ncle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA VISAKHAPATNAM | TUESDAY | 15 DECEMBER 2020



RH: 86%

Rainfall: NII

Forecast: Fog. Max/Min temp.





NATION 4

India ready for any



SANJAY KAW | DC NEW DELHI, DEC. 14

agricultural

of talks.

As the protesting farmers intensified their agitation

against the Centre's three

laws and went on a day-

long fast on Monday,

Union agriculture minister Narendra Singh Tomar

said Centre was trying to

engage with farmers' lead-

ers to decide the next date

"The meeting will definitely happen. We are engaging with farmers,"

Mr Tomar said. "The gov-

ernment is ready for dis-

cussions anytime. The farmers' leaders have to 'decide and convey' when

they are ready for the next

The contentious farm

laws also led to a Twitter

spat between Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal

and Punjab CM Capt.

Amarinder Singh, with

the two accusing each

other of "playing politics"

over the sensitive issue. Mr Kejriwal lashed out

at Capt. Singh for criticis-

ing him for notifying one

of the three farm laws

passed by the Centre. The

Delhi government on Nov-ember 23 notified the Far-

mers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Ordi-na-

Mr Kejriwal said: "Punjab CM has made allegations against me that

I've passed the black laws

in Delhi. How can he do

such low-level politics in

this fragile situation? It's

not up to the state govt to implement it. Had it been

so, why would farmers of

with the Centre?"

nce 2020.

meeting," he added.

"reform"

SPORTS 6

Highways blocked; Centre trying to fix new date for meet

Finch tells Aussies not to provoke Kohli



COVID-19 **C**<!-- UNT

CASES (+359)(+22,114)

1,43,745 99,06,463 covid19india.org STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+573)(+4)1,493 TS: 2,77,724 (+506)(+5)AP: 8,75,531 7,057

CASES AROUND THE WORLD



worldometers.info/coronavirus

Sarvari; Dakshinayana **Tithi:** Margasira Shuddha Padyami till 7.10 pm Star: Mula till 9.33 pm Varjyam: 8.05 pm to 9.33 pm; then from 6.35 am (Wednesday) Durmuhurtam: 8.54 am to 9.37 am; 10.53 pm to 11.45 pm Rahukalam: 3 pm to 4.30 pm **HIJRI CALENDAR** Rabbi-ul Akhir 29, 1442 AH **PRAYERS** Fajar: 5.50 am

Zohar: 1.30 pm Asar: 4.45 pm Maghrib: 6.15 pm Isha: 8.15 pm **SUNSET TODAY 5.24 PM**

SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.20 AM MOONSET TOMORROW 6.48 AM **MOONRISE TODAY 6.08 PM**



I don't need a farmer... I am strictly non-vegetarian!

IN BRIEF

Tatas, Interups to bid for Air India

New Delhi: Salt-to-software

conglomerate Tata Group and US-based fund Interups Inc were among "multiple" entities that on Monday put in preliminary bids for buying loss-making carrier Air India. A group of 219 Air India employees submitted an expression of interest (EoI) for the carrier in partnership

with Interups at the close of the deadline on Monday. **Google suffers**

global outage

New Delhi: Gmail and a host of other Google services faced disruptions on Monday evening. The company is yet to specify a reason for the outage. On the G Suite status dashboard, Google said it is "aware of a problem with Gmail affecting a majority of users. The affected users are

IIT-Madras shut due to Covid

unable to access Gmail".

Chennai: The Indian Institute of Technology-Madras here has been hit by the Coronavirus outbreak with over 100 people, a majority of them students, testing positive for the contagion, a top health official said on Monday. A total of 104 students and others have contracted the disease and all were doing well in a hospital.

China eventuality



WORLD 5

Master of espionage John le Carre dies at 89

Vol. 36 No. 201 Established 1938 8 PAGES ₹6.00

Jagan in Delhi today, Farmers intensify stir set to meet Amit Shah over Centre's agri laws

Major judicial developments likely in a few days

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 14

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy will leave for New Delhi on Tuesday. Though his meeting with

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is yet to be confirmed, sources said Reddy would meet Union home minister Amit Shah to discuss the crucial rehabilitation and resettlement of Polavaram oustees apart from other pending issues of bifurca-

The meeting with Shah gains significance in the backdrop of rumours of major developments on the judicial front in next

Alleging bias against his government, the Chief Minister complained to

DC CORRESPONDENT

Tribunal (NGT) directed

the AP government to

take action against per-

sons involved in illegal

sand mining or exploita-tion of mines and miner-

als, by launching prosecu-tion, imposing penalty

and collecting royalty.

The NGT, Southern

Zone, Chennai compris-ing justice K.

Ramakrishnan and expert

member Saibal Dasgupta, while issuing an order on

National Green

VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 14

NGT tells AP to stop

illegal sand mining

judges besides writing to Chief Justice of India S.A. Bobde

The Union finance ministry put the state government in a fix over the Polavaram project funding by proposing to downsize the assistance.
The state government

immediately acted and made the Polavaram Project Authority to recommend the state's view on approving the revised cost estimate. "Water impounding is

largely dependent on the submergence area and the R&R package," a senior official said adding that the project potential could not be fully utilised if water is impounded at lower levels.

Though the government will initially impound

Monday on petitions filed

by Devineni Rajasekhar

and T. Srinivas, challeng-

ing regulations and notifi-

cations by several depart-

ments on sand mining,

said that no act of sand

mining in the guise of

desilting or dredging is to be permitted in the river,

reservoir, lakes and pond

AP to conduct regular sur-

vey of sediment deposit on the water bodies.

Page 3: State told to

The NGT directed the

meters to assess the dam stability and other safety parameters, it has to eventually raise the level to meters and to achieve this, the Centre has to release about ₹26,000 crore, the official pointed out.
The Chief Minister on

Monday visited the Polavaram project site and reiterated that neither the project's height or the storage level would be decreased as propagated falsely by the Opposition and a section

He, however, indicated that the storage level would be enhanced in a phased manner and directed the officials to complete the R&R works for the submergence area at 41.5 mtr

CENTRE RELEASES NORMS FOR VACCINE ROLLOUT

DC CORRESPONDENT

The Centre has released

NEW DELHI, DEC. 14

guidelines for the distribution of the vaccine once it becomes avail-As per the new guidelines issued by the Centre, vaccinating 100-200 people in each session per day, monitoring them for 30 minutes after administering the shots for any adverse event and allowing only one beneficiary at a time. States can fix the days

PUNJAB CM alleged | **AT A** time when that I have passed black laws in Delhi. If that were so, why are farmers of the country trying to hold talks with the

ARVIND KEJRIWAL Delhi Chief Minister

Centre?

people that you are putting allegations against me? Are you doing it for friendship with the BJP or are you under pressure as the Enforcement Directorate has filed a case against your family?' Capt. Singh hit back, say-

the country hold talks ing: "At a time when our farmers are braving the winter cold on the roads outside your city and many of them are dying fighting for their rights, all you can think of is how opportunity to promote your political interests.'

Volunteers serve food for farmers and security personnel at the Ghazipur border dur-

farmers are braving

the Delhi winter and

promote your

political interests

dying, all you can

think of is to use

the opportunity to

ing Delhi Chalo protest against the new farm laws, at Ghaziabad-Delhi Border on

adamant on continuing their agitation until the three laws were repealed, minister of state for agri-Parshottam Rupala claimed most farmers in the country were in favour of the new laws and there was no need to bring the law as demanded by them. The minister urged

Punjab CM

Delhi's borders to express **AMARINDER SINGH** anger over the new laws The massive protests led to huge traffic jams in and around Delhi-NCR with commuters forced to use to make the most of the alternate routes to reach their destinations. While the farmers stayed This was the second

nationwide protest in less than a week after national highways were blocked last Tuesday as a part of countrywide shutdown call backed by the call backed Opposition. The Rajasthan farmers continued to block the Delhi-Jaipur the MSP under purview of highway at Shahjahanpur

the protesting farmers to

return to the discussion table and find an amicable

The protests against the

new laws kept growing. A

large number of farmers

from Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and UP on Monday turned up at

solution to the deadlock.

Mr Kejriwal asked Capt. SC to study if Emergency Singh if he was accusing the Delhi CM in a bid to form friendship with the BJP. He said: "So, is it (due in '75 is unconstitutional Fishermen pelt stones at RS MP

PARMOD KUMAR NEW DELHI, DEC. 14

The Supreme Court on Monday said that it will consider the "feasibility or desirability" of examining a plea seeking to declare the 19-month-long national Emergency that was declared in June national 1975 and had witnessed a large scale preventive arrests and the freezing of the fundamental rights as unconstitutional.

The 19-month long emergency was declared by the minister prime Indira Gandhi.

Issuing notice to the Centre, a bench compris-ing Justice Sanjay Kishan

Kaul, Justice Hrishikesh Roy and Justice Dinesh Maheshwari after expressing reluctance to embark on examining the validity 45-year-old the

event, agreed to consider whether it was feasible or desirable to examine the plea that the Emergency was unconstitutional and was an abuse of power and fraud on Constitution.

"We would not be disinclined to see whether probing such a proclamation after such a long time would be feasible or desirable," said Justice Kaul in the order after two rounds of consultations with Justice Roy and Justice Maheshwari. Supreme Court permitted senior counsel Harish Salve to amend the peti-tion and remold the prayers by December 18 as per the course that the court has decided to embark on.

Appearing for a 94-yearold woman petitioner Veera Sarin who has sought the declaration emergency was unconstitutional and also sought a compensation of ₹25 crore, Salve told the court that such an abuse of power that had taken place in the history had to be corrected so that they don't get repeated in the

DC CORRESPONDENT NELLORE, DEC. 14

Tension prevailed and police pickets have been placed in Vodarevu area of Prakasam district after some fishermen pelted stones at the convov of Rajya Sabha member Mopidevi Venkataramana on Monday.

market director Agricultural committee Kanaparthi Bajjibabu and Congress leader Kagitala Satish, following the MP in a vehicle of the convoy, were injured.
Police had a tough time

POLICE HAD tough time in controlling the fishermen who initially raised slogans

controlling the fishermen, who initially started raising slogans against the MP but later hurled stones at his car and vehicles that were following it.

Venkataramana come to the area for sorting out the ongoing tussle between fisher folk of Katarivaripalem Vodarevu folk villages over use of fishing nets called "Ballavala".

Earlier, addressing the fishermen Katarivaripalem, the MP asked them not to believe

rumours over their rivals preparing to attack them. He assured that he would find a lasting solution to the dispute between the two villages. He visited the government hospital in the area to console a person injured in the recent clashes between the two villages

Chirala MLA Karanam Balaram, former legislator Amanchi Krishna Mohan MLC Pothula Suneetha were present

with the MP.
Locals said separate
political affiliations within fishermen of two villages, who are followers of MLA Karanam Balaram and his arch rival Amanchi Krishnamohan, could be reason for stone pelting and ongoing disputes between the two vil-

Prakasam district additional SP B. Ravichandra, camping at Vodarevu, said they have posted police pickets in the troubled areas. He maintained that the situation is well under

PROJECT | MISINFORMATION | Jagan reiterates height of Polavaram dam will not be decreased even by a millimetre

Need Polavaram water by '22 Kharif, CM tells officials

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 14

Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has directed officials to adhere to the schedule of completing Polavaram Irrigation Project by end of 2021. He wishes to ensure that the project's water is supplied before farmers start cultivating crops during the 2022 Kharif season.

