore, Rar Bengal, North Bengal,

Kolkata and Nawadip will be covered by those five senior national leaders. They will maintain coordination with district-level presidents, leaders and supervise whether booth-level campaigns are being organised and prepare a report. Our former national president and Union home minister Amit Shah may again come on 30 November and hold meeting based on these report," said a senior BJP leader.

The party also took an important decision today by sending party vistarik (state level leaders) to spend at least three days in districts, mandal (zonal) level leaders will go to shakti kendra (local level) and shakti kendra leaders will visit booths for campaigning.

"That was very effective during Lok Sabha poll. We hope this will more help us to strengthen the party's base here," said a senior leader.

Malviya today said that the glory of the state can be restored only if the Mamata Banerjee government is ousted. "I am sure together we will restore the glory. It can happen only if Pishi's (CM) government steeped in corruption, appeasement and lawlessness is routed," Malviya said.

BJP national general secretary (organisation) B.L. Santosh is also scheduled to arrive here on Tuesday to hold meetings with the state leadership.

"Five zones-Midnapore, Rar Bengal, North Bengal,

Ghosh said Malviya had overseen the IT and social media strategies of the BJP during the last two or three polls, including the Lok Sabha elections in 2019, in which BJP bagged 18 of the 42 seats in the state.

"His presence will further strengthen the IT wing of the state unit," Ghosh said. He also disparaged TMC poll strategist Prashant Kishor by saying that BJP does not use hired soldier like TMC. He asserted that Enforcement Directorate (ED) will investi-

gate the disproportionate properties of the TMC leaders and sent those corrupt leaders to jail.

"Central force will replace the state police in the Assembly poll. Mamata will give 2 lakh bikes to youths, but who will provide them fuel expenses?

She has no proper employment generation plan and only gives political bluffs to people for vote," he said. Mean-

while, CPI-M former Councillor from ward No 102 Rinku Naskar today joined BJP with several followers.

Guj not to allow 'Chhath Puja' as Covid cases rise

SNS & PTI
AHMEDABAD, NEW DELHI
17 NOVEMBER



Proving the warnings of medical fraternity correct, the Covid-19 pandemic in Gujarat has registered a surge in cases soon after the Deepawali festivities to be followed by two other events.

In a damage control exercise, the authorities have decided not to allow 'Chhath Puja', scheduled on coming Friday, on the banks of Sabarmati in Ahmedabad and Tapi in Surat.

Doctors in Gujarat had repeatedly urged the authorities not to relax the pandemic guidelines during the nine-night Navratri festival soon followed by Deepawali holidays, Gujarati New Year, Bhai Dooj and Chhath Puja.

Statewide daily addition of Covid-19 cases had stayed below the 1,000-mark for about a week, but the figure has jumped above 1,100 during the days just prior to Deepawali. With 926 cases reported on Monday, the total number of Covid-19 patients in Gujarat has crossed 1.89 lakh, of which 3,808 have died so far.

Deputy chief minister Nitin Patel, who also holds the health portfolio, has said that testing protocol would be increased a lot soon after festivities are over.

Delhi BJP protests against Chhath ban
The Delhi BJP has intensified

PM to virtually inaugurate 'Bengaluru Tech Summit 2020'

NEW DELHI, 17 NOVEMBER

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is slated to virtually inaugurate the three-day long technological summit 'Bengaluru Tech Summit 2020' on 19 November. It will be attended among others by his Australian counterpart Scott Morrison and technocrats from India and abroad.

Giving details of the event a note from the PM said, "This year, the theme of the summit is 'Next is Now'."

Though leaders, researchers, innovators, investors, policy makers and educators from India and various countries of the world will adapt to the changed scenario and to continue their deliberations using innovative formats.

Leading the protest, Purvanchal Morcha president Kaushal Mishra called the chief minister "anti-Purvanchali" and said that the ban has hurt the religious sentiments of the people from Bihar and Purvanchal settled in Delhi.

The AAP government should withdraw its 'Tughlaq farman' (diktat) within the next 24 hours or Purvanchalis will teach it a lesson at the right moment, said Delhi BJP vice president Dinesh Pratap Singh.

Representatives of Chhath Puja committees and hundreds of Purvanchalis also took part in the protest, said Delhi BJP media cell head Navin Kumar.

ICAR-CIBA help fishery graduates set up India's first start-up in seabass hatchery

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHENNAI, 17 NOVEMBER



Aquaculture' owned by the young entrepreneurs from Kumta, Karnataka on the West coast of India to ensure the transfer of CIBA's technology on seabass seed production to the latter.

The initiative assumes significance in the wake of the launch of Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday for boosting fish production, doubling farmer's income and the sustainable growth of fisheries sector.

This is the first attempt in the country in setting up the seabass hatchery in the private sector on a start-up mode.

An MoU was signed between the CIBA and Canares

Savan, the three fisheries graduates from Mangalore Fisheries College, chose to develop their career in entrepreneurship.

They wanted to be job providers than job seekers.

Their visit to the CIBA's seabass hatchery at Muttukadu experimental station during their Bachelor of Fisheries Science

authorities their desire to set up a start-up in the field. The CIBA followed up the start-up with hand-holding which enabled them getting funding support to start the firm.

A milestone in aquaculture

K K Vijayan, Director of CIBA called the start-up initiative a milestone in brackishwater aquaculture. "It is a path-breaking development in the country's aquaculture sector with youngsters coming to this field with start-up ventures, which will pave way for a resurgence and growth in the brackishwater aquaculture, especially Asian seabass farming in the country", he said. According to him, private sec-

tor has become largely reluctant to enter marine fish seed production consequent to the relatively longer production cycle and need for unique skill sets required for rearing marine fish larvae.

Huge demand

With the farmed Asian seabass having a huge commercial value, there is a huge demand for its quality seeds among aqua-farmers across the country.

Presence of well-established value chain for seabass is very evident from spawn to harvest size, where huge demand exists among the farmers for the range of hatchery and farm-produced seeds.

DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL - II, DELHI	
4TH FLOOR JEEVAN TARA BUILDING	
PARLIAMENT STREET, NEW DELHI-110001	
MA NO 1011/2019, DA NO. 649/2016	DATE : 16.11.2020
BANK OF BARODA Vs M/S ADDI INDUSTRIES & ANR.	
APPLICANT RESPONDENT	
To DEFENDANT	
1 M/S ADDI INDUSTRIES through its sole Proprietor MR. LALLAN KUMAR SINGH	
2 MR. LALLAN KUMAR SINGH/S/O MR. KISHORI SINGH	
ALL AT:	
A-11 Ground Floor Vishwadeep Tower Distt. Centre Janakpuri Delhi - 58	
B. Flat No. 504, 5th Floor Skytech Matrott Sect.-56 Noida	
C-B-	

History lesson

The old joke resurrected each time the Congress Party fails, which it does with monotonous regularity, to come up to scratch in an electoral challenge, is that the once grand and now just old party is given a few seats to contest in any anti-BJP alliance not because it can bring in votes but because it can bring in top-notch legal counsel for Opposition worthies. Congress leader Kapil Sibal, one of these lawyers and among the dissenters who wrote to party president Sonia Gandhi demanding changes in the leadership a few months ago, has spoken up again after the Bihar poll debacle. He has underlined the fact that the party leadership is still in denial and introspection remains a far cry. Sibal says the Congress is not seen as an "effective alternative" and advocates an "organisational overhaul, better articulation of its ideas and promoting active, thoughtful leaders". On the evidence of this prognosis, however, Sibal too is in denial. For, he confuses form with content.

Historically, the Congress has faced two major challenges to its worldview and ideology. The first came from the Left. The undivided Communist Party of India under the leadership of the moderate PC Joshi had a serious chance of eating into the Congress base. But the Jawaharlal Nehru-led Congress was done the favour of a lifetime by the coup of the doctrinaire hardliners within the CPI who dispensed with Joshi as leader in favour of a rabidly Stalinist leadership. Nehru was enough of a practitioner of realpolitik to draw the moderates - termed 'revisionists' by the Marxists of the time - into the broader Congress fold though their leader never succumbed to the blandishments of office and remained loyal to his party despite its shabby treatment of him. It also helped the Congress that the Left's pandering to what may be termed extraterritorial Islamism made it the party of choice for Hindus while its tokenism for minorities shored up its support base among them. Congress cruised in this comfort zone for the next three decades till the advent of what is mistakenly termed the Right under the leadership of LK Advani in the late 1980s. His project was the political articulation of an Indic civilisational ethos on which could be built a civic nationalism. The Congress' many hypocrisies and venalities had brought its leadership inter-generational entitlement but not the smarts to cope with this ideological challenge. Its cluelessness about a changing world and an aspirational India was thoroughly exposed as first the AB Vajpayee-led government and now the Narendra Modi-led administration, albeit in a different manner, emphasised the primacy of the nation-state, championed a non-supremacist Indic ethos and focused on bottom-up development. Advani, like PC Joshi five decades before him, was discarded by his party. But instead of Advantage Congress, as it had proven to be in the 1950s, it is Modi who is fashioning the national narrative in the new millennium because the Congress is clueless about even its own history.

Routine, required

On the occasion of National Press Day on Monday, Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu at a webinar on the 'Role of media during Covid-19' organised by the Press Council of India gave a rather routine speech, one that the uncharitable might even term platitudinous. Yet, it was required. If for nothing else, then to remind both purveyors and consumers of information about what ought to be the non-negotiables. Some of the statements made by Naidu are unexceptionable; others need amplification and/or clarification. "Any attack on the freedom of the Press is detrimental to the national interest, democracy cannot survive without a free and fearless media... a robust and vibrant media is as important as an independent judiciary in consolidating democracy and strengthening Constitutional rule of law," the Vice-President said. He was spot on. He may, however, have been guilty of over-enthusiasm when he iterated that the Press in India has "always been in the vanguard of protecting and strengthening the foundations of democracy" ~ the cravenness of a section of media during the Emergency is the most prominent but by no means sole example to the contrary. But that's forgivable, perhaps, given the occasion. Describing journalism as a "pious mission", on the other hand, does more harm than good to the profession. The phrase possibly accurately describes what was termed the "nationalist Press" during British colonial rule but that's about it. Indian journalism flourished and thrived when not piousness but two different P's were dominant ~ public interest and profit. That is because only a going concern has the luxury to be concerned about quality and fairness, aka the public interest. Naidu also urged the media to avoid sensationalism and curb the tendency to mix news with views. Excellent advice on both counts. A line on the role of social media and the transnational corporates that own its major platforms being a law unto themselves would not have been out of place in this context, given it is primarily to compete against the fact-fiction on-defamation funnelling social media does so well that media organisations have resorted to the tactics the Vice-President would have them avoid. It is also not unproblematic to laud media, as Mr Naidu did, "for playing an outstanding role in empowering the people and furthering national interest". It is the job of the institutions of the State to empower the people and the government of the day to further the national interest. The Press works best as an informed interventionist in public discourse not as a representative of the people. For the latter, we have universal adult franchise. Where there can be no disagreement whatsoever, is in endorsing the Vice-President's fulsome praise for journalists who have quite literally risked their lives as frontline warriors during Covid-19. The courage shown by reporters in ensuring non-stop coverage of all happenings unmindful of grave risks has been truly magnificent.

After all, China plays by its own set of opaque trade rules and there are serious concerns about its influence in sensitive sectors such as telecom and 5G. China can use tech equipment here to carry out espionage and cyberattacks, a concern that even RCEP member Australia has raised. In fact, most RCEP members are concerned about China's malpractices and aggressive foreign policy. This means there are inherent tensions within the RCEP architecture.

But while India has done the right thing in walking away from RCEP, it should not close the door on free trade agreements. We need them to boost trade, access markets and capital, import the latest technologies and increase our competitiveness. Otherwise, India is doomed to low growth as in the pre-1991 years.

With the incoming Joe Biden administration in the US likely to take a more strategic view of trade, concluding an FTA with Washington is possible. Similarly, we should conclude an FTA with the EU, and be prepared to join the

technology which is within the reach of the poor ~ the radio. "The technological infrastructure, though diluted, can be revived and the band-width of the FM channels expanded for it to become a vehicle for imparting education." Re-opening of schools and chances of restoring traditional educational methods being uncertain, the policy makers may consider implementation of Chowdhury's suggestion.

Yours, etc., Sanjay Chopra,
Mohali, 17 November.

USE RADIO

SIR, Prasenjit Chowdhury's article 'Plagued education' (November 16) is thought-provoking. However much the political leaders may boast of achievements in digitalisation, the fact remains that majority of poor people living in Indian villages do not have access to internet. In fact, many villages do not have electricity either. For them, providing online teaching to their wards cannot be dreamt of. Thus majority of poor students are not getting opportunity to study, the schools remaining shut due to Covid. Inability to provide alternative education routes to the vast majority of boys and girls is a colossal failure of governments.

