

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA
NELLORE | WEDNESDAY | 25 NOVEMBER 2020



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MP to probe money transfer to AICC



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Biden finally gets accepted as winner

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Top bat Rohit Sharma to miss Oz Test series



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WEATHER

Max: 32.5°C
Min: 22.9°C
RH: 74%
Rainfall: Nil
Forecast: clear.
Max/Min temp. 32/22 °C

COVID-19 COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+45,827)	(+515)
92,20,703	1,34,727

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+921)	(+4)
TS: 2,65,049	1,437
(+1,085)	(+8)
AP: 8,63,843	6,956

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

5,97,86,447

DEATHS

14,07,642

COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES

218

worldometers.info/coronavirus

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Dakshinayana

Tithi: Kartika Shuddha Ekadasi till 5.10 am (Thursday)

Star: Uttarabhadra till 6.20 pm

Variyam: Nil

Durmuhurtam: 11.40 am to 12.25 pm

Rahukalam: 12 noon to 1.30 pm

HJRI CALENDAR

Rabbi-ul Akhir 9, 1442 AH

PRAYERS(SHAHI MASJID)

Fajar: 4:58 am

Zohar: 11:55 pm

Asar: 4:03 pm

Maghrib: 5:39 pm

Isha: 6:52 pm

SUNSET TODAY 5:38 PM

SUNRISE TOMORROW 6:15 AM

MOONRISE TODAY 1:21 PM

MOONSET TOMORROW 1:20 AM

COUNTER POINT

...first dose to healthcare workers, political leaders and people of the states where elections are due!

SHORT TAKE

CENTRE BLOCKS 43 MORE CHINESE APPS

New Delhi: India on Tuesday blocked 43 more Chinese mobile apps, including Alibaba Group's e-commerce app AliExpress, in a fresh wave of web sanctions amid its border standoff with China. The banned applications, which include a few dating apps, were a threat to the "sovereignty and integrity of India", an official statement said.

The latest list of 43 mobile apps include AliSuppliers, Alibaba Workbench, AliExpress, Alipay Cashier, CamCard, Snack Video, WeDate, Chinese Social, TrulyChinese, ChinaLove, DateMyAge, FlirtWish and Guys Only Dating, Tubit, WeWorkChina, First Love Live, Rela, Cashier Wallet, Jellipop, Munchkin Match and Happy Fish Match.

Kerala to cancel contentious law

Thiruvananthapuram: The CPI-M-led LDF government in Kerala on Tuesday decided to bring out an ordinance to withdraw the controversial amendment to the Kerala Police Act. A special cabinet which met in the afternoon decided to recommend Governor Arif Mohammed Khan to issue an ordinance to repeal Section 118-A which got his assent on Saturday.



President Ramnath Kovind along with his family members worship at Dwajasthambam inside Tirumala temple on Tuesday. — DC

Cyclone Nivar is likely to batter Rayalaseema today

DC CORRESPONDENTS
VISAKHAPATNAM/VIJAYAWADA/KURNOOL/TIRUPATI, NOV. 24

Cyclone Nivar is very likely to bring widespread rain over south Andhra Pradesh post its landfall as the influence of the tropical system is seen till Tirupati. The gale wind speed could reach 65-75 kmph gusting up to 85kmph on November 26. Under the influence of the system, Guntur and Prakasam received good rainfall on Tuesday with gale wind blowing over the coastal districts. Cyclone Nivar may cross Tamil Nadu-Puducherry coasts between Karaikal and Mamallapuram as a very severe cyclonic storm during late evening of November 25 or mid-night. Rayalaseema region will witness widespread rains after the system crosses the coast. Sea conditions will be very high over Southwest and adjoining West central Bay of Bengal and phenomenal over the same area from noon to night. Fishermen are advised not to venture into these areas. After crossing the coast, the adjacent subdivisions of coastal AP,

● **CYCLONE NIVAR** may cross Tamil Nadu-Puducherry coasts between Karaikal and Mamallapuram as a very severe cyclonic storm during November 25 late evening or midnight. Rayalaseema region will witness widespread rains after the system crosses the coast.

● **SEA CONDITIONS** will be very high over Southwest and adjoining West central Bay of Bengal and phenomenal over the same area from noon to night. Fishermen are advised not to venture into these areas.

Rayalaseema need to be observed for spillover of intense weather activity in some areas. Relief can be expected from marginal weather conditions from November 27 onwards. Meanwhile, Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy in a review meeting with district collectors through video conference sought protection of crops and informing farmers through RBKs. "Awareness should be created among farmers on protecting the harvested crops and standing crops should not be harvested in the wake of the cyclone," he said. Nellore and Prakasam district collectors KVN Chakradhara Babu and Pola Bhaskar said that the district administrations are on full alert to face any eventualities. They appealed to the public to contact 1077 helpline number, which works round-

the-clock at the district emergency operations centre, for help during emergencies. Nellore collector Chakradhara Babu, who inspected various cyclone shelters in the district on Tuesday, said that around 100 personnel from NDRF and SDRF have reached the district to handle emergency situations. He said that the district administration is also in constant touch with the Venkatagiri 9th battalion for extra support at vulnerable areas. Pola Bhaskar said they have identified 11 vulnerable mandals that may be impacted by the cyclone. He said special officers have been deputed to all 11 mandals, which have 40 revenue villages and 134 habitations under it.

■ **Page 2: Interior Seema districts to get 20 cm rain**

Multiple standards defeat factory inspection's purpose

SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 24

Lack of a uniform approach in inspection of industries that handle hazardous and explosive substances, as a special drive, seems to be defeating the very purpose of inspection that is aimed at ensuring safety and environmental compliance in the State.

In the aftermath of styrene vapour leak from LG Polymers in Visakhapat-

nam, the AP government constituted a high-power committee and based on its recommendation, a special 90-day drive was ordered from mid-August. The units to be covered for inspection are all the hazardous chemical industries covered under MSIH Rules, 1989, including all 'red' category units. A district joint committee was constituted with the joint collector in-charge for industries and commerce as its chairman.

Sources say out of 1,326 industrial units identified for inspection in the entire state, notices have been served only 300 units following deviations in certain norms to ensure their compliance with safety. For instance, in East Godavari district, 21 industrial units are falling under Major Accident Hazard category out of a total number of 151 units.

■ **Page 2: Pressure on officials hinder inspection**

NUMBER | GAME

DoT accepts Trai's recommendation; Decision will come into force from Jan. 1

Landline to mobile calls get zero prefix

New Delhi, Nov. 24: Callers will soon be required to add '0' prefix for making calls from landlines to mobile phones in the country, with the telecom department asking telecom companies to make necessary arrangements by January 1 to implement the new system. The department has accepted sectoral regulator Trai's recommendation for having the '0' prefix for such calls, a move that will create sufficient numbering space for telecom services. The Department of

Telecom (DoT) in a circular on 'modification of dialling pattern from fixed line numbers to cellular mobile numbers' said in order to ensure adequate numbering resources for fixed line and mobile services, Trai's recommendations dated May 29, 2020 have been accepted by the Department. "Following may be implemented...Fixed-to-mobile calls shall be dialled with prefix '0'. A suitable announcement may be fed in the fixed line switches to apprise the fixed line subscribers about the require-

FUTURE READY

● Come January 1, people need to add '0' before dialling a mobile number from landline phone.

● All landlines will be provided with STD dialling facility to enable them to make calls to mobile phones.

● The change in dialling pattern will allow the department of telecom generate 254.4 crore additional numbering resources for mobile services to cater to the future requirements.

ment of dialling the prefix '0' for all fixed-to-mobile calls," DoT said in a circu-

lar dated November 20. This announcement should be played whenever

a subscriber dials a fixed-to-mobile call without prefixing '0', it said. "All the fixed line subscribers should be provided with '0' dialling facility, that is, STD dialling facility," said the circular posted on Department of Telecom's website. DoT said that time till January 1 is allowed to all the telecom service providers to implement this new system. "Compliance of the same may be intimated," the telecom department said. It is pertinent to mention here that the Telecom

Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) in May this year had recommended dialling prefix '0' for a call from fixed line number to mobile number. The regulator had, however, stated that the introduction of a dialling prefix for a particular type of call is not akin to increasing the number of digits in the telephone number. Trai had then also stated that this change in dialling pattern will generate 2,544 million additional numbering resources for mobile services to cater to the future requirements. — PTI

Jagan to rollout sops for small biz, street vendors

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 24

The YSR Congress government is to launch yet another welfare scheme with Jagananna Thodu, which aims to provide financial assistance to small scale businesses, including traditional occupations and street vendors.

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy will do it on Wednesday and it can benefit nearly 10 lakh people in 13 districts.

As many as 1,44,486 vegetable vendors applied for Jagananna Thodu, followed by 1,24,735 small Kirana traders, 85,330 tiffin-shop vendors, 26,024 roadside bunk traders, 26,024 small fancy shop traders, and nearly four

● **AS MANY** as 1,44,486 vegetable vendors applied for Jagananna Thodu, followed by 1,24,735 small kirana traders, 85,330 tiffin-shop vendors, 26,024 roadside bunk traders, 26,024 small fancy shop traders, and nearly 4 lakh other petty traders and vendors. These 10 lakh applicants will take the Jagananna Thodu scheme on Wednesday.

Interest-free loan of ₹10,000 would be provided to small and petty vendors under the scheme. With regard to this, the CM will

release ₹1,000 crore and the amount will be directly credited into the bank accounts of the beneficiaries. The objective of the scheme is to free vendors from paying heavy interest to private parties and fall into debts. The banks will be providing loans to all the eligible members and the government shall pay interest on the loan amount to banks. The state government had also started a special web portal to coordinate with banks and to implement the scheme giving no scope for corruption. The beneficiaries will also be provided with QR-based smart ID cards and the scheme will be monitored by SERP, MEPMA officials.

● **JAGAN CONDUCTED** a review meeting with officials and directed them to prepare an action plan towards administering the Covid vaccine

importance to infrastructure facilities required for refrigeration of the vaccine. He told them to come up with an action plan for storing the vaccine at optimum temperature, as well as transporting it to remote areas retaining the temperature. He also sought readiness of vaccine distribution. Home minister Mekathoti Sucharitha, transportation principal secretary T. Krishnababu and other officials were present in the video conference.

BRAHMOS WITH LONGER RANGE PASSES TEST

New Delhi, Nov. 24: India on Tuesday "successfully" test fired the surface-to-surface supersonic cruise missile BrahMos as part of a series of planned trials of the weapon, known for its precision strike capabilities, official sources said. The range of the new land-attack version of the missile has been extended to 400 km from the original 290 km but its speed has been maintained at 2.8 Mach or almost three times the speed of sound, they said. "The land-attack version of the missile was test-fired in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands at around 10 am and it was a successful trial," an official source said. According to official sources, in the next few days, the Indian Air Force and the Indian Navy are scheduled to carry out separate test-firing of the new version of the air-launched and naval versions of the supersonic cruise missile respectively. BrahMos Aerospace, an India-Russian joint venture, produces the lethal weapon that can be launched from submarines, ships, aircraft, or from land platforms. India has already deployed a sizeable number of the original BrahMos missiles along the Line of Actual Control. In the last two-and-half months, India has test fired a number of missiles including an anti-radiation missile named Rudram-1 which is planned to be inducted into service by 2022. — PTI

CAPITAL ISSUE ORDER ISSUED TO CHANGE LEVYING OF PROPERTY TAX

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 24

The state government has issued an order to change the system of levying of property tax based on the existing system of Annual Rental Value to Capital Value.