After inspecting spillway works on the project, the CM reiterated his statement in State Legislative Assembly that height of the Polavaram Dam will not be reduced even by a millimetre. His assurance came after "mis-information campaign" that the project's full reservoir level will be reduced from

55 metres to 45.72 metres.

Member secretary of Polavaram Project Authority also announced that height of the dam will be as approved by the Central Water Commission (CWC) and will never be decreased. On resettlement and rehabilitation (R&R) of project-affected people, the Chief Minister instructed officials to first resettle those affected once the water level reaches 41.5 metres. The next to be resettled will be those affected after water level reaches 45.72 metres. He said ₹3.330 crore will be spent on rehabilitation, which must be completed by February or March, 2021.

> Page 2: CM unhappy bills not cleared



Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy inspects the Polavaram project works at Polavaram in West Godavari on Monday.

Jaggaiah mandal land in resurvey

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 14

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy will launch the resurvey of lands from Sher Mohammad Peta of Jaggaiah mandal in Krishna district

December 21. The state government will take up resurvey of lands in the first phase in about 5,461 villages from December 22 covering one village in each mandal in order to complete the exer-

The revenue department published the relevant gazette notification on November 30 and accordingly, the district collectors are also publishing notifications in their respective districts.

Local volunteers will

inform the schedule of

land resurvey to their own-

by serving them notices.

■ Page 2: Officials to visit property, fix boundaries

SHORT TAKES

AID UNDER AMMA VODI PHASE-II ON JAN. 9

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 12

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy to give away financial assistance in phase II under Amma Vodi scheme for the academic year 2020-21

on January 9, 2021.

Minister for education

Adimulapu Suresh told media persons here on Monday that they had already taken up the registration of the names of parents and guardians of the eligible students to get financial assistance under the scheme and added that the list of eligible students to be displayed at ward/village secretariats on Deceber 16.

The minister said that as the CM noted that no student should be deprived of the opportunity to pursue education due to poverty, the state government was implementing the scheme for the poor students pursuing first standard to intermediate education in government schools and colleges, aided and unaided institutions and also in government Gurukula schools to get annual financial assistance of ₹15,000 per head.

CM UNHAPPY BILLS NOT CLEARED

FROM PAGE 1

The CM expressed concern that project bills pertaining to At this, officials informed him that they need some funds as advance for getting funds from the Centre. Jagan Mohan Reddy assured that he will make all efforts to ensure no dues from the Centre are pend-

Later, officials informed the Chief Minister a committee comprising officials from Water Resources, Polavaram Project Authority and CWC will be set up to resolve any issues arising in models, designs or construction of the

OFFICIALS TO VISIT PROPERTY. FIX BOUNDARIES

FROM PAGE 1

A team of officials comprising village secretary, revenue officer and village surveyor will visit the property and fix boundaries based on the village map and collect data. Later, based on government guidelines, the borders of the property would be marked and photographed, It is likely to take four months to complete land resurvey in each village.

At the time of land resurvey. proper owner or anyone authorised by him or her would have to be present with all requisite details of the property. Earlier, the state government

had carried out land resurvey on an experimental basis at Thakkellapadu Jaggaiahpeta mandal in Krishna district for properties located in 152 survey numbers

MAOISTS KILL ADIVASI IN VIZAG AGENCY

DC CORRESPONDENT

in 180 subdivisions

The outlawed CPI (Maoist) allegedly killed a tribal farmer in Vakapalli village in G Madugula mandal in Visakha agency, after branding him as a police informer. The incident reportedly happened just before midnight on Sunday.

The deceased has been identified as one Gemmili Krishna Rao. Local reports said that around 20 to 30 Maoist cadres picked up the deceased from his home and hacked him to death at a place close to the village. The Maoists also left a letter at the spot, wherein they branded him as police informer.

Claiming responsibility, the Maoists in the letter stated that Krishna Rao was killed as he was actively playing a role in all the community policing initiatives taken up by the district police in the agency area

They further mentioned in the letter that the deceased was forcing the tribal youth to take part in the 'Jana Maitri' programme launched by the police and also asking them to take part in the volleyball tournaments being conducted by the police for the tribal

The Maoists also stated that Krishna Rao had given shelter to a police informer, who had allegedly played a role in the aiding the police.



Candidates of Group-1 examination coming out of the examination centre after writing the test at One Town in

BJP to fight for Amaravati as only capital: Veerraju

We will develop AP across spheres if voted to power in '24

DC CORRESPONDENT

State BJP president Somu Veerrariu assured the agitating farmers that his party would fight for the continuation of Amravati as the capital city.
Lauding the efforts of

the farmers at a meeting organised by small and medium farmers Thullur on Monday, he said that his party was committed to establishing the capital in Amravati and there was no second thoughts over it. He demanded the government to issue pattas to 64,000 farmers and develop the remaining 9,000 acres in the capital region. Stating that BJP would

build its party office in Vijayawada, Mr Veerraju said Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy had

LOBBYING FOR

JNTUA I/C V-C

DC CORRESPONDENT

ANANTAPUR, DEC. 14

INTENSIFIES



 Lauding the efforts of the farmers at a meeting organised by small and medium farmers in Thullur on Monday, he said that his party was committed to establishing the capital in Amravati and there was no second thoughts over it.

 He demanded the government to issue pattas to 64,000 farmers and develop the remaining 9,000 acres in the capital

promised to build the capital in Amravati soon after assuming power but later changed his mind and announced three capitals.

He said the previous government claimed that it had spent around ₹72,000 crore on the capital. Of this, the Union Government had sanc-Union tioned ₹2,500 crore and ₹800 crore for Amravati Smart city project and a ₹4,000 crore loan was given by Hudco.

"The TD wants that the Prime Minister should intervene in the capital issue but did not mention where he should intervene," Mr Veerraju said He said even if the capital is proposed to be shifted, the Centre has been going ahead with its proj-

He said AIIMS was being built at a cost of ₹1,800 crore and many more like university institutions

were coming up. The Centre helped in the construction of Kanakadurga flyover, two flyovers at Benz circle, defense establishment at Avanigadda and Nimmaluru, six-lane road to Machilipatnam while many more projects are in the pipeline, he said.

"We will develop the state across spheres if BJP is voted to power in AP in 2024," Mr Veerraju

Likely recognition of tribal villages creates tension in EG

DC CORRESPONDENT KAKINADA, DEC. 14

> East Godavari district should be treated as tribal villages and be included

> in the agency area. This stems from the fact that

there is a mix of tribal

and non-tribal population

in these villages, and they

are adjacent to the agency

area. The tribal people in

the villages want them

included in the agency in

order to be entitled to all

the corresponding bene-

But, there is a resistance

from non-tribal farmers

and non-tribal people in

general, as their proper-

ties will come under the

1/70 Act. They cannot sell

their properties or pur-

chase lands. Therefore,

they are opposing the move and a debate is rising in the villages whether they should be an

According to sources,

though tribes for a majori-

ty of the population, most

of the properties are in

the hands of non-tribal

people, who are not will-

ing to give up their rights

Officials conducted grama sabhas and resolved not to merge the

villages under agency. But

agency or not.

on those lands.

Competition for a vicechancellor's (VC) post in any university is always close battle. But in JNTU Anantapur, there is a scramble to land up with the in-charge VC post. And there is patronage of politicians for some of the candidates

As the tenure of Prof. Srinivasakumar ended in the first week of this month, the government issued a notification for filling up the vacancy. A three-member search committee was formed to short-list three suitable names for the post.

Meanwhile, a former top official of university is reportedly mounting pressure on the authorities to nominate his close aide for the in-charge post. Also in the running are some officials.

However, the state government recommended and posted Prof. Ananda Rao, who is presently the of Rayalaseema University. Sources said that the Education minrecommended Anand Rao's as he was 'a suitable candidate and belonged to the weaker sections.

A top official is also reportedly lobbying for the post for his associate against the minister's nominee. Given the high drama, and the confusion thereof, appointment orders for the incharge post have been kept pending for more than two days, sources

Meanwhile, the tenure of Srinivasa Kumar was duly completed despite ongoing legal complications. A PIL was reportedly pending against the recruitment process of the outgoing vice chan-

Prof. Srinivasa Kumar from JNTU, Kakinada, was appointed as vice-chancellor of JNTU Anantapur following the untimely death of then Vice-Chancellor M.M.M.

lages want them included in the agency in order to view is gaining ground be entitled to all the cor that nearly 50 villages in responding benefits

> There is a resistance from non-tribal farmers and non-tribal people

tribal unions many strongly condemned it and they said that some political leaders are influofficials and encing passed resolutions without conducting grama sabhas

In some villages, they alleged that officials told the people that they would more schemes and took their signatures.

"We are not accepting the resolutions as it has been unilateral. The grama sabhas should be conducted again and opinions of the people should be taken," said Fifth Schedule Sadhana Schedule Committee member L. Subba Rao.

He said that tribals in these villages are demanding that the villages be declared as scheduled areas and all tribal rights be extended to them. Another member of the committee K. Rajendra said that Samatha Organization has been

declared as 'girijan mandal' since 1985.

The BJP has lent its suj

port and toured the vil-

lages. The party's Kakinada Parliament dispresident Ramkumar said that they would fight for the rights of the people. BJP State General Secretary Lokula Gandhi submitted a representation to Superintendent of Police, seeking to focus on law and order as there a possibility of a showdown between tribal and nontribals.

However, Prathipadu Purnachandra said that in some villages tribals are in majority. but lands belong to non-tribal people, who are worried about losing their rights under 1/70 Act, if these villages are merged with

agency area.

He said that he would respect both sections of people. But, if the government takes a decision, nobody can oppose it.

Meanwhile, according to

sources, officials are likely to conduct another grama sabha in the subplan areas. It is said that if the 1/70 Act is not applicable, even non-tribal farmers also may accept the

SIT constituted by YSRC govt focussed on Sec. 22A

DC CORRESPONDENT VISAKHAPATNAM, DEC. 14

The second phase of Special Investigation Team (SIT), constituted by YSRC government mainly focussed on the amended Section of the 22(A) Registration Act, which prohibited registra-tion of land and had become a bane for the people. Due to lack of subdivision of land, it was not possible to identify which land fell under the purview of the government order.

Talking to this correspondent, chairman of the SIT and former Visakhapatnam joint collector K. Vijay Kumar said the team had a review meeting with the 13 tahsildars and suggested they speed up the sub-division process using mandal surveyors since people are

Around 110 acres of land have been locked under Section 22(A), he said and children's marriage and other emergency needs were the worst sufferers.