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technology which is within the reach of the poor ~ the radio. "The technological infrastructure, though diluted, can be revived and the band-width of the FM channels expanded for it to become a vehicle for imparting education."

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Yours, etc., Sanjan Ghatak,

Narendrapur, 16 November.

ERRANT BEHAVIOUR

SIR, This refers to the editorial 'Sore loser' published today. The errant behaviour of US president Donald Trump to not concede the defeat graciously ~ which is essential to facilitate the smooth transition of power to the US president-elect Joe Biden ~ undermines the legitimacy of the country's democ-

racy. The US presidential election

delivered a massive blow to Trump.

It followed four years of chaos,

maverick conduct and bundles of

lies. But he hasn't stopped his obsessive effort to discredit an election that he lost by a wide margin.

Through a series of tweets, the belligerent president continues to mislead the world alleging that the election was rigged despite state, national and private election officials working in his own adminis-

tration candidly admitting that there is no evidence of any

voting system being compromised.

The president's claim of fraud without any evidence clearly shows the mala fide intent to stick on to the presidency by hook or by crook disregarding the people's mandate.

It's befuddling that USA's vib-

rant democracy and liberal laws

which offer precious guidance to

others have been reduced to a

laughing stock before the world.

It's more disgusting that Trump's

hardcore followers rush to the

streets to endorse their leader's

defiance. This political drama in

US will embolden dictatorial

and autocratic regimes in other

parts of the world. However, the US

has pinned hopes on independent

A MEMBER OF THE **ANN**
ASIAN NEWS NETWORK

ASIAN VOICES

It is time to act

The National Commission for Women and Children has called for harsher penalty to sexual offenders. It has its reasons. A review of sexual assault cases from 2009-2020 showed that every week, a woman or a child was sexually assaulted. Of the 530 cases, 70 percent is rape of children. The numbers are worrying. What is as disturbing, the Commission's analysis has found is that 71 percent of the perpetrators were given the minimum punishment of which 81 percent for no particular reason and for the rest, the mitigating circumstances was taken into consideration based on the fact that the perpetrator had no previous criminal record. These statistics tell us that our women and children are not safe, at home or in our society. And the complacency in the law compounds a situation that is already grave. Of the 45 cases of rape of minors the commission reviewed, most perpetrators received minimum sentencing for no definite reason or for lack of past criminal records. We are a society that pursues progress through the wellbeing of its people. Yet we tolerate heinous crimes against women and children. NCWC's call is thus, timely if not already late. Our parliamentarians will soon meet for the winter session where among others, the Penal Code

of Bhutan will be tabled for discussion. The issue on the safety of our women and children merits attention and must be given priority. However, members of the National Assembly already met earlier this month and following an, 'intense emotional debate' it decided to retain the clauses of sexual assaults as it is and not enhance the sentencing as proposed by the National Council. According to the MPs, if the objective of the law is to punish the offender and deter others, past records indicate that enhancing sentencing did not work. They argue that the Penal Code was amended in 2011 with enhanced sentencing for sexual offenders.

Besides, it is not only in Bihar that the Congress has proved to be an embarrassment for its allies, the party has lost a series of by-elections in Gujarat, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh. In contrast, the BJP has won 41 of the 59 seats in the by-elections that were held in 11 states.

The fading out of the Congress would have been deemed a disaster for the opposition but for Tejashwi's unexpected rise. Arguably, along with the Shiv Sena's Uddhav Thackeray, the duo could become the new focal points of the non-BJP camp. Both the Bihari and the Marathi have a reliable base in their respective states and are not scared of taking on the BJP with caustic observations, especially where the Shiv Sena is concerned.

The country, therefore, is on the verge of a new brand of politics where two dynasts other than the Nehru-Gandhis can be expected to play a prominent role. It may not be besides the point to say that the two are quite different from their fathers. Both Tejashwi and Uddhav are more restrained in their utterances and outlook than Laloo Prasad and Bal Thackeray.

The Annual General Meeting of Bowbazar Bayam Samity (Swimming Section), 53/2, College Street, Vidyasagar Udyan, Kolkata-700073, will be held on December 20, 2020 at 10 a.m. at the Tent of Samity. Eligible members are requested to attend the meeting at the above noted date, time and place. For agenda and other details see the Notice Board of the Samity.

The new challenger

Notwithstanding its victory, which was a narrow one, the BJP is aware that it now facing a doughty challenger in Tejashwi, who may well become the opposition's new mascot. This possibility is all the greater because Rahul Gandhi has failed to make an impact in Bihar. Not only has his party proved to be a liability for the mahagathbandhan, his own rallies proved to be far less effective than those of Tejashwi



There are two winners and two losers in the recent Bihar assembly elections. The victors were the Rashtriya Janata Dal's (RJD) Tejashwi Yadav and the BJP's Narendra Modi while the losers were the Janata Dal (United)'s Nitish Kumar, who is the chief minister, and the Congress's Rahul Gandhi.

Tejashwi heads the list because his party came out on top with 75 seats although it lost the election. The BJP, on the other hand, won the poll but was only the second largest party with 74 seats. Modi played a stellar role in his party's and the ruling alliance's success because there is little doubt that but for his popularity, they would have found the going tough.

If Nitish Kumar can be considered a loser, the reason is not only the fall in the number of seats of his party, the Janata Dal (United), from 71 in 2015 to 43, but also because it is clear that his continuance as the chief minister will be only because of the BJP's pre-poll assurance since he is no longer in a position to call the shots.

Instead, it is Big Brother BJP which will be in the driver's seat in its state for the first time in its political career. As such, no one can be sure that Nitish Kumar will be able to complete his term without any hiccups and will not generally be regarded as a puppet chief minister.

However, there are reasons why the BJP will be treating him with kid-gloves for the time being. Having lost three allies –

the Shiv Sena, the Akali Dal and the Lok Janshakti Party – in the recent past, the BJP will be careful not to annoy Nitish Kumar lest he, too, should walk out.

But there is little doubt that the chief minister himself has become a much diminished figure compared to the times when he was not only labelled sushasan babu or a good governance man, but was also a standard-bearer of the secular side before he switched to the BJP. It is that reputation of his which has persuaded the Congress's Digvijay Singh to invite him back to be among the secularists once again since his stocks have fallen in the BJP camp.

If Nitish Kumar can be considered a loser, the unlikely hero of the moment is the 31-year-old Tejashwi who was considered a novice before the elections with neither experience nor a vote-catching appeal. Yet, belying all negative perceptions, Tejashwi succeeded in electing the masses so much so that the surging crowds at his rallies became the talking point of the political class and the media and must have given sleepless nights to the BJP.

Not surprisingly, the RJD has emerged as the No 1 party and might have done even better if its partner, the Congress, hadn't let it down by putting up a dismal performance. As it gradually became

clear during the campaign that the Congress was faring poorly, it was widely said that the aging Grand Old Party should not have been allotted as many as 70 seats.

It is believed that Tejashwi was unwilling to give the Congress so many seats, but was persuaded by his father, Laloo Prasad, who is in jail, to do so. In the event, Tejashwi has been proved right, for the Congress could win only 19 seats, thereby hurting the mahagathbandhan or grand alliance of the RJD, the Congress and the Left. Interestingly, the Left has punched above its weight with the CPI(M-L) winning 12 of the 19 seats which it contested. The CPI and the CPI(M), too, won two seats each. If only the Congress was given fewer seats – say, 40 – and the Left parties more, it might have been a different story.

As it is, the story is that the BJP received the fright of its life before it managed to retrieve the situation with, as its critics say, a resort to its familiar tactic of branding the opponents as anti-nationalists as when Modi told a rally that there are people who are unwilling to chant "Bharat Mata ki Jai" or victory to Mother India or invoke Lord Ram's name by saying, "Jai Shri Ram", which is the BJP's political slogan.

Notwithstanding its victory,



AMULYA GANGLI

The writer is a former Assistant Editor, *The Statesman*

India should look at trade linkages

SIR, Fifteen Asia-Pacific nations have inked the RCEP trade agreement, set to become the largest trade pact in the world. India, however, remains outside the pact as per its decision last year to pull out of negotiations over concerns of cheap Chinese imports flooding the Indian market. Those concerns have only been amplified this year with India and China locked in a border standoff in eastern Ladakh. There is welcome recognition in New Delhi that Beijing represents its biggest strategic security threat today and economic disengagement from China is in India's best interests.

After all, China plays by its own set of opaque trade rules and there are serious concerns about its influence in sensitive sectors such as telecom and 5G. China can use tech equipment here to carry out espionage and cyberattacks, a concern that even RCEP member Australia has raised. In fact, most RCEP members are concerned about China's malpractices and aggressive foreign policy. This means there are inherent tensions within the RCEP architecture.

But while India has done the right thing in walking away from RCEP, it should not close the door on free trade agreements. We need them to boost trade, access markets and capital, import the latest technologies and increase our competitiveness. Otherwise, India is doomed to low growth as in the pre-1991 years.

With the incoming Joe Biden administration in the US likely to take a more strategic view of trade, concluding an FTA with Washington is possible. Similarly, we should conclude an FTA with the EU, and be prepared to join the



Trans-Pacific Partnership trade pact if the US rejoins it. Countering China requires us to grow our economy quickly which can't be achieved without a liberal trade policy with the right partners.

Yours, etc., Sanjay Chopra,

Mohali, 17 November.

USE RADIO

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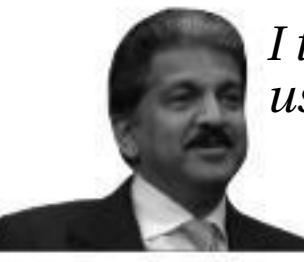
technology which is within the reach of the poor ~ the radio. "The technological infrastructure, though diluted, can be revived and the band-width of the FM channels expanded for it to become a vehicle for imparting education." Re-opening of schools and chances of restoring traditional educational methods being uncertain, the policy makers may consider implementation of Chowdhury's suggestion.

Yours, etc., Sanjan Ghatak,

Narendrapur, 16 November.

ERRANT BEHAVIOUR

SIR, This refers to the editorial 'Sore loser' published today. The errant

*I took some time to explore the contours of this initiative. I don't use the term 'game-changer' too often but it's apt in this case*ANAND MAHINDRA
MAHINDRA GROUP CHAIRMAN

THUMBNAILS

M&M to manufacture K2 tractor series in T'gana: Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd (M&M) on Tuesday said it will manufacture its new tractor series K2 exclusively at its Zaheerabad facility in Telangana, where it will bring incremental investments of Rs 100 crore and double employment in the plant by 2024.

Agri ministry seeks DCCA nod for taking images: The agriculture ministry has sought civil aviation regulator DCCA's nod for allowing shortlisted private agencies operate drones to capture images of rice fields in 100 districts to assess crop yields at gram panchayat level under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), according to a senior government official. This is the second year the ministry has hired private agencies for a pilot study of unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) based remote sensing data collection in agricultural areas of 100 districts for assessing gram panchayat level under the PMFBY.

Tupperware launches new store in Gurugram: Tupperware, one of the leading home and kitchenware manufacturers, launched its third brand store in Gurugram, Haryana to strengthen its footprint in northern India. With this launch, the national count of Tupperware outlets reaches a figure of 71 with this being the brand's first retail kiosk in Gurugram, according to a Press release statement.

Tata Steel's Netherlands operation sale: The due diligence process for the sale of Tata Steel's Netherlands operations will complete in the next two months, its Executive Director and CFO Koushik Chatterjee said on Tuesday. In Europe, Tata Steel is in talks with Swedish steelmaker SSAB on the potential sale of its Netherlands business, including IJmuiden steel-works.

ONGC inks deals for 7 blocks; Oil India signs up for 4 blocks

Pradhan wanted explorers to expedite the hunt for oil and gas to make the nation self-reliant in energy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 17 NOVEMBER

State-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC) on Tuesday signed contracts for seven oil and gas blocks it had won in the latest bid round that saw scant participation from the private sector.

Oil India Ltd signed up for the remaining four blocks awarded under the fifth bid round of Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP).

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said with the latest bid round, the government has in the last four years awarded 1.56 lakh square kilometre of acreage for finding and producing oil and gas.