The department of municipal administration and urban development issued GO Ms No. 198 here on Tuesday to issue the 'Rules for Levy and Assessment of Property Tax' in supersession of the earlier rules issued in GO MS No. 438 dated 29-10-1990 and GO Ms No.439 dated 29-10-1990 applicable to all urban local bodies.

APUCF OPPOSES TAXES HIKE PROPOSAL

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 24

The AP Urban Citizen Forum (APUCF) demanded that the AP government cancel the proposed hike of property, water, drainage and other taxes which would put huge extra financial burden on people who were already disturbed due to the Corona crisis.

APUCF convener Ch. Babu Rao said that the state government approved the ordinance proposed to increase taxes on people.

He said that the government decided to collect ₹10,000 crore through property tax against the normal of ₹1,270 crore hence decided to increase property tax hugely to collect ₹10,000 crore.

Babu Rao said that there was no possibility to collect user charges for garbage collection but the government changed norms and all set to start user charges collection and further decided to collect user charges for underground drainage connections.

He said that the neighbouring Telangana state government reduced property and water taxes but sadly the Andhra Pradesh government was targeting to put more financial burdens on people through tax increases.

He demanded cancellation of the tax hike proposal with immediate effect and warned about starting protests if the government stood adamant about the tax increases.

HC HEARS PETITIONS ON CAPITAL CITY AMARAVATI

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 24

The AP High Court held a hearing on a batch of petitions on capital city Amaravati lands here on Tuesday.

Representing the affected farmers from Amaravati region, Supreme Court senior advocate Nidhesh Gupta informed the court that the state government was bound to honour the agreements it had with the farmers who offered their lands under Land Pooling Scheme for developing capital city Amaravati. He stated that the agreements between the state government and the farmers were held based on the CRDA Act and added that as per the provisions of the Act, the farmers were assured to allot plots.

The senior advocate referring to the provisions of the AP Reorganisation Act, 2014, he said that 'A' capital for the new state of Andhra Pradesh meant only a single capital.

PETITION FILED IN HC SEEKING CBI PROBE ON MASS SUICIDES

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 24

A petition was filed in AP High Court seeking CBI probe here on Tuesday, on death of autorickshaw driver Abdul Salam along with three of his family members by committing suicide in pact, unable to bear police harassment at Nandyal in Kurnool district recently.

Indian Union Muslim League Andhra Pradesh general-secretary Kajavali filed a PIL in the AP High Court asking it to hand over the mass suicide case of autorickshaw driver Abdul Salam to the CBI for taking up proper inquiry. He said in his petition that as the police personnel were accused in the case, it would not help to find out the facts in the case if the police were involved to take up the inquiry.

Petitioner's counsel Sravan Kumar sought the High Court to hand over the case to the CBI for taking up a through probe in the case.



President Ram Nath Kovind is welcomed by Governor B.B. Harichandan and Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy at the Renigunta Airport on Tuesday.

Prez offers prayers at Tirumala, Tiruchanoor

Vedic pundits rendered Vedaśirvachanam on the President

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, NOV. 24

President Ram Nath Kovind offered prayers to Lord Venkateswara and Goddess Padmavathi Devi at Tirumala and Tiruchanoor temples during his one-day pilgrimage to Tirupati on Tuesday.

Earlier, the first citizen of the country along with his entourage had reached the Renigunta airport in a special Indian Air Force flight. AP Governor Biswa Bhushan Harichandan, Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy and a host of elected representatives and officials received the President at the Renigunta airport.

After a brief interaction, the President along with

● The first citizen of the country along with his entourage had reached the Renigunta airport near Tirupati in a special Indian Air Force flight.

● The President and his family members have offered prayers at Sri Bhuvareśwara Swamy temple, following the customary practice of having darshan of presiding deity here.

his family members reached the Tiruchanoor temple, where he offered prayers to Goddess Padmavathi Devi and then reached Sri Padmavathi guesthouse at Tirumala by road.

After a brief stay here, the President and his family members have offered prayers at Sri Bhuvareśwara Swamy temple, following the customary practice of having darshan of presid-

ing deity here. Later, they reached the Mahadwaram (main entrance) of Lord Venkateswara temple where they were accorded the traditional 'Isthi-kapal' welcome by the temple priests and the TTD officials led by TTD chairman Y.V. Subba Reddy and executive officer Dr. K.S. Jawahar Reddy.

After being led into the sanctum sanctorum, the President and his family

members offered prayers to Lord Venkateswara for a brief while and the temple priests explained the historical significance of the hill shrine. Later, Vedic pundits rendered Vedaśirvachanam on the President and TTD chairman and executive officer offered the temple's prasadam and a picture of Lord Venkateswara.

The TTD chairman also presented a sketch of the first citizen of India and his wife drawn by an artist from Vizianagaram, to the President.

The President was later given a send-off at the Renigunta airport by the elected representatives, officials of the state government and the TTD on Tuesday evening.

Naidu calls upon all sections to wage battle against YSRC govt

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 24

Telugu Desam chief N. Chandrababu Naidu called upon all sections of people who are allegedly being victimised by the YSRC government to rally together and wage a relentless battle against the ruling party's atrocities and oppression.

He alleged that Meuzzin Hanif attempted suicide due to the harassment by the YSRC leaders which Naidu says is showing the continuation of atrocities against the minorities.

Addressing a meeting with the party mandal committee leaders from across the state, Naidu claimed that the ruling party leaders were afraid of being routed in the polls if they were to be held immediately as they fear that the victimised sections of the society would become united and defeat their candidates. He alleged that this Chief Minister would not discourage atrocities but he would encourage miscreants and their atrocities.

Mr. Naidu asked what wrong Abdul Salaam family did that they were terrified to the extent of committing joint suicide. He lamented that just for questioning soil digging in Muslims' graveyard, Muezzin Hanif was

GOVT FAILED TO ENHANCE PENSIONS: TD

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, NOV. 24

Telugu Desam's Nellore district general-secretary Ch. Venkateswara Reddy alleged that the ruling YSRC, which assured to enhance pensions at the rate of ₹250 annually to the disabled, widowed and senior citizens, has failed to keep up its promise.

Speaking to reporters at Kovur on Tuesday, he said the TD chief N. Chandrababu Naidu enhanced the pensions 10 times, while the ruling YSRC had till date enhanced

● Naidu claimed that the houses constructed during the previous TD regime were a right of the poor beneficiaries and the YSRC had no right to snatch away these houses from these poor families.

harassed and forced to attempt suicide. He asked if it was a crime to oppose illegal soil digging?

Naidu claimed that the Jagan Mohan Reddy regime was scared of facing a backlash from the BC, SC, ST and Muslim

only 10 per cent. He alleged that the YSRC had assured ₹3,000 of pension to eligible beneficiaries if they come to power but they have failed to keep up their promise.

He noted that women from the SC/ST/BC communities, who crossed 45 years of age are still waiting for Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy, who assured pensions to them, but did not realise it. He said that the state government, as per its promise, had to enhance the pension by ₹250 from July, but there has been no such increment till now.

minorities which was they were creating hurdles for the local body elections.

He stressed the need for a united effort by all the affected sections to give a tough fight against the oppressive regime. He stated that the responsibility to save AP would now rest upon the shoulders of each and every citizen of the state.

Naidu claimed that the houses constructed during the previous TD regime were a right of the poor beneficiaries and the YSRC had no right to snatch away these houses from these poor families.

FAILED PROJECT

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 24

The Andhra Pradesh Industrial Infrastructure Corporation Limited (APIIC) to take back the 840.76 acres government land allotted to M/s Kintea Power Limited located in Thamminalpatnam and Momidi villages of Chilla-kur mandal in Nellore district as the state government issued permission to cancel land allotment and resume the land.

The department of industries and commerce (infra) issued GO MS No. 84 dated 24-11-2020 stating that orders were issued for alienation for 1,847.98

Company failed to implement power project at Krishnapatnam within the time-frame

APIIC gets nod to recover 840.76 acres from Kintea

● After noticing violation of certain terms and conditions of Agreement for Sale, the government ordered the APIIC to conduct an inquiry and accordingly, the government observed that the Agreement of Sale executed between the APIIC and M/s KPPL was not having provisions for transfer of allotment of land before or during implementation of the project.

frame. As the show cause notices were served, the company replied stating that they were in process of obtaining CRZ clearance and sought permission to include a strategic partner by exempting from them from clause No. 9 (i) of Sale Agreement. Accordingly, M/s Jindal Power (P) Limited came

into issue stating that they were willing to implement the project of M/s KPPL and requested for exemption from the purview of clause No 27(i) of the APIIC Allotment Regulations, 2012. The APIIC approved it in its board meeting.

After noticing violation of certain terms and conditions of Agreement for Sale, the government ordered the APIIC to conduct an inquiry and accordingly, the government observed that the Agreement of Sale executed between the APIIC and M/s KPPL was not having provisions for transfer of allotment of land before or

Interior Rayalaseema districts predicted to receive 20 cm rain

From Page 1

Parts of Kurnool, Kadapa and Anantapur districts are expected to receive 10 to 20 cms of rain.

Kurnool district administration is on high alert as the Nivar cyclone is expected to wreak havoc. Control rooms have been set up at Nandyal, Adoni and Kurnool. Farmers in Nandyal division were teetering with fear as their standing crops are in danger of being washed out.

Distressed people may contact four control rooms, including command control room at Kurnool Collectorate - 08518 277305 and each one at three revenue divisions like Kurnool RDO office - 83339 89011, Nandyal sub-collector office - 08514 221550 and 83339 89013 and Adoni RDO office 83339 89012 have been established. Officials said that at least 10 to 20 centimetres of rainfall is expected

● KURNOOL DISTRICT administration is on high alert as the Nivar cyclone is expected to wreak havoc. Control rooms have been set up at Nandyal, Adoni and Kurnool.

in the district.

Moreover, in view of T u n g a b h a d r a Pushkaralu, officials have been asked to closely monitor the situation, said Kurnool district collector G Veera Pandian. The district administration is focused on reducing agriculture losses. Vulnerable low-lying areas are under focus and officials have been asked to be available round-the-clock.

He directed officials to caution the people to be alert as there were chances of the cyclone water entering villages. The people can contract

flood control rooms at their nearest RDO offices, he said.

He also ordered the officials to alert the people of river bank villagers especially Tungabhadra River where presently the 12-day Pushkar fete is being organised.

Meanwhile, two trains under East Coast Railways have been partially cancelled and some diverted due to cyclone Nivar.

A release said Bhubaneswar-Puducherry special express leaving Bhubaneswar on Tuesday was cancelled between Chennai

Egmore-Puducherry. The return train leaving Puducherry on Wednesday was cancelled between Puducherry-Chennai

Egmore. Puducherry-Howrah special express leaving Puducherry on Wednesday was cancelled between Puducherry-Villupuram.



K. Atchannaidu

TD ASKS SEC TO PREVENT ATTACKS ON TD LEADERS

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 24

Telugu Desam AP president K. Atchannaidu on Tuesday made a strong plea to the State Election Commission (SEC) to take stringent measures to prevent the ongoing attacks by the ruling YSRC leaders on the Opposition parties' candidates in the local body elections.

He wrote a letter to SEC Nimmagadda Ramesh Kumar, alleging that the YSRC candidates and their followers were resorting to intimidation tactics and attacks on the TD nominees in Santhamaguluru mandal in Prakasam district. He further alleged that the ruling party was targeting all those who contested the local polls on behalf of the TD.