Similarly, the team has focussed on the Urban Land Ceiling issue under which more than 450 applications were submitted for regularisation and issue of GO from the government. The applications are pending since 2017. Until the government issues GO for regularisation, the lands cannot be registered under section 22(1)D. The ULC issue is an

entirely local issue which could be sorted out by the district administration, the chairman said. Regarding encroach-

ment of government essentially for which the SIT was constituted, the chairman said around 400 acres of government land had been encroached by the private people, and key documents have tampered. The team will suggest the government on how to get back the land and identiadded that people who were preparing for their fied around 20 revenue

role in the encroach-

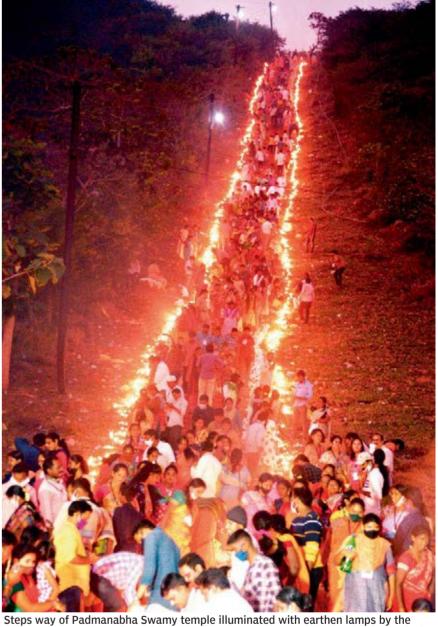
ments. He said AP Housing Corporation has also been asked to file FIR against those who encroached the government lands. Two such cases have been filed under

Secion 140 of CrPC. He announced that final touches were being given to the report which might be submitted to the government in another fortnight.

The SIT received 1,380 petitions and of them, 679 were referred to the concerned tahsildars who in turn returned 420 reports and of them, 342 were disposed.

Former BJP MLA P. Vishnu Kumar Raju, who was responsible for the constitution of the first SIT by the then Telugu Desam government, said he hoped that this government would take the report to the logical end and put an end to the encroachment of government lands.

Festive lights



devotees alongside Padmanabha hills as part of Deepotsavam to mark the conclusion of Karthika month, at Padmanabham in Visakhapatnam district on Monday.

CBI submits report to HC on doctor case

DC CORRESPONDENT VISAKHAPATNAM, DEC. 14

The CBI submitted its report to the AP High Court on the arrest of Dr K. Sudhakar, the former anaesthetist

Narsipatnam area hospital in Visakhapatnam on Monday. But since the report was not incorporated in the registry, the High Court judges sought the report to be submitted to them and adjourned the case to March 21.

The order was delivered by judges Rakesh Kuamr and J. Uma Devi. It may be recalled that

Dr Sudhakar had abused the prime minister and the chief ministers of Telugu states on the National Highway in Visakhapatnam city in May this year following which the local police had arrested him.

dragged by the police before the arrest. Former MLA of Paykaraopeta V.

Anitha sent the video clip to the High Court along with a letter with an attachment of Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy's morphed video on Naidu. The High Court accepted the letter as a suo motu case and ordered the CBI to inquire into the mode of arrest of the doctor.

The High Court also ordered the CBI to submit allegedly the report on the social posts made against the

ILLEGAL | ACTIVITY Police to continue combing, warned of stern action against smuggling 4 tonnes of red sanders logs seized in 3 days

DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUPATI, DEC. 14

The Red Sanders Anti-Smuggling Task Force (RSASTF) have seized around four tonnes of red sander logs during its ongoing combing operation being held in the Seshachalam forests for the past three days. In a fresh catch, the task force team seized 30 red sanders logs on the outskirts of

Monday.

Disclosing the details to

media RSASTF SP G. Anjaneyulu said, acting on a piece of credible information that Tamil Nadu based woodcutters ventured into have Seshachalam forests, the task force team led by RSI Vasu have been carrying out intensive combing operations in the forests and also conducting vehicular checking at all the Tirupati and 32 logs in on entry and exit points of

seized 30 red sanders logs on the outskirts of Tirupati and 32 logs in on Monday

In another catch, the task Force teams have seized 32 red sander logs in Ramapuram of Kadapa

Srivari Mettu area and Bakarapeta ghat road for the past three days.

"In the early hours on Monday, the task force team had encountered a group of 30 woodcutters carrying logs in the forest area near S.V. Zoo park in Tirupati. On noticing the task force personnel, the woodcutters fled away from the spot, leaving behind nearly 30 logs. The teams have intensified the combing operation to nab

the escaped woodcutters,' the SP said. In another catch, the task

Force teams have seized 32 red sander logs in Ramapuram of Kadapa district. RI Ali Basha and Ramapuram Police led this operation. A case was registered Ramapuram police station in this regard, SP Mr Anjaneyulu said.

The SP appreciated the efforts of Task Force DSP's K.C. Venkataiah, V.V. Giridhar, RI Bhaskar, Inspector Subrahmanyam and others for taking part in the combing operation, which led to the seizure of nearly 4 tonnes of logs in the past three days.

The SP informed that they would continue the

combing operation and warned of stern action against the smugglers and the woodcutters. He said that they would not hesitate to slap the PD Act against repeated offenders involved in smuggling

OTHER STORIES

ACB TRAPS VRO ALONG WITH ₹1L BRIBE MONEY

DC CORRESPONDENT NELLORE, DEC. 14

The Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) sleuths have trapped a Village Revenue Officer soon after he collected a bribe of ₹1 lakh as advance to issue pattadar passbook to a farmer at the Tahsildar Office in Santhanuthalapadu town in Prakasam district on Monday.

According to ACB officials, the farmer identified as Nannuri Madhusudhan Rao approached ACB DSP of Ongole after the VRO Poondla Srihari Babu demanded ₹1.5 lakh to issue pattadar passbook a few days back.

As per the directions of the DSP, Madhusudhan negotiated with the VRO and convinced him to take an advance payment of ₹1 lakh.

Launching Offer

Rs. 2,999/- Per Sft. Gated Community Luxurious 2 & 3 Bhk Flats @AGANAMPUDI, NH-16. Bank Loans upto 85% 7347343379 Hurry Up... Limited Slots.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender No. 30205743, Date: 09.12.2020 NAME OF THE WORK: 25KV SINGLE POLE VACCUM CIRCUIT BREAKER.
INSPECTION BY RDSO. (QUANTITY-08 Nos.) NOTE: Material to be supplied within 90 days.

Date and time of opening of tender At 1500 hrs of 06.01.2021

Complete details available

CHANGE OF NAME l, Sanadi Laxmi Ningappa (Old Name), D/o Ningappa resident of 101 Block-C of MVV Apartment, VUDA Madhurawada, Colony. Gayatri (Near) Engg. College, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh-530 048. henceforth and called as known SANADI JASMINE NINGAPPA Name) for (New purpose.

23-2020. Dt. 08.12.2020

Name of the Work : MISCELLANEOUS PLATFORM BALANCE WORKS IN CONNECTION WITH NEW DOUBLING LINE MALLIVIDU, LAKKAVARAPUKOTA AND SRUNGAVARAPUKOTA STATIONS ON K.K LINE OF WALTAIR DIVISION. Approx Cost of the work : ₹ 2,49,75,358.84,

24-2020, Dt. 08.12.2020 EXISTING RCC HUME PIPE BRIDGE NO. 484 AT KM 155/6-7 AND BRIDGE NO. 634 AT KM 209/23-24 UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF ASSISTANT DIVISIONAL ENGINEER KORAPUT ON KK LINE OF WALTAIR

Approx Cost of the work : ₹ 19,26,781.02, EMD: ₹38,500/-. (3) Tender Notice No. et-central-wat

25-2020, Dt. 08.12.2020 Name of the Work : DESILTING OF CATCH

WATER DRAINS, SIDE DRAINS, PROVIDING OF PROCLAIN MACHINE ON KK LINE UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF SR. DIVISIONAL ENGINEER (CENTRAL) Approx Cost of the work : ₹ 60,48,154.01,

Completion period of the work : 12 Months (fo

Tender closing date & time : at 1330 hrs. of 30.12.2020 (for all tenders).

No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax or in person shall be accepted against such

Complete information including e-tender

website: http://www.ireps.gov.in Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 10 (Ten) days before the date

of closing of tender to note any changes/ corrigenda issued for this tender. Divisional Railway Manager (Engg)



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Left party activists take out a huge rally in support of the farmers who were staging protest against the New Farm Laws by the Central government near Dabagardens in Visakhapatnam on Monday.

Left parties take out rally in support of farmers stir

New laws would benefit only the corporate sector: Left parties

DC CORRESPONDENT VISAKHAPATNAM, DEC. 14

Left parties, including CPI and CPM, took out a rally in support of the agitating farmers in New Delhi, in Visakhapatnam

The rally started from the RTC Complex and cul-minated into a meeting at LIC Building.

Party activists per-formed folk dance and raised slogans condemning the NDA government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the farm laws he

State joint secretary of CPI J.V. Satyanarayana Murthy said the new laws would benefit only the corporate sector and not the

He appealed to the people to boycott the goods being manufactured by big corporate houses. State committee member

of CPM Ch. Narsinga Rao said the Prime Minister instead of solving the issue, has been blaming that extremist organisations have taken over the

This indicates the sincerity the government has towards the farmers," Mr Narsinga Rao said.

CPI(ML-ND) Y. Kondaiah and leaders from other mass organisations and Left parties participated in the rally and meeting in support of farmers.

NATIONAL ENERGY

CONSERVATION

WEEK OBSERVED

DC CORRESPONDENT

VISAKHAPATNAM, DEC. 14

The week-long National

Energy Conservation Week, observed by Wal-

tair Division, East Coast

Railway concluded on

During the weeklong

observation, awareness

campaigns were under-

taken by displaying ban-

ners, posters, stickers and organised rallies

with energy-saving slo-

gans at different railway

stations and locations of

Waltair Division to cre-

ate awareness among

the public as well as the

An exhibition was also

organised today, with the display few of the techniques adopted for

conservation of energy like the implementation

of automation of light-

ing for offices and resi-

dences, solar energy based streetlights, BLDC

fans that work by utilis-

ing less energy, i.e. 27W instead of 60W, Remote

Sensing Lighting System, LED lights and insu-

lated geysers which can

keep the water hot for up

to six hours, Inverter

Type Air Conditioning

On the concluding day,

a seminar was organised

at the DRM's office. Mr

Chetan Kumar Srivast-

ava, DRM suggested

exploring the new ways

of utilising the natural forms of energy, like

solar energy, wind ener-

gy and others.

system and others.

railway staff.

Monday.

Agri bills will help Adani, Ambani: Kisan leaders

DC CORRESPONDENT KADAPA, DEC. 14

The All India Kisan Struggle Coordinating Committee (AIKSCC) said that the new agricultural laws are part of the inter-nal agenda of the Modi government to double the income of Ambani and Adani companies, instead of working towards doubling the income of farmers before the elections.

An agitation was organized at the BSNL office in Kadapa on Monday in support of the farmers' initiative in Delhi.

Farmers Association Kadapa District general secretary Gali Chandra said that the Central government was not implementing any of recommendations the Swaminathan Committee was aiming to increase the revenue of

hundred times. He said the Central government was not going to let the farmers get rid of their debts but was only protecting their evaders like Vijay Mallya and Neerav Modi.

Reliance and Adani by a

• **THE AP** Farmers **Association Kadapa** District general secretary Gali Chandra said that the Central government was not implementing any of the recommendations made by the Dr Swaminathan Committee and was

aiming to increase

Reliance and Adani

the revenue of

by a hundred times. He said the Modi government, which was incapable of resolving the problems of the peasantry, had brought in new agricultural laws in the name of trade deals with farmers, free transport and crop storage beyond the limit, and try to give up foodgrain income to the corporate sector.