This compares to 90,000 sq km of area awarded in nine rounds of New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) and pre-NELP awards in the previous two decades. He, however, wanted explorers to expedite the hunt for oil and gas to make the nation self-reliant in energy. "You have to



exponentially speed up," he said. Red-tape and multiple permissions needed for exploring and producing oil and gas have in the past led to several slippages in the committed timelines. "Tell us, if you need more help," Pradhan said asking explorers to give suggestions on improving the regulatory environment. "Business as usual cannot work." The minister also wanted the data repository set up by his ministry's upstream nodal agency, the Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH), to be

remodelled on lines of the National Geoscience Data Repository (NGDR) of the mines ministry. He wanted the data repository, which houses geological data of Indian sedimentary basins, to become an independent profit centre. The NGDR is a public-private initiative for all non-coal and non-fuel resources. The government had offered 11 blocks for exploration and production of oil and gas in OALP-VA total of 12 bids, including seven bids by ONGC and four by Oil, were

received for the 11 blocks on offer at the close of bidding on June 30. Invenire Petrodyne Ltd was the only private bidder for one block. While ONGC was the sole bidder for six blocks, Oil was the lone bidder in all the four blocks it bid for. ONGC won all six blocks where it was the sole bidder and also the one block where Invenire Petrodyne had bid. The previous bid round, OALP-IV, too had seen just eight bids coming in for seven blocks on offer. ONGC had walked away with all the seven

oil and gas blocks on offer. Prior to OALP-V, the government had awarded 94 blocks in four OALP bid rounds since 2017. These 94 blocks cover an exploratory area of about 1,36,790 sq km over 16 sedimentary basins.

In the latest bid round, about 19,800 sq km of the area was offered for bidding, he said.

At the time of the launch of OALP-V, DGH had stated that the round is expected to generate immediate exploration work commitment of around USD 400-450 million.

Of the 94 blocks awarded in the first four rounds of OALP, Vedanta has won the maximum at 51. Oil India Ltd has got 21 blocks and ONGC another 17. After OALP-V, ONGC's tally has gone up to 24 and that of Oil to 25. Under OALP, companies are allowed to carve out areas they want to explore oil and gas in. Companies can put in an expression of interest (EoI) for any area throughout the year, but such interests are accumulated thrice in a year. The areas sought are then put on auction.

RBI puts Lakshmi Vilas Bank under moratorium; DBS Bank to acquire debt-ridden lender

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 17 NOVEMBER

The government on Tuesday imposed a 30-day moratorium on Lakshmi Vilas Bank, restricting cash withdrawals at Rs 25,000 per depositor, and simultaneously announced a scheme to merge the cash-strapped lender with DBS India.

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"resources," it said. LVB is the second private sector bank after Yes Bank which has run into rough weather during this year.

In March, capital-starved Yes Bank was placed under a moratorium. The government rescued it by asking state-run SBI to infuse Rs 7,250 crore and take 45 per cent stake in the bank.

The Department of Financial Services, in a gazette notification, said LVB "shall not, without the permission in writing of the Reserve Bank of India, make, in the aggregate, payment to a depositor of a sum exceeding Rs 25,000 lying to his credit, in any savings, current or any other deposit account" during the moratorium period up to December 16, 2020.

DBS Bank India, in a statement, said the proposed amalgamation will provide stability and better prospects to LVB's depositors, customers and employees. "To support the amalgamation, DBS will inject Rs 2,500 crore (SGD 463 million) into DBIL if the scheme is approved. This will be fully funded from DBS' existing

PURE EV to launch e-scooter Etrance Neo



NEW DELHI, 17 NOVEMBER

IIT-Hyderabad incubated startup PURE EV on Tuesday said its high-speed long-range electric scooter Etrance Neo will be launched next month at an ex-showroom price of Rs 75,999. The new model that offers a higher pickup and longer range combined with modern aerodynamics will be launched on December 1, 2020. It comes with a patented battery and in-house technical developments for BTMS (battery thermal management systems) to ensure long life and high performance, the company said in a statement.

The vehicle has faster pickup and longer range. It is being launched mainly targeting youngsters who will find this model very appealing.

Pure EV Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer Rohit Vadera said: "We will launch four projects in the second half of this fiscal, two in Mumbai and one each in Pune and Chennai."

In Mumbai, the company will launch two projects in the mid-premium category comprising 130 units. It will launch two affordable housing projects in Pune and Chennai comprising 430 units and 345 units, respectively.

The company may rope in financial investors if it opts for outright land purchase, he added.

Flipkart Group acquires Scapic to enhance user experience

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 17 NOVEMBER



Walmart-owned Flipkart on Tuesday said it has acquired Bengaluru-based augmented reality company Scapic, a move that will help the e-commerce major enhance its immersive shopping experience capabilities. Through the acquisition of Scapic, the Flipkart Group will acquire a 100 percent stake in the company and welcome onboard a talented team of experienced developers and designers," a statement said. This team will work towards accelerating the company's efforts to provide deeper camera experiences, virtual storefronts and new opportunities for brand advertising on its platform, it added. However, the company did not disclose

the financial details of the transaction. With the pandemic bringing about a change in consumer behaviour and an increase in online adoption, Flipkart has been focusing on enhancing consumer experiences through several investments, including strengthening technology capabilities, the statement said. In addition to providing local language interfaces on its platform for consumers across the country,

our efforts to provide deeper value to our customers."

Flipkart Group CEO Kalyan Krishnamurthy said: Founded in 2017 by Sai Krishna VK and Ajay PV, Scapic is a cloud-based platform which enables creation and publishing of Augmented Reality (AR) and 3D content, currently serving clients across e-commerce and marketing. Earlier this month, Flipkart had acquired Intellectual Property from Mech Mocha to strengthen its gaming strategy and made a strategic investment in USPL - a premium youth-focused fashion firm that operates brands like Wrogn - to strengthen its fashion portfolio. Last month, Flipkart Group had made a Rs 1,500 crore investment in Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Ltd (ABFRL).

Embassy REIT to acquire business park in Bengaluru for ₹9,782 crore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, NOV 17



Embassy Office Parks REIT on Tuesday said it has agreed to acquire a large business park 'Embassy TechVillage' in Bengaluru from realty firm Embassy group, Blackstone and some other investors for Rs 9,782.40 crore.

Embassy REIT is India's first publicly-listed REIT (Real Estate Investment Trust) sponsored by Blackstone and Embassy group. It got listed on stock exchanges last year. In a statement, Embassy REIT said it has "agreed to purchase Embassy TechVillage assets from affiliates of Embassy Sponsor, Blackstone Sponsor and other selling shareholders for a total consideration of Rs 9,782.40 million (USD 1.3 billion)". The pro-

posed deal is subject to unitholders' and regulatory approvals.

The acquisition comprises 6.1 million square feet (msf) of completed area, 3.1 msf of under-construction area, and two proposed 518-keys Hilton hotels. The acquisition will increase Embassy REIT's commercial office portfolio by 28 per cent to 42.4 msf.

TechVillage will mark the addition of another trophy asset to our existing office portfolio, while reinforcing our stable cash flows".

Mike Holland, Chief Executive Officer of Embassy REIT, said, "the proposed accretive acquisition of Embassy

Road sub-market of Bengaluru, with a diversified blue-chip and predominantly multinational occupier base, including JP Morgan, Cisco, Sony and Flipkart, he said.

The acquisition further deepens our presence in Bengaluru, which remains India's strongest office market, and significantly enhances our scale and ability to deliver embedded growth.

"We are delighted to purchase an asset of the quality and scale of Embassy TechVillage at a 4.6 per cent discount to the average of the two independent valuations," Holland said.

Jitendra Virwani, Chairman & Founder of the Embassy Group said, "we are pleased to deliver on our commitment to support the growth of the REIT platform".

Mahindra Lifespace to launch 4 new housing projects by March

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 17 NOVEMBER

Realty firm Mahindra Lifespace Developers Ltd will launch four new housing projects, comprising over 900 units, in Mumbai, Pune and Chennai by March next year as part of its expansion plan for future growth. In an interview with PTI, Mahindra Lifespace MD and CEO Arvind Subramanian said the company's sales booking improved in the second quarter and are likely to be strong on festive demand during the October-December period.

The demand for residential properties has improved post lockdown, which was imposed to curb the spread of COVID-19 pandemic, driven by the salaried class who have a predictable income source, he added. Mahindra Lifespace has achieved

a sales booking of Rs 115 crore in the second quarter and Rs 154 crore during the first six months of this financial year. It collected around Rs 200 crore from customers during the first half.

"We would like to match sales bookings of last financial year," he said. Its sales booking stood at over Rs 800 crore in the 2019-20 financial year. Asked about new launches, Subramanian said: "We will launch four projects in the second half of this fiscal, two in Mumbai and one each in Pune and Chennai".

In Mumbai, the company will launch two projects in the mid-premium category comprising 130 units. It will launch two affordable housing projects in Pune and Chennai comprising 430 units and 345 units, respectively.

The company may rope in financial investors if it opts for outright land purchase, he added.

Only 1% of Crisil-rated non-MSME companies may opt for one-time debt recast

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI, 17 NOVEMBER

With an improvement in economic activities and expectation of recovery in the next fiscal, almost 99 per cent of non-MSME companies are unlikely to opt for the Reserve Bank of India's one-time debt restructuring, says a report by Crisil Ratings.

The finding is based on a preliminary analysis of 3,523 Crisil-rated non-micro, small and medium enterprises, the report said.

In August, the RBI had allowed one-time restructuring for personal loans and for non-MSME corporate borrowers having aggregate exposure of greater than Rs 25 crore and were affected by COVID-19 related stress.

"As many as 99 per cent of companies (excluding MSMEs) rated by Crisil are unlikely to opt for the RBI's one-time debt restructuring (OTDR), a preliminary analysis of 3,523 such non-MSME companies indicates," the report by the rating agency said.

Of the sample, only one per cent indicated that they would apply for a one-time debt recast. This is despite two-thirds of the rated entities being eligible based on the parameters proposed by the KV Kamath Committee set up by the RBI, it said. The rating agency's senior director Subodh Rai said, "Improving business sentiment on account of increased economic activity over the past couple of months, and expectation of a sharp recovery next fiscal are persuading

borrowers to skip OTDR." Another deterrent is the impact on the borrower's long-term credit history accounts of those opting for OTDR would be classified as restructured advances by lenders, which could impact their ability to raise debt in future, he said.

The report said for around 44 per cent of Crisil-rated corporates, more than three-fourths of their debt comprises short-term working capital facilities. So availing of OTDR would have negligible benefits, as the resolution plans under this scheme are focussed on deferring principal repayment of long-term debt, it said.

"Such companies, instead of opting for debt recast, may prefer to seek additional work-

ing capital financing as announced by the RBI under its COVID-19 regulatory package," it said. Early into the lockdown, 968 companies, or nearly 27 per cent of the sample set, had opted for the moratorium allowed by the RBI. As much as 98 per cent of these are not seeking an OTDR.

According to the agency's director Sameer Charania, "The recently announced Emergency Credit Line Guar-

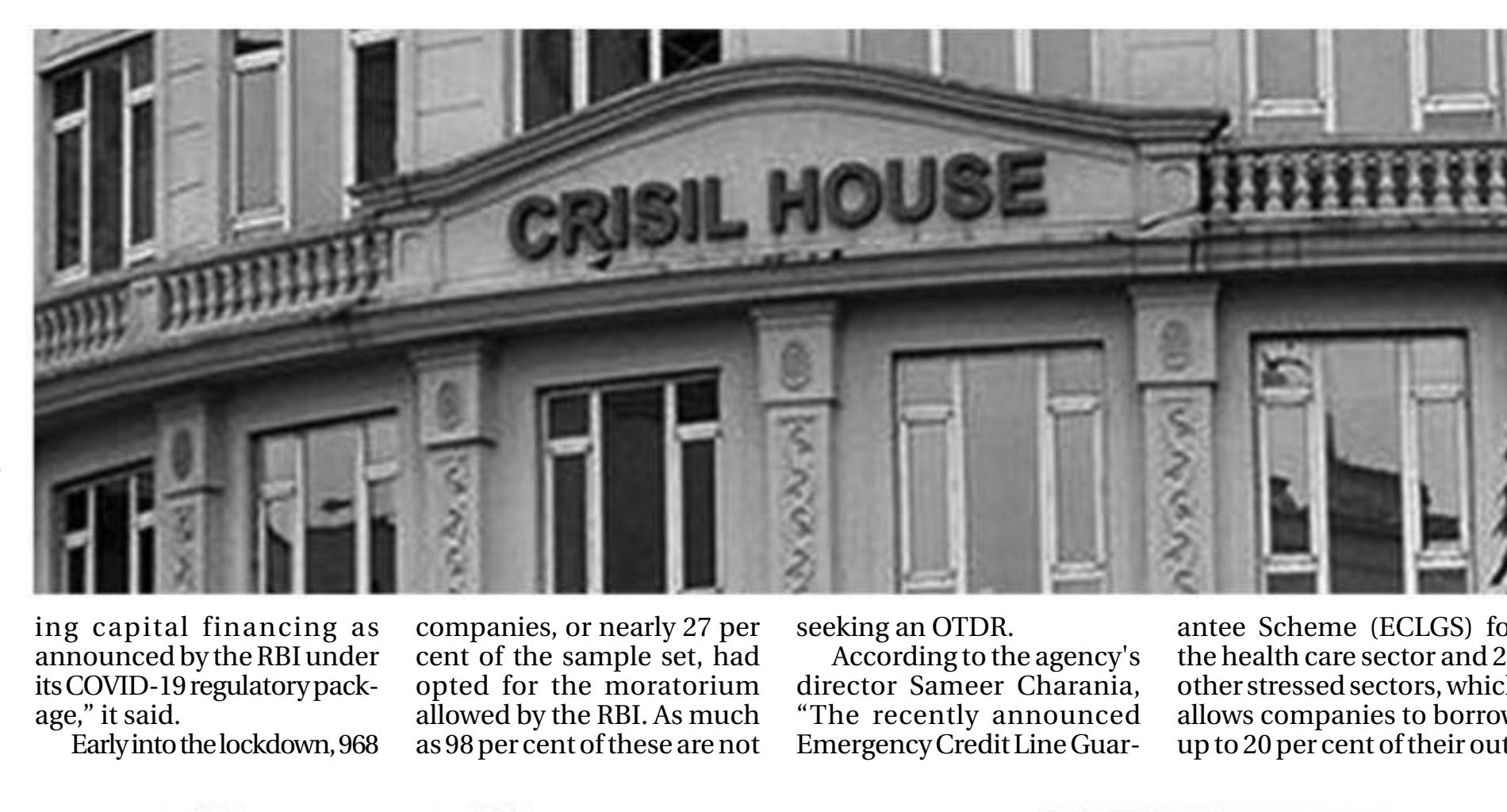
antee Scheme (ECLGS) for the health care sector and 26 other stressed sectors, which allows companies to borrow up to 20 per cent of their out-

standing dues, will further dissuade borrowers -- especially those facing temporary liquidity issues -- from opting for debt recast."