Stating that the common public were being terrified with murder politics, Atchannaidu demanded that the CBI inquiry be launched into the YSRC attacks on the TD activists. He deplored that the ruling party was indulging in undemocratic and unlawful activities all across the state.

Atchannaidu sought postponement of elections wherever violence and irregularities were reported. He demanded that security be provided to the Opposition candidates with the Central forces. He sought the SEC to begin online nominations in order to give a level-playing field to all the candidates in a democratic manner.

Atchannaidu stressed the need for conducting the elections amid security provided by the Central forces since the YSRC was resorting to widespread violence and attacks.

development of temple city on all fronts by pumping in crores of rupees funds from the Centre under the smart city projects.

“The BJP-led Central government has sanctioned nearly ₹1,400 crore for the Tirupati smart city project, under which many development works are being carried out in the temple city today. The Centre has established world-class educational institutions here. To name a few, the IIT, IISER, Indian culinary institute etc”, he added.

BJP'S WINNING STREAK IN AP WILL BEGIN WITH WIN IN TIRUPATI: SOMU

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, NOV. 24

BJP AP unit president Somu Veerajulu said that BJP's winning streak in Andhra Pradesh will begin with a remarkable victory in the Tirupati Lok Sabha byelection.

Speaking to the media here on Tuesday, the BJP state chief said that both the Telugu Desam and the YSRC are trying to credit themselves for the overall development of Tirupati, but the city denizens know that it was the BJP, which fast-tracked the


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IN BRIEF

MAN SETS RECORD BY REMOVING 68 BOTTLE CAPS

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, NOV. 24

An Indian martial arts expert from Nellore has set a new Guinness World Record by removing the most number of cooldrink bottle caps with his head in just one minute.

The martial arts expert Prabhakar Reddy of Legend martial arts in the Magunta layout, has removed 68 bottle caps in a minute and made it to the book of records, while he was assisted by E. Sujith Kumar and B. Rakesh. He broke the earlier world record set in this category by Pakistan's Muhammad Rashid Naseem.

The Guinness world record tweeted the video of the act on its official handle by writing, "Don't try this at home." In the video, Prabhakar Reddy was seen using his forehead to remove the cap from the bottles.

As per the official website of Guinness world record, Prabhakar broke the record on November 18, 2020, on the occasion of Guinness world records day. Along with Prabhakar, many have participated in the celebrations in a bid to break existing records.

NATIONAL PARK LIKELY IN ANANTAPUR DIST

DC CORRESPONDENT
ANANTAPUR, NOV. 24

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) sought proposals for setting up National Park in existing 1,000 acres of forest land in between Penukonda-Somandepalli on NH 44 in the district.

The local organisations represented the Centre to consider National Park in Anantapur district in view of all requirements available for establishing a new park.

The Penukonda Paryatak Porata Samithi president Prathap Reddy sent a representation to the MoEFCC seeking a mega-park to be established in Anantapur district. The committee observed that there were more than 2,000 acres of forest lands including hillock areas available in between Penukonda and Somandepalli mandals located on National Highway 44.

The Union minister Prakash Jawadekar reacted positively towards representation and Rameswar Guptha, secretary of Environment of forests and climate change and directed the state forest department to prepare detailed proposals towards establishing a National Park in Anantapur district.

It may be noted that deep reserved forests exist in the district along with diverse flora and fauna. At least 120 leopards, 10,000 bears and 30,000 blackbucks and many other species exist in the reserved forests and hillock areas. More than five leopards died in different incidents in the district for the past few months. Several instances of bear attacks on farmers have been reported.

The proposal was to set up a National Park in between Penukonda-Somandepalli would improve tourists from Anantapur district and surrounding Karnataka areas because of many tourist centres, temples and historic places that existed in the district. Penukonda, the summer capital of Vijaynagar Empire, Lepakshi with world biggest Nandi and sculpture, Puttaparthi -International Spiritual centre, World Biggest Thimamma Marrimanu, Hemavathi- only temple of Lord Shiva with the human statue in South India.

Filthy city



GVMC sanitation staff clean the plastic waste from the closed drainage through manholes in the One Town Main Road in Visakhapatnam on Tuesday. People and shopkeepers on the main road were shocked to find a huge amount of plastic bottles from the closed drainage which passes before them.

— K. MURALIKRISHNA

No water release after Mar. 31

Polavaram project cofferdam works, laying of pipeline to begin

DC CORRESPONDENT
KAKINADA, NOV. 24

Though there is plenty of water in River Godavari, irrigation officials will not be able to supply irrigated water to the agriculture fields after March 31 as Polavaram project officials have made it clear that they will expedite the Polavaram project cofferdam works and laying of pipeline works from April 1.

Project superintendent engineer M. Nagireddy said that Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has given next year's December as the deadline to complete the project and commencement of project works in April. He also said that the 300-metre length of pipes would be laid near the project, which would stop water flows.

Meanwhile, 9,000 cusecs of water can be supplied to the farmers till March 31. The Irrigation Advisory Board meeting was held at

Rajamahendravaram on Tuesday and was presided over by Deputy Chief Minister Dharmana Krishna Das, also the district in-charge minister.

Ministers, MLAs, Farmers' Union leaders and others from East and West Godavari districts discussed thoroughly about the availability of water and releasing it to fields in Rabi season.

Irrigation superintendent engineer N. Siva Ramakrishna said that water can be supplied till March 31 and water may not be flown downstream from Polavaram project.

Rajya Sabha member Pilli Subhash Chandra Bose appealed to the irrigation and Polavaram project officials to supply the water up to April 15 as paddy crops will need water on those days.

Mr Bose said that if the

chief minister Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy for supplying water to the entire crop with efficient management.

He advised Polavaram project officials to use sophisticated technology and extend their date up to April 15. However, Nagireddy said that after holding thorough discussions on all possibilities and available technology, March 31 has been fixed as the last date for releasing water to the second crop at Polavaram project site and their works should be completed by June, as the rainy season may stall progress of the project.

Mr Bose said that if the

Polavaram project officials give another 15 days, it will be enough to save the second crop.

Housing minister Ch. Sriranganatha Raju said that there is plenty of water but due to the Polavaram project and coffer dam works, the officials say that they can't supply water from April.

He said, "If we leave officials for this season, the project would be completed and then the water problem would be sorted out."

Agriculture minister Kurasala Kannababu said that every year tail-end lands are facing a huge water crisis and irrigation officials should chalk out an action plan to save the tail-end farmers.

Kakinada MP Vanga Gita said that officials should pay attention to the supply of drinking water and to livestock. Otherwise, the people and animals would face difficulties due to scarcity of water.

Meanwhile, the Telugu Desam MLA of Palakollu, Nimmala Ramanaidu said that the farmers lost heavily in last year's Rabi and water should be supplied up to April 15. He said that during the Telugu Desam regime, advanced and sophisticated technology had been used for the project works, which fetched them the Guinness Book honours. He suggested the project officials use ultra-modern technology and save crops.

East Godavari district collector D. Muralidhar Reddy and his West Godavari counterpart Revu Muthyala Raju said that agriculture and irrigation officials should encourage farmers to opt for direct sowing method to save time and money. He also suggested the farmers should sow short period varieties. Muthyala Raju said that an action plan has been made ready to complete the crop by March 31.

4 PERSONS OF THE SAME FAMILY HELD FOR KILLING A RELATIVE

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, NOV. 24

The Venkatagiri Police on Tuesday arrested four persons from the same family on charges of murdering their relative with lethal weapons on November 21.

According to Venkatagiri Police, the accused were identified as Arani Venu, A. Lakshmaiah, A. Tirumala and A. Hari Krishna, residents of Arava Valla colony in Harijanawada of Ammapalem in

Venkatagiri mandal.

Arani Srinivasulu was having disputes with his brother's sons regarding a land. Though village elders settled the issue some time ago, Arani Venu and others have plotted to kill Srinivasulu to grab the land.

On November 21, the three accused had trespassed into the land and tried to clean it. On observing this, Srinivasulu had a heated argument with the three, who attacked him with lethal weapons and he died.

FATHER, SON KILLED IN ROAD ACCIDENT

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, NOV. 24

In a tragic incident, a father and his 9-year-old son were killed when he lost control over his motorcycle and rammmed a palm tree near Aletipadu in Chittamur mandal of Nellore district on Tuesday.

According to Chittamur Sub-Inspector Kishore Babu, the deceased were identified as B. Malli Babu, 35 and B. Subrahmanyam, 9. The father and son went to purchase groceries at a nearby store in Kothagunta village on their two-wheeler when Malli Babu lost control over his vehicle and rammmed a tree at Bayyavarikandriga near Aletipadu village.

Malli Babu and his son Subrahmanyam died on the spot. SI Kishore Babu reached the spot.

Ammonia poses threat to workers

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, NOV. 24

Industrial ammonia usage, emissions and leakage pose a new problem for workers as well as people living in areas surrounded by the industries. In August this year, about 14 workers hospitalised after an Ammonia gas leak at a milk dairy unit in Puthalapattu mandal of Chittoor district.

This is not just an isolated case of Ammonia problem in the country. Despite several reports showing that a thick blanket of toxic Ammonia lies over the industrial areas in our country, there was no concrete policy to regulate its usage. In fact, many food processing industries are still relying on Ammonia, though there are many alternatives to it.

For instance, out of the 1,572 small, medium and large-scale industries in Chittoor district, around 217 industries – having pollution index scores of 60, were identified as hazardous and classified under red category. Out of the total identified hazardous factories, about 63 per cent i.e., 138 units - 120 dairy units and 18 other factories - have been widely using ammonia, mainly for refrigeration purposes.

The special drive being conducted by the district joint committee to ensure compliance of safety protocols and environmental

norms by the industries, has found that many of these units have failed to be in compliance and violating the laid norms. The most worrying factor is that many small dairy farm units in the district, which contributes 70 per cent of total units, are using ammonia as a refrigerant to store milk, though there are many alternatives to it.

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*, deputy chief inspector of factories M.V. Sivakumar Reddy said that the ongoing and scheduled evaluations and pre-emptive maintenance are critical for any Ammonia storage solution.

"While bulk units have fewer alternatives for Ammonia, smaller units are having many alternative gases to be used as a refrigerant. By applying already known techniques and industrial practices, it is possible to reduce industrial usage of Ammonia by more than 60 per cent in the district," he noted.

He said, presence of gaseous Ammonia has dangerous implications on both human health and environment and it is highly recommended for small-scale dairy units to go for Ammonia alternatives and save the environment and take measures for the safety of workers and people living around their units.

The department has also launched an awareness campaign in the district.


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TASTY | MEAT

Quail farming is very lucrative, says farmer

Quail farming catching up

DC CORRESPONDENT
KURNOOL, NOV. 24

Quail farming is catching up in Rayalaseema districts and neighbouring Mahbubnagar. Quail meat is supposedly more delicious than poultry and quail eggs are rich in protein.

Prior to the lockdown, quail meat used to be served in Rayalaseema districts and dhabas. Since normal times are back, patrons of quail meat are demanding the dish, said Siraj, owner of a dhaba on NH 44.

Sai Baba, a resident of

Nagarkurnool said quail farming is very lucrative as the bird gets ready for consumption in just seven weeks. When compared to poultry chicken, the maintenance of quail farms is easy and remunerative. He said each quail lays 280 to 300 eggs in a year and the bird is highly fecund and fertile.

Manish Babu, a resident of Sirivella, said he was rearing quails as a hobby. The bones of the bird are a delicacy in themselves, he said.