Farmers' union leaders B. Narayana, Krishnamurthy, Dastagiri Reddy, A.V. Ramana, Shivareddy, Obulesu, Venkata Siva, Bellam Manohar, Subrahmanyam, Bashirunnisa and Prabhakar Reddy, were present on the occasion

GOVT SHOULD ABOLISH THE FARM BILLS: LEFT PARTIES

DC CORRESPONDENT KAKINADA, DEC. 14

The Left parties along with Farmers Unions staged protests at Kakinada Rajamahendravaram, demanding that the gov-ernment should abolish the 'Farm Bills' immediately and the activists said that they were supporting the farmers' agitation.

At Kakinada, the activists led by All India Farmers Unions joint action committee staged a dharna in front of Central Post Office here and raised slogans for withdrawal of the farm bills.

AP Rythu Sangham state treasurer Chlluboyina Kesavasetty said that though the farmers were staging agitation for the past 18 days, the Central government did no respond and this proved the Prime Minister Modi is not having any interests in farmers problems.



National Energy Conservation Week in Vijayawada on Monday.

AP registered 305 new Covid-19 cases, 2 deaths

Andhra Pradesh registered a steep fall in the number of new Covid-19 cases as only 305 were reported with two deaths in the last 24 hours.

The state health authorities issued Covid-19 bul-letin on Monday reporting that out of 44,935 samples tested, 305 persons were found infected with Covid-19. Out of a total number of 1,08,75,925 samples tested so far, 8,75,836 persons found infected with Covid-19 and 8,64,049 patients were recovered while 4,728 patients are still active with the virus.

Among the daily Covid-19 cases, West Godavari registered 45 followed by 43 in Chittoor, 37 in Krishna, 28 in East Godavari, 27 in Nellore, 24 in Guntur, 21 in Prakas-am, 19 in Visakhapatnam, 15 in Srikakulam, 14 in Vizianagaram, 12 each in Kurnool and Kadapa and eight in Anantapur. Krishna has the highest number of cumulative

Covid-19 active cases with 884 followed by 816 in Guntur, 619 in Nellore, 537 in East Godavari, 424 in Chittoor, 306 in West

AP waives off fee for Inter students

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 14

The state government waived off fee to be collected from the students of Intermediate education for getting a series of permissions from the Board Intermediate Education keeping in view of the prevalence Covid-19 pandemic to avoid any financial hard-

ships to the students. BIE's secretary V. Ramakrishna in a release issued here on Monday stated that the minister for education and chairman of BIE, suspended the fee to

m, 199 in Visakhapatnam, 198 in Srikakulam, 152 in from Nellore succumbed to the virus rising toll to 7,059. Chittoor recorded the highest number of

be collected from students. Accordingly, all the Principals of the colleges were instructed the follow the guidelines to avail the

For getting re-admission, the prescribed fee is ₹1,000 and the same amount was waived off.

Similarly, for TC admissions-₹1,000, change of II language for first year only-₹800, change of medium for first year only-₹600, change of group for first year only-₹1,000 and change of group for second year regular students-₹1,000, were also waived

Srikakulam and 238 in

of miners extracted from

Godavari, 274 in Prakasacumulative cases of death patients with 835 followed Anantapur, 129 in Kurnool, 115 in Kadapa and 75 in Vizianagaram.

Among daily cases of Covid-19 deaths, only two from Nellons, unanythed. in Nellore, 487 in Kurnool, 454 in Kadapa, 346 in

STATE TOLD TO FOLLOW CENTRAL GUIDELINES

FROM PAGE 1

This must be done before undertaking the work of declining and dredging as part of maintenance of these water bodies.

It ordered that the state follow the guidelines provided by the Union ministry of environment and forests and also the guidelines of Sustainable Sand Mining and Management, and Monitoring Guide-lines for Sand Mining issued in January, 2020. The NGT directed the

mining/desilting/dredg-ing by providing all necesinfrastructure including technical assistance. It asked for provid-

ing to the point of destina-AP to have adequate contion to avoid misuse of trol mechanism and monitoring mechanism on activities like minerals for unauthorised purpose. It asked for registration of vehicles permitted for transport and also installation of

GPS facility in the vehicles. The NGT asked the AP to set up a permanent ing proper monitoring mechanism for transport Expert

THREE HELD, 6 **RED SANDERS LOGS SEIZED**

CORRESPONDENT KADAPA, DEC. 14

The Railway Kodur police on Monday held three persons and seized six red sanders logs.

Rajampeta Siva Bhaskar Reddy held a press conference at the Kodur Police Station and disclosed the information.

Railway Kodur Inspector Ananda Rao, Sub Inspectors Pedda Obanna and Reddy Suresh raided a place near Raghavarajapurm dur-ing the early hours of Monday. They seized 69 kg

red sanders logs valued at ₹1.38 lakh and arrested three per-Rajampeta

DSP speaking on this occasion said that they are taking stringent action against red sanders smuggling.

Mr Siva Bhaskar Reddy appealed the public to inform about red sanders smuggling anywhere, and assured that would keep they secret the information about the informers of red sander smugglers.

Thiruppavai ritual at Tirumala till Jan. 14

DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUPATI, DEC. 14

The first and foremost predawn ritual of Supra-bhatham at the hill shrine of Lord Venkateswara in Tirumala will be replaced with Thiruppavai

from Thursday onwards and continued till January 14, 2021. With Dhanur Masam com-

mencing on Wednesday, the awakening Seva of Lord will be replaced with Andal Sri Godai Thiruppavai Pasura Parayanam. Dhanur Masam has a unique place in Hindu spiritual calendar Dhanur Masam.

for devotional activities especially worshipping Lord Sri Maha Vishnu during the early hours before Sunrise.

In Tirumala shrine, the 30 popular hymns penned by the only woman among the 12 Alwars, Andal Sri Goda Devi will be recited with each Pasuram on each day during the entire month.

Meanwhile, the temple body also mulled yet another spiritual live pravachanam programme on Nada Neerajanam platform at Tirumala from Tuesday onwards, on the occasion of

TD demands aid to ailing WB workers

DC CORRESPONDENT NELLORE, DEC. 14

politburo member Somireddy Chandramohan Reddy has advised the AP government to offer an exgratia of ₹10 lakh to the family of the deceased and

financial

ers from West Bengal who are undergoing treatment at GGH in Nellore. Mr Chandramohan Reddy consoled the ailing workers, who are suffering from diarrhoea allegedly after consuming stale food and water from an abandoned borewell, during a visit to abandoned

GGH along with former

₹50,000 to the migrant work-

assistance of

Minister Pathhipati Pulla Rao on Monday.

Mr Reddy found fault with the district administration for the delay in obtaining the lab reports related to the food and water to ascertain the reasons for the illness. He took a dig at the offi-

cials for not alerting the workers on the use of water from unused borewell and the locking the same after the incident. Referring to some workers

undergoing treatment in ICU still, he said the state government to provide better treatment for the workers and shift them to Chennai, Vijayawada or Hyderabad if necessary.



EAST COAST RAILWAY **HOLDING ADALAT FOR PENDING** COMPASSIONATE

APPOINTMENT CASES - 2020 No.WPT/5/Comp.Adalat-2020

will not be entertained.

East Coast Railway/Waltair Division is holding Adalat for pending Compassionate Appointment Cases in the office of Divisional Railway Manager(P)/East Coast Railway/Waltair for clearance of pending compassionate appointment cases at 1100 hrs. on 29.12.2020.

The bereaved families of the Waltair Division/East Coast Railway, having grievances about their pending compassionate appointment cases may submi their applications in an envelope indicating as Compassionate Adalat-2020/ECoRIv/WAT, addressing to The Divisional Railway Manager(P), 1st Floor, Divisional Railway Manager's Office Complex, Dondaparthy, Visakhapatnam latest by 23.12.2020 and to attend the Adalat on 29.12.2020.

It should be noted that the matters related to pending compassionate appointment cases at the divisional level only will be dealt with in the Adalat. The cases already decided earlier both at Head guarters and Divisional level

For full details please visit East Coast Railway website www.eastcoastrail indianrailways.gov.in

Divisional Railway Manager (P)/Waltair

PR-418/L/20-21

REVIEW I MEET Drainage system in Atmakur will be updated: Min March 21 deadline to complete works

DC CORRESPONDENT

NELLORE, DEC. 14

Minister for industries, IT and skill development Mekapati Goutham Reddy directed the officials to take steps to complete the construction works of all the village secretariats, Bharosa Centres, Janata Bazaars, Schools and Hospitals before the end

He was addressing the

officials during a review

on ongoing development

activities at Atmakur

town on Monday after

inspecting the construc-

tion of the Municipal

of March this year.

office in Atmakur.

Reddy said that Andhra Pradesh is the only state that is offering Minimum Support Price for 22 varieties of crops.

Mr Goutham

He reviewed with officials and enquired about the enumeration process of cyclone damages in the district. Mr Goutham Reddy

said that Andhra Pradesh is the only state that is offering MSP (Minimum Support Price) for 22 varieties of crops. He claimed that precau-

after the announcement of cyclone threat prevented major damages in the The minister pointed to

by the government soon to Atmakur town apart

their efforts to provide all the amenities to the government schools on par with Corporate schools under the Nadu-Nedu programme. He said 90 per cent of

the works under the programme have been completed though the pandemic had posed threat to the progress of works. Referring to the indus-

trial activities in the dis-

trict, he pointed to the

land acquired for devel-

tionary measures taken oping a MSME Park close

estimated cost of ₹40 crore. collector Joint

Prabhakar Reddy, RDO Suvarnamma and others

measures being taken to

provide infrastructure

for the industrial corri-

Mr Goutham Reddy has

instructed the officials of

Atmakur to expedite the

construction of munici-

pal office building, com-

pound wall, electrifica-

He said an action plan is in the offing to update

the drainage system in

Atmakur apart from

establishing parks at an

dors in the region.

tion and others.

SHORT TAKES

MODI, HASINA TO HOLD VIRTUAL SUMMIT ON DEC. 17

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, DEC. 14

India and Bangladesh will hold a crucial virtual summit on Thursday (December 17) that will be co-chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina during which the "two leaders will hold comprehensive discussions on the entire spectrum of the bilateral relationship, including further strengthening cooperation in the post-Covid era", New Delhi announced on Monday. This is likely to include the progress of development projects, sharing of river waters including the Teesta issue, the Rohingya migrants issue, border security, Covid-19 vaccines as well as the forthcoming golden jubilee celebrations of the 1971 war of

The summit will take place at a time when India is making a renewed bid to reach out to its immediate neighbourhood and also when Pakistan is trying its best to improve rela-

tions with Bangladesh. On Monday, New Delhi said, "India and Bangladesh have continued to maintain regular exchanges at the highest level. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina paid an official visit to India in October 2019. Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered a video message on the historic occasion of Mujib Borsho in March 2020. Both leaders have remained in regular touch during the Covid pandemic." "Mujib Barsho" refers to bir-

th centenary celebrations of Sheikh Mujibur Rehman — popularly known as Bangabandhu — who had led the Bangladesh freedom struggle in 1971.

