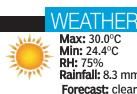
THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

NELLORE | THURSDAY | 10 DECEMBER 2020



Rainfall: 8.3 mm Forecast: clear. temp. 30/24 ºC

Max/Min

COVID-19 **C**
 UNT

CASES **DEATHS** (+338)(+26,348)1,41,735 97,62,250

covid19india.org STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS (+721)(+3)

TS: 2,75,261 1,480 (+618)(+3)AP: 8,73,457 7,045

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

6,89,23,274 **DEATHS**

15,69,873 COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES

worldometers.info/ coronavirus

Sarvari; Dakshinayana **Tithi:** Kartika Bahula Dasami till 12.48 pm Star: Hasta till 10.48 am Varjyam: 6.07 pm to 7.35 pm Durmuhurtam: 10.19 am to 11.03 am; 2.42 pm to 3.26 pm Rahukalam: 1.30 pm to 3 pm **HIJRI CALENDAR** Rabbi-ul Akhir 24, 1442 AH **PRAYERS** (SHAHI MASJID)

Fajar: 5.09 am **Zohar:** 12.03 pm **Asar:** 4.06 pm Maghrib: 5.42 pm Isha: 6.58 pm **SUNSET TODAY 5.41 PM SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.24 AM**

MOONRISE TODAY 1.46 AM MOONSET TOMORROW 2.51 PM



Too much of rajneeti!

IN BRIEF

China, Pakistan

start joint exercise

Islamabad: The air forces of Wednesday commenced a joint exercise designed to

deepen practical cooperation

and improve the actual-combat training level of the two sides. The joint air force exercise "Shaheen (Eagle)-IX" started on Wednesday at an operational air base of the Pakistan Air Force in Sindh.

Prize winning

teacher positive

Mumbai: Ranjitsinh Disale, a school teacher from Maharashtra who won a global award having \$1 million prize money, on Wednesday tested positive for COVID- 19, said a family

deccanchronicle.com, facebook.com/deccannews, twitter.com/deccanchronicle, google.com/+deccanchronicle

NATION 4

Popular Tamil television actress Chitra found dead



WORLD 5

UK body issues allergy warning for Pfizer jab

SPORTS 8

Ronaldo beats Messi in battle of big two



Vol. 18 No. 154 Established 1938 | 8 pages | ₹6.00

Opposition leaders Sharad Pawar, Rahul Gandhi, Sitaram

DCGI denies EUA to Biotech, Serum vaccine

KANIZA GARARI with agency inputs HYDERABAD, DEC. 9

In a setback to two major pharma companies in the race for the vaccine for Coronavirus, the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) has not granted the Emergency Use Autho-risation permission (EUA) to citybased Bharat Biotech and the Serum Institute of India (SII) for their vaccines, Covaxin and Covisheild.

DC CORRESPONDENT

Even as the number of fresh cases of "mystery

illness" has come down

to 12 on Wednesday and

only 44 affected persons

are still undergoing treatment, a deadly com-bination of neurotoxins

and organochlorine are

prime suspects for the

confounding disease that

has caught national and

even international atten-

State health authorities

maintain that these sub-

stances found in hydro-

carbon pesticides such as

DDT can turn poisonous, affecting nervous tissues

in human body. This could be why affected

people are developing convulsions for a brief period, being getting back to normalcy after

Several reputed central

agencies like All India Institute of Medical Sci-

ences (AIIMS), National Institute of Nutrition

(NIN), National Centre

(NCDC), Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (IICT) and

World Health Organis-

ation (WHO) are working

on finding the source of

such poisonous sub-stances entering the

human body and affect-

The AIIMS report has

already confirmed pres-

ence of lead in the blood

of affected people in its

preliminary report after

ing nervous system.

Disease Control

tion.

VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 9

The data submitted by both companies was found to be "insufficient" by the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) of the DCGI in terms of data on the trials of Indian patients, according to sources. The panel sought additional data on the safety and efficacy of

their proposed shots. Due to lack of data on Indian patients, the CDSCO subject expert committee, which met on

Toxins in food may have

led to mystery Eluru illness

DC CORRESPONDENT

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy con-

ducted a review meeting

on the illness in Eluru

with officials and medical teams on Wedne-

sday. He directed them to

conduct a through research and find out the

causes of the illness and

affirmed that the state

government is offering

good treatment to people.

POLLUTION EFFECTS

Vegetables raised with polluted water

from Kolleru Lake may contain residues

of pesticides and toxic substances. Their

consumption may cause health problems

Untreated effluents from tanks of

shrimp culture contaminate soil. Those

who consume crops raised on such soil

may also suffer from symptoms being

exhibited by people with the "mystery

VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 9

Find actual reason

for illness: Jagan

the "data submitted of phase 1 and phase 2 trials was not sufficient". The DCGI said that

Covid-19 vaccine candidates should have "at least 50 per cent efficacy in phase III clinical tri-als" for it to be widely deployed.

The DCGI rules of 2019 state that there must be at least 3,000 patients on whom the vaccine has to be tested before approval.