However it is alleged that hotels and dhabas have struck a deal with suppli-



ers, who procure wild quail from forests rather than from farms. But forest officials are denying such allegations.

Atmakur DFO Kuran said that hunting of any bird is punishable and the culprits could be prosecuted under the Wildlife Act.

Kadapa DFO Ravinder Dama said any eatery serving quail meat found violating rules would be dealt with as per law. He said there were instances of wild pigs being poached in his jurisdiction but not quails. Stern action would be taken against the culprits, Ravinder warned.

Quails, which inhabit densely in Rollapadu sanctuary, have become a hindrance to the endangered Great Indian Bustard. While quails, harriers and black deer thrive in Rollapadu, the Bustard has almost vanished, said a forest official.

SHORT TAKES

CONG LEADERS
USING WRONG
PLATFORM: BAGHELRABINDRA NATH
CHOUDHURY | DC
BHOPAL, NOV. 24

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Tuesday lambasted the Congress leaders who demanded change of party leadership, saying that they were using the wrong platform to raise such an issue.

"Those who talk of change of system, structure and leadership of Congress have chosen the wrong platform to raise the issue", Baghel said in his Twitter post.

Baghel's statement comes in the wake of senior Congress leaders like Gulam Nabi Azad and Kapil Sibal going to the media to express their views on the need for restructuring the party to make it more democratic. "Congress party is an ideology and ideology has no structure. Ideology is the 'neev' (foundation)", he tweeted. He dared these leaders to work on the ground. "Hit the street carrying the Tricolor and flag of Congress. Then, the realisation that the problem does not lie in foundation nor in structure (of the party), will come", another Twitter post by him said.

VETERAN
ACTOR BADOLA
NO MORE

Mumbai, Nov. 24: Veteran actor Vishwa Mohan Badola, who appeared in several television shows, films and was a prominent name in theatre, has passed away due to age-related ailments. He was 84.

According to a source close to the family, the actor died at his residence here on Monday night. The veteran also featured in several acclaimed films, including Ashutosh Gowariker's *Swaades*, in which played the role of a village leader. He reunited with Gowariker for the 2008 period drama *Jodhaa Akbar*.

UP okays law against
conversion for marriage

Violators of ordinance get can jail-term for upto 10 years, fine

Lucknow, Nov. 24: The Uttar Pradesh government on Tuesday approved a draft ordinance to deal with religious conversion for the sake of marriage, which could land violators in jail for up to 10 years.

An official spokesperson said the state Cabinet gave its nod to the ordinance at its meeting chaired here by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

In recent weeks, BJP-run states like Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh have revealed plans to enact laws to counter alleged attempts to convert Hindu women to Islam in the guise of marriage, which Hindu activists refer to as love jihad.

"The way in which religious conversions are done using deceit, lies, force and dishonesty is heart wrenching, and it was necessary to have a law in this regard, Cabinet minister and UP government spokesperson

Sidharth Nath Singh said. He said punishment under the new law is a jail term from one and five years, and a fine of ₹15,000.

But if the woman involved is a minor or belongs to a Scheduled Caste or a Scheduled Tribe, the jail term would range from three to 10 years, he said. The fine would increase to ₹25,000.

In the case of mass conversions, the punishment is from three years to 10 years and a fine of ₹50,000 on the organisations which indulge in it," the minister told reporters.

Singh said if anyone wants to change religion after marriage, then he or she can do so.

But the district magistrate has to be informed two months in advance in a prescribed form, and the person can convert once permission is granted.

He claimed that this will resolve law and order problems.

— PTI

HC upholds right
to choose partner

Allahabad, Nov. 24:

Amid a row over love jihad, the Allahabad High Court has ruled that the right to choose a life partner irrespective of religion is intrinsic to the right to life and personal liberty. The bench contradicted a high court judgement in September and another in 2014 against marriages performed after alleged conversions, saying that the two rulings were not good in law.

Justices Pankaj Naqvi and Vivek Agarwal made the observations while quashing an FIR lodged by a man against his daughter's husband, whom she married after conversion to Islam. Interference in a personal relationship would constitute a serious encroachment into the

right to freedom of choice of the two individuals, they said.

While allowing the writ petition by Salamat Ansari and Priyanka Kharwar alias Alia of Kushinagar, the judges cited Article 21 of the Constitution on personal liberty. "To disregard the choice of a person who is of the age of majority would not only be antithetic to the freedom of choice of a grown up individual but would also be a threat to the concept of unity in diversity," they said. We do not see Priyanka Kharwar and Salamat as Hindu and Muslim, rather as two grown up individuals who out of their own free will and choice are living together peacefully and happily for over a year, they said. — PTI

Customs arrest Kerala CM's ex-secretary

GILVESTER ASSARY | DC
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
NOV. 24

The troubles of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's former principal secretary M. Sivasankar are from over with Customs recording his arrest in connection with the gold smuggling case.

The Customs officials visited Sivasankar in Kakkadai jail in Ernakulam district where he is currently under judicial custody in a case registered by the Enforcement Direc-

torate earlier. He was arrested by the ED in connection with the money trail associated with the gold smuggling case in which he is the fifth accused. The Customs recorded his arrest a day after the special court for Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) cases allowed Customs to take Sivasankar into custody.

The Customs while seeking his custody had claimed that they had received direct incriminating material against the bureaucrat regarding

his involvement in gold smuggling through diplomatic baggage.

The Customs has cited the statement given by key accused Swapna Suresh in which she alleged that Sivasankar was involved in the gold smuggling conspiracy. His detailed questioning was essential to probe the different channels involved in gold smuggling.

It may be recalled that the Customs had earlier arrested 15 persons in connection with the case including Swapna Suresh,

Sarith P.S. and Sandeep Nair in connection with the seizure of 30 kg of gold which was smuggled through diplomatic baggage meant for a senior official of UAE consulate in Thiruvananthapuram.

The seizure made by the customs at the Thiruvananthapuram International airport on July 5 exposed a huge racket involving several people.

The Customs told the court that it has sufficient information regarding the suspended officer's involvement in the case.

Final journey



Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi near the mortal remains of his father and former Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi in Guwahati on Tuesday. Tarun Gogoi, 86, passed away at the Gauhati Medical College Hospital, where he was receiving treatments for post-Covid complications. Scores of people and leaders cutting across party lines gathered at Tarun Gogoi's official residence in Dispur to pay their last respects. The Assam government has announced a three-day state mourning in honour of Tarun Gogoi.

— PTI

RJD fields candidate
for Speaker's postNAYEAR AZAD | DC
PATNA, NOV. 24

The RJD on Tuesday announced that the party has fielded a candidate for the post of the speaker against the ruling NDA in the newly constituted Bihar Assembly.

Leader of the Opposition Tejashwi Yadav said that the party has fielded five-time RJD MLA from Siwan, Awadh Bihari Chaudhary for the post against the ruling NDA nominee and three-time BJP MLA Vijay Kumar Sinha.

"Our nominee for the post of Assembly speaker has submitted his nomination paper even before the ruling NDA announced its candidate. Chaudhary is a five-time MLA and is aware of the Assembly proceedings. The decision to declare him as the candidate for

the post was taken during a meeting with all grand alliance partners. We feel that he is the fit candidate for the post of the speaker", Yadav said on Tuesday.

With RJD declaring Chaudhary as the grand alliance candidate, the election scheduled on Wednesday for the post would not be unanimous this time.

This is also the first time since the NDA came to power in 2005 that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has staked claim for the post.

During the recently concluded Assembly elections, the BJP became the largest in the NDA with 74 seats while its partner JD(U) won 43 seats.

Two other NDA partners Hindustani Awam Morcha and Vikasheel Insan Party won four seats each.

POLICE RESCUE
TRANSEXUAL
DOCTOR IN TN

Madurai, Nov. 24: A young transsexual doctor found in the company of transgenders, begging on the streets of this temple town, was rescued by the police who is now helping her open a clinic, to serve the people. The transsexual, who did not want her name to be revealed, hopes to move the Medical Council of India for making appropriate changes in the records, and open the clinic to resume medical practice soon.

This young doctor who graduated from the Madurai Government Medical College in 2018, was ostracised by her family for undergoing sex transformation to become a woman. Her profession almost came to an end when she was sacked from a hospital, where she was working for a year.

— PTI

WORLD

SHORT TAKES

TAIWAN TO
BUILD DOMESTIC
SUBMARINES

Kaohsiung (Taiwan), Nov. 24: Taiwan's president inaugurated the production of domestically made submarines Tuesday in the southern city of Kaohsiung, in a step forward for the island's defence strategy at a time of elevated tensions with China.

"This submarine is an important part of allowing our navy to develop asymmetric warfare and to intimidate and block enemy ships from surrounding Taiwan's main island," said President Tsai Ing-wen. "Now, with the construction of the submarine to its future commission, we will certainly let the world know our persistence in safeguarding our sovereignty."

B'DESH MAN
HELD FOR HINDU
ATTACK PLOT

Singapore, Nov. 24: A Bangladeshi man, who was plotting attacks against Hindus in his own country and planning to fight in Kashmir, has been arrested by Singapore's security agencies which investigated the suspicious activities of 37 people as part of the heightened security measures in the city-state following recent terror strikes in Europe, the government said on Tuesday.

In a statement, the Ministry of Home Affairs said that counter-terrorism investigations into the suspicious activities of 37 people in Singapore have been carried out after most of them posted on social media, inciting violence or stoking community unrest in the aftermath of the terror attacks in France.

Of the 37 people, 14 are Singaporeans and 23 foreigners, mostly Bangladeshis, it said. "The 14 Singaporeans comprise 10 males and four females, and are aged between 19 and 62 years old. Most of them had, in response to the recent terror attacks in France, made social media postings which incited violence or stoked communal unrest," the ministry said.

As for the 23 foreigners, 16 of them, including 15 Bangladeshis and one Malaysian have been repatriated, it said.

Trump agrees to
Biden transition

Will pave way for a smooth handover of power; Prez doesn't concede poll defeat

Washington, Nov. 24: US

President Donald Trump has finally given a go-ahead to begin the transition process for president-elect Joe Biden after the state of Michigan certified the Democratic leader's victory in the November 3 presidential election, paving the way for a smooth handover of power after weeks of delay.

President Trump, a Republican, however, did not formally concede the election to Biden, saying he would "continue to fight and will prevail." He has launched a slew of lawsuits in key states, but has not provided any evidence to back his claims of electoral fraud. Many of the lawsuits have been dismissed by courts.

On Monday, the Administrator of the General Services Administration (GSA) Emily Murphy informed Biden in a letter that the Trump administration is ready to begin the formal transition process. The letter from Murphy, a Trump appointee, is the first step the administration has taken to acknowledge President Trump's defeat, more than two weeks after Biden was declared the winner.

Taking to Twitter after Murphy wrote to Biden, Trump said that he has asked to begin the transition process in the best interest of the country. "...fight, and I believe we will prevail! Nevertheless, in the best interest of our Country, I am recommending that Emily and her team do what needs to be done with regard to initial protocols, and have told my team to do the same."

"What does GSA being allowed to preliminarily work with the Dems have to do with continuing to pursue our various cases on what will go down as the most corrupt election in American political history? We are moving full speed ahead. Will never concede to fake ballots & "Dominion," Trump said

Michigan certifies
Biden poll victory

Lansing (US), Nov. 24:

Michigan election officials on Monday certified Democrat Joe Biden's 154,000-vote victory in the state, another setback for President Donald Trump in his futile effort to undermine the results of the Nov. 3 election through baseless legal challenges and unsupported claims of fraud.