However, companies that belong to highly impacted sectors such as hotels, retail, real estate, and textiles would still prefer OTDR given their longer business-recovery timelines, he added.

The report further said greater clarity will emerge closer to the regulatory deadline of December 31, 2020, set by the RBI for invoking debt restructuring plans.

The number of companies seeking OTDR may increase if sentiment around recovery dampens or COVID-19 affections keep increasing, leading to fresh curbs on economic activity, it added.



We now face a difficult decision. We have been in Afghanistan for almost 20 years. But at the same time, the price for leaving too soon or in an uncoordinated way could be very high

NATO SECRETARY-GENERAL JENS STOLTENBERG

AS US PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP TO WITHDRAW A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF AMERICAN TROOPS FROM AFGHANISTAN

NEW DELHI WEDNESDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2020

09

Ethiopia's PM vows 'final & crucial' offensive in Tigray

Alarmed African neighbors including Uganda and Kenya are calling for a peaceful resolution

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NAIROBI, 17 NOVEMBER



Ethiopia's Prime Minister says the final and crucial military operation will launch in the coming days against the government of the country's rebellious northern Tigray region.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in a social media post on Tuesday said a three-day deadline given to the Tigray region's leaders and special forces has expired today.

Abiy, last year's Nobel Peace Prize winner, continues to reject international pleas for dialogue and de-escalation in the two-week conflict in the Horn of Africa that has spilled into neighboring Eritrea and sent more than 25,000 frightened Ethiopian refugees pouring into Sudan.

Alarmed African neighbors including Uganda and Kenya are calling for a peaceful resolution, but Abiy's gov-

ernment regards the Tigray regional government as illegal after it defiantly held a local election in September. The Tigray regional government objects to the postponement of national elections until next year because of the pandemic and considers Abiy's federal government illegal, saying its mandate has expired.

Ethiopia's federal government on Tuesday also confirmed carrying out new airstrikes outside the Tigray capital of Mekelle, calling them precision-led and surgical and denying the Tigray government's assertion that civilians had been killed.

Communications and transport links with the Tigray

region remain almost completely cut off, making it difficult to verify either side's claims.

"If Tigray is not solved somehow, I don't think the situation of the country will be solved," Mekonnen Gebreslasie Gebrehiwot, who leads an association of ethnic Tigrayans, told The Associated Press from his home in Belgium. On Tuesday, the Nobel committee said in a statement that it is "deeply concerned" about the situation in Ethiopia, and it called for all parties involved to "end the escalating violence." The United States, the African Union, Pope Francis and the United Nations secretary-general all have expressed their deep concern and urged a peaceful resolution. But there is no clear path back to peace in a region that's seen little of it.

"This conflict dashes our hopes for the region," prominent Horn of Africa citizens wrote in a letter circulated late

last week. For much of the world, Abiy's transformation from peacemaker to war-wager was as swift as his rise to power.

But for months, human rights groups had warned that Abiy's administration was beginning to embrace the repressive ways of the past, including locking up critics and shutting off the internet.

Even as the Nobel committee awarded Abiy last year, it defended its choice. "No doubt some people will think this year's prize is being awarded too early," it said, noting "troubling examples" of ethnic violence. But it believed "it is now that Abiy Ahmed's efforts deserve recognition and need encouragement."

For many, Abiy represented a welcome break from the past when he rose to power in one of Africa's most powerful countries, a key U.S. security ally in the strategic Horn of Africa.

His government welcomed opposition figures home from exile, and released others from prison, including some who had been sentenced to death. He swept through the region, brokering peace, and toured the United States to excited diaspora crowds.

He was seen by many as a unifier, the son of a Christian and Muslim and of mixed ethnic heritage.

He surprised Ethiopians by apologizing for the government's past abuses. He appeared to be drawing from his painful past. In his Nobel address, the former soldier recalled his fighting experience on the Eritrean border two decades ago. "War is the epitome of hell for all involved," he said.

But for some, it was hard to miss a warning amid his calls for unity in Ethiopia, where some ethnic groups have pushed hard for more autonomy, sometimes with violence.

Pompeo meets Turkey's Orthodox spiritual leader

ISTANBUL, 17 NOVEMBER

US State Secretary Mike Pompeo met Tuesday with the Istanbul-based spiritual leader of the world's Orthodox Christians during a short trip to Turkey that has raised the ire of Turkish officials and includes no meetings with any of them.

Pompeo, tweeted pictures of him being greeted by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, the leader of some 300 million Orthodox Christians, after being shown around the Patriarchate. He was also scheduled to meet with the apostolic nuncio to Turkey, Archbishop Paul Russell.

The talks were to centre on religious freedoms in Turkey, which has angered Ankara and prompted officials to call on Washington to focus on human rights violations in the United States.

Last week, Turkey issued a sharply-worded statement criticising Pompeo's plans and said Washington should look at the mirror and deal with issues such as racism, Islamophobia and hate crimes.

But the talks went ahead, and Pompeo on Tuesday tweeted that as leader of the Orthodox world Bartholomew is a key partner as we continue to champion religious freedom around the globe. AP

Peru selects centrist lawmaker to be new leader

ASSOCIATED PRESS
LIMA (PERU), 17 NOVEMBER



Peru's political crisis appeared on the verge of resolution Monday as Congress cleared the way for an elder statesman and consensus candidate to become the country's third president in a week.

Jubilant people waved the nation's red-and-white flag and blared horns on the streets of Peru's capital as Francisco Sagasti of the centrist Purple Party was selected as the new president of Congress. The 76-year-old engineer has not yet been sworn in office, but as head of Congress becomes the nation's chief of state by default. Peru currently has no president or vice president, making him next in line. It will now fall on Sagasti to heal a

nation bruised by a week of upheaval. What's at stake is taking a first step toward rebuilding confidence between the people and the state, said Samuel Rotta, president of the Peruvian chapter of Transparency International.

Applause erupted in the legislative palace as Sagasti clinched the required majority vote. A respected academic, he has also spent decades consulting government institutions and held a post at the

World Bank. Shortly after the vote, he took an oath to become Congress' president.

We will do everything possible to return hope to the people and show them they can trust us in, he said in his first remarks. Many in the Latin American nation are hopeful Sagasti's appointment will mark the end of a tumultuous week in which thousands took to the streets outraged by Congress' decision to oust popular ex-President Martn Vizcarra.

During the upheaval, two young men died and dozens were injured. Peru also spent more than 24 hours with no designated chief of state.

Sagasti could steer the country back toward stability because he is in a position to win the support of both

Congress and demonstrators. He and his Purple Party bloc were among just 19 of 130 lawmakers to vote against Vizcarra's removal. That will earn him credibility among protesters who condemned the ouster as a power grab. Unlike Vizcarra, he also has a party in Congress representing him.

Sagasti is someone who inspired confidence among a lot of people, said Jo-Marie Burt, a senior fellow with the Washington Office on Latin America.

Peru has much on the line. The country is in the throes of one of the world's most lethal coronavirus outbreaks and political analysts say the constitutional crisis cast the country's democracy into jeopardy.

Australia, Japan to bolster defence ties amid China's rise

ASSOCIATED PRESS
TOKYO, 17 NOVEMBER

framework to allow their troops to visit each other's countries and conduct training and joint operations.

Morrison and Suga are to hold talks later Tuesday and may conclude the deal. They are also expected to discuss the coronavirus and the economy, Japanese officials said.

If signed, it will be Japan's first such agreement since the 1960 status of forces agreement with the United States, which set bases for about 50,000 American troops to

operate in and around Japan under the Japan-US security pact. Japan is committed to maintain and deepen its 60-year-old alliance with the US as the cornerstone of Japanese diplomacy and security, but has in recent years sought to complement its regional defence by stepping up cooperation with others, especially Australia, amid China's growing maritime activity that has spread from the East and South China seas and beyond. Japan still sticks to self-

defence and bans first strikes under its postwar pacifist constitution, but has bolstered its defence role and spending under former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

Abe pushed Japan's military cooperation and weapons compatibility with the US as it increasingly works alongside US troops and bolstered purchases of costly American stealth fighters and other arsenals.

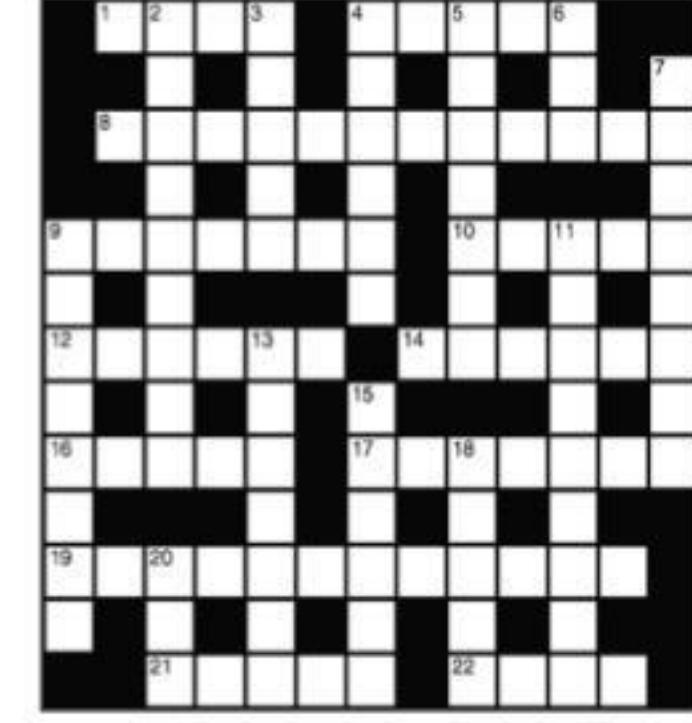
Suga, who took office in mid-September after Abe

resigned due to ill health problems, is carrying on his predecessor's diplomatic and security policies.

Japan considers Australia as a semi-ally and the two countries signed a defence cooperation agreement in 2007, a first for Japan other than the US. The two countries agreed on the sharing of military supplies in 2013, expanding it in 2017 to include munitions after Japan eased restrictions on arms equipment transfers.