■ Page 3: Phase III trial

During a video conference with the authori-

ties, doctors and experts

from the WHO, AIIMS,

NIN, CCMB and the

IICT, the Chief Minister

said that corrective mea-sures will be taken based

on the final outcome of

investigations and urged

the experts to find the

actual reason for the ill-

sed to pesticide either

through their feed or con-

sumption of contaminat-

In such a case, their

milk may contain residues of pesticide.

Page 2: Boiled milk of

infected cattle not safe

ed water.

■ Page 2: WHO officials

RUSSIA: INDIA IN ANTI-CHINA GAME PLAYED BY WEST

SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI | DC NEW DELHI, DEC. 9

The West, led by the United States, is trying to engage India in "anti-China games" through its Indo-Pacific strategies and is also trying to undermine Russ-ia's close and privileged ties with

I n d i a , Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov has said, in unprecedented remarks that have highlighted both Moscow's proximity with Beijing and a growing unease over the India-US strate-

gic partner-ship. Addressing the Russian International Affairs Council, Mr Lavrov said: "It (the West)

is trying to restore the unipolar model of world order. 'Po-les' like Russia and China are unlikely to be subordinate to it. However, India is currently an object of the Western countries' persistent, aggressive and devious policy as they are trying to engage it in anti-China games by promoting Indo-Pacific strategies, the so-called 'Quad'."

■ Page 7: Russia unhappy with close Indo-US ties

Farmers reject Centre's offer

Threaten to intensify agitation, block Delhi

NEW DELHI, DEC. 9

Within hours of receiving the Centre's draft proposals to amend the new agriculture laws, the farmers unions categorically rejected it on Wednesday and threatened to intensify their agitation by blocking all entry points to Delhi if their demands were not immediately met. They also threatened to capture all toll plazas and hold "sit-in" protests across the

Terming the proposal as "vague" and an insult to farmers, Krantikari Kisan Union president Darshan Pal said: "We will block the Delhi-Jaipur highway and Delhi-Agra expressway and sit on dharna at all toll plazas on December 12... No tax to be paid on that day at any toll plaza... We will also gherao all district headquarters during our protest on December 14. We have asked the people to protest against every MP and MLA of the BJP."

The farmers' organisations have also threatened they will boycott all Jio products and Reliance malls across the country.
The Centre on Wednesday proposed to

Yechury, D. Raja and T.K.S. Elangovan present a memorandum to President Ram Nath Kovind at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Wednesday on the new Farm held at a ground allocated for the farmers' protests in

give a "written assurance" that the existing Minimum Support Price (MSP) regime for procurement will continue. In a draft proposal, the Centre also assured the registration of all private mandis to strengthen Agricultural Produce Market Committees.

With the farmers camped out at Delhi's busy border points, three of the Delhi-Haryana border points -Tikri, Jharoda and Dhansa have been closed for traffic. Besides the border areas of the capital, demon-

Delhi's outskirts. At least five deaths were reported since the protests began. After deliberating over

the Centre's proposal, the

farmers' leaders made it

clear they will continue their agitation until all the three new farm laws are rolled back. The All India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee (AIKSCC) said the Narendra Modi govern-ment was "insincere and arrogant" about resolving

Self-employment plan gets Cabinet approval

DC CORRESPONDENT

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved an employment generation scheme Atmanirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana at an expenditure of ₹1,584 crores for the current financial year and ₹22,810 crores for the entire scheme period 2020-2023. Bharat Atmanirbhar Rozgar Yojana scheme, which aims to create more formal jobs, to benefit around 58.5 lakh employees, said Union minister Santosh Kumar Gangwar while briefing media after Cabinet meeting. The registration for the scheme will

labour minister said, adding that the ministry will soon notify rules for net briefing. the scheme.

Though the government claims that there are around 10 crore labourers formally registered with it, even as there are more than 40 crore labourers in the country, his department has no data on the number of people who have lost jobs since Corona virus-induced lockdown was imposed on March 24 this year. Under the programme, the Centre will reimburse 24 per cent, 12 per cent each for employees and employers, for two years for all new formal jobs created in enterprises having up to 1000 employtill June 30 next year, Gangwar said at the cabi-

In an organisation where employee strength is more than 1,000 workers, the reimbursement will be restricted to 12 per cent of the employees' contribu-tion, he said. Union finance minister

Nirmala Sitharaman had on November 12 announced ₹2.65 lakh crore worth economic stimulus package, termed as Atmanirbhar Bharat 3.0, comprising 12 big measures to revive the economy marred by Covid. These measures included the Atmanirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana to generate employment.

PUBLIC WI-FI **NETWORKS GET CABINET NOD**

DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs

The Union cabinet on Wednesday approved a proposal to launch a Wifi access network in the country, wherein public data centres would be opened to facilitate the process. No licence fee would be levied, while registration would be needed for the purpose, which will be done within seven days.

Announcing the decision, Union IT minister Ravi Shankar Prasad told mediapersons that the proposal is aimed at the growth of public Wifi networks in the country, especially in the interiors of the country so that even people at the grassroots level can have internet access. The programme will be called PM-WANI and, under it, public data offices will establish and maintain Wi-Fi access points and deliver broadband service to subscribers.
Further, official sources said that the proliferior

ation of public Wi-Fi will not only create employment but also enhance disposable incomes in the hands of small and medium entrepreneurs and boost the GDP of the country.