GMAIL, OTHER GOOGLE SERVICES FACE OUTAGE

New Delhi, Dec. 14: Gmail and a host of other Google services faced disruptions on Monday evening and the tech major is in the process of fully restoring the services. The company, which faced a similar outage in August this year, is yet to specify areas on for the outage.

In an update on the Google work space status dashboard at 18:17 hours, Google said Gmail service has already been restored for some users, and "we expect a resolution for all users in the near future. Please note this time frame is an estimate and may change".

At around 17:25 hours, Google had said it was "aware of a problem with Gmail affecting a majority of users" and that the affected users are unable to access Gmail.

As per the dashboard, other Google services like Google Calendar, Google Drive, Google Docs and Google Meet have also been affected. Down detector, which detects outages and interruptions on networks, also showed that services like YouTube (Google's video platform) and Gmail facing disruption. Netizens turned to Twitter to express their emotions.

MAHA GOVT OFFERS **HELP TO PRESERVE**

SHAHAB ANSARI | DC MUMBAI, DEC. 14

Claiming Maharashtra government is willing to help restore and preserve "the historical ship" *INS Viraat*, Shiv Sena MP Priyanka Chaturvedi Monday said she has written a letter to the defence ministry seeking a no-objection certificate to preserve the decommissioned aircraft carrier.

The Shiv Sena leader in her letter addressed to defence minister Rajnath Singh has stated that the government of Maharashtra was happy to cooperate in restoring and preserving the historical ship. She has also requested Singh's immediate intervention to grant No Objection Certificate (NOC) to preserve the aircraft carrier. INS Viraat is being dismantled at the Alang shipbreaking yard in Gujarat.

According to Mukesh Patel, chairman of the Shree Ram Group which bought INS Viraat as scrap, "About 5 per cent of the ship has already been broken.

In her social media post she has stated that INS Viraat served as India's aircraft carrier for nearly 30 years. "It has been the pride of our seas and our Indian Navy. To see it sold as scrap and dismembered will be a huge disservice to our naval legacy. With RM's NOC, a memorial on INS Viraat will be a reality," she said.



People witness the launch of GRSE-built first Project 17A stealth frigate Himgiri in Kolkata on Monday.

India geared up for any China build-up: Rawat

CDS says armed forces can counter PLA's constant moves

RAJIB CHOWDHURI I DC KOLKATA, DEC. 14

In a veiled warning to China amid a prolong stand-off, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat on Monday affirmed that the Indian armed forces, undertaking steps on this side of the Line of Actual Control to counter the People Liberation Army's military build-up on the other side, would leave no stone unturned to protect the nation's interests from land to air to sea.
"We are in a stand-off

situation in Ladakh and based on that there is some development activity which has been ongoing in Tibet Autonomous Region of China. Every nation will continue to prepare for ensuring it's security based on its strategic interests. I do not

UK FOREIGN

SECY ON 4-DAY

VISIT TO INDIA

DC CORRESPONDENT

think there should be much concern in that because we, on our side, are also carrying out simiactivity. attempt to change the status quo on the LAC along the northern border amidst the Coronavirus pandemic necessitates high-level preparation on land, in air and at sea. I am fully confident that Indian armed forces will leave no stone unturned to safeguard our frontiers be it on land, in air or at ocean. We are fully prepared for any eventuality we may be faced with,"

Gen Rawat said at the launch of *INS Himgiri*, the first GRSE-built P17A stealth frigate in Kolkata. Referring to the Doklam stand-off between the two sides, Rawat elaborated, "A situation had evolved in Doklam in 2017. Ever since we have taken meas-

Heavy polling was record-

ed in the third and final

phase of local body polls

More than 78.62 per cent polling was recorded till 8

pm in four northern dis-

Kozhikode , Kannur and

Kasargod which went to polls on Monday. Malappuram recorded 78.86 per cent, Kozhikode

78.98, Kannur 77.54 and

Kasargod 77.14 per cent. A total of 89,74,993 vot-

ers were eligible to vote in the third phase in 6,867

wards across 354 local

bodies. The polling was

held strictly complying with Covid safety proto-

col. Voters turned out in

masks, maintained social

distancing while waiting

in the queues and used

sanitisers before and after

Barring minor incidents

of scuffle between the

supporters of rival par-

ties, no major violence

was reported from any of

The state had witnessed

heavy turnout of voters in

all three phases which

the northern districts.

votes.

casting their

Malappuram,

in Kerala.

ures to ensure that the situation does not escalate. The PLA on the other side has been carrying out certain activity. our side, have also been watching this activity very carefully. We have also taken necessary action to counter anything that could be a cause of concern to our national security.

Underlining the importance of technology in military, he added, "What we are looking at is getting technology. Time has come to look at the future of warfighting imbibing technology into systems. We have adequate force and reserves available to counter any threat or challenge that we may face on the northern border."

On the Navy's push for a third aircraft carrier visa-vis submarines, Gen Rawat observed, "Both have their advantages and disadvantages. marines have their separate place in naval warfare in domination of the sea. So does an aircraft carrier. I am no way saying the navy does not need it's air wing. Yes it does. But how to manage air wing and how to ensure the security and sanctity of the sealine of our communication is something we are thinking about. I think we also need to look at our Island territories that we have in large numbers. We can leverage the island territory to our advantage. Then we can balance whether these can be used for launching our naval aircraft or do we need an aircraft carrier. Once we study all that and we understood in detail, we will take a call on

Heavy voter turnout in last phase of Kerala polls

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, DEC. 14 THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. British

Foreign

Secretary Dominic Raab is beginning a four-day visit to India from Monday and will hold ministerial-level talks with his Indian counterpart External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Tuesday. This comes just days after media reports that British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has been invited by India to be the guest at the Republic Day parade next month. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) had recently evaded questions from the media on the reported invitation, saying earlier that in matters, "the such matters, "the announcement is made

closer to the event". In a statement on Monday, meanwhile, the MEA said, "The Rt Hon Dominic Raab MP, secretary of state for foreign, commonwealth affairs, development United Kingdom, will pay an official visit to from 14-17 December 2020. During his stay in New Delhi, Raab will hold talks with Minister of External

Affairs Subrahmanyam Jaishankar on 15 December 2020 on bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest. He will also have official meetings with the minister of environment, forests and climate change Prakash Javadekar and the minister of education Ramesh Pokhriyal."

It may be recalled that Minister Narendra Modi had spoken on phone to his British counterpart Johnson last month in which the two "leaders agreed that officials from both sides would continue their work to quickly finalise an ambitious long-term roadman for the India-UK partnership".



Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan casts his vote during the last stage of Kerala local body elections at Cherikkal in Kannur on Monday.

clearly indicated the enthusiasm of the elec-

Leaders of LDF, UDF and BJP are keeping their fingers crossed over the heavy polling with each party trying to interpret the trend according to their respective calcula-

tions. It may be recalled that 72.67 per cent polling was went to polls recorded in the first December 10.

phase on December 8 southern Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Pathanamthitta, Alappuzha and Idukki.

A higher voter turnout of 76.38 per cent was witnessed in the second phase when central districts of Kottayam, Ernakulam, Thrissur. Palakkad and Wayanad

Rajnath lauds valour of forces deployed at LAC

PAWAN BALI | DC NEW DELHI, DEC. 14

Defence minister Rajnath Singh on Monday said that unprovoked aggression on India's Himalayan frontiers by China is a reminder of how world is changing and how power is being asserted across Indo-Pacific. He lauded the valour of Indian armed forces deployed along the LAC for standing up to aggression by Chinese troops and said our troops fought the Chinese military with "utmost bravery," forcing it to go back. On farmer's issues Singh said there is no question of taking "retrograde steps against our agricultural sector ever".

Unprovoked aggression on our Himalayan frontiers is a reminder of how the world is changing, how existing agreements are being challenged, how power is being asserted not just in Himalayas but across Indo-Pacific. How

the region and world could be in this backdrop," said Singh while virtually addressing the annual general meeting of apex industry chamber FICCI. Defence minister said that there is a big build up of armed forces at LAC in Ladakh. "In these testing times, our forces have shown exemplary courage and remarkable fortitude. They fought the PLA with utmost bravery and forced them to go back," said Singh. He said that the coming generations will be proud of what our forces have managed to achieve this year. Defence minister point-

ed out that whenever there is a situation at LAC the most obvious outcome is comparison between India and China's military strength.

"There can be a serious debate on who owns more military might but when it comes to soft power there is no scope of ambiguity India is far ahead of China when it comes to leading the world with ideas," said Singh. "If one looks at East-Asia from Burma to Thailand to Indonesia and Malaysia and even Japan "there is a huge Indian cultural impact on these countries," he added "Buddhism had a monumental impact on China to the extent that before the 1949 revolution almost 80 per cent of China population followed

Buddhism," said Singh. He added that famous Chinese thinker Hu Shih, who was also the vice-chancellor of Peking University had said that: "India has culturally dominated and controlled China for more than 2,000 years without sending a single soldier." "This statement by Hu Shih underlines the fact that India as a civilisation state has been insp iring and influencing the world through its cultural and soft power for centuries," he said.

Kamal Nath hints at political retirement

CHOUDHURY | DC BHOPAL, DEC. 14

Former chief minister and Madhya Pradesh president Kamal Nath has created a ripple in the political circle here when he hinted at retirement from poli-

Nath who is facing growing resentment in the party following the poor show by Congress in the November 3 by-elections to 28 Assembly constituencies in Madhya Pradesh, said, "I am ready to take some rest. I have no ambition or greed for any position or power. I have served in various posts at Centre. I have already achieved a lot. I am ready to stay at home"

He was addressing a rally in his Assembly constituency of Sasaur in Chhindwara on Sunday

Nath' statement comes in the wake of reports of his running feud with veteran Congress leader and former chief minister Digvijay Singh.

"Nath is responsible for the drubbing of Congress in November 3 Assembly by-elections. The party suffered a setback in the by-polls because Nath sidelined Singh in the Assembly by-elections", Congress MLA Baburam Jandela said. Jandela is considered

close to Singh. Congress spokesman Narendra Singh Saluja, however, sought to underplay the development, saying, 'Nath has several times in the past said he has achieved a lot and has no greed for power or posi-

Nath who holds dual posts of Madhya Pradesh president Legislature Congress Party chief is under pressure by a strong section of the party to leave one of the posts in the wake of party's poor show in the November 3 Assembly byelections.

Congress could win only nine out of 28 Assembly constituencies which had gone to by-elections on November 3.

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan took a jibe at Kamal Nath for reportedly weighing the option of retiring from politics, saying, "It is up to him to decide whether to retire or sit at home. It is his affairs. If charges and counter-charges are made, he should come up with clarifications"

WISTRON SUFFERS ₹437 CR LOSS TO **RIOTS AT K'TAKA**

Bengaluru/New Delhi, Corporation, a contract manufacturer for Apple Inc, has suffered losses worth over ₹437 crore due to violence perpetrated by a section of workers over salary issues at its manufactur ing plant in Karnataka.

A large number of employees allegedly carried out arson, loot and violence at Wistron's Narasapura manufac-turing plant in Kolar district over some wagerelated issues Saturday, police had said.