LEISURE

10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS	DOWN
1 Person who colours cloth (4)	2 Standard of comparison (9)
4 Arm joint (5)	3 Duplicate from a stencil (5)
8 Horror film character (12)	4 Marine molluscs (6)
9 Clerical vestment (7)	5 Immediate (7)
10 Warn (5)	6 Neckwear item (3)
12 Restrain (4,2)	7 Woolen items (8)
14 Hit (6)	9 Shell (8)
16 Card game (5)	11 Get rid of (9)
17 Coal miner (7)	13 Incursions (5)
19 Ship's staircase (12)	15 Busy (6)
21 Pour fat over (5)	18 Jousting weapon (5)
22 Pitcher (4)	20 Unruly crowd (3)

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

BEETLE BAILEY/Mort Walker



RED EYE/Bill Yates & Mel Casson



DADDY DAZE/John Kovaleski



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25656421/25656431 Reservation 41528181

Air Canada Flight Inquiry and Reservation 23466262 (City)

Kuwait Airways Flight Inquiry and Reservation 23354373

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Rajasthan Roadways 25671576, 18001803838

JET AIRWAYS Flight Inquiry and Reservation 3984111

EMIRATES Flight Inquiry and Reservation 3773377

PORTS

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Rajasthan Roadways 25671576, 18001803838

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RAILWAYS

Port 01



More than anything, though, my fascination with India had to do with Mahatma Gandhi. As a young man, I'd studied his writings and found him giving voice to some of my deepest instincts

FORMER US PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA

IN HIS BOOK "A PROMISED LAND"

WEATHER

CITY	MAX	MIN
SINGAPORE	29°C	25°C H
HONG KONG	26°C	20°C H
TOKYO	18°C	12°C CL
LONDON	17°C	9°C S
DUBAI	30°C	25°C S
SAN FRANCISCO	13°C	04°C C H
NEW YORK	10°C	07°C S
MOSCOW	16°C	09°C H

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

THUMBNAILS



Two police officers guard an entry point on empty Red Square in Moscow on Tuesday. AP

Gas explosion in Mexico: A double-tanker truck carrying liquified cooking gas lost control and flipped on a highway in western Mexico, caught fire and exploded, killing at least a dozen people in nearby vehicles Monday, authorities said. The truck's driver also apparently died. AP

Danish govt to cull mink: The Danish government said that there was now a parliamentary majority behind a decision to cull 15 million minks over concerns about a mutated version of the virus that has spread among the animals. The government had announced it despite not having the right to order the killing of healthy animals. AP

Pentagon says it shot down unarmed missile in sea-based test

WASHINGTON, 17 NOVEMBER

In a first for the Pentagon's push to develop defenses against intercontinental-range ballistic missiles capable of striking the United States, a missile interceptor launched from a U.S. Navy ship at sea hit and destroyed a mock ICBM in flight on Tuesday, officials said.

Previous tests against ICBM targets had used interceptors launched from underground silos in the United States. If further, more challenging tests prove successful, the ship-based approach could add to the credibility and reliability of the Pentagon's existing missile defense system.

The success of Tuesday's test is likely to draw particular interest from North Korea, whose development of intercontinental-range ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons is the main reason the Pentagon has sought to accelerate its building of missile defense systems over the past decade.

North Korea has recently refrained from flight tests of ballistic missiles of intercontinental range and has not continued its nuclear testing. But the intentions of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un are uncertain as President-elect Joe Biden prepares to take office, succeeding President Donald Trump.

Although the current U.S. approach to missile defense is designed to protect the U.S. homeland against an ICBM fired from North Korea, both Russia and China have expressed concern that the U.S. could use its missile defenses to undercut the deterrent value of their nuclear forces, which are larger than those of North Korea.

Missile defense has long been a sticking point in U.S. arms control talks with Russia. Navy Vice Adm. Jon Hill, director of the Pentagon's Missile Defense Agency, which conducted Tuesday's test, called the result an incredible accomplishment and critical milestone for the program. The test had been planned for last spring but was delayed because of restrictions related to the coronavirus pandemic. AP

'More people may die as Trump transition stalls'

Infection rate has reached new heights in recent days, surpassing 160,000 cases in one day



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WASHINGTON, 17 NOVEMBER

President-elect Joe Biden has warned that many more Americans "may die" if incumbent President Donald Trump does not cooperate with the transition process and hamper the incoming administration's ability to tackle the deadly coronavirus pandemic.

According to media projections, Democrat Biden has won the November 3 presidential election. Biden has 306 votes in the electoral college, surpassing the 270 threshold needed to win.

However, Trump, a Republican, has not conceded and instead alleged election fraud without presenting any significant evidence. The Trump campaign has also mounted legal fights in a number of battleground states where he lost.

"More people may die if we don't coordinate," Biden said in his home state of Delaware on Monday, responding to a question on President Trump refusing to concede the election and the outgoing administration not co-operating in the transition process.

The US government agency that launches transition process - the General Services Administration (GSA), headed by a Trump appointee - has yet to recognise Biden and his running mate Kamala Harris as winners.

The Trump-appointed administrator of the General Services Administration has so far refused to take the legally necessary step to begin the transition process, which would give Biden's team a budget, intelligence briefings and access to federal agencies.

A vaccine is important. It's of little use until you're vaccinated. So, how do we get the vaccine, how do we get over 300 million Americans vaccinated? What's the game plan? It's a huge, huge, huge undertaking to get it done, prioritise those greatest in need and working our way through, and also cooperate with the World Health Organization and the rest of the world in dealing with this, he said.

So they (Trump administration) say they have this 'Warp Speed' programme that not only dealt with getting vaccines, but also how to distribute this. The number of Covid infections in the US

has reached new heights in recent days, surpassing 160,000 cases in one day for the first time since the outbreak began.

More than 247,000 people have died in the US due to the disease.

Dr Anthony Fauci, the top US infectious diseases expert, has warned that the country faces "a very challenging and ominous situation" as it approaches winter.

He called Trump's refusal to acknowledge he lost the election, despite calls to do so from both sides, "totally irresponsible".

The President-elect said that he is having a lot of meetings with world leaders on the telephone and he can get into negotiations with them about things that are going to be done. They are calling with some degree of enthusiasm everyone from a holy father to prime ministers across the globe.

So we are moving along knowing what the outcome will be and I find this more embarrassing for the country than debilitating for my ability to get started, Biden said.

Head of govt agency under pressure to let transition proceed

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, 17 NOVEMBER

The head of an obscure federal agency that is holding up the presidential transition knew well before Election Day that she might soon have a messy situation on her hands.

Prior to November 3, Emily Murphy, the head of the General Services Administration, held a Zoom call with Dave Barram, 77, the man who was in her shoes 20 years earlier.

The conversation, set up by mutual friends, was a chance for Barram to tell Murphy a little about his tortuous experience with ascertaining the task of determining the expected winner of the presidential election, which launches the official transition process.

Barram led the GSA during the 2000 White House race between Republican George W. Bush and Democrat Al Gore, which was decided by a few hundred votes in Florida after the U.S. Supreme Court weighed in more than a month after Election Day.

I told her, 'I'm looking at you and I can tell you want to do the right thing,' recalled Barram, who declined to reveal any details of what Murphy told him. I'll tell you what my mother told me: If you do the right thing, then all you have to do is live with the consequences of it.' It's been 10 days since President-elect Joe Biden crossed the 270 electoral vote mark to

defeat President Donald Trump and win the presidency. Unlike the 2000 election, when the winner of the election was truly unknown for weeks, this time it is clear that Biden won, although Trump is refusing to concede.

But Murphy has yet to certify Biden as the winner, stalling the launch of the official transition process. When she does ascertain that Biden won, it will free up money for the transition and clear the way for Biden's team to begin placing transition personnel at federal agencies.

Trump administration officials also say they will not give Biden the classified presidential daily briefing on intelligence matters until the GSA makes the ascertainment official.

Murphy declined to be interviewed for this article. A GSA spokesperson, who refused to be identified by name because of the sensitivity of the matter, confirmed that Murphy and Barram spoke prior to the election about his experience in the close 2000 election.

The White House has not said whether there have been conversations about ascertainment between officials there and at GSA.

Murphy, 47, leads a 12,000-person agency tasked with managing the government's real estate portfolio and serving as its global supply chain manager. Before last week, she was hardly a household name in politics.

"The idea the President is still playing golf and not doing anything about it is beyond my comprehension," Biden said. Biden also criticised Trump for failing to work with Congress to negotiate a measure to aid businesses and unemployed Americans as the pandemic rages heading into the winter.

He called Trump's refusal to acknowledge he lost the election, despite calls to do so from both sides, "totally irresponsible".

The President-elect said that he is having a lot of meetings with world leaders on the telephone and he can get into negotiations with them about things that are going to be done. They are calling with some degree of enthusiasm everyone from a holy father to prime ministers across the globe.

Biden will coordination is important "now, or as rapidly as we can get that done," and said that "it would make it a lot easier if the President were to participate."

"I am hopeful that the President will be mildly more enlightened before we get to 20 January," he said.

Biden filling out top WH team with campaign vets

ATLANTA, 17 NOVEMBER

President elect Joe Biden is drawing from the senior ranks of his campaign to fill out an increasingly diverse White House leadership team.

People familiar with Biden's initial decisions confirmed Monday that former campaign manager Jen O'Malley Dillon will serve as a deputy chief of staff, while campaign co-chair Louisiana Rep. Cedric Richmond and campaign adviser Steve Ricchetti will play senior roles in the new administration.

Richmond will leave his Louisiana congressional seat to fill the White House job.

Murphy declined to be interviewed for this article. A GSA spokesperson, who refused to be identified by name because of the sensitivity of the matter, confirmed that Murphy and Barram spoke prior to the election about his experience in the close 2000 election.

The new hires represent an initial wave of what will ultimately be hundreds of new White House aides hired in the coming weeks as Biden builds out an administration to execute his governing vision. The Democrat will be inaugurated on January 20.

Late last week, Biden tapped former senior campaign adviser Ron Klain to serve as his chief of staff.

O'Malley Dillon, 44, was the first woman to manage a successful Democratic presidential campaign. She is a veteran political operative who worked on both of former President Barack Obama's White House bids. Ricchetti worked as lobbyist for the health care industry, among others, before becoming Biden's chief of staff during the Obama administration.

Biden's campaign was staffed with many alumni from Obama world and his administration is expected to be as well. Less clear is the shape of his Cabinet, which will be subject to Senate confirmation. Since winning the election earlier this month, the president-elect has been hunkered down with Vice President-elect Kamala Harris near his home in Delaware preparing for the business of governing.

Biden will begin rolling out his higher-profile Cabinet picks in the coming weeks. Richmond, a 47-year-old African American, will take on a public engagement role in the Biden administration that will allow him to deal with Congress along with a focus on the Black community and other minority groups. AP

Facebook, Twitter CEOs to be pressed on election handling

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, 16 NOVEMBER

The CEOs of Facebook and Twitter are being summoned before Congress to defend their handling of disinformation in the 2020 presidential election, even as lawmakers questioning them are deeply divided over the election's integrity and results.

Prominent Republican senators have refused to knock down President Donald Trump's unfounded claims of voting irregularities and fraud, even as misinformation disputing Democrat Joe Biden's victory has flourished online.

Sen Lindsey Graham, a close Trump ally who heads the Senate Judiciary Committee where the CEOs will testify Tuesday, has publicly urged, Do not concede, Mr. President. Fight hard.

Both Zuckerberg and Dorsey promised lawmakers last month that they would aggressively guard their platforms from being manipulated by foreign governments or used to incite violence around the election results and they followed through with high-profile steps that angered Trump and his supporters.

The new hires represent an initial wave of what will ultimately be hundreds of new White House aides hired in the coming weeks as Biden builds out an administration to execute his governing vision. The Democrat will be inaugurated on January 20.

Facebook also moved two days after the election to ban a large group called Stop the Steal that Trump supporters were using to organize protests against the vote count. The 350,000-member group echoed Trump's baseless allegations of a rigged election rendering the results invalid.

It was just one of several similar groups that popped up as the vote counting went

15 Democratic senators ask Facebook to take action to combat anti-Muslim bigotry

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WASHINGTON, 16 NOVEMBER

the Uyghurs in China and other human rights violations against this population, that Facebook and WhatsApp have been used to incite violence against Muslims in India, and that Facebook has been used to promote hate and violence in other areas around the world, the Senators wrote in the letter to Zuckerberg.

Advocacy groups similarly detailed the extent and persistence of anti-Muslim hate content on Facebook India in multiple reports last year, concerns that have been amplified by recent allegations that some high-ranking employees at Facebook India have enabled hate speech against Muslims and others by applying the platform's content moderation policies in a selective manner, wrote the Senators.

Of particular concern is how Facebook has addressed the targeting of mosques and Muslim community events by armed protesters through the platform, said the letter, which was signed by Richard Blumenthal, Mazie Hirono, Dick Durbin, Mark Warner, Robert Menendez, Patrick Leahy, Ben Cardin, Michael Bennet, Gary Peters, Amy Klobuchar, Kirsten Gillibrand, Elizabeth Warren, Chris Murphy, and Bernie Sanders.

on. A copycat Stop the Steal group grew steadily, nearing 12,000 members as of last week, and others were easily searchable on Facebook.

STAYING POSITIVE



A woman wearing a face mask walks past a poster in London, on Tuesday. IANS

SpaceX capsule with four astronauts reaches space station

ASSOCIATED PRESS
CAPE CANAVERAL, 17 NOVEMBER

a new mechanism that links EU funding to the rule of law.