The proliferation of Broadband Services through public Wi-Fi is a step towards digital India, Prasad said, adding that this will have consequential benefits thereon. No Licence Fee for providing broadband Internet services using public Wi-Fi hotspots will massively encourage its proliferation and penetration across the length and breadth of the country, he further added.

'No licence, no regis tration, and no fee will be applicable for the PDOs which could be small shops or even Common Service Centres," he said. App provider will be responsible for developing application to register users and discover WANI compliant Wi-Fi hotspots in the nearby

Kurnool shocked by quality of KMC water it discharges 60 million

illness".

testing 10 patients. It is,

however, yet to come up with its report of

analysing milk samples.

NCDC has started its

investigations to find out

reasons for the illness. It

is also collecting samples from blood and urine of

cattle, as they are expo-

D. SIVA RAMI REDDI | DC KURNOOL DEC. 9

Citizens in Kurnool are shocked at the quality of water being supplied to them by Kurnool Municipal Corporation (KMC) in the wake of Eluru contamination that saw hundreds of people taking ill.

KMC has no sewerage

litres (mld) into Tungabhadra river without any health. River pollution in Handri and Tung-abhadra, the two rivers that flow across Kurnool city, have been causing health issues to people other material, lead and cadmi-

Regional Pollution control Board officials say that Tungabhadra waters showed marginally higher toxins after Pushk-arams. The Board conducted a test on the quality of water in Tungabhadra in the first week of this month soon after

■ Page 2: Coliform bacteria exceed standards

residing on the river bank. Plastic waste and Pushkarams. non-degradable

LAND I SURVEY MoU signed for survey, first of its kind in 100 years AP, Survey of India join forces

DC CORRESPONDENT

The State government on Wednesday signed Memoranďum Understanding (MoU) with Survey of India for the implementation of 'YSR Jagananna Saswatha Bhoomi Hakku-Bhoomi Rakshana', scheduled for launch on December 21.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy said that they would be conducting a comprehensive survev which will be written in golden letters as a survey of such a magnitude is being conducted after almost 100 years. He said that the two partners are putting together 70 base stations to take up this survey, which will

be added to their network in future. The Chief Minister said that all the measurements will be accurate with a minimum error rate of 2 cm. State-of-the-art facilities are being used with the latest CARS technology, drones and rovers. He instructed officials to take up awareness campaigns about the initiative

and directed district collec-

tors to be responsible for the survey project. He said 'As many as 14,000 surveyors have been appointed by the State government and 9,400 surveyors are being given training by Survey of India. Training for the remaining lot will be completed by January 26.

■ Page 2: 5,000 villages to be covered in first phase

CJI'S MOTHER **DUPED OF ₹2.5CR, ACCUSED HELD**

be effective from October 1,

Nagpur, Dec. 9: Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sharad Arvind Bobde's mother was allegedly duped to the tune of ₹2.5 crore by the caretaker of a family property here, the police said on the police Wednesday.

The accused, Tapas Ghosh was arrested on Tuesday. A Special Investigation Team is looking into the matter under the supervision of DCP Vinita Sahu, said Nagpur commissioner of police (CP) Amitesh Kumar.

Mukta Bobde, CJI Bobde's mother, is the owner of Lawn Akashwani Square which is rented out for marriages and other functions, he said. The Bobde family had appointed Ghosh as caretaker of the property in 2007. He was paid salary and

also a commission on bookings. Taking advantage of Mukta Bobde's age and frail health, Ghosh and his wife allegedly kept her in the dark about transactions, and did not deposit the entire rent amount which they collected, the CP said. They also allegedly forged receipts. The fraud came to light when several bookings were cancelled in lockdown,

NCB makes 1st big arrest in Sushant's case

SAURABH JOSHI | DC MUMBAI, DEC. 9

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) arrested a known bigtime drug peddler from Mumbai and seized a contraband to the tune of ₹2.5 crore from him in connection with the Sushant Singh Rajput

suicide probe.
The NCB officials said that the accused was the supplier to one of the arrested peddlers, who later passed on the drugs Rajput's girlfriend ea Chakraborty's brother Showik for consumption. The seized contraband is premium quality cannabis with market

name 'Malana Cream'. The arrested accused was identified as Jinendra Jain alias Rigel Mahakal alias Jeet who was arrested from Andheri's Lokhandwala area from where the NCB officials also seized the contraband. The officials said that Jain was named in the statement by arrested peddler Anuj Keshwani, who was arrested for supplying Charas / Hashish. The charas seized in this

case is' Malana Cream' which is the most desirable charas in the world. The said charas is grown only in Malana Region of

Himachal Pradesh. The

market price of Malana

Cream ranges from ₹50 lakh per kg. "Preliminary probe revealed that Jain was involved in trafficking of Hashish in Mumbai area. Another accused Mohammad Azam Jumman Shaikh was also apprehended and 5 kg Charas was recovered from him along with small quantities of opium and ecstasy from his house in Millat Nagar, Oshiwara," said an officer. The officials said that the seizure is a part of follow up of Rhea Chakraborty Case and this is the biggest haul of drugs seized in this case. Shaikh is the main supplier of Charas linked to this case.

OTHER STORIES **Naga Bhushan is** additional A-G

Vijayawada: State government appointed the advocate Jasti Naga Bhushan as the additional advocate general for the state of Andhra Pradesh.The state government issued GO RT No. 329 here on Wednesday appointing him as the AAG. He is the son of Supreme Court former judge Jasti Chelameswar.