The Board of State Canvassers, which has two Republicans and two Democrats, confirmed the results on a 3-0 vote with one abstention. Allies of Trump and losing GOP Senate candidate John James had urged the panel to delay voting for two weeks to audit votes in heavily Democratic Wayne County, home to Detroit. Under Michigan law, Biden claims all 16 electoral votes.

Biden won by 2.8 percentage points — a larger margin than in other states where Trump is contesting the results like Georgia, Arizona, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania. Some Trump allies had expressed hope that state lawmakers could intervene in

selecting Republican electors in states that do not certify. That long shot bid is no longer possible in Michigan. "The people of Michigan have spoken. President-elect Biden won the State of Michigan by more than 154,000 votes, and he will be our next president on January 20th," Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, a Democrat, said in a statement, saying it's "time to put this election behind us."

The Trump legal team dismissed the certification as "simply a procedural step" and insisted it would fight on. But Trump's efforts to stave off the inevitable — formal recognition of his defeat — is facing increasingly stiff resistance from the courts and fellow Republicans with just three weeks to go until the Electoral College meets to certify Biden's victory.

Time and again, Trump's challenges and baseless allegations of widespread conspiracy and fraud have been met with rejection as states move forward with confirming their results.

— AP

YELLEN MAY BE TREASURY SECRETARY

Washington, Nov. 24: US President-elect Joe Biden is planning to nominate former Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen as his Treasury Secretary to lead his economic response to the raging Coronavirus pandemic, which has wreaked havoc on the world's biggest economy

and led millions of Americans to lose their jobs.

A formal announcement on 74-year-old Yellen would be made soon, according to *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Washington Post*. The Treasury Secretary is fifth in the presidential line of succession.

— PTI

in a series of tweets.

In her letter, Murphy said she took the decision "independently" and based on the law. "Please

know that I came to my decision independently, based on the law and available facts," Murphy said.

— PTI



Palestinians, mask-clad due to the Covid-19, wait to cross onto the Egyptian side at the Rafah border crossing between the Gaza Strip and Egypt, on Tuesday. It was announced that Egypt would reopen the border crossing from November 24 to 26.

— AFP

US virus response: Thanksgiving
could prove to be make or break
China FM in Japan for talks on
reviving Covid-hit economies

Washington, Nov. 24:

In Pennsylvania, if you're having friends over to socialise, you're supposed to wear a mask — and so are your friends. That's the rule, but Barb Chestnut has no intention of following it.

"No one is going to tell me what I can or not do in my own home" said Chestnut, 60, of Shippensburg. "They do not pay my bills and they are not going to tell me what to do."

As governors and mayors grapple with an out-of-control pandemic, they are ratcheting up mask mandates and imposing restrictions on small indoor gatherings, which have been blamed for accelerating the spread of the coronavirus.

But while such measures carry the weight of law, they are, in practical terms, unenforceable, and officials are banking on voluntary compliance instead. Good luck with that. While many are undoubtedly heeding public health advice it's inevitable that a segment of the population will blow off new state and local restrictions and socialise anyway.

— AP

Tokyo, Nov. 24: Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi arrived in Japan on Tuesday to meet with his Japanese counterpart and discuss ways to revive their pandemic-hit economies as well as regional concerns over China's growing influence.

During his two-day visit, Wang and Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi are to discuss resuming business trips between the world's No. 2 and No. 3 economies through a "business track" programme that would allow visitors to engage in limited business activity during 14-day quarantine periods. Japan recently launched such arrangements with a few less-infected Asian countries.

Wang's visit comes as Japan is grappling with resurgence of coronavirus infections and the gov-

ernment struggles to balance disease prevention and the economy. Chinese visitors topped the number of tourists in Japan before the Covid pandemic.

Wang is expected to meet with PM Yoshihide Suga during his Tokyo visit, the first by a top Chinese official since the February visit of Chinese foreign policy chief Yang Jiechi.

— AP

Oz airline boss for
vaccine passport

Sydney, Nov. 24: The boss of Australia's largest airline said Monday that once a coronavirus vaccine becomes widely available, it may require passengers use it before they can travel abroad.

Qantas Chief Executive Alan Joyce said he's been talking to his counterparts at other airlines around the world about the possibility of a "vaccination passport" for overseas travellers.

— AP

U.S. PRISONS TO
PRIORITISE STAFF

Washington, Nov. 24: The federal prison system will be among the first government agencies to receive the coronavirus vaccine, though initial allotments of the vaccine will be given to staff and not to inmates, even though sickened prisoners vastly outnumber sickened staff.

— AP

DECCAN Chronicle

25 NOVEMBER 2020

Corporate takeover of banks a dangerous idea

Recommendations of an Internal Working Group (IWG) of the Reserve Bank of India to allow big corporations to promote commercial banks has finally set the stage to turning the clock back on the ownership of lending institutions in the country, nearly 50 years after the Indira Gandhi government nationalised banks.

One of the reasons that forced Prime Minister of the day, Indira Gandhi, to nationalise 14 large private banks in 1969 was that these were owned by big industrialists and that they gave loans to themselves. Ever since this watershed moment in history, successive RBI governors and committees balked at the prospects of allowing industrial houses to promote banking institutions. Even when the RBI relaxed norms for setting up banks, it allowed only two entities — IDFC and Bandhan — to promote full-fledged banks.

The IWG's recommendation on allowing big companies into the banking sector, however, does a somersault on the RBI's past approach. Though the IWG did not lose sight of the possibility of such corporate-promoted banks resorting to connected lending, it noted that allowing such entities would bring in much-needed capital, experience, management expertise, and strategic direction to the banking sector. It also observed that many of such industrial houses have been successfully operating in other financial segments.

Discussing international experience in allowing industrial houses into the banking sectors, IWG argued that there are very few jurisdictions which explicitly disallow large corporate houses. There was, however, no country with a comparable economic and social background as that of India on the list. Most of the countries cited were the Western countries or some smaller countries like Singapore or Malaysia.

In India, a large majority of people still trust banks because they are not allowed to fail. In such circumstances, the trust deficit among people towards the banking sector would lead to the collapse of the banking sector. That is why former RBI governor Raghuram Rajan called the IWG recommendations a bombshell.

In a joint statement, Mr Rajan and former RBI deputy governor Viral Acharya questioned the timing of the decision to discard the cautious approach adopted by the central bank in allowing industrial houses to promote commercial banks. They argued that giving banking licences to industrial houses would allow them to concentrate economic power in their hands. Citing the corporate governance track record in the country, they argued that it would be difficult to ring-fence their banks from lending to their own group companies, which would put their competitors at a great disadvantage.

The IWG's recommendations have also become controversial because all the experts, except one, were of the opinion that large corporates/industrial houses should not be allowed to promote a bank. The IWG, however, went ahead with a recommendation that contradicts the expert advice. This undue haste on the part of the IWG to create a favourable policy framework for industrial houses could create suspicion in the minds of people, which is not conducive for the healthy growth of the banking sector in the country. The RBI governor and board, and also the Central government, should, therefore, exercise abundant caution while acting on this particular recommendation.

A builder of modern Assam

If there is a lesson in the life of former Assam chief minister Tarun Gogoi, who died on Monday at age 86, it is this: a sympathetic and active consideration of the lives of all communities in a state, a close and pragmatic attachment to ground realities, and an intellectual appreciation of the development paradigm, wins people's hearts — and elections.

Assam's longest-serving CM (2001-16) did not adopt the attitude of either entering a popularity contest or pleasing his party's high command in Delhi. This lent gravitas to his actions. In any objective evaluation, Mr Gogoi will be counted as arguably the most important Assam personality since independence, and among the most important Indians, although the breadth of his achievements remains to be fully appreciated. This Congress leader offers a model to emulate for his party and its leaders, and for other parties and their leaders.

Mr Gogoi did not contest the 1983 election following the call of All Assam Students Union to boycott parliament polls until a resolution of the "foreigners issue" was found. A Congressman through and through, he was not into AASU or AGSP politics but was frank in acknowledging that there was a problem. He also held that some "Indians" had gone to Bangladesh on account of communal problems, only to come back. He did not count them as foreigner. The Congress leader was a strong votary of the Assam Accord patiently negotiated by PM Rajiv Gandhi and wanted the tribunals to identify "illegal" elements to do their work patiently, and with the utmost care (unlike what transpired).

Assam had been wracked by multiple insurgencies. It faced a very serious illegal migrants issue. The state has multiple ethnic, religious and tribal communities. Mr Gogoi negotiated their demands for political participation and socio-economic development with empathy. As CM, he brought a financially bankrupt state back to life, leveraging his personal goodwill with former PM A.B. Vajpayee and home minister L.K. Advani. And he built infrastructure, offered employment opportunities, and encouraged women's participation in panchayat institutions. He acknowledged corruption in his own government. He was a builder of modern Assam.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

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Subhani



If 'Trumpism' outlives Trump, America loses



Sunanda K. Datta-Ray

Reflections

A cartoon in London's free and therefore mass circulation *Evening Standard* shows US President Donald Trump screaming: "This totally discredited, completely fraudulent election ... has been won by me." The searing contradiction of that rant may well reflect the profound conviction of the 68 million fanatical Trump devotees. It is what 78-year-old US President-elect Joseph R. (Joe) Biden must address if the next four years of American history are not lost in bitter political wrangling, interminable legal battles, vicious racial conflict and bloody fighting in the streets.

During the last four years the United States suffered what former President Barack Obama calls "truth decay". He warns, moreover, that it will take more than one election — meaning Mr Biden's historic victory this month — to undo the damage done during the Trump presidency. The mix of toxic conspiracy theories, denigration of respected international institutions, intensely narrow nationalism as highlighted by the beligerence of Mr Trump's "America First" slogan, the spate of sackings to purge the administration, especially the Pentagon, of all but Trump loyalists, and a reckless populism that has divided American society from top to bottom has created wounds that are in desperate need of healing.

Abroad, the mix found support only among leaders who share some of Mr Trump's personal and political characteristics — Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson, Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel, and our own Mr Narendra Modi among them. At home, Mr Trump's divisive demagoguery enjoyed the back-

ing — apart from influential power brokers who are always in the shadowy background — of an extreme right-wing fringe, lower income group whites in the so-called "rust belt", and a surprising number of women and Latino voters who also saw Mr Trump as a champion of the underprivileged. Like India's Sangh Parivar, this coalition, too, was able to single out the enemy within and charge it with doing the majority out of its rights. Similarly, Mr Trump accused, without a shred of evidence, countless anonymous enemies as well as the financier George Soros and voting machines manufactured in Venezuela of cheating him of his majority.

A Biden presidency's real tasks lie at home where it must counter such dangerous fantasies and persuade all Americans to accept reality. But what it needs to accomplish abroad naturally commands greater attention in the media outside the United States. India and Britain both offer examples of such expectations. Mr Modi's concern for H-1B visas and Green Cards may not be shared by a Democratic administration, not even by Mr Biden, a friend of India who wrote to President George W. Bush asking him to remove the sanctions on India that President Bill Clinton had imposed after the 1998 Pokharan-II nuclear tests, but saying

During the last four years, the United States suffered what former President Barack Obama calls 'truth decay'. He warns, moreover, that it will take more than one election to undo the damage...

It is a matter of regret to the world and should be a matter of shame to the United States that some 30 of Mr Trump's election complaints have already been rejected by the American courts

the time was not ripe for easing up on Pakistan. At the same time, he warned India not to take advantage of the Afghanistan crisis because, as he put it, the whole world, not just the United States, was looking at the Kashmir problem. This comment provoked Jaswant Singh, who was visiting the US as external affairs minister under Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, to cancel his appointment with the then Senator Biden.