Amid the second wave, the money - which includes billions in support for Hungary and Poland - is crucial for many EU nations whose economies have been ravaged by the deadly virus and the lockdowns put in place to slow the pace of contaminations. The new budget is meant to take effect on Jan. 1.

I ask everyone in the EU to live up to their responsibility," Roth said. It's not the time for vetoes, but for acting swiftly and in the spirit of solidarity. Our people would pay a very high price of a blockade." In Warsaw and Budapest, right-wing governments are adamantly opposed to the rule of law mechanism that could cause them to lose EU money if they continue with policies seen as eroding democratic standards.

On Monday, ambassadors voted by a qualified majority - around two-thirds - in favour of the rule of law mechanism, but Poland and Hungary then blocked the procedure for the adoption of a mechanism allowing the EU to borrow money for the recovery.

and eventually Boeing transporting astronauts to and from the station for NASA.

This regular taxi service got underway with Sunday night's launch. Hopkins and his crew Victor Glover, Shannon Walker and Japan's Soichi Noguchi join two Russians and one American who flew to the space station last month from Kazakhstan. Glover is the first African-American to move in for a long haul. A space newcomer, Glover was presented with his gold astronaut pin Monday.

"Oh, what a good voice to hear," space station astronaut Kate Rubins called out when the Dragon's commander, Mike Hopkins, first made radio contact. "We can't wait to have you on board," she added after the two spacecraft were latched together.

This is the second astronaut mission for SpaceX. But it's the first time Elon Musk's company delivered a crew for a half-year station stay. The two-pilot test flight earlier this year lasted two months. The three Americans and one Japanese astronaut will remain at the orbiting lab until their replacements arrive on another Dragon in April. And so it will go, with SpaceX

Putin: Sputnik V could be produced in India & China



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MOSCOW, 17 NOVEMBER

President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday called for a joint effort by the BRICS countries on the development of the coronavirus vaccines as he suggested that Russia's Sputnik V vaccine against Covid could be produced in China and India, which are members of the five-nation bloc.

Putin said that Russia's Sputnik V vaccine that was registered in August could be produced in China and India, both members of the BRICS, Sputnik news reported. The Russian Direct Investment Fund has reached agreements with its Brazilian and Indian partners on conducting clinical trials of the Sputnik V vaccine, it has also reached an agreement with pharmaceutical companies in China and India to launch production in these countries, not just to cover their needs, but for third countries as well," Putin said.

The summit, hosted by

Ji Jinping, Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa.

Putin said that Russia's Sputnik V vaccine that was registered in August could be produced in China and India, both members of the BRICS, Sputnik news reported.

Europa glows at night

It could tell us what there is on the surface of Jupiter's moon

S ANANTHANARAYANAN

The first satellites of planets in the Solar System to be seen were the four moons of Jupiter, which Galileo spotted through his telescope in 1610. And the smallest of the four, slightly smaller than Earth's Moon, is Europa.

Europa displays a surface which is the smoothest of the known solid objects in the Solar System. The smoothness suggests that below the surface, there is an ocean of liquid water, kept liquid by internal heat and tidal flexing. This, and the high oxygen content of the thin atmosphere, makes Europa a strong candidate as a host of extra-terrestrial life.

The surface of Europa, however, is battered by intense radiation, which was thought to prevent the survival of any life-form till deep below the surface. While there are studies to say that life could exist at a depth of just a centimetre, there is now a paper in the journal, *Nature Astronomy*, that puts a different slant on the onslaught of radiation. Murthy S Gudipati, Bryana L Henderson and Fred B Bateman, from NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Pasadena and the National Institute of Standards and Technology, Gaithersburg, Maryland, write that the radiation would affect the salt and ice on the surface to give off a greenish glow, which could help sensitive analysis of its composition. Bombardment of pieces of material with radiation, for analysis, is standard laboratory technique. It would appear that we could carry out these studies of the material on Europa without the need to go there and fetch samples.

The reason for the radiation that strikes Europa is the strong magnetic field of the parent planet, Jupiter. Jupiter's magnetic field is 14 times stronger than Earth's and the planet has a rotation period of nine hours. The strong and rapidly changing magnetic field reacts with the *solar wind*—charged particles, mainly electrons, protons and alpha particles, that stream forth from the Sun. These, along with the rich outpouring of charged particles from Io, Jupiter's volcanic moon, create a rotating ring. The influence of the radiation, which is called the magnetosphere of Jupiter, extends seven million kilometres towards the Sun and another seven million kilometres, almost to the orbit of Saturn in the opposite direction. This is the largest magnetosphere in the Solar System and its existence was first inferred from strong radio signals that come from Jupiter, as a rotating radio beacon.

The result is that the moons of Jupiter (there are 79 in all) are blasted with radiation. In fact, even spacecraft that were sent near Jupiter and to fly past Europa needed special shielding and could remain in the radiation only for short periods.

The paper in *Nature Astronomy* observes that the radiation that strikes the surface of Europa, which is essentially made of silicate rock and covered by a crust of water-ice, could create energy-rich chemicals at the surface. These, if transported down to the ocean below the sur-



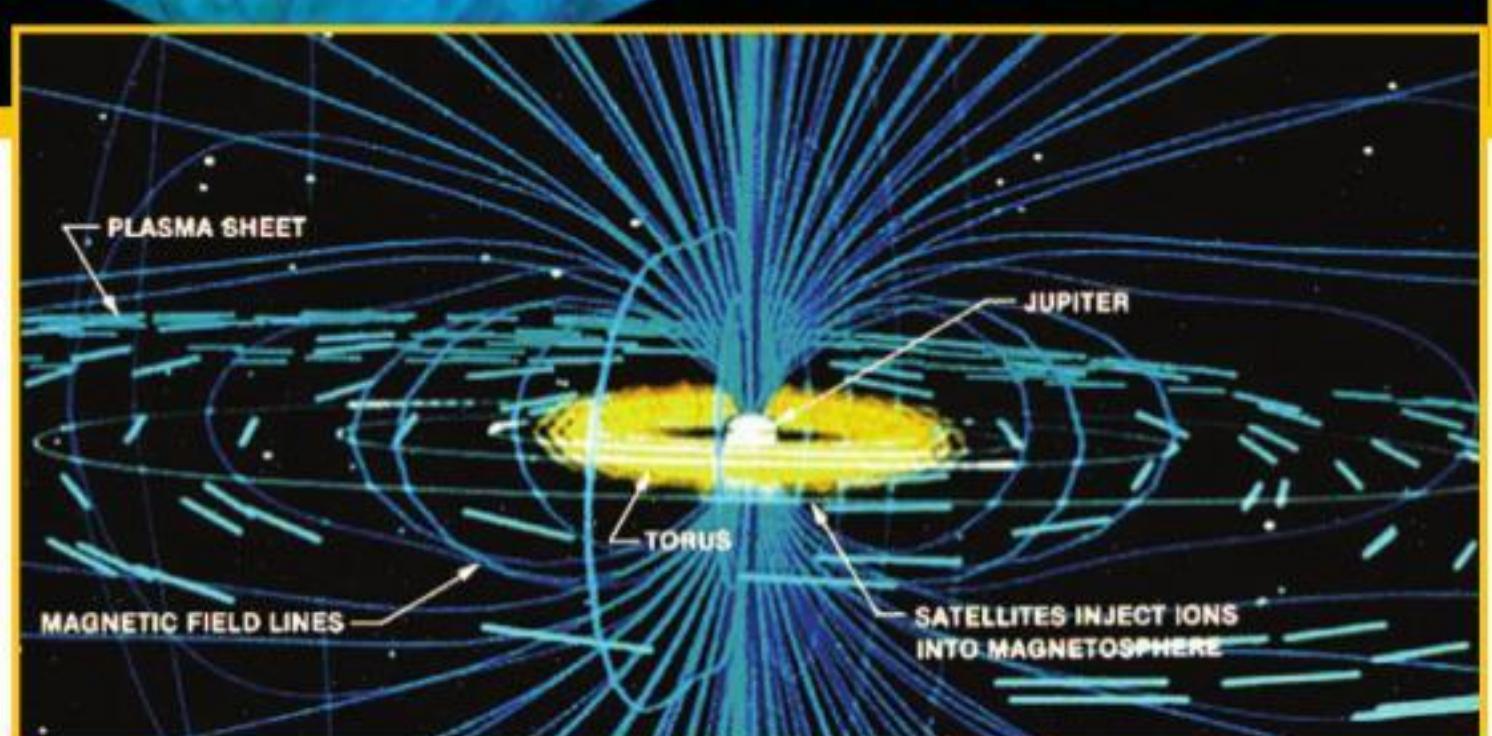
IT IS NOT REFLECTED LIGHT

It is not unusual to analyse reflected light, for instance the light that comes to us from the planets, to identify the elements in the planet's atmosphere, through which the light has passed. This is even done with starlight which passes through the atmosphere of a heavenly body that is just about to block the star from view.

In the case of Europa, the glow that we see is not reflected light. What shines on Europa is not light, but high energy radiation of charged particles—electrons, protons and alpha particles. These cause the elements on the surface of Europa to emit light, which could help us understand what these elements are. As for the atmosphere, there is none to speak of on Europa. And not a bad thing, as the glow at the surface can be viewed with less scattering.

face, could promote chemical reactions, which, in turn, could support life processes. In this context, the paper says, it is important to understand the chemical constituents of Europa's surface, particularly, sodium and magnesium, and chloride, carbonate and sulphate ions, which would help assess the salinity of the water ocean and the nature of the interaction between the ocean and the surface.

The major moons of Jupiter, including Europa, have been extensively studied with the help of several conventional tools. These include telescopic observation from Earth and orbiting stations like the Hubble Space Telescope and observations by the *Pioneer* and *Voyager* fly-by spacecraft, the *Galileo* orbiter (to Jupiter) that mapped near infrared emission from Europa over eight years, and *New Horizons*, which flew past on its way to Pluto. And there are more missions planned, including *Europa-Clipper*, to orbit Europa. However, "many salts of interest are relatively featureless in the near infrared spectral region that is typically used for compositional analysis," the paper says. The near IR spectra seen can thus be correlated to many combinations of chemical components. Even observations of the



visible and UV spectra, using the Keck Observatory and the Hubble Space Telescope have not given significant results. "For definitive salt identification, complementary methods are needed," the paper says.

Laboratory studies conducted by the group shows that the *radiation induced ice-glow* can provide this complementary information. The laboratory studies used a piece of equipment built at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, called the Ice Chamber for Europa High-Energy Electron and Radiation-Environment Testing (*ICE-HEART*). Ice cores held in an aluminium tube were cooled down to the temperature of Europa's surface. They were then bombarded with controlled electron beams from the Medical and Industrial Radiation facility at Gaithersburg, in Maryland, US. Electron beams of different energies were used with a large number of ice-core compositions. Any emission from the ice-cores was recorded with all other lighting switched off, to simulate the night-time conditions of the water-ice on Europa.

The trials, building on earlier studies,

showed that electron bombardment of water-ice and salts produced a glow with spectral characteristics that changed according to the salt component. The radiation that bathes the surface of Europa would then produce similar emission. Imaging the glow, from short range, as from the proposed *Europa-Clipper* orbiter, could then provide information about the distribution of saline patches with fresh water-ice, and other characteristics.

The *Europa Instrument Set* aboard the proposed orbiter includes a wide-angle camera and a narrow angle camera, for selective, high resolution imaging. Night-time imaging of the radiation-induced glow could then produce a map of the chemical composition of the Europa surface. The night-time data could be combined with the daytime observations for better identification of the chemical composition and geological features, now of Europa and later of Io, Ganymede and Callisto, the other moons of Jupiter, the paper says.

The writer can be contacted at response@simplescience.in

PLUS POINTS

Puzzle-solvers



Otters are naturally playful and inquisitive animals, but a new study reveals that Asian short-clawed otters actively learn from one another when solving puzzles to get food.

A research team at the University of Exeter in the UK gave groups of otters a variety of different transparent containers, each containing meatballs as bait. These plastic puzzles could be opened by twisting or pulling a particular lid or handle.

The researchers found evidence of "social learning"—as when one otter cracked the puzzle, its closest "friends" quickly figured it out too. The otters saw each puzzle twice, several months apart, and when they came back to it, the researchers found the otters could solve the puzzle 69 per cent faster on average the second time round. They said this suggests the animals have a capacity for long-term memory.

"Asian short-clawed otters are declining in the wild, partly due to overfishing and pollution affecting the crustaceans and small fish they feed on," said lead author Alex Salveros, of the Centre for Ecology and Conservation on Exeter's Penryn Campus in Cornwall. "With that in mind, we wanted to understand more about how they learn and remember information about new food sources. Being able to catch new prey in new ways, and to pass on that knowledge, could be important in terms of conservation."