MINISTERS ASSURES DEVELOPMENT OF TWO DARGAHS

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 9

Minister for endowment Velampalli Srinivas Rao assured development of Syed Shah Quadri and Ali Hussein Shah Quadri Dargahs into a spiritual pilgrimage centre.

The minister announced that Chadar would be offered in the Durgah on behalf of the state government during Urs.

Dargah Muzawar Syed Khaja Mohiddeen and others presented to the minister an invitation of Urs of Ali Hussein Shah Quadri scheduled to be held on December 11 in the Dargah situated near Prakasam Barrage at Vijayawada.

They said that the Dargah committee made flawless arrangements for Urs following the Covid-19 guidelines. The minister praising the arrangement appealed to the devotees to attend the Urs programme. He said that their government adhered to develop the Dargah hence started development works which were under progress.

He assured that Congress government will turn the Dargahs into a spiritual pilgrimage centre in the

ORGANISERS TOLD TO KEEP POLLUTION **TESTING VEHICLES FIT**

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 9

The Transport Department directed mobile pollution testing vehicles to complete checks of their equipment by December 31 and warned of stern action if they issue pollution certificates without proper testing to the vehicles.

Deputy Transport Commissioner (DTC) M. Purendra said that a programme to create awareness among the mobile testing organisers about vehicle pollution tests was conducted.

He said that as per the instructions of the State Transport Commissioner inspection was held on the pollution control testing vehicles across the district.

He said that vehicle pollution inspection records made last month are required to be shown at the RTA offices by the 5th of every month. He warned surveillance will be intensified across the district from the first week of January.

Mr Purendra said that there are 60 pollution checking vehicles in the Krishna district out of which 50 are mobile and rest of 10 are stationary.

ACQUIRE SKILLS TO SUPPLY QUALITY MILK, FARMERS TOLD

DC CORRESPONDENT NELLORE, DEC. 9

Milk Producers associations and secretaries of Milk Procurement Centres have been told to increase the milk supply to Amul Project and provide tips to the farmers to improve the butter percentage and solid non-fat in the milk to secure enhanced price for their milk.

During a review with secretaries and assistant secretaries of Milk Procurement Centres at Ongole on Wednesday, Prakasam district collector Pola Bhaskar said that milk producers should be told not to compromise on milk quality while pointing to the standards of Amul.

"Create awareness among milk producers on the management of cattle and offer tips to provide high quality balanced feed along with nutrients to increase the milk output," the collector told them. He said village taskforce and secretaries should provide technical skills necessary to handle the cattle and improve the milk production.

Mr Bhaskar called for collective efforts from everyone concerned to overcome the initial hurdles in the supply of quality milk to Amul since the toil is certain to boost the village economy unlike never before.

JC T.S. Chetan and Deputy Director of Animal Husban-

dry, D.L.D.A. Hanumantha Rao

were present among others.



Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy watches a Map of Anantapur before laying the foundation stone for three reservoirs from the camp office on Wednesday, Minister P. Anil Kumar Yaday and others are also seen

CM sets foundation stone for three new reservoirs

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 9

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy virtually laid a foundation stone to Dr YSR Upper Penna project, where three reservoirs Muttala, Thopudurthi, and Devarakonda in Anantapur district are to be constructed at a cost of ₹803 crore under Handri Neva Sujala Sravanthi (HNSS) scheme on Wednesday in the CM camp office at Tadepalli. Mr Reddy said that their

government added two extra reservoirs to HNSS scheme with extra storage capacity of 3.3 tmc of water and this would be carried without increase in cost of ₹803 crore.

Speaking on this occasion, the Chief Minister said that the project was taken up with utmost sincerity and added two more reservoirs to store an additional 3.3. tmc. He stated, "The project is

5,000 VILLAGES

TO BE COVERED

IN FIRST PHASE

From page 1

 THE PROJECT will also fill up 7.216 tmc of water in five reservoirs in 90 days and irrigate about 75,000 acres in Beluguppa, Kuderu, Atmakuru, Kambadur, Kanaganapalli, Chennekothapalli, Raptadu

being constructed at the same price quoted by the previous Telugu Desam government with an addition of two more reservoirs thereby increasing the capacity. This shows how much corruption the previous TD government was steeped in. During the previous government, a GO was issued on January 24, 2018, to carry out works at a cost of ₹803.96 crore, but the works was not done. However, our government is establishing two additional reservoirs with the same cost and increasing the storage capacity which clearly explains the contrast."

and Ramagiri mandals.

aims to irrigate about 6.025 lakh acres in Rayalaseema and provide drinking water to about 33 lakh people. He explained that as part of Handri Neva, lifting water from Jeedipa-lli reservoir, through main canals of Muttala, Thopudurthi, Devarakonda and Somaravandlapalli reservoirs of the upper Penna reservoir which have a capacity of 5.40 tmc will be irrigating 75,000 acres. He further explained that in addition to this, the project will fill up 7.216 tmc of water in five reservoirs in 90 days and irrigate about 75,000 acres in Beluguppa, Kuderu, Atm-He said that through this akuru, Kambadur, Kanaproject, the government ganapalli, Chennekotha-

Raptadu Ramagiri mandals. The Chief Minister said

Venkatapuram Maddalacheruvu. He said that the lives of people and their economic conditions will be changed forever bringing a better facelift to the rural area.