As for Britain, Mr Johnson, facing bankruptcy because of the costs of the coronavirus pandemic and nowhere near achieving a divorce settlement with the European Union which he must do by December 31, desperately needs a trade pact with the United States. But whereas President Trump was solidly behind the British Prime Minister, proudly calling himself "Mr Brexit", his Roman Catholic successor with roots in Ireland's County Louth, has not rushed to Britain's defence. On the contrary, he has made it clear that the Good Friday agreement which Mr Clinton had brokered must be honoured and a soft border retained between Ireland and the six British-held counties of Ulster (Northern Ireland).

Beyond such specific challenges, a Biden presidency must reintegrate the United States into pragmatic global politics. It must forge rational new alliances with leaders of the European Union like Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany and France's President Emmanuel Macron. It must return to the Paris climate accord and abandon the insensate persecution of Iran in favour of a coordinated strategy to meet Tehran's legitimate

threat perceptions, if any.

Above all, Washington must come to grips with the challenge of a rising China. A firm stand is certainly necessary when it comes to China riding roughshod over the rights of smaller East and Southeast Asian countries in the South China Sea as well as China's aggressive militarism in Ladakh. But ranting and raving about the Wuhan virus, drawing facile distinctions between the People's Republic of China and the Chinese Communist Party, and targeting even the World Health Organisation for apparent subservience to China makes a mockery of diplomatic activism. It is as childish as dubbing North Korea's Kim Jong-un "Rocket Man" until the two finally met under Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's aegis in Singapore. Yesterday's enemy was then transformed into today's sweetheart... until they fell out again!

It is a matter of regret to the world and should be a matter of shame to the United States that some 30 of Mr Trump's election complaints have already been rejected by the American courts, and that a number of civil and criminal charges may be levelled against him after January 20, 2021 when his immunity from prosecution lapses. None of this is a good advertisement for democracy in an increasingly undemocratic and authoritarian environment. The world's only superpower enjoys a responsibility to the global community that goes far beyond the demands of domestic party politics. Americans simply must not allow Trumpism to outlive Donald Trump.

The writer is a senior journalist, columnist and author

A number of civil and criminal charges may be levelled against him after January 20, 2021, when his immunity from prosecution lapses. None of this is a good advertisement for democracy

LETTERS

STAFF MUST UNITE

It is true that the state employees are not happy with the YSRC government over the delay in releasing 50 per cent of salaries for two months, the issues of PRC and DA, not revoking the old pension scheme (*State govt stay up the ante over delay in PRC, DA, DC, Nov. 24*). But, as long as there is no unity among the government employees, things can not be improved.

Panchakarla Govardhana Rao
Kankipadu

WISDOM DAWNS

Finally, the draconian Police Act was put on hold by the Kerala government, and it saved the day of the government (*Kerala's dropping law to punish dissent welcome, DC, Nov. 24*). The predilection and proclivity for new laws while neglecting the existing ones need to be discouraged and dissuaded. Par for the course is not putting the cart before the horse.

Dr C. Ghanshyam Visakhapatnam

WHY THE ABUSE?

Of late, we are seeing YSRC leaders abusing persons holding constitutional bodies and the situation has reached its nadir. (*War of words in DRC meeting of East Godavari, DC, Nov. 24*). We have had Chief Ministers like Damodaram Sanjeevaiah whose words oozed honey. We can't find a single leader of that class in the Telugu political arena now. I wonder what is the necessity for the leaders to stoop so low and abuse each other, unless it is for their self interest rather than the public? It's time to rein in the leaders by the top brass in the party.

Udatha Rama Chandra Rao Yeleswaram

50 YEARS AGO IN

DECCAN Chronicle

Centre's stand on Telangana unchanged

NEW DELHI, Nov. 24.

Telangana Regional Committee Chairman J. Chokka Rao and Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee President Narasa Reddy today called on Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

While Mr. Chokka Rao urged Mrs. Gandhi for additional financial allocation to Telangana, Mr. Reddy is understood to have explained that the result of the Siddipet Assembly by-election in which Telangana Pradesh Samithi candidate was returned, should not be exaggerated.

Dilip Cherian
Dilli Ka Babu



Who's afraid of Nitin Gadkari?

Union road and transport minister Nitin Gadkari's recent sharp rebuke of National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) officials for the delay in the construction of the NHAI headquarters was delivered with his typical smiling demeanour but carried a lethal punch that shocked the babus. It was surprising in its candour (rare for politicians) and turned what was meant to be a joyous event — the inauguration of the building — into a scathing critique of bureaucratic inefficiency in the country.

This was not meant to turn out like this, more than six years into the rule of the NDA government. When the Narendra Modi *sarkar* came to power six years ago, it rode in on huge expectations that it would re-energise the economy, oversee infrastructure development, improve the functioning of

the government and tackle corruption.

Many of its big-ticket economic reforms are still on the anvil or have been watered down, following political resistance. Two big "reforms", namely demonetisation and a badly implemented GST, have been disastrous. But the one area where the winds of change were felt the most was the bureaucracy. It is clearly evident that despite what some saw as a streak of authoritarianism in Prime Minister Modi's approach, bureaucracy in India was shaken out of its long slumber and was compelled to sit up and take note of his new style of proactive governance.

Now, from hearing it from Mr Gadkari, it appears that in this respect, too, the recalcitrant babus have refused to fall in line with the Modi *sarkar*'s stated culture of direct access, simplifying proce-

It is indeed rare for the political executive to haul up the bureaucracy in the manner that Mr Gadkari did, though the present dispensation at the Centre has moved far more decisively against bureaucratic corruption and inefficiency than its predecessors...

dures and eliminating delays in decision-making and implementation. The situation seems to hark back to the to the days when an administrative paralysis had set in during the UPA-2 government's tenure. Despite green signals from the highest levels, the babus in Lutyens' Delhi refuse to take a deci-

sion and keep the file moving from one ministry to the other.

It is indeed rare for the political executive to haul up the bureaucracy in the manner that Mr Gadkari did, though the present dispensation at the Centre has moved far more decisively against bureaucratic corruption and inefficiency than its predecessors — compulsorily retiring hundreds of babus for corruption and inefficiency. When it came back to power last year, it started with compulsory retirement of 27 IRS officers and followed this up with instructions to various departments to identify deadwood that the government needed to get rid of. This message was underlined again by Mr Gadkari to his captive audience, just in case some babus felt the government was not serious.

But is this the entire picture? Could there be a flip side — that

perhaps it is the workman who is quarrelling with his tools for his own failures? After all, the same babus, who were lambasted by the minister, used the same rules and procedures to build the national highways at a stupendous rate of 30 km a day! It could also be pointed out that the political executive also should share the blame for allowing the "*naalayak*" and "*nikamma*" babus to fester in the system because it suits them and their populist policies?

Can Mr Gadkari and the government seize the courage to follow through with its campaign to purge corruption in governance or will the corrosive forces of corrupt netas and babus manage to paper over the cracks and survive?

Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@Twitter.com. Let's multiply the effect.

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	44,523.02	1.01
Nifty 50	13,055.15	1.00
S&P 500*	3,619.28	1.17
Dollar (₹)	73.99	0.16
Pound Sterling (₹)	98.88	0.14
Euro (₹)	87.93	0.08
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	48,569	1.049
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	47.66	1.60
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.880	0.021
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.865	0.006
* As of 8:30 PM IST		

Google pays ₹33,700 cr for Jio Platform stake

Alphabet Inc's Google has paid Rs 33,737 crore for a 7.73 per cent stake in Reliance Industries Ltd's digital subsidiary, Jio Platforms Ltd. The transaction also marks the US technology giant's biggest investment in an Indian firm. With this, Jio Platforms has raised a total of Rs 1.52 lakh crore by selling nearly 33 per cent stake to 13 financial and strategic investors in just 11 weeks, RIL said.

Aibea to join trade unions in strike tomorrow



The All India Bank Employees' Association (Aibea) said it would join the one-day nationwide strike on Nov. 26 called by central trade unions to protest against the government's anti-labour policies. Ten central trade unions, except BMS, will observe a general strike on Thursday. "Lok Sabha in its recently held session has passed three new labour enactments by dismantling existing 27 enactments," the Aibea said.

Indian sellers join Amazon's US holiday sales

More than 70,000 Indian exporters on Amazon's Global Selling programme will showcase their Made in India products on the annual Black Friday and Cyber Monday sales. The exporters are launching thousands of new products on Amazon's global websites for the holiday season between Nov. 26 and Nov. 30. Indian products in categories like health & hygiene and home essentials saw heightened demand abroad.

Goa govt issues ₹156-cr demand notice to JSW

The Goa government has issued a demand notice to JSW Steel Ltd, handling coal at Mormugao Port Trust (MPT), to pay Rs 156.34 crore in the form of Goa Rural Improvement and Welfare Cess, within a fortnight, for transportation of coal. In a demand notice issued on Nov. 9, copy of which was released on Monday, the Assistant Director of Transport has asked JSW Steel to pay Rs 156.34 crore to the state.



Heavy FPI buying pushes indices up Nifty crosses 13000-mark

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD
MUMBAI, NOV. 24

Benchmark index Nifty-50 created a new milestone by crossing the 13000-mark for the first time and closed at a new peak of 13055.15, aided by a sharp rally in financials and auto stocks and heavy foreign portfolio buying.

The index has gained 73.81 per cent from the March low of 7511.10 in the post-Covid rally over optimism around economic revival and robust second quarter corporate earnings.

The Nifty gained 128.70 points or 1 per cent on Tuesday to reach the new landmark of 13055.15 after touching an intra-day high of 13079.10 points.

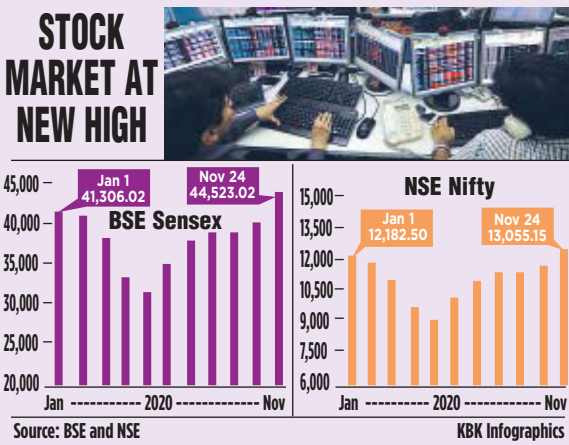
The BSE Sensex also gained 1.01 per cent, or 445.87 points, and closed above the 44,500 mark, at a new all-time high of 44523.02.

BSE's market capitalisation hit a new all-time high of Rs 174.81 lakh crore.

The Nifty Bank Index comprising banks and other financial heavyweights gained 2.46 per cent while the Nifty Auto Index gained 1.71 per cent.

The top Nifty gainers included Adani Port (4.46 per cent), Axis Bank (3.93 per cent), HDFC Bank (3.54 per cent), Eicher Motors (3.52 per cent), Hindalco (3.44 per cent) and Mahindra & Mahindra (3.05 per cent).

The broader market also gained but lagged behind the large-caps with the



BSE Mid-cap Index rising 0.58 per cent and the BSE Small-cap Index rising 0.89 per cent.

Heavy buying by foreign portfolio investors (FPIs), to the tune of Rs 4,563.18 crore, led to gain across all the sectoral indices on Tuesday.