They damaged the building, damaged vehicles, set them on fire, damaged costly equipmachines and comput-

ers. The company, which on Monday expressed deep shock over the incident, has already filed a complaint at the Vemagal police station.

In the complaint, the company's executive T.D. Prashanth has stated that office equipment, mobile phones, production machinery and related equipment equipment worth ₹412.5 crore were lost.

-PTI

Centre upgrades Vijayvargiya's security with bullet resistant car

Vijayvargiya's Kailash VIP security has been upgraded with the addition of a "bullet resistant" car in his convoy during his West Bengal tour, official sources said on

Monday.
The Union home ministry has issued an order directing the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) to include an armoured vehicle in the convoy of the 64-year-old national general secretary of the BJP and ensure he only travels in that SUV,

"The security of Vijayvargiya has been upgraded with the inclu-

voy. This has been done keeping in mind the security requirements of the protectee in the wake of the recent attack on his vehicle that was part of a convoy of BJP president J.P. Nadda," an official

source said.

The CISF has been providing 'Z' category VIP cover security Vijayvargiya February last year. The protection includes a mobile team of about sixseven armed CISF commandos as well as a pilot and an escort vehicle. Vijayvargiya's vehicle was attacked with stones during a visit to Diamond Harbour area in the

when he was accompany ing the BJP president.

Vijayvargiya confirmed

his security upgrade to reporters after he arrived in Kolkata on Monday afternoon to take part in a programme Mathurapur in South 24 Parganas.

"As per the order of the Union home ministry, I have been provided with a bulletproof vehicle," he told the media at the air port. On December 10, several vehicles in Nadda's cavalcade were damaged in the attack. Sources in the BJP said its leaders, including Vijayvargiya and vice president Mukul Roy, sustained injuries in

Bill gives death penalty, ₹10 lakh fine for crimes on women, modelled after AP

Bill tabled in Maharashtra Assembly

BHAGWAN PARAB | DC MUMBAI, DEC. 14

In a historical move, the Maharashtra government on Monday tabled the Shakti Bill in the Vidhan Sabha that provides a death penalty and a fine up to ₹10 lakh for crimes against women and chil-

dren in the state. State home minister Anil Deshmukh tabled the Maharashtra Shakti (Maharashtra Amendment) Act, 2020, as well as

Maharashtra Exclusive

Special Court (for certain

against Children Women and under Shakti Law) on the first day of the two-day winter session of the state legislature. Based on the Disha Act

in Andhra Pradesh, the bill has proposed strict punishments for crimes such as rape, acid attack and derogatory material on social media against women and children.

It has also proposed specourts ensuring speedy trial in cases of crimes against women and children, amendments in sections of Indian Penal

• BASED ON the Disha Act in Andhra Pradesh, the bill has proposed strict punishments for crimes such as rape, acid attack and derogatory material on social media against women and children.

(CrPC) and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) to Offences sternly deal with such crimes

The bills have assured to bring down the investigation period from two months to 15 days, the trial period from two months to 30 days, and appeal period to 45 days from the present

Code (IPC), Code of six months. It is expected Criminal Procedure to be cleared by the House

The new law will have a separate judicial system to fast-track the cases that come under the Act's purview with at least one special court in each of the districts. It has the provision for special public prosecutors and special police teams, which will have at least one woman

establish institutions for providing services to victims, including medical or psychiatric support and care, counselling, facilitating legal and financial aid, and rehabili-

officer. It also aims to

Deshmukh said the legislation proposes to complete investigation, trial and sentencing within a stipulated time frame. "The offences against women and children, especially heinous and sexual offences have increased many fold in the state. The proposed law will also

have provisions to tackle threats and messages on social media platforms. It is an important legislation and provisions have been made to ensure that the accused are booked and sentenced at the earliest, he added.

Several women's groups had earlier Maharashtra Minister Thackeray to not table the Shakti bill, calling it draconian legislation that is fundamentally women with the potential to negate the very offence



fix the problem.

hacking tools.

arm are investigating.

The hacks were revealed

cybersecurity firm dis-

into its network and

stolen the company's own

Many experts suspect

against

Security

spokesperson

Russia as responsible for

FireEye, a major cyberse-curity player whose cus-

tomers include federal,

state and local govern-

ments and top global cor-

porations. There was no

immediate connection between the attacks, and it

wasn't immediately clear

if Russia was also respon-

sible for the hack of the

Treasury Department, which was first reported

John Ullyot said in a state-

ment that the government

was "taking all necessary

steps to identify and reme-

dy any possible issues

related to this situation."

The government's Cybers

Infrastructure Security Agency said separately that it has been working

"regarding recently dis-

covered activity on gov-

CISA is providing techni-

cal assistance to affected

ernment networks.

other agencies

by Reuters.

Council

National

attack

SHORT TAKES

RAWALPINDI BLAST: 3 ULTRAS HELD IN PAKISTAN

Lahore, Dec. 14: Three Taliban terrorists, involved in a blast in Rawalpindi, were arrested on Monday by Pakistan's security agencies.

At least 25 people, including women and children, were injured in the grenade attack in the Ganj Mandi area near a police station in the garrison city of Rawalpindi on Sunday.

Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) of the Punjab police said in a state ment on Monday that a CTD Rawalpindi team got information that three terrorists were hiding on Adyala-Kharakan Road along Swan River Rawa lpindi. "On this information and evidence collected from Pir Wadhai crime scene, CTD raided the place on Monday and arrested three terrorists Explosives, detonators, cell phones and other articles recovered," it said.

U.S. REMOVES SUDAN FROM TERROR LIST

Khartoum, Dec. 14: The United States has formally removed Sudan from its state sponsor of terrorism blacklist its Khartoum embassy said Monday, less than two months after the East African nation pledged to normalise ties with Israel. The move opens the way for aid, debt relief and investment to a country going though a rocky political transition and struggling under a severe economic crisis exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. US President Donald Trump had announced in October that he was delisting Sudan, 27 years after Was hington first put the country on its blacklist for harbouring Islamist militants. "The congressional notification period of 45 days has lapsed and the Secretary of State has signed a notification stating rescission of Sudan's State Sponsor of Terrorism designation," the US embassy in Khartoum said

Hackers infiltrate US fed networks

Experts suspect Russian hand in attack on FireEye, major cybersecurity player in US

Data leak exposes China in top firms

Hackers broke into the networks of federal agencies including the Treasury and Commerce departments as US government officials said ernment officials said Sunday that they were working to identify the scope of the breach and to **Melbourne, Dec. 14:** identified as having Amid simmering tensions alleged CPC members as between Australia and The FBI and the Department of Homeland China, the media here on Monday reported a major Security's cybersecurity data leak containing official records like party position, birthdate, national ID number and just days after a major ethnicity of nearly two closed that foreign governmillion alleged members ment hackers had broken of the Communist Party

> working across the world. The data leak obtained by 'The Australian' newspaper has revealed how the alleged CPC members are employed with some of the world's biggest corporations in the areas of defence, banks and pharmaceutical giants manu-Coronavirus facturing vaccines

of China (CPC) living and

Among the companies

their employees are Boeing and Volkswagen, pharmaceutical Pfizer and AstraZeneca, and financial institutions including ANZ and HSBC. according to the reports. The leak has exposed

details of 1.95 million CPC members after being extracted from by Shanghai server whistleblowers. An invesby tigation Australian' has found that at least 10 consulates in the eastern Chinese metropolis Shanghai have CPC members employed as senior political and government affairs specialists, clerks, economic advisers and executive

assistants.

entities as they work to identify and mitigate any potential compromises." President Donald Trump last month fired the director of CISA, Chris Krebs, after Krebs vouched for the integrity of the presidential election and disputed Trump's claims of widespread electoral fra-

Federal government agencies have long been attractive targets for foreign hackers.

Hackers linked to Russia were able to break into the State Department's email system in 2014, infecting it so thoroughly that it had to be cut off from the internet while experts worked to eliminate the infstation. Reuters earlier reported that a group backed by a foreign government stole information from Treasury and a Commerce Department agency responsible for deciding internet and telecommunications policy.

Intelligence agencies are reportedly concerned that other agencies were hacked using similar tools. The Treasury Department deferred comment to the National Security Council. A Commerce Department spokesperson confirmed a "breach in one of our bureaus" and said "we have asked CISA and the FBI to investigate."

US kicks off Covid-19 vaccine drive as Germany returns to partial lockdown

New York, Dec. 14: The United States kicked off a mass vaccination drive Monday hoping to turn the tide on the world's biggest Coronavirus outbreak, as the country's death toll neared a staggering

3,00,000. A nurse in New York became the first person in the US to be vaccinated when she received the Pfizer-BioNTech shot live on television.

"I feel great. I feel relieved," said Sandra said Sandra Lindsay, a critical care nurse at the Long Island Jewish Medical Center, imploring all Americans to "to do our part" by getting vaccinated.

"I hope this marks the beginning of the end of the very painful time in our history," she added.

The landmark moment comes at one of the darkest phases of the pandemic, with infections in the United States and many other countries soaring, and health experts still struggling against vaccine skepticism, lockdown fatigue and uneven adherence to safety rules.

The US has the world's highest death toll of more than 2,99,000, and the largest number of reported cases, at 16.2 million including more than 1.5 million new infection in just the past week.

"First Vaccine Administered. Congratulations USA! Congratulations
WORLD!" tweeted President Donald Trump.
The start of the US vacci-

nation campaign came as Germany announced a partial lockdown from Wednesday, with essential shops essential and schools to close in a bid to halt an "exponential growth" in infections.

The restrictions, agreed by Chancellor Angela Merkel and regional leaders, will apply through the holidays until January 10.

Santa infects 75 at Belgian care home EFFECTIVE: STUDY Belgium, Dec. 14: A man

from Belgium, who dressed up as Santa Claus to spread Christmas joy, ended up being labelled as 'super spreader' after inadvertently infecting 75 people at an old age home with Covid-19.

According to reports, the unnamed man visited the Hemelrijck aged care home in the Belgian town of Mol to entertain its residents and staff. However, he had no idea that he was already infected with Covid-19.

The man was welcomed to spread joy among 150 residents at the care home. While everything went smooth during the visit, he ended up infecting 14 staff members and 61 residents, one of which required oxygen support for breathing.

Fortunately, the other infected people only suffered mild to moderate symptoms, without any breathing troubles.

Just three days after the

visit, the man who dressed up as Santa fell ill and tested positive for Covid-19. The aged care home made it mandatory for residents and staff to wear face masks. But pictures from the Christmas event showed that not all residents wore masks and Santa' and his helpers stood very close to the eld-

erly people. "It was made with the best intent, but it went wrong. It has been a very dark day for the care home. It is a very great mental strain to bear for the man that played Saint Nicholas, as well as for the organisers and the staff," mayor, Caeyers, told Belgian news organisation VRT

"Initially they said that the rules had been followed, but then straight away you receive photos from the families of residents where you can see that this wasn't the case," — Agencies

REMDESIVIR DRUG MAY BE HIGHLY

London, Dec. 14: Remd esivir may be a highly effective antiviral against SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19 according to a new single patient study that contradicts previous research which found the drug had no impact on death rates from the disease.

The researchers from the University of Cambridge in the UK who gave the drug to a patient with Covid-19 and a rare imm-une disorder, observed a dramatic improvement in his symptoms and the disappearance of the virus.