He said by the grace of God all reservoirs across the state are filled with water and the government has been implementing all the welfare schemes as promised and mentioned in the manifesto.

Meanwhile, ministers Botsa Satyanarayana, M. Sankara Narayana and S. Appalaraju, MP Madhav, MLAs T. Prakash Reddy, MLC Iqbal and other officials were present at the event held at Venkatapalli of Kothapalli mandal in Anantapur district near

that four more lift irrigation projects are going to be constructed in Kottapalli, Atmakuru,

pesticide remnants in them. This is because those who consume food cooked with such crops

The decrease in BOD and increase in DO from effluent discharge point was due to natural selfpurification.

The rivers in Kurnool are polluted by chemical effluents, medical waste in addition to sewage by KMC, said K.N. Reddy, an environmental activist.

D.K. Balaji said it requires ₹300 crore to construct sewerage treatment plant but the civic body does not have that much of money. A proposal has been sent to the Union government to sanction the amount under Swach scheme, he said.

Balaji further said AP Urban Asset Management Ltd also assessed the sewerage treatment desirability and contemplated to take up construction of the treatment plant for sewer-

"The three-phase survey

In the test it was found reflected in coliform sam- 6.4 ppm. will be conducted in 1.26 lakh sq km across villages, hamlets, towns, and cities except for forest lands. Around 5,000 villages will be covered in the first phase, 6,500 villages in the second and 5,500 villages in the third phase. The government will set up mobile tribunals to solve land disputes on the spot.' The CM stated "The survey is overdue. Sub-divisions and distributions coliform at were not registered at the field level in the last 100 years. A land titling card consisting of a unique identification number, measurements of the property, name of the owner along with photo, and the total area would be given after the survey. Digitised cadastral maps would also be prepared and they will feature details of the lands in the village. Survey stones would be installed once the mark-Declare SVVU as national varsity: TTD ing of land is completed. Digitised property register and title register and DC CORRESPONDENT a register for complaints

at Village Secretariats.' The CM explained "be Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam Trust Board chairman Y.V. Subba it a house site or agricultural land or any real estate layout, after giving a title on it, it will be Wednesday appealed to the Union eduput for display in the cation minister Ramesh same village Secretariat under observation for two years to see if there **BJYM SEEKS** were any objections. A permanent land title **IMPLEMENTATION** will be provided after two years upon finalisation. In case of objec-**OF EWS QUOTA**

TIRUPATI, DEC. 9

ingly. Lieutenant General Girish Kumar, Surveyor General of India, said that he was honored to be part of this initiative, which stands as a role model for other states. He said that records of the surveyed lands will be ready within five minutes. He stated that a comprehensive survey is a visionary programme that uses the latest technology in the world.

tions, the government

will take responsibility

and compensate accord-

would be made available

Pushkar ghats: Coliform bacteria exceed standards

that "It may be noted from the data, the pH and dissolved oxygen are meeting the standards, whereas the other two parameters, viz., Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) and Total coliform bacteria are exceeding the standards." A PCB official said that Environment ministry constituted a committee in 1999 which recommended desirable limit of fecal MPN/100ml and a maximum permissible limit at 10,000 MPN/100ml for discharge of treated sewage into a water body or reuse for agriculture, aquaculture or forestry application. And when it comes to drinking water, it should not be more than 500/MPN/ 100 ml, he said. Pushkar Ghats near Mantralayam at Vinayaka Ghat, Šanta Market, Kurnool Pump House, Rambotla and Sankalbagh

ples, said a PCB Engineer. Oxygen Biological Demand (BOD) is a measure of the quantity of oxygen used by microorganisms (aerobic bacteria) in the oxidation process. In a study conducted sometime back by independent researchers, the BOD values of water samples during the monitoring periods at the industrial effluent disposal point was found to be between 78ppm to 119 ppm, which indicates that the effluent run-off carries chemical wastes during poly-fibre synthesis. This is due to the discharge of untreator partially treated industrial effluent directly in to the river.

There is makeable variation in the BOD content along the downstream from the discharge point during the study period which varied from 20.1 ppm to 36 ppm. The

Pokhriyal to recognise the TTD-run Sri Venkates-wara Vedic University

(SVVU) as a national uni-

versity and requested to

hike the TTD quota in the Delhi based S.V. College.

The TTD chairman has

given a representation let-

ter to the Union minister at her office in New Delhi on Wednesday.

In the representation, the chairman said that the SVVU, which was set up in 2006, was recognised by UGC as a State University under 2F category.

ghats showed abnormal upstream water showed fecal contamination as low BOD values 3.1 ppm to

Health authorities say that all these grounds will be subject to a scientific scrutiny. Truth can be established once test reports from several cen-Commissioner

tral agencies are out. Health director Dr. T. Geeta Prasadini said, "We will be able to know the exact reason for the cause of mystery illness very shortly. Several central agencies have collected samples of blood, urine, water, milk and crops, among others. These are being testing at present and their reports are

Infrastructure age in a phased manner.

mystery illness at Eluru Sarma: Lead coated PVC pipes could be poisoning water

VISAKHAPATNAM, DEC. 9

AKN university to study

DC CORRESPONDENT

Adikavi Nannaya University will take up a study to

find out the reason for the

mystery illness at Eluru in West Godavari.