"Our study is the first to show evidence of social learning and long-term memory in Asian short-clawed otters—which may be good news in terms of their adaptability and future survival."

By building up a picture of the otters' "social networks"—done by examining which otters spent most time together—before presenting them with the puzzles, the researchers were able to see how problem-solving techniques passed through the otter groups.

Senior author Dr Neeltje Boogert said, "We previously found that smooth-coated otters learn from each other. Now that we know Asian short-clawed otters do so as well, we can start investigating how we might transmit critical survival information regarding new foods and predators through wild otter groups more generally."

The Asian small-clawed otter is the world's smallest otter species, and mainly lives in mangrove swamps and freshwater wetlands in South and South-east Asia. The species faces ongoing habitat loss, pollution, and is hunted in some areas. It is listed as "vulnerable" on the IUCN Red List.

The research is published in the journal *Royal Society Open Science*.

—THE INDEPENDENT

Zoologist no more



In a career spanning about 40 years, National University of Singapore professor Dennis Hugh Murphy created some of the earliest maps of Bukit Timah Nature Reserve and the Mandai mangroves. He also had a hand in the development of the Singapore Zoo's Fragile Forest bio-dome, where visitors to this day can get up close with insects and other animals in a rainforest setting.

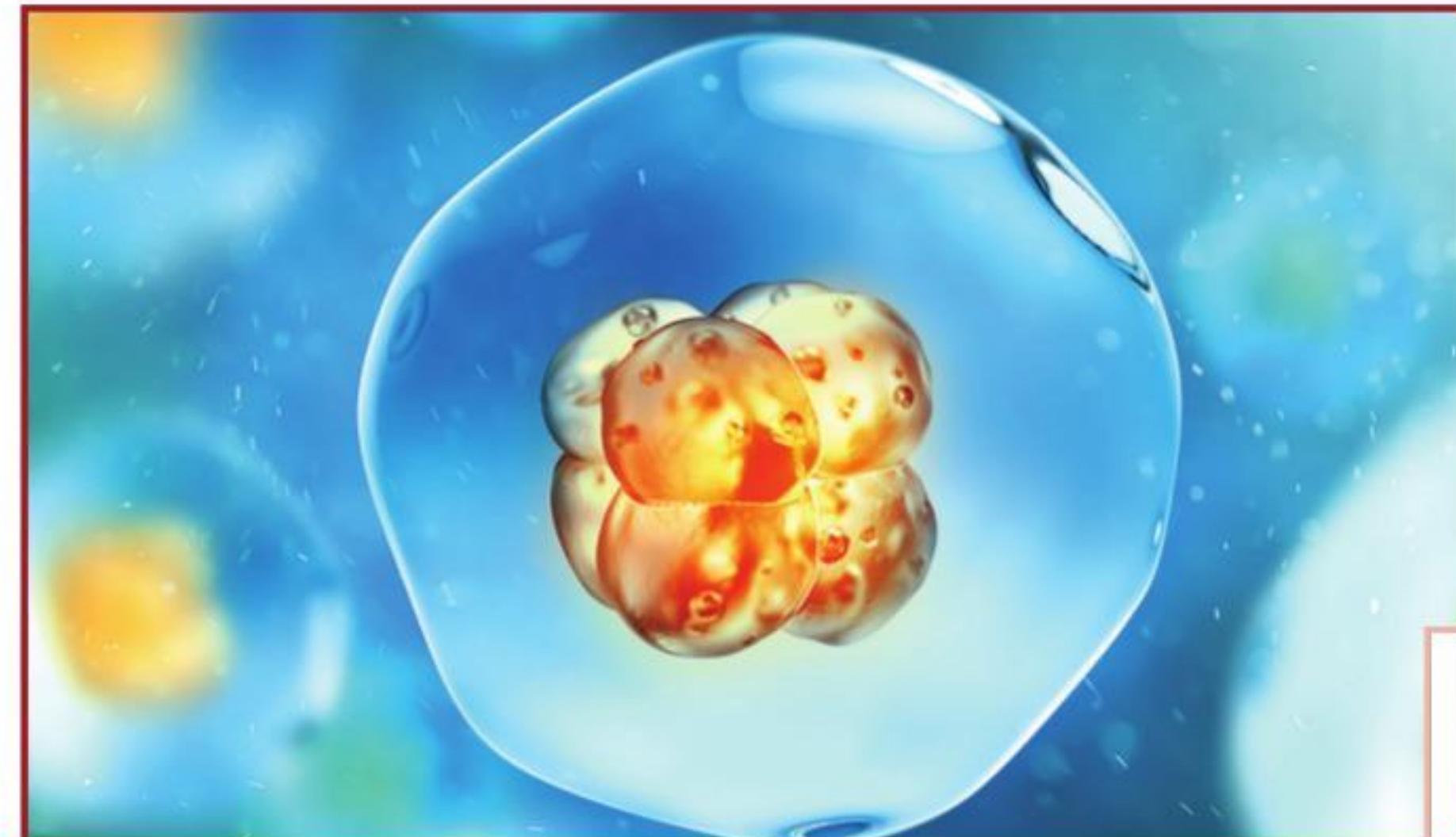
On 7 November, the celebrated British zoologist who mentored a generation of biologists in Singapore died peacefully in a nursing home in Singapore. He was 89.

Murphy, affectionately known as Paddy, first moved to Singapore in 1960 and joined the then Singapore campus of the University of Malaya as a lecturer in its zoology department.

Speaking to The Straits Times, his former students said they have fond memories of a jovial man who was practical yet generous with his time, spontaneous and unorthodox in his perspectives, and humble despite his towering contributions to science.

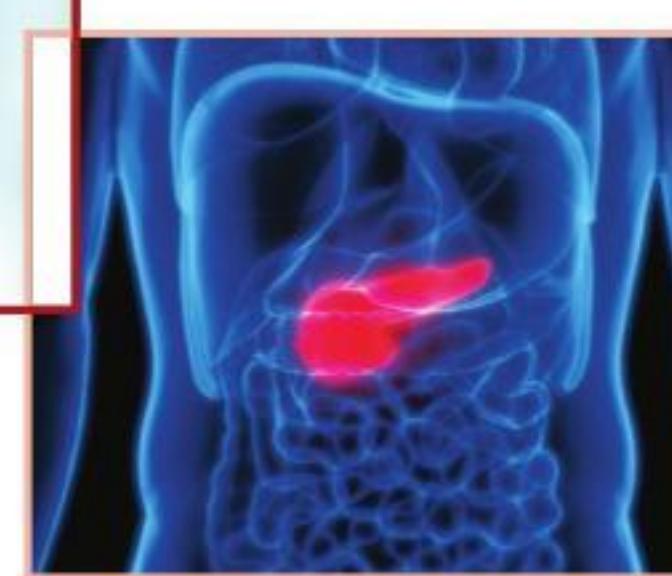
Murphy's key achievements include pioneering work on Singapore's mangrove biodiversity in the 1970s and 80s. Even after his retirement in 1990, he continued to be a fixture at the NUS labs for nearly a decade more. He later served as a consultant to government agencies and various firms in insect identification.

—THE STRAITS TIMES/ANN



HOPE ON THE HORIZON

With it being World Pancreatic Cancer Day tomorrow, a new drug could improve life expectancy and quality for pancreatic cancer patients



TIM SKERRY

Pancreatic cancer is a devastating disease, and most patients die within a few months of diagnosis. This is partly because the early signs of the disease are non-specific, so that intermittent back or abdominal pain, digestive disturbances and weight loss are often seen by patients as too trivial to bother their doctor. The location of the pancreas also makes it challenging to detect. Its position at the back of the abdomen behind other organs makes it hard for doctors to feel during routine examinations. This means that often the disease is advanced and even terminal when it is diagnosed. In addition, pancreatic cancer is also a major cause of cancer deaths because the tumours are difficult to treat.

Many of the new therapies that have made such dramatic improvements in the treatment for other cancer types, such as immunotherapies, have been disappointingly unsuccessful in pancreatic cancer. The result is that pancreatic cancer is rising in the causes of cancer deaths and is expected to become the second highest cause within five years. Current treatments for pancreatic cancer

include surgery or cytotoxic drug cocktails, but neither are without problems.

As many pancreatic cancer patients are over 60, they are often too frail to be considered for the extensive surgery needed to remove affected tissues if the tumour has spread. The cytotoxic drug cocktails are very aggressive, and few patients experience valuable extension of good quality life. There is a pressing need, therefore, for novel treatments for pancreatic cancer.

A group of scientists in the University of Sheffield have made discoveries that suggest new ways to treat pancreatic and other cancers, based on a drug they have invented which blocks one of two types of receptors for the hormone adrenomedullin. AM is important because it controls blood pressure by dilating blood vessels all over the body. If its actions are blocked, blood pressure rises rapidly, and this would be dangerous to patients. However, most tumours secrete AM and it has powerful effects which help tumours to grow and survive.

First, AM signals between tumour cells to increase their growth

rate and lifespan. The AM released from tumours also affects cells in the patient, increasing blood vessel growth to supply oxygen and nutrients to the tumour and helping it to evade host defence mechanisms. This happens because AM alters immune cell responses to tumours so that tumour cells are not killed. Finally, it stimulates the formation of a tough fibrous matrix around tumour cells which makes it hard for drug molecules to get to and kill them.

Together with my colleagues, professor Joe Harrity and Dr Gareth Richards from the University of Sheffield, I have been working on AM for several years. There are two different receptors for the hormone on cells and the AM1 adrenomedullin receptor controls its normal functions in regulating blood pressure, while the AM2 receptor is responsible for functions in cancer. We worked with experts in medicinal chemistry and molecular modelling from industry to develop "first in class" drugs that block the functions of the AM2 receptor, without altering AM1 receptor function. With £5 million of support

from the Wellcome Trust's Seeding Drug Discovery committee, our team designed and made more than 1,000 different molecules in order to identify compounds that are suitable for use as drugs.

The results are very encouraging. Studies of human pancreatic cancer growth in mice suggest that the drugs slow tumour growth dramatically and alter the nature of the tumour mass to make it more susceptible to host defences and other drug treatments. Unlike cytotoxic drugs, these molecules are very specific and appear to have a low likelihood of causing side effects at even high doses.

The University of Sheffield has now formed a spinout company Modulus Oncology, with partners from the Edinburgh-based oncology drug incubator company Cumulus Oncology to take the new compounds forward. Dr Alan Wise and Dr Clare Waring, scientist entrepreneurs from

Cumulus have a long experience of successful drug development. Together with Sheffield scientists and internationally recognised medical experts in cancer treatment and drug development, professors Glen Clack and Andrew Biankin, they lead Modulus Oncology.

Modulus Oncology is seeking investment in order to make enough drugs for legally required safety testing (CTA/IND approval) before embarking on clinical trials in humans. Pancreatic cancer is one of a small number of cancers being considered for the first trials, and in addition to the regulatory approval studies, the company will perform further research to identify specific groups of pancreatic cancer patients who would be most likely to benefit from the AM2 receptor antagonist drugs.

As a "first in class" drug, AM2 receptor antagonists offer a new and potentially important way to treat cancers and extend the lives of patients with pancreatic cancer.

As cases of pancreatic cancer continue to increase worldwide there has never been a more appropriate time for a new treatment. The invention of a new drug molecule is just the first step in a long process, from bench to bedside. However, this new development could lead the way for a treatment for pancreatic cancer patients worldwide.

The writer is professor, department of oncology and metabolism, University of Sheffield, UK, and co-founder and chief scientific officer, Modulus Oncology.

—THE STRAITS TIMES/ANN



For more updates

MATTER OF FACT
Jos Buttler (*photo, left*) has spoken up about the ill-effects of the bio-secure bubble, going on record as saying: "You feel a bit homesick or you feel a bit claustrophobic by not being able to get out and about as you might usually want to," adding: "We'll just have to make sure we are aware of that."

www.thestatesman.com**THUMBNAILS**

Kit sponsor: The Board of Control for Cricket in India on Tuesday announced e-sports platform MPL Sports as the new kit sponsor and official merchandise partner of the national team. MPL Sports has entered into a three-year agreement with the BCCI.

Pathan fights: Irfan Pathan has reached Colombo for the Lanka Premier League which begins on 26 November. The seam bowler said he was looking forward to playing in the tournament. Pathan will represent Kandy Tuskers. The competition ends on 16 December.

Cricket poll: The election of the next chairman of the International Cricket Council could be completed after three rounds of voting if neither of the candidates in the running gets the required number of votes. The relevant meeting of the ICC began on Monday.

Interim board: Facing a threat of sanction by sport minister Nathi Mthethwa, Cricket South Africa's members council has agreed to recognise a nine-member interim board, days after it refused to accept the government-appointed body. The England-Proteas series is saved.