"Indian indices opened on record-high levels on Tuesday, tracking gains in Asian peers, on the back of the progress made on the Covid-19 vaccine and the prospects for a speedy global economic revival," said Hemang Jani, head-equity strategy, Motilal Oswal Financial Services.

"FPIs have made the highest monthly buying in November 2020 in the last 2 decades. Till date they have pumped in approximately Rs 50,989 crore. In November itself and have invested approximately Rs 1.31 lakh crore in India year-to-date. This has helped the indices touch the 13K levels," Jani said.

"The inflow increased considerably especially after the end of the election in the United States and weakness in the dollar index. Another major reason behind such a large inflow was the expected stimulus worth trillions of dollars from central banks to revive economies that are hit hard by the Covid-led lockdown," Jani said.

Strong second quarter corporate earnings with significant growth seen in IT, pharma, metals, select private banks and NBFCs, and cement have helped the market move higher.

"Rural demand continued to outperform urban in 2QFY21, enabling sequential recovery for most companies in the consumer sector. Commentaries of NBFCs suggest improving macros across most business segments and the end of the moratorium have led to increased optimism for collection efficiency as well as growth," Jani said.

RBI nixes Muthoot plan to acquire IDBI Mutual Fund

New Delhi, Nov. 24: The RBI has turned down the proposal of Muthoot Finance to acquire IDBI Bank's mutual fund business for Rs 215 crore, saying sponsoring a mutual fund is not in consonance with the activity of an operating NBFC.

In a regulatory filing on Tuesday, IDBI Bank said a share purchase agreement for sale of IDBI Mutual Fund to Muthoot Finance was signed on November 22, 2019. The agreement was for acquisition by Muthoot Finance of 100 per cent equity shares of IDBI Asset Management held by IDBI Bank, IDBI Capital Markets & Securities, and 100 per cent shares of IDBI MF Trustee Company held by IDBI Bank.

"Their (Muthoot's) request for a no objection certificate was not accorded to by Reserve Bank of India," IDBI said. —PTI

Motor premiums reclaim top share

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, NOV. 24

After remaining subdued for six months, motor premiums have once again reclaimed the top slot among general insurance categories in October. Increased festive demand for automobiles has helped the revival of motor insurance premiums.

Motor premiums historically had the highest share

RE corners 95% energy project financing in 2019

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, NOV. 24

Financing for coal-based energy projects dropped 82 per cent last year to shrink the segment's share in the total energy project financing to 5 per cent. Renewable energy projects now account for 95 per cent of the lending.

Two coal-fired energy projects received a total finance of Rs 1,100 crore in 2019, which was 82 per cent less than Rs 6,081 crore received by five projects in 2018. The project financing in the coal sector has been coming down for the past two years. In 2017, coal projects had received a total of Rs 60,767 crore and by 2018 the lending dropped by 90 per cent, as per the report by Centre for Financial Accountability.

Coal-based projects had a higher share of 72.6 per cent in the energy project financing till 2017. That year, renewable energy accounted for just 27.4 per



cent share with a total financing of Rs 22,913 crore. By 2018, renewable energy (RE) financing grew by 6.6 per cent to Rs 24,443 crore. But as the coal project loans fell drastically, the RE share rose to 80 per cent.

Total project financing for the energy sector further came down to Rs 24,071 crore in 2019. Despite, a 6 per cent dip in funds to Rs 22,971 crore, 14 renewable energy projects grabbed a higher share of 95 per cent. Of the total funds, wind energy projects received Rs 6,917 crore and solar projects got Rs 16,054 crore.

The troubled state of discoms affected the lending towards renewable energy projects as well.

Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh continued to be the most attractive states for renewable energy, accounting for 79 per cent of the total lending. Commercial banks provided the majority of loans to renewable energy, while their exposure to coal-based projects fell drastically.

Private commercial banks continued their dominance, but state-owned financial institutions too increased their lending.

Refinancing continued to account for the majority of coal power lending in 2019, while most renewable energy lending was for new projects.

India's latest unicorn startup is Cars24

SARAH MCBRIDE & SARITHA RAI
NOV. 24

India's mass transit systems were shut off when the country locked down. As a result, Indians rushed to find alternative transportation, and that often meant used cars.

A major beneficiary was Cars24 Services Pvt Ltd, an online marketplace for used cars based in Gurgaon. The company's valuation jumped to more than \$1 billion after a new round of funding. DST Global, the investment firm led by Russia-born billionaire Yuri Milner,

invested \$200 million in the deal.

The investment doubles the total funds raised by Cars24 since the business was established five years ago. The chief executive officer and co-founder, Vikram Chopra, was an investment analyst early in his career at Sequoia Capital, one of the world's most prominent venture capital firms and now a Cars24 investor. Chopra started Cars24 after having a hard time selling his car before a temporary move to the US, he said.

Daunted by the situation, he ended up giving his car to a friend instead, he said. For Cars24, the new

Cars24, which takes a cut of each transaction, is on track to generate estimated gross annual revenue of \$600 million, Chopra said. "Our awareness among consumers has shot up dramatically," he said.

India's pre-owned vehicle market is fragmented. Online retailers like Cars24, Droom and OLX, along with the automakers themselves, offer a more consistent buying experience, simplified paperwork and access to lenders. India lacks a system to establish fair values for used cars like Kelley Blue Book.

investor brings a global expertise. DST Global is based in Hong Kong and has backed a varied list of companies over the years, including Facebook Inc and WhatsApp in the US and Alibaba Group Holding Ltd in China. In India, DST invested in the online shopping firm Flipkart. What made Cars24 stand out was its ability to handle so many steps, including remote inspections of vehicles, said Rahul Mehta, a Dubai-based managing partner at DST. "You have to be deep into operations," he said. "These guys have done well." —Bloomberg

Oil-rich Kuwait faces reckoning as debt crisis looms

Dubai, Nov. 24: When Kuwait emerged from a months-long coronavirus lockdown, hundreds of Kuwaitis flocked to reopened stores, the lines clogging malls, snaking through hallways and spilling onto sidewalks.

But unlike much of the world, where long lines

formed for donated food, Kuwaitis were waiting to buy Cartier jewelry.

The jewellery-store rush by Kuwait's long-coddled citizens is a symptom of a looming disaster.

Kuwait, one of the world's wealthiest countries, is facing a debt crisis. The pandemic has sent the

price of oil crashing to all-time lows and pushed the petro-state toward a reckoning with its longtime largesse, just as a parliamentary election approaches in December.

Covid, low oil prices and the liquidity crisis have all come together in a perfect storm, said Bader al-Saif, a

professor of history at Kuwait University.

Like other Gulf sheikhdoms, Kuwait provides cushy jobs to roughly 90 per cent of citizens on the public payroll, along with generous benefits and subsidies, from cheap electricity and oil to free health care and education. —AP

Time to reform office culture of financial world

SREE VIDYA BHAKTAVATSALAM
NOV. 24

Everywhere, the stewards of capitalism are in flux, grappling with the implications of a radically different future that's set to play out from home offices, living rooms, and kitchen tables around the world.

This is a big moment for an industry that has long lionised alpha-male "tough guys" who wear their stamina as a badge of honor and view the need for work-life flexibility as an admission of weakness. From New York to London to Hong Kong, the hard-charging culture of finance has been tied to the towering edifices that cram in thousands of over-achievers, the cutthroat chaos of the trading floors, and the relentless schmoozing that accompa-

nies the entry into the upper echelons.

The new workplace reality, with hundreds of thousands of bankers working from home for the foreseeable future, has spurred considerable angst among the financial elite. One by one, powerful men have lamented the damage to their companies' cultures-cultures they've sought to perpetuate.

Sergio Ermotti, who stepped down as CEO of Zurich-based UBS Group AG on Nov. 1, said it's "especially difficult for banks to create and sustain cohesiveness and a culture when employees stay at home."

In September, JPMorgan Chase & Co.'s Jamie Dimon pushed for a return to normal, warning of slipping productivity and alienation among workers. BlackRock Inc.'s Laurence Fink worried about the

serendipitous "water cooler moments" being lost as Zoom calls supplant impromptu encounters. Senior leaders at Goldman Sachs Group Inc, Barclays Plc, and others have pointed to the vital role that face-to-face interactions play in preserving the fabric of their companies' cultures.

Lost in this nostalgia is a hard truth: The finance industry has created some of the most toxic workplaces for women, racial minorities, or anyone else who doesn't fit in comfortably with Wall Street's fraternity. As a journalist who has spent years covering finance and investing from Boston, New York, Hong Kong, and London, I'm often asked what I learned from my time in these financial centres. One takeaway seems especially relevant in the

Column

The world of finance can be incredibly isolating and hostile to someone who isn't White, straight, and male

strange times in which we find ourselves today: The world of finance can be incredibly isolating and hostile to someone who isn't White, straight, and male.

Sure, sexual harassment is no longer as flagrant as

it was in the 1990s, a sordid period that former Bloomberg News columnist Susan Antilla chronicled in her 2002 book, Tales From the Boom-Boom Room: Women vs. Wall Street. Back then, women were subjected to profanity-laced tirades, grabbing and groping, and topless dancers on trading floors. The blatant racism of that era has given way to more subtle forms of discrimination, even as the right noises come from financial leaders.

But the cultural problems aren't a vestige of a remote past. As recently as 2019, Bloomberg News reported on a Cantor Fitzgerald bond saleswoman's story of persistent persecution, culminating in her discovering feces in her coffee mug, as well as the booze-drenched culture at the insurance

market Lloyd's of London that put women at the mercy of their drunken bosses and colleagues.

For every incident that gets this kind of spotlight, dozens are never chronicled.

The global reckoning fuelled by the #MeToo movement in 2017 and the racial justice protests that followed the police killing of George Floyd in 2020 have led many banks and other financial companies to enact tough policies to combat and address sexism and racism in the workplace.

At the same time, the financial industry is adapting to the tectonic shift toward remote working. Standard Chartered Plc has unveiled a permanent move to flexible working for its 85,000 employees. Switzerland's UBS expects a third of its

employees to work from home permanently, and Japan's Mizuho Financial Group Inc is mulling a shorter workweek.

Already there are signs that some of the worst aspects of banking culture are moving to this virtual world. Excluding women and members of minority groups from important meetings and decisions is even easier when operating remotely.

Financial companies will have to navigate a tricky path between respecting employees' privacy and protecting vulnerable staff. But instead of bemoaning the loss of the corporate cultures caused by remote working, leaders should use the opportunity to examine these cultures more closely and then take concrete steps to reform them.

—Bloomberg

SHORT TAKES

Dada underwent 22 Covid-19 tests

Mumbai: BCCI president and former India captain Sourav Ganguly on Tuesday revealed that he underwent as many as 22 Covid-19 tests in the past four and a half months while trying to navigate his professional commitments amid the raging pandemic. Ganguly was kept busy by the conduct of the Indian Premier League in the UAE from mid-September to early November. "I must tell you I have got tested 22 times in the last four and half months and not been positive even once, I have had cases around me, so that probably forced me to get tested myself," Ganguly said at a virtual conference where he was brand ambassador of Livinguard AG. "...I stay with elderly parents and I have travelled to Dubai and in the initial part, I was very worried, not just for me, but the community, you don't want to spread it to somebody else because people are looking up to you," he added. Ganguly said he is immensely proud of his BCCI team for pulling off a successful IPL, which he hopes, would be back in India for its next edition. The event was shifted to UAE this year because of the pandemic.