The university vice-

chancellor held a meeting with the heads of several

departments in Rajamahendravaram on Wednes-

day and discussed with

them about the mystery

illness affecting several people. He said that based

on the suggestion from

the state government, the

university would take up

a study to find out the pos-

sible reason affecting the health of several people at

The VC said that a com-

mittee under the leader-

ship of professor Dr A. Matta Reddy from university science and technolo-

gy college, would take up the study and submit its

He called upon the managements of university affiliated colleges and NSS volunteers to move to

Eluru and extend all nec-

essary help to the affected

people and their families

and also to the general public to instil confidence

among them as they were

panic stricken following

the mystery illness affect-

ing several people in the

He also said that it was

their social responsibility

BOILED MILK OF

INFECTED CATTLE

Humans, who consume

such milk even after boil-

ing, have a chance of get-

ting infected with pesti-

NCDC is also collecting samples of crops like paddy and others to test

them for any presence of

may get infected. It is also

searching for warehouses,

where huge quantities of

pesticides are stored to check any chance of their

leakage or spillage that

may find their way into

drains, canals and other

water bodies, especially

owing to recent spell of

heavy rains and floods.

Soil may have got contam-

inated with residues of

pesticides in the process.

NOT SAFE

From page 1

cide residues.

Eluru.

VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 9

Former civil servant and social activist EAS Sarma told the chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy that use of lead coated PVC pipes for supplying domestic water could be the reason for the massive sickness of the people in Eluru. In a letter to the Chief

Minister on Wednesday, Mr Sarma said an analysis carried out by the offi-cially recognised Quality Council of India, 33 per cent of the water samples taken in 26 cities in India have indicated high levels of lead. Lead coated PVC pipes used extensively in urban drinking water systems seem to be the major contributor to lead poisoning of water.

The water samples thus analysed indicated lead levels to be in excess of the Indian norm of 50 parts per billion, which is in itself a questionable one compared to the WHO norm of 10 parts per bil-

lion. Excess lead in the human body can cause neurological problems of the kind observed in Eluru. The impact of lead poisoning of water is far more deleterious on children. Lead in excess of 10 micrograms per decilitre causes serious learning problems in children. More than 70 different body ailments are attributable to excess lead present in the human body,

Sarma told the chief min-ister in his letter. It is also possible that discarded vehicle batteries entering the drinking water supply systems might have also caused

lead poisoning.
The former civil servant suggested urgent measures on the part of the municipal bodies to maintain cleanliness at all fresh water sources that cater to water supplies, minimise the use of PVC pipes and carry out frequent, statistically well designed sample analysis of the municipal tap water points at the consumer end.

WHO officials take details

from Page 1

He told authorities to focus on whether the illness was due to water contamination or due to some other cause and asked to conduct a detailed investi-

Officials informed that the presence of lead and nickel in the patient bodies might have caused the illness, which could have happened due to excessive use of pesticides. Officials said that the number of cases have been declining and the patients are recovering within 3-4 hours.

Meanwhile, experts from the WHO said they are surveying the areas where people fell sick and are taking health details including the food they consumed. On the other hand, experts suspect that bleaching and chlorine used in sanitation programmes as part of Covid-19 prevention measures may also be the cause.

from AIIMS, Delhi said that comprehensive tests are yet to be done, but the primary investigations revealed that lead and nickel appear to be high in the blood of those who were ill. As Indians do have nickel in their bodies, the presence of lead might have caused the illness. Also, it was found that there is a significant drop in the level of lead in the patients after 24 hours of becoming sick.
"The process of recy-

Doctors and experts

cling batteries or due to the dumping of broken batteries, or when fired may also have led to the current situation. We will test drinking water and milk samples and come to a definite conclusion on the reasons as soon as pos-

sible," they said. Experts from Mangalagiri said that pesticides might have contaminated the organic chlorides, which is just a primary finding, where accurate conclusions on this are yet to come.

Expert team from NIN, Hyderabad said that they have examined the food water, milk, urine and blood samples from the families of the sick and also taken samples of vegetables and essentials from the market. 'We are conducting comprehensive tests, so far, there are no signs of danger. We shall submit a report on

water, food, milk, urine and blood samples.' Similarly, experts from IICT and CCMB are also investigating the cause of illness and are conducting various tests for accurate diagnosis.

Chief Secretary Nilam Sawhney, Principal Secretary of Health Department Anil Kumar Singhal Andhra Pradesh Medical and Infrastructure Development Corporation chairman Dr K Chandrashekar Reddy and expert teams of AIIMS, NIN, IICT, WHO, CCMB and other officials were present.

CM should disclose results of tests: Naidu

there were rising fears ov-

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 9

Telugu Desam chief N. Chandrababu Naidu on Wednesday demanded that the Jagan Mohan Reddy government dis-close the results of tests held so far in order to find out the actual reasons for the Eluru mass sickness in West Godavari district. He wrote a letter to Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, saying that

er the presence of heavy metals like lead and nickel in the drinking water. He demanded that the government immediately address these concerns and ensure proper drinking water supply through mobile mineral water plants and such measures. Stating that the general public were under grip of constant fears, Naidu said that the presence of heavy metals would have a serious impact on the health of pregnant women, children and the aged people hence every resident in the town should be given electronic health cards.