Personal choice: West Indies all-rounder Sherfane Rutherford was recently seen with his Indian Premier League's franchise Mumbai Indians gloves on him while playing for Karachi Kings in the Pakistan Super League. When he arrived at Karachi, he was in his MI shirt.

Race row: Two former umpires, John Holder and Ismail Dawood, have accused the England and Wales Cricket Board of "institutionalised racism," asking for an independent investigation by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, reports the BBC.

Suarez out: Striker Luis Suarez will miss Uruguay's home 2022 World Cup qualifier against Brazil after testing positive for novel coronavirus. Goalkeeper Rodrigo Munoz and a team official were also diagnosed with the virus ahead of Uruguay's clash with Brazil.

African adversity: Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang and his Gabon team-mates were forced to spend the night sleeping on the airport floor ahead of their vital Africa Cup of Nations qualifier against Gambia. The captain used social media to highlight their plight.

Ban reduced: Australian swimmer Shayna Jack, a member of the world record-breaking 4x100m freestyle relay team, on Monday had her doping ban reduced to two years by the Court of Arbitration for Sport with the suspension ending days before the Tokyo Olympics.

Bach's assurance: The International Olympic Committee will cover the cost to vaccinate athletes — who are participating in next summer's Tokyo Olympics — against the novel coronavirus, IOC president Thomas Bach said at a Press conference in Tokyo on Monday.

Virus checks: Sixteen people tested positive for the coronavirus in the latest round of checks on players and club staff in the Premier League. It is the highest number of positive tests recorded in a single week since testing began ahead of the return of football.

Serena inspires: Discovery Plus came up with its latest Emmy nominated sports docu-series that follows the life of former tennis champion, Serena Williams, titled "Being Serena".

Of India, as Steve Waugh saw it

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
SYDNEY, 17 NOVEMBER



Australian great Steve Waugh (*in photo*) has long held a deep affection for India, first touring the country in 1986. But his experiences were all too often fleeting glimpses, before he got the chance to return and photograph everyday cricket in the sport's powerhouse.

Travelling from one ground to the next as a player, and function to function as Australia's captain, Waugh felt he never got properly to see and feel the melting pot of life in the teeming, South Asian nation.

But those small peeks into backstreets and alleyways from Kolkata to Jodhpur never left his mind.

Waugh, one of most successful skippers in cricket history, recalls being overwhelmed by "the absolute and complete bombardment of my senses," and vowed to one day go back when his star was shining a little less brightly.

"It's something that's always been in the back of my mind, I was always fascinated by what I saw out of the bus window."

Now, everyday life, the spirit of the people," Australia's most capped player told AFP in an interview.

"I couldn't comprehend really how important cricket was to the people and how it was almost a religion."

Waugh, 55, put it off for years, until the Australian team were plunged into crisis in 2018 by the ball-tampering scandal in South Africa.

With Australian cricket at a low point, he began planning a "feel-good" project which culminated in an 18-day journey through far-flung parts of India with his camera to capture the essence and simple joys of the game, and raise money for sick children at the same time.

"It was just a fun project. You know, 18 months or so ago people were saying that cricket had lost its soul after what happened in Cape Town," Waugh said. "I just wanted to do a feel-good project that I was passionate about."

Accompanied by a mentor in professional photographer Trent Parke, Waugh set off in January before the coronavirus pandemic changed the world.

His journey took him to the

desert of Rajasthan, the foothills of the Himalayas and the teeming streets of Mumbai, stopping wherever he saw the game being played.

He met cricketing monks, a 100-year-old player, and a three-year-old Instagram batting sensation, while being inspired by blind and physically challenged players.

Old friends like Sachin Tendulkar got involved and the end product was a book -- *The Spirit of Cricket* -- and a documentary due to air ahead of India's limited-overs and Test tour of Australia.

Proceeds will support his work with charities in India and the Steve Waugh Foundation, which raises funds for children with rare diseases, a philanthropic role he has embraced since a meeting decades ago with the late nun and missionary Mother Teresa.

Waugh took about 17,000 photos and had to whittle them down to 220 for the book. It was a memorable trip for Waugh, who had always been interested in photography. He said he hoped the end product would help people better understand what cricket means to Indians.

alian players, including captain Tim Paine (*in photo*), into self-isolation but the country's cricket board said the first Test against India there from 17 December would go ahead as scheduled. A cluster of Covid-19 patients in Adelaide prompted Western Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory to close their borders with South Australia and impose a 14-day hotel quarantine on all visitors from Adelaide from Monday noon.

Pucovski's claim

Fast-rising Australian batsman Will Pucovski says he has "earned the right" to be in the red-ball squad for the series against India and is better prepared to make his Test debut compared with a couple of seasons ago. Pucovski, named in a 17-member extended Australian Test squad for the four-match series against India, made back-to-back double hundreds in the Sheffield Shield.

Despite missing the opening two rounds of the competition, he has scored 495 runs so far this season in three innings and is currently the tournament's highest scorer. "This time it feels like I've earned the right to be here, and I'm pretty pumped to take the challenge on of playing India if I do get the chance," Pucovski said on SEN Radio.

The 22-year-old was first named in the Test squad for the 2019 Sri Lankan series but stepped away from the game, citing mental health concerns. It is the first time since then that

Pucovski has earned a Test squad call-up. "I feel like I'm in a much better place to take the opportunity if it presents itself now, than I may have been a couple of years ago. I was 20 a couple of years ago and I'm 22 now. I've played 15 or 20 more first-class games, and I've put a stack of work in off the field to make sure my life and my cricket are in a really good place," he added.



Scare prompts series-saving bid

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

SYDNEY, 17 NOVEMBER

Cricket Australia is reportedly bracing itself for a mass airlift of players and the staff into New South Wales to save the series against India as a coronavirus outbreak in South Australia threatens the start of the summer season. As Western Australia, Queensland and Tasmania closed their borders with South Australia yesterday, the country's cricket board today decided to try to get its white-ball, Test and A squads into Sydney so the A\$300 million season remained unaffected. CA said all possible measures would be explored to make sure that the series went ahead. "Our bio-security and operational teams are closely monitoring the situation and working to put in place the necessary plans to ensure that players, coaches and staff are available for the fixtures," CA said in a statement. According to the Australian media, CA is continuously "assessing" the fast-evolving situation. "CA has always maintained that it would need to be agile as border conditions change and we thank the players, coaches and the staff involved for their flexibility and all parties for their support. We will continue to provide updates as the situation evolves and look forward to hosting a safe and successful summer across all formats," it said.

Proceeds will support his work with charities in India and the Steve Waugh Foundation, which raises funds for children with rare diseases, a philanthropic role he has embraced since a meeting decades ago with the late nun and missionary Mother Teresa.

Waugh took about 17,000 photos and had to whittle them down to 220 for the book. It was a memorable trip for Waugh, who had always been interested in photography. He said he hoped the end product would help people better understand what cricket means to Indians.

Al Hasan's behaviour had hurt Muslims, besides threatening to cut him to pieces with a

chopper. The young man even said that that he would walk all the way from Sylhet to Dhaka to kill Al Hasan if necessary. Talukdar did not approve of Al Hasan inaugurating a Kali puja in Kolkata.

The video link was handed over to the cyber forensic team, but the youth again went live on Facebook and apologised for his action. He also advised all celebrities to follow the "right path." Both the videos were later removed from Facebook.

Al Hasan went to Kolkata via Petrapole on Thursday to inaugurate a Kali puja in the Beleghata area. He was seen praying before the image. He returned to Bangladesh by air on Friday.

(According to IANS, Al Hasan later apologised for having inaugurated the puja, promising never to do anything like it again.)

East Bengal v East Bengal

KOLKATA, 17 NOVEMBER

Sources in the club told *The Statesman* here today that a media report about East Bengal's current officials' alleged sell-out bid had reflected intra-institution rivalries fuelled essentially by power-grab thoughts.

"You have to take into account the fact that our investors have already pumped in crores of rupees in trying to build the best team in the Indian Super League," said a source, adding: "And a co-sponsor is to come in a few days' time. Besides, it's not easy to usurp what we have. In fact, it's impossible. East Bengal have only signed an MoU and nothing else that could imply a sell-out."

Inside-the-club feeds have as long a history in East Bengal as in Mohun Bagan. SNS



man who had threatened to kill Al Hasan on a Facebook live video on 15 November. A team of Rab-9 arrested Mohsin Talukdar (25) at Ronoshil village in Dakshin Sunamganj upazila today around 11:15am,

assistant superintendent of police Samiul Ahmed, media officer of Rab-9, told *The Daily Star*.

The arrest was made after police had filed a case against Talukdar -- of the Taluk-

darpura area in Shahpur in Sylhet Sadar upazila -- under the Digital Security Act.

Talukdar claimed that Al Hasan's behaviour had hurt Muslims, besides threatening to cut him to pieces with a

Big Bash League doesn't want Al Hasan among participants

THE DAILY STAR/ANN

DHAKA, 17 NOVEMBER

Cricket Australia has nixed all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan's (*in photo*) probable Big Bash League move because of its zero-tolerance policy in dealing with corruption.

Al Hasan's one-year ban from cricket for not complying with the International Cricket Council's rules and regulations regarding corrupt activities ended on 29 October. The 33-year-old had reportedly put his name in for the BBL but CA did not allow him to take part.

However, Al Hasan took CA's decision in his stride and did not make a fuss about not being able to play in the tournament, scheduled to get underway on 10 December. In another development, Bangladesh's Rapid Action Battalion today arrested the

man who had threatened to kill Al Hasan on a Facebook live video on 15 November. A team of Rab-9 arrested Mohsin Talukdar (25) at Ronoshil village in Dakshin Sunamganj upazila today around 11:15am,

assistant superintendent of police Samiul Ahmed, media officer of Rab-9, told *The Daily Star*.

The arrest was made after police had filed a case against Talukdar -- of the Taluk-

darpura area in Shahpur in Sylhet Sadar upazila -- under the Digital Security Act.

Talukdar claimed that Al Hasan's behaviour had hurt Muslims, besides threatening to cut him to pieces with a

Novak Djokovic thrashes Diego Schwartzman in straight sets

AGENCIES

LONDON, 17 NOVEMBER

Novak Djokovic made a strong start at the ATP Finals on Monday as he began his campaign for a record-tying sixth title at the season-ending tournament by beating debutant Diego Schwartzman 6-3, 6-2.

Schwartzman's first match at the finals went a similar way to fellow debutant Andrey Rublev's, with the Russian having barely laid a glove on 20-time Grand Slam winner Rafael Nadal during a straight-set victory on Sunday night.

And Schwartzman was equally powerless at the O2 Arena in London, failing to prevent a sixth loss from six matches against the clinical Djokovic en route to his own straight-sets loss.

Djokovic dropped his serve early on at the virtually empty arena, where on Sunday he was presented with the ATP's end-of-year world No1 award for a record-equalling sixth time.

The Serb broke back immediately and then pounced again when Schwartzman served at 3-4, outmanoeuvring his opponent before pummelling away a forehand winner into the corner. With no fans in the 18,000 arena to rally to the Argentine's underdog cause, world No9 Schwartzman -- who qualified here in the absence of the injured Roger Federer -- never looked capable of turning the opening Group Tokyo 1970 match into a contest.

Djokovic secured two breaks in the second set and clinched victory with minimum muss.

"I was very happy with the way I played in the second set

when I started swinging through the ball," Djokovic said on court.

"It was close I think until I broke at 4-3. It was tough for Diego, first match in the arena, he maybe wasn't playing his best in the closing moments of the first set."

Daniil Medvedev defeated Alexander Zverev for his first victory.

The Russian made his debut at London's O2 12 months ago but failed to win any of his three round-robin matches, "choking" - in his own words - in a loss to Rafael Nadal.

But he arrived at the tournament on the back of a final victory over Zverev to win the Paris Masters last weekend and scored a repeat with a 6-3 6-4 triumph.

It is the first time in his four appearances that Zverev, the champion in 2018, has lost

his opening match.

The German has been competing under the considerable shadow of serious domestic abuse allegations made by ex-girlfriend Olga Sharapova that he again denied in his pre-tournament Press conference.

On the court Zverev has appeared unaffected, but his recurrent second-serve troubles reared their head early in this contest.

The 23-year-old served six double-faults in his first three service games, losing two of them, and the second break saw Medvedev take control after a series of lengthy rallies and close games.

A break in the seventh game of the second set put the Russian within sight of the finish line, and in the next game he pulled out an underhand serve.

Zverev scrambled well to

retrieve it but miscued a volley, and Medvedev clinched the victory with a leaping

backhand drilled crosscourt.

He will take on Novak Djokovic on Wednesday while

Schwartzman faces a winover

Diego Schwartzman to keep his semi-final hopes alive.

Zverev needs a win over</