— PTI

Fans set for EPL games next week

London: Supporters are set to return to English Premier League games next week for the first time since March. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson is allowing a return of spectators to sports stadiums as part of an easing of coronavirus restrictions when the national lockdown ends on December 2. A maximum of 4,000 fans will initially be allowed into venues in the areas with the lowest Covid-19 infection rates and up to 2,000 in the areas placed in the next tier of restrictions. The highest-risk areas still won't be allowed fans. Plans for the return of spectators in October were put on hold due to a spike in coronavirus cases. "We are able to get the turnstiles turning sooner than expected," Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said on Monday, "taking a cautious approach and starting with the lowest risk areas first. I'm confident that sports will take every step to ensure their fans are safe, and fans will play their part and look out for each other until we can safely get everyone back in." — AP

Honda end year with double points

Portugal: Fighting rides from Stefan Bradl and Alex Marquez delivered a double-top ten to wrap up a strong final weekend in here. The unprecedented 2020 MotoGP came to a close in Portugal with a trio of tremendous races across the classes. Conditions were again near perfect as the sun loomed over the Portimao circuit. Using morning warm up to confirm the final aspects of his setting, Alex was again strong and consistent throughout the 20-minute session. The MotoGP rookie ended in seventh but with excellent pace. Focus was high for Bradl as the last race day of the year began, the German having put in a very impressive performance on Saturday. A fast fall at Turn 9 saw Bradl walk away unharmed, changing his leathers and returning to the track for the final minutes of warm-up. The crash had no ill effect as Bradl shot forward in the race and immediately began to battle in the top five, giving no quarter. The battle would rage until the end of the race, Bradl earning seventh and achieving his best race finish of the year.

Live on TV

CRICKET

Women's Big Bash League: Semifinal-1 from 1.40 pm on Sony Six

FOOTBALL

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

Champions League: Olympiacos vs Manchester City from 11.25 pm on Sony Ten 2; Monchengladbach vs Shakhtar Donetsk from 11.25 pm on Sony Six; Liverpool vs Atalanta from 1.30 am (Thursday) on Sony Ten 1; Inter Milan vs Real Madrid from 1.30 am (Thursday) on Sony Ten 2; Bayern Munich vs Salzburg from 1.30 am (Thursday) on Sony Ten 3; Atletico Madrid vs Lokomotiv Moscow from 1.30 am (Thursday) on Sony Six

WWE

NXT: Bouts from 6.30 am (Thursday) on Sony Ten 1, HD

DOUBLE TROUBLE?

Rohit, Ishant may miss entire Australia Test series

New Delhi, Nov. 24: India's star opener Rohit Sharma and pacer Ishant Sharma will miss the first two Tests against Australia and are also doubtful for the remaining two after it was conveyed to the BCCI that the duo will require close to a month to be match fit.

The two, who are undergoing rehabilitation at the National Cricket Academy in Bengaluru, are already out of contention for the limited-overs leg of the series, which begins with the ODIs on Friday.

They were kept in the Test squad for the series starting on December 17 but tough quarantine rules have made their availability uncertain.

"The NCA has given a report that both Rohit and Ishant will take at least another 3 to 4 weeks to get match fit," a Board source said on Tuesday.

Rohit, while talking to PTI last week, had stated that his hamstring injury is fine now and he is only working on strength and conditioning to be battle-ready at the NCA.

Ishant, on the other hand, is recovering from a side strain.

"Even if they travel now they will have 'hard quarantine' since they will travel by commercial flight. Hard quarantine means not being able to train during the 14 days like the whole team," the source said.

"So, now if only Cricket Australia can convince the government and allow them to train during quarantine," he added.

The Indian team, which landed here after the IPL earlier this month on a chartered flight, was allowed to train in quarantine as Australia battled a fresh wave of Covid cases.

National coach Ravi Shastri had on Sunday stated that the two cricketers' chances of playing the Test series hinge on whether they are able to board a flight to Australia within this week.

— PTI



Ishant Sharma



Rohit Sharma

Shastri backs 'Fav 5' to rule Oz

New Delhi, Nov. 24: Coach Ravi Shastri believes India's pace attack can conquer Australia "in their own den" in the upcoming Test series between the world's top two sides.

India's quick bowlers, led by Jasprit Bumrah, will face a powerful home batting line-up including David Warner and Steve Smith when the four-Test series begins on December 17.

But Shastri said his team's pace unit was the best in the world, despite being likely to be without

the injured Ishant Sharma who is receiving treatment India for a muscle tear.

"His absence does make a difference to the fast-bowling department, but then we have the capacity among the young bowlers to deliver," Shastri told *Sportstar*.

Shastri dubbed Bumrah, Mohammed Shami, Mohammed Siraj, Umesh Yadav and Navdeep Saini the "fabulous five", adding, "Yadav has the experience. Saini is young and fast. Bumrah one of the best

You put up runs on the board and watch these fast bowlers hunt the opposition. They can beat Australia in their own den.

— RAVI SHASTRI
India coach on his team's pace attack

in business.

Shami is raring to go. Siraj is an exciting prospect. "You put up runs on the board and watch these fast bowlers hunt the opposition. They can beat Australia

in their own den."

Australia last week overtook India at the top of the inaugural world Test championship when the scoring system was amended due to the coronavirus pandemic, but Virat Kohli's men enjoyed a historic first Test series win Down Under on their last tour in 2018-19.

Shastri is confident his team can stay focused on and off the pitch during the tour, which requires travel bubbles and isolation because of the pandemic.

— AFP

CLARKE SAYS INDIA COULD BE SMOKED 4-0

Sydney, Nov. 24: Former Australia captain Michael Clarke has warned that India could be "smoked 4-0" in the Test series if skipper Virat Kohli does not set the tone in the white-ball games before his departure.

Kohli will lead the team in the white-ball series, comprising three ODIs and as many T20s, and the opening Test at Adelaide before heading back home.

"These One-dayers and these Twenty20s is where Virat Kohli can really stand up and lead from the front," Clarke said on *'Sky Sports Radio'* on Tuesday.

"If India don't have success in the One-dayers and the T20s, they are in deep trouble in the Test matches and they'll get smoked 4-0, in my opinion," he added.

— PTI

Kohli, Ashwin nominated for Player of Decade award

Dubai, Nov. 24: The talismanic Virat Kohli and Ravichandran Ashwin were on Tuesday nominated for the coveted ICC Men's Player of the Decade Award with the Indian captain featuring in all five men's categories for his incredible run in the last 10 years.

Kohli and veteran off-spinner Ashwin are the two Indians among seven players nominated for the most prestigious award.

Besides the Indian duo, Joe Root (England), Kane Williamson (New Zealand), Steve Smith (Australia), AB de Villiers (South Africa), and Kumar Sangakkara (Sri Lanka) are the other contenders in this category.

In the Men's ODI Player of the Decade cat-



Ravichandran Ashwin

egory, former India skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni and run-machine Rohit Sharma also found a place alongside Kohli, Lasith Malinga (Sri Lanka), Mitchell Starc (Australia), de Villiers and Sangakkara.

Kohli and Rohit also



Virat Kohli

featured in the Men's T20I Player of the Decade category, which also included Rashid Khan (Afghanistan), Imran Tahir (South Africa), Aaron Finch (Australia), Malinga and Chris Gayle (West Indies).

— PTI

Athletic Bilbao hammer Betis

Madrid, Nov. 24: Athletic Bilbao comfortably defeated Real Betis 4-0 to move further away from the relegation zone in the Spanish league.

Athletic got on the board with an own goal by Victor Ruiz in the ninth minute, and Ander Capa added to the lead before halftime.

Iker Muniain scored in the 59th and Alex Berenguer sealed the scoring in the 68th.

Betis goalkeeper Claudio Bravo had to make a few good saves to keep the hosts from an even bigger win at San Mamés Stadium in Bilbao.

The result moved Athletic to eighth place. They were just two points above the relegation zone entering the match.

Manuel Pellegrini's Betis also are in mid-table, though they have played one game more than Athletic.

Real Sociedad lead the

THE RESULTS

LA LIGA

Athletic Bilbao (Victor Ruiz 9-og, Capa 33, Muniain 59, Berenguer 68) **4**
Real Betis **0**

PREMIER LEAGUE

Burnley (Wood 8) **1**
Crystal Palace **0**
Wolves (Neto 75) **1**
Southampton (Walcott 58) **1**

league with 23 points, three more than second-placed Atlético Madrid, who have two games in hand.

Meanwhile in England, Burnley won for the first time in the Premier League this season as Chris Wood sealed a 1-0 victory against Crystal Palace, while Southampton missed a

chance to go third in their 1-1 draw at Wolves.

Burnley had failed to win any of their first seven games.

Sean Dyche's side were the only Premier League team yet to score a home goal this term until New Zealand striker Wood put them ahead in the first half against Palace.

That was enough to

— AP

Thapa shines in Chennaiyin win

Vasco, Nov. 24: Anirudh Thapa's early strike coupled with a penalty from Esmael Gonçalves (26') gave Chennaiyin FC a 2-1 win over Jamshedpur FC in the Hero Indian Super League here on Tuesday.

Thapa got the game off to an electrifying start, scoring in the very first minute. Rafael Crivellaro won the ball and found Gonçalves on the right flank. His low cross was powered into the net by the midfielder, the exuberance of his celebration matching that of his finish. He became the first Indian goal scorer after four games this season.

Last season's golden boot winner Nerijus Valskis (37') pulled one back but a string of misses ensured that Jamshedpur boss Owen Coyle started the season with a defeat to the team he managed last season.

The next few minutes made it evident what sort of a game this was going to be. Jamshedpur's English defender Peter Hartley wasted a golden opportunity to draw his team level in the 7th minute and headed a free-kick wide off. Three minutes later, Gonçalves found himself one on one with opposing custodian TP Rehenesh but failed to find the target.

Lallianzuala Chhangte missed a chance to score in the 20th minute. His first touch, as he received Crivellaro's excellent pass, took the ball away and the subsequent effort was

MFC LOOK TO BOUNCE BACK AGAINST GOA

Margao, Nov. 24: Stunned by NorthEast United in their opening match, Mumbai City FC would look to bounce back when they take on FC Goa in an Indian Super League match, which is expected to produce free-flowing football here on Wednesday.

For Mumbai City head coach Sergio Lobera, it will be the first time he will be up against his former club.

The match is expected to see a lot of passes. Lobera has long been known for getting his players to spray the ball all around the pitch. During his stint as FC Goa coach, he averaged 535 passes per match.

Despite losing 0-1 to NorthEast United, 10-men Mumbai had more than 60 per cent possession and completed 451 passes to their opponents' 217. No team has passed more in the league so far.

— PTI

pushed behind by Rehenesh. But he made amends five minutes later, drawing a push from Isaac Vannalsawma inside the box and winning a penalty. Gonçalves did not make a mistake from the spot.

— Agencies



Chennaiyin FC's Anirudh Thapa celebrates after scoring the fastest goal (52 seconds) of the season against Jamshedpur FC in an ISL-7 match at the Tilak Maidan Stadium in Vasco da Gama on Tuesday.

— ISL

SSS Art creation

SHOOT BEGINS...

Peddarasu Nagappa
సమర్పించు

Bhargav's

శ్రీ భగవాన్ ఉవాచ
ప్రేమ స్వరూపులారా

PEDDARASU SUBRAMANYAM - GANGARAPU LAXMAN
SAIRAM (MF.TECH) - BHARGAV - KAVALA SANTOSH

Thanks to CHIDHURUGITA