Every patient should be monitored on a long-term basis. He demanded that the best medical care should be provided with medical experts and a scientific study of the Eluru illness should be made in order to find out the root

LEGAL | OPINION | State govt taken decision keeping in mind interests of people: Dave HC urged not to issue interim order on 3 capitals

DC CORRESPONDENT

Bharatiya Janata Party Yuva Morcha threatened to launch a statewide agitation to bring pressure on the government to implement EWS Bill (Reservation for Economically Weaker Sections) while accusing the CM for ignoring the Bill even after extending support in the Assembly

NELLORE, DEC. 9

and Parliament.

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 9

Senior Supreme Court advocate Dushyant Dave has appealed to the High Court not to issue any interim order to stop the state government's move to set up three capitals in the state during the hear-ing held here on Wednesday. He informed the court that the state government

had decided to set up three

capitals, including legisla-

tive, executive and judiciary, keeping in mind the interests of the people. He businessmen. He argued to mittee set up said that the High Court's

Dave said that though the state government had taken the decision to set up three capitals based on the reports submitted by experts' committees, the previous government's to develop decision Amaravati as capital city, was based on the opinion

of political leaders and

interference on the capita-

ls issue was unwarranted.

He argued that the committee set up under the chairmanship of former minister P. Narayana was not having any experts in it. Referring to the Sivara-makrishnan Committee, set up by the Centre, as per norms of AP Reorganisation Act, 2014, he said that the previous government

added that it even decided

to develop Amaravati as

capital city even before

Sivaramakrishnan panel

that it was the prerogative of the state government to decide its capital city and said that the Centre never intervened in setting up the capital city in any state. He said that a few politiignored such a report and

cal leaders and businessmen had decided to set up a capital city at Amaravati and develop it at a cost of ₹1 lakh crore without consulting appropriate

has submitted its report. He informed the court

Advocate general S. Sriram arguing in the case said that Amaravati town and the capital city Amaravati were not having any relation at all and said that the previous government had resolved to develop the capital city between Vijayawada and Guntur.

He said that the court needed to know how the previous government had taken the decision to develop Amaravati as the capital city.

SHORT

TAKES

THIRUPPAVAI TO **REPLACE SUPRABATHAM**

DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUPATI, DEC. 9

As the auspicious month of Dhanurmasam is commencing from December 16 at 6.04 am onwards, Andal Sri Godai Thiruppavai will be recited in the place of Suprabatham – the awakening seva of Lord inside Tirumala temple till

All the Sri Vaishnavaite temples follow the recitation of Thiruppavai hymns during the entire month and it is also an important month for all spiritual seekers as it is believed as the most sacred period to worship Lord Vishnu.

According to Hindu scriptures, a day of God is equal to six months (Uttarayana) and a night equal to the remaining months (Dakshinavana) in a human year. Dhanurmasam falls at the end of Dakshinayana. In fact, this month is considered to be auspicious for worship during early hours.

APSSDC-IBM TRAINING FOR UNEMPLOYED

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 9

State Development Corporation and IBM offering training in front end web development innovation camp and inviting applifrom unemployed

youth.

APSSDC Krishna district skill development officer E. Tammaji Rao here on Wednesday said that the training would be held for 22 weeks and computer science and electronics graduates and PGs are eligible to get the training. He said that training would

be offered in coding, front end web development and design making. He said that besides this, front end skills, HTML, GIT, JavaScript, CSS-pre processors and CSS programming would be offered through

online free of cost. He said that interested unemployed youth can register their names with complete details on www.apssdc.in by December 14 and said that interested persons can contact APSSDC helpline 18004252422 number for more details.

82 TONNES OF GANJA DESTROYED

DC CORRESPONDENT VISAKHAPATNAM, DEC. 9

After a long wait, the officials of Vizag Rural Police got a legal nod to destroy tonnes of seized dry ganja in Vizag region. The police destroyed over 82,400 kgs (82 tonnes) of dry ganja seized by the police in the presence of Drug Disposal committee at Balighattam dumping yard in Narsipatnam of Vizag district on Wednesday.

Deputy Inspector General of Police (Visakha Range) L.K.V. Ranga Rao said that the ganja was seized in over 657 cases under 41 police stations limits in the district. It was the first time that such a huge quantity of dry ganja was destroyed by a single day in the district.

He said that over 1,26,350 kgs of seized ganja was destroyed in the past three years from 2018 in Vizag rural limits.

The police have been on the job to identify the repeated ganja smugglers, including the inter-state smugglers to invoke PD Act against them to curb the ganja trade in the

130 TONNES OF PDS RICE, 6 TRUCKS SEIZED

DC CORRESPONDENT NELLORE, DEC. 9

Chittoor police have seized 130 tonnes of rice, meant for the public distribution system, at ada mandal of SPSR Nellore district late on Tuesday night.

They have also seized six trucks transporting the rice bags illegally. A team of police led by Satyavedu Sub Inspector Nagarjuna Reddy jumped into action and found the rice at an unauthorised stock point at Tada following a

tip-off. Police officials said their men are keeping a tab on the movements of paddy brokers of the region after they came to know that some of them have been purchasing PDS rice in Chittoor district and shifting to Tada for transporting to Chennai and other parts of Tamil Nadu.