Scientists had previous ly pinned hope on remde sivir which was originally developed to treat hepatitis C and subsequently tested against Ebola. However. results from large clinical trials have been inconclusive, and the World Health Organisation (WHO) announced in October that the drug did not significantly reduce

SOUTH KOREA TO OPEN MORE TESTING SITES

Seoul, Dec. 14: South Korea was opening dozens of free Covid-19 testing sites in the greater Seoul area, as the country registered additional 718 new cases on Monday amid a surge in infections.

The Korea Disease Control and Prevention Disease Agency said the additional cases took the country's total since the pandemic began to 43,484 infections -APwith 587 deaths.

Pak flayed over overcrowded jails Islamabad, Dec. 14: A lation by over 6,000 between April and

human rights report released on Monday harshly criticised Pakistan's response to the Coronavirus threat faced by tens of thousands of inmates stuck in overcrowded and often unsanitary prisons. Instead of following through on promises to

ease prison overcrowding

made when the pandemic

first hit, pakistan's gov-

ernment has actually

between April and August, from 73,242 to 79,603. Some of the few who were freed were later rearrested.
The joint report by London-based Amnesty International and Justice

Project Pakistan said inmates face a growing risk of infection, and called for renewed efforts to free certain prisoners.

FINANCIAL

VISAKHAPATNAM | TUESDAY | 15 DECEMBER 2020

INDICATO	RS	%
Sensex	46,253.46	0.34
Nifty 50	13,558.15	0.33
S&P 500*	3,676.49	0.36
Dollar (₹)	73.56	0.12
Pound Sterling (₹)	98.65	1.32
Euro (₹)	89.41	-0.19
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	48,371▼460	0.95
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	49.72	-0.25
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.946	-0.010
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.921	0.030
* As of 8:30 PM IST		

Hyundai gets 30,000 bookings for i20 in 40 days



received around 30.000 bookings for the all-new version of its premium hatchback i20 in last 40 days. It has already delivered 10,000 units of the model, the firm said. "We are witnessing a truly superlative customer response," director (sales, marketing & service) Tarun Garg said. He said 85 per cent of the bookings are for higher trims. Hyundai launched the new i20 on Nov. 5.

Seek 51% stake with each staff putting in ₹1 L

Employees bid for Air India

RAGINI SAXENA

group of 219 Air India Ltd employees submitted a bid to purchase 51 per cent of the loss-making state owned carrier.

The remaining 49 per cent will be held by a financial partner, said Meenakshi Malik, Air India's commercial director. Each employee will have to contribute at least Rs 100,000 toward the bid, she said.

Air India has been on sale since 2017 when Prime Minister Narendra Modi's cabinet signed off on a plan to sell all or part of the debt-ridden carrier. The government sweet-ened the deal earlier this year when it extended the bid deadline to December 14 from October 30, saying potential suitors will be allowed to decide how much of the flag carrier's debt they want to take on as part of the transaction. The rules before that required bidders to take over the carrier's \$3.3 billion of aircraft debt, deter-

ring buvers. 'We always believed Air India can be a profitable set up," said Malik. "The government has removed a huge part of the debt, so we thought who better than us? We know the airline inside out, we know where the problems are. We're not bidding to win or lose, we're doing it because we believe we can run the

airline well.' Air India has been unprofitable since its 2007



merger with state-owned domestic operator Indian Airlines Ltd, and has relied on taxpayer money to keep flying, with the bailouts adding to the pressure on already strained government finances.

The airline, which began operations in 1932 as a mail carrier before winning commercial popularisaw its fortunes fade with the emergence of cutthroat low-cost competition. The state-run carrier's entire debt totals more than \$8 billion. The government didn't find a single bidder when it tried to sell the company before.

That said, the the airline does have some lucrative assets, including prized slots at London's Heathrow airport, a fleet of more than 100 planes and thousands of trained pilots and Malik said a financial

partner had already been

found, without disclosing

entity's Employee participation has come from "the most junior employees to the most senior board members," she said, without elaborating.

A local media report on Monday said that US-based Interups Inc plans to bid with the employees. Interups chairman Laxmi Prasad confirmed the development, telling Moneycontrol that we "will be submitting a bid." Tata Group is also said to

have submitted an expression of interest for Air India over the weekend. Its interest was submitted via AirAsia India, in which Tata Sons Pvt Ltd has a significant majority stake. Singapore Airlines Ltd, with which Tata Sons operates full-service airline Vistara, won't be part of the bid in the initial stages, according to a news

- Bloomberg

Burger King more than doubles on debut



RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, DEC. 14

Burger King India share-holders made a bumper listing gain of 130.67 per cent on the stock's debut on the bourses.

Burger King's shares closed at Rs 138.40 per share against the public issue price of Rs 60 for each share of Rs 10 face

The public issue of Burger King, a sub-sidiary of US-based fast food chain, received overwhelming response from investors, with the Rs 810-crore issue getting subscribed 156.65 times. The shares listed at Rs

115.35 on the BSE, a premium of 92.25 per cent over the public issue price of Rs 60, and at Rs 112.50 on the NSE. The stock moved up till the market close, indicating more upside as the shares closed at the day's high of Rs 138.40 on the BSE and Rs 135 on the

The market capitalisation of Burger King stood at Rs 5,282.10 crore, close to Rs 6,624.15 crore m-cap of Westlife Development, McDonald's

Torrent to invest ₹5,000 cr in Chennai city gas project

New Delhi, Dec. 14: Torrent Gas Ltd on Monday pledged Rs 5,000 crore investment to develop infrastructure to retail CNG to automobiles and piped gas to households and industries in Chennai, the biggest city gas licence in its portfolio.

Torrent Gas, part of the

pharma-to-energy Torrent Group, signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Government of Tamil Nadu for development of city gas infrastructure at an event in Chennai, the company said. The firm will lay

pipelines and other infra-



structure in Chennai and Tiruvallur districts, covering an area of 3,569 sq. km, to provide piped natural gas (PNG) connections to homes, industries and commercial establishments. It will also set up the infrastructure to dispense compressed nat-

Torrent Gas holds city gas licence for 16 geographical areas spread across 32 districts covering seven states—UP, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Telangana—and the Union territory of

Puducherry.
Jinal Mehta, director,
Torrent Gas, said, "This
investment of Rs 5,000 crore by Torrent Gas in development of CGD infrastructure is expected to have a major impact on the socio-economic development of the region by attracting fresh investment in the state." —PTI

GST shortfall: States, UTs get ₹42,000 cr

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, DEC. 14

The central government has so far borrowed and released Rs.42,000 crore to states and union territories to meet the GST compensation shortfall of Rs 1.10 lakh crore. The amount under seven

installments was borrowed through the special borrowing window at an average interest rate of 4.7 per cent. Of the 7th weekly instalment of Rs 6,000 crore released on Monday, Rs 5,516.60 crore has gone to 23 states and Rs 483.40 crore to the three union territories. The interest rate on the amount borrowed this week is 5.13 per

special borrowing window in October to meet the estimated shortfall of Rs 1.10 Lakh crore in revenue arising on account of implementation of GST. The borrowings are being done via this window on behalf of the states and UTs.

The Centre had set up the

Karnataka has received the highest amount of Rs 5,668.31 crore, followed by Maharashtra at Rs 5,472.11 crore. North-eastern states of Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Nagaland, Mizoram and Manipur have nil GST compensation gap.

The Centre has also granted additional borrowing permission equivalent to 0.50 per cent of GSDP to the states choosing Option-I to meet the GST shortfall.

OLA TO INVEST ₹2,400 CRORE IN **E-SCOOTER PLANT**

New Delhi, Dec. 14: Ride-hailing firm Ola, backed by Japan's SoftBank Group, said on Monday it planned to invest Řs 2,400 crore (\$326 million) to set up a factory in Tamil Nadu to produce

electric scooters. The plant will have an initial annual capacity to produce two million scooters and will create nearly 10,000 jobs, Ola said, as it gears up to launch electric scooters in the coming months.

ment of over \$180 billion in vehicle production and charging infrastructure until 2030 to meet its EV ambition, says the CEEW Finance.

India needs an invest-

SHORT TAKES

Ex-Reds coach Houllier dies

Paris: Gerard Houllier, a Frenchman who won three titles in one season as coach of English club Liverpool, has died. He was 73, Liverpool announced the death on Twitter on Monday. French sports daily L'Equipe said Houllier died following heart surgery in France. "We are mourning the passing of our treble-winning manager, Gerard Houllier," Liverpool wrote on Twitter.

Houllier had a mediocre stint as coach of France's national team in the early 1990s, his shortlived journey ending with an embarrassing failure to qualify for the 1994 World Cup. His tenure at Liverpool was far

more successful, leading the Reds to the FA Cup, League Cup and UEFA Cup treble in 2001. He is one of only three managers along with Alex Ferguson and Pep Guardiola to have won three trophies with an English club in the same season. — AP

Shuttlers alerted about fake events

New Delhi: The Badminton Association of India on Monday again cautioned its players, coaches and technical staff and asked them to stay away from unauthorised tournaments after it came to light that a Goabased organisation is conducting such an event next month. According to a release issued by BAI, Goa-based organisation Youth & Sports Development Association of India is conducting the third National

Federation Cup next month in Madgaon, Goa with the organisers claiming that it will be a selection trial for upcoming international championships. "Neither BAI nor its affiliated unit Goa Badminton Association is aware about such

tournaments and organisation, **BAI General Secretary Ajay** Singhania said in the release.

Hockey side for foreign tour soon

Bengaluru: His side's Olympic preparation hampered by the Covid-19 pandemic, Indian men's hockey team chief coach Graham Reid is hoping to resume international action from early next year. The Australian said the sooner India gets to play international matches, the better will be their preparations for the Tokyo Games, which has been shifted to next year due to the global pandemic. "With the support of Hockey India, we have planned for matches from early next year. These matches will ideally show us the level we are truly at and the areas that will require work on leading into the Olympic Games," Reid said in a statement issued by Hockey India. — PTI

Iniured Nevmar stretchered off

Rio de Janeiro: Brazilian star Neymar gave fans a reassuring message on Monday after undergoing tests on the ankle he injured in Paris Saint-Germain's 1-0 Ligue 1 defeat to Lyon at the weekend. Neymar left the field on a

stretcher in apparent agony on Sunday but on Instagram he said: "It could have been worse.

"These tears, it's the pain, the fear, the worry, the surgeries, the crutches and other bad memories," Neymar wrote on his Instagram story alongside a picture of him in tears clutching his ankle.

It was a reference to previous injuries he has suffered notably twice breaking his foot since joining the French champions in 2017.- AFP

Live on TV

CRICKET

Big Bash League: Hobart Hurricanes vs. Adelaide Strikers from 1.45 pm on Sony Six, HD

FOOTBALL Indian Super League: Hyderabad FC

vs East Bengal from 7.20 pm on Star Sports 2, 3

English Premier League: Wolves vs

Sports Select 1, HD

Italian League: Udinese vs Crotone from 11 pm. Benevento vs Lazio from 1.15 am (Wednesday) on on Sony Ten 2, HD

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Finch wary of Virat

Aaron warns Aussies about 'ruthless' Kohli

Australia limited-overs captain Aaron Finch wants the home team players to strike a "fine balance" when they confront Virat Kohli in the opening Test as he believes, if provoked too much, the India skipper can be "ruth-less" against his opponents.

India and Australia have always shared an intense rivalry on the field, filled with verbal volleys, banters and controversies over the

The last time the two teams faced off in 2018-19, the Test series saw some heated exchanges between the two captains — Kohli and Tim

"I think there will be times when things boil over and when you have got strong characters on either team that's going to come to a head at some point," Finch was quoted as saying by 'Sydney Morning Herald'.

"(But) there is a fine balance there, isn't there? You don't want him (Kohli) to get up and about in the contest. When he does, he can be ruthless on an opposition.

The first Test of the four-game series, a day-night contest, begins on Thursday in Adelaide and it gains prominence Kohli will be returning home after the match for the birth of his first

Finch, who was part of the last home Test series between the two teams, said the Indian skipper looks much calmer the way he goes about his job now.

"I think the change is in the way he goes about it now. I think as a person he is probably a bit more relaxed out on the field and understands the tempo of the

game." Finch, who had played under Kohli in

superior glovework may

be given preference over

Rishabh Pant's blazing blade in India's opening

day/night Test against

Australia, starting at the

One of the most hotly

debated topics going into

the first Test has been the

Indian team's probable

playing XI, with the jury

still out on whether the

better keeper in 36-year-

old Saha pips the better

batsman that the 23-year-

The Indian team man-

agement has kept its cards close to its chest with Hanuma Vihari terming it a "healthy competition" that augurs

There is a school of thought in the team that

Saha's superior glove-

work and also safe batting

should be valued more at

coaches Vikram Rathour,

Bharat Arun and travel-

ling selector Harvinder

Singh will be assessing

well for the side.

this point of time.

Oval from

Adelaide

Thursday.



A file photo of India captain Virat Kohli (left) and Australia's Aaron Finch.

Challengers Bangalore, said he was 'surprised" to see the Indian's confidence in this year's IPL.

"What really surprised me was how, he obviously does a lot of planning and preparation himself, and into the opposition, but he never focused more on the opposition than his own team," he said.

"At Bangalore, he was always confident in the XI players that were picked and knew that if you played well, you had every chance of winning.

As someone who had many on-field duels with Kohli, Finch said it was good to learn

Ajinkya Rahane will not

be bogged down by the

pressure of captaincy if he leads India in the last

Australia in Virat Kohli's

absence, feels batting great Sunil Gavaskar.

With Kohli going on paternity leave after the

opening day-night Test

against Australia in Adelaide, Rahane is

expected to lead the team

in the remainder of the

"There is no real pres-

sure on Ajinkya Rahane,

because both the times

both Pant and Saha's per-

formance based on their

individual contributions

game and he bailed the

team out while facing a top-quality attack. The

score read 143 for nine

in match situations.

Coach Ravi Shastri, captain Virat Kohli, assistant

Saha's 54 came when India could have lost the

four-Test series.

Tests against

HENRIQUES REPLACES INJURED ABBOTT

rounder Moises Henriques was on Monday added to Australia's injury-hit squad for the opening Test against India while pacer injury-hit Sean Abbott was ruled out of the match due to a calf strain.

GAVASKAR FEELS THERE WILL RE NO

Ajinkya Rahane

that he has led the team,

against

faced

and

he has won. He led

Dharamshala and India

Afghanistan and India

lost to Australia A, but he

guided a young Kartik

and saved the game.

Гуаді, scored his runs

The attack that Saha

James

had

Pattinson, Michael Neser

which was international

Cameron Green,

Australia

He led against

Moises

Henriques, who had missed the three-day second practice game due to a hamstring strain, cleared the fitness Test on Monday to return to the Test squad after a gap of four years. The opening game, a daynighter, begins on

Saha has an edge over Pant

December 17 in Adelaide. "All-rounder Henriques has been added to Australia's squad for the first Test against India about his relaxed side.

after the hosts' camp continues to be hit with injury," a report in *crick*-

et.com.au. said.
Abbott became the latest Australian player to join the injury list after being picking up the strain during the second warm-up game here. He is, however, expected to be available for second Test in Melbourne, which begins on December 26.

Abbott, who had taken three wickets in India's first innings, will not travel with the team to Adelaide.

"Fast bowler Sean Abbott will not travel to Adelaide with Henriques and the remaining Australia squad members from Sydney

won," Gavaskar said dur

"So, as far as his cap

taincy is concerned.

there is going to be no

pressure because he

knows he is at the

moment, only the stand-

in captain for the 3 Test

"So, I don't think the

fact about being a cap-

tain or carrying on as

captain is going to be

part of his thinking at all."

Rahane had captained

the side during the two

warm-up games which

ended in draws. -PTI

ing Star Sports show.

strain in the day-night tour match at the SCG on Saturday.

Henriques last played a Test more than four years ago in Sri Lanka. He made a comeback to the national set-up after three years by featuring in the limitedovers series against India. He is the second player after Marcus Harris to be added late to the Test

Harris was included in the squad for the opening Test following a spate of injuries, including David Warner and opener Will Pucovski being ruled out of the first game due to a groin injury.

NZ BEAT WINDIES IN SECOND TEST TO SWEEP SERIES

Wellington, Dec. 14: Zealand joined Australia atop world cricket's Test rankings on Monday when they beat the West Indies by an innings and 12 runs in the second Test to sweep the two-match series.

The West resumed their second innings at 244/6 on the fourth day, trailing New Zealand by 85 runs after following on 329 behind.

The tourists were eventually out for 317, their highest innings total of the series.

New Zealand made a positive start on Monday after a short rain delay, dismissing West Indies captain Jason Holder for 61 in the fourth over of the day and ending his 82run partnership with Joshua Da Silva. Holder was bowled by

Tim Southee with a fuller ball which straightened and beat the outside edge of the bat. Brief scores: New Zealand 460 bt West Indies 131 & 317

(Jason Holder 61, da Silva 57, Wagner 3-54, Boult 3-

INDIAN | SUPER LEAGUE

Mumbai fail to crack open JFC

Goa, Dec. 14: A flurry of missed chances saw tabletoppers Mumbai City FC settle for only a 1-1 draw against Jamshedpur FC in the Indian Super League at the GMC Stadium, here on Monday.

Owen Coyle's men took the lead through Nerijus Valskis (9') before Mumbai back through Bartholomew Ogbeche (15'). A red card for Aitor Monroy around the halfhour mark saw Jamshedpur reduced to ten-men but some dogged defending and a number of chances for Mumbai, saw the former

get away with a draw.

Mumbai dominated the early exchanges as Monroy had to dive to block Ogbeche's shot as early as the first minute. But it was Jamshedpur who drew first blood. Just nine min-utes had passed when Jackichand Singh found Valskis in the penalty box. The Lithuanian's first-time shot was unerring. Barely three minutes later, Monroy could only find the side netting from a free-

Monroy was in the thick of things a couple of minutes later, hacking Cy Goddard down and getting himself in the referee's

Then, Mumbai found their equaliser. Adam Le Fondre made a run down the right before squaring the ball to Bipin Singh. The

HYDERABAD FACE EB IN TRICKY TIE

Vasco, Dec. 14: Hyderabad FC will be keen to continue their unbeaten run when they take on a struggling SC East Bengal in an Indian Super League fixture at the Tilak Maidan here on

Tuesday. Four games into the season, Hyderabad FC are one of just three teams that are yet to lose a game a win and three draws) and they will be eager to convert their efforts into a victory, against the ISL debu-

tants.
SC East Bengal have not had the best of starts to the season. They are yet to score a goal, but logged first point in the league table in a feisty clash against Jamshedpur

Thursday. They remain bottom of the table but could prove to be one of the biggest tests for Hyderabad so far this season.

latter found Ogbeche and the Nigerian unleashed a powerful drive past Jamshedpur keeper T.P. Rehenesh.



Barcelona's Lionel Messi (centre) vies for the ball with Levante players during their La Liga match at the Camp Nou in Barcelona on Sunday.

Messi comes to Catalans' rescue

Madrid, Dec. 14: Lionel Messi saved Barcelona from another embarrassing result by scoring the decisive goal in a 1-0 win over lowly Levante, while Real Sociedad returned top of La Liga on Sunday.

Messi struck with 14 minutes remaining of a lacklustre display from Barca at the Camp Nou which will do little to ease fan fears following their 3-0 hammering at the hands of Juventus midweek.

Ronald Koeman's side are still way off the pace in the title race, nine points behind Real Sociedad who reclaimed first place despite only drawing 1-1 with Eibar.

Barcelona do however have two games in hand on the Basque outfit.

Atletico are level on 26 points with Sociedad and also have two games in hand while Real Madrid are now just three points behind the leaders having played one less after beating their local rivals 2-0 on Saturday.

Villarreal are four points off the lead in fourth after drawing 1-1 at Real Betis, who are one point behind Barca in ninth.

Barca managed to force several saves from Aitor Fernandez, with the Levante goalkeeper doing particularly well to push away a stinging shot from Martin Braithwaite in the 16th minute and Antoine Griezmann's header five

minutes later. However the best chance of the opening period fell to Jorge de Frutos in the 12th minute, the Spaniard somehow shooting straight at Marc-Andre ter Stegen after the ball broke kindly for him right in front of

Leicester's James Maddison (right) celebrates his goal against Brighton in their Premier League match at the King Power Stadium in Leicester on Sunday. -AP

and the team could have standard.

matches

Compared to that, Pant came after India had already taken control of the pink ball dress rehearsal with leg-spinner Mitchell Swepson and part-timer Maddinson in operation.

Leaders Spurs, Liverpool held

London, Dec. 14: Tottenham and Liverpool remain tied at the top of the Premier League after both were held to 1-1 draws at Crystal Palace and Fulham respectively, while Pierre-Emerick Aubamyeng's own goal condemned Arsenal to another shocking home defeat, going down 1-0 to Burnley on Sunday.

Leicester took advantage of slip ups by the top two to close to within one point of leaders as Maddison scored twice in a 3-0 rout over Brighton and Southampton are up to fourth as they also comfortably saw off Sheffield United 3-0.

Liverpool and Tottenham

THE RESULTS

Crystal Palace

Southampton (Adams 34, Armstrong 62,

face each other at Anfield on Wednesday and, after Chelsea, Manchester City and Manchester United failed to win on Saturday, they both missed the chance to open up a gap at the top in the title race. The champions needed a Mohamed Salah penalty 11

minutes from time to avoid an embarrassing defeat at Fulham after a dreadful first-half performance left Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp seething on the

(Maddison 27, 44, Vardy 41)

Fulham

Burnley

Liverpool

(De Cordova-Reid 25)

touchline. "We needed half an hour to get our feet in the game, that's why I shouted a bit at

them," said Klopp.
"I think in the first half

an hour we could have lost the game, in the last 60 minutes we should have won it. In the end we get a point and that's it.

Bobby DeCordova-Reid's thunderous finish into the far corner to take the lead was no more than Scott Parker's side deserved as the returning Alisson Becker kept Liverpool in the game before the break.

Liverpool dominated the second-half to pin Fulham back, but needed a penalty to salvage a point when Aboubakar Kamara was penalised for handling Georginio Wijnaldum's