Vaccination to spur infra

AP has 1,142 PHCs, 7,548 sub-centres which would be used for vaccination

K.M.P. PATNAIK | DC

The massive exercise of vaccination could lead to strengthening of the rural health infrastructure, according to experts.

Over the years, Andhra Pradesh has 1,142 PHCs 7,548 sub-centres through which the vaccine would be administered to the vulnerable sections of the society. Incidentally, the State

has begun improving the infrastructure at the PHC and sub-centre level under Effective Vaccine Management (EVM) programme in February itself and a third party

AP RECORDS 618

COVID CASES,

THREE DEATHS

DC CORRESPONDENT

AP registered 618 new cases of Covid-19 scaling up tally to 8,73,457 and three deaths taking toll

According to the Covid-19 bulletin issued

here on Wednesday, out

of 61,038 samples tested,

618 persons were found

infected with Covid-19 and out of a total num-

ber of 1,05,70,843 sam-

ples tested, 8,61,153

patients were recovered

while 5,259 patients are still active with the

Among daily cases of

Covid-19, Krishna recorded the highest

with 121 followed by 92

in Guntur, 76 in Chittoor, 66 in West Godavari, 50

in Anantapur, 49 in East

Godavari, 44 in Visakhapatnam, 29 in Nellore, 23 in Kadapa, 22 in Srikakulam, 17 in Prakasam, 15 in

Prakasam, 15 in Vizianagaram and 14 in

With regard to cumula-

cases, Krishna contin-

ued to lead with 1,042 fol-

lowed by 743 in Guntur,

670 in East Godavari, 639

in Nellore, 465 in Chittoor, 366 in West

Prakasam, 272 in Visakhapatnam, 220 in

Kadapa, 121 in Vizianagaram and 81 in

Out of three deaths of

Covid-19 infected patients in the state,

Krishna, Nellore and

West Godavari reported

one each. Among cumu-

lative cases of deaths of

reported the highest

number of 834 followed

by 654 in Guntur, 651 in

Krishna, 636 in East

Visakhapatnam, 529 in West Godavari, 501 in

Nellore, 487 in Kurnool, 453 in Kadapa, 346 in Srikakulam and 237 in

state

authorities discharged

785 patients after recov-

ery in the last 24 hours

AP conducted Covid-19

tests on 1,97,956 samples

per one million popula-

tion and recorded posi-

594

578

545

198

156

infected

Chittoor

confirmed

virus.

Kurnool.

Coronavirus

Godavari,

Anantapur,

Kurnool

Covid-19

Godavari.

Prakasam,

Anantapur,

Vizianagaram.

in the state.

tive rate at 8.26.

OFFENCES

TIRUPATI, DEC. 9

session.

CCS

breaking

3 NABBED FOR

SHUTTER BREAK

DC CORRESPONDENT

The CCS police of

Tirupati arrested three

persons involved in vari-

ous offences and seized

₹3 lakh worth groceries

and cash from their pos-

The accused were iden-

Krishnamachary, 55, M

Viswanath, 49, and U.

Yugandharachary, 38,

hailing from various parts of Chittoor dis-

Muralidhar said that the

three accused have been

involved in shutter

reported from various

DSP

offences

natients.

Srikakulam,

VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 9

agency suggested a 9point parametre to make the rural health points flawless in administering the vaccine.

"We have covered 85 per cent of the PHCs and subcentres under the EVM and complete all the points before the first shot was administered which is likely to happen after polio vaccination being taken up in mid-week of January," said director of health Dr T. Geetha Prasadini.

Talking to DC she said the PHCs have been refurbished under Nadu-Nedu programme and the subcentres were being converted into health and wellness centres under

Railway station on Wednesday.

FROM PAGE 1

Dr Kiran M, senior anaesthesiologist,

Government Hospital,

Nizamabad, said, "Phase

III trials are still not

complete. They are currently ongoing. Without data of these trials, the

EUA cannot be given.

There is no concept of EUA in India. This is for

this given the emergency of the pandemic. For this

reason, scientists and

drug controllers are very

According to sources aware of the proceed-

ings, "the data submitted

by a company to CDSCO

in order to get a EUA per-

tained to data of over-

seas patients by a compa-

ny for phase III human

In case of another com-

pany, recruitment of all

26,000 volunteers is still

not complete, sources said. Given these lapses

clinical trials".

cautious.

The PHCs have been refurbished under Nadu-Nedu programme and the sub-centres were being converted into health and wellness centres

Ayushman Bharat programme. Installation of generators and uninterrupted power supply are in place to maintain the cold-chain, she added. She said AP was ahead

in building infrastructure in the rural sector got ready to launch the vaccine all over the State. "Our PHCs have been administering vaccine

Passengers traveling in Vijayawada to Lingampally inter-city express after it

was restored after nine months due to Covid pandemic from Vijayawada

Phase III trial data

needed for approval

it will take time for the

EUA to be given to these

Experts argue that vac-

cine development takes

time and evaluation of

Dr Sanjay Reddy, senior pharmacist, said, "The data generation will be

based on the dosage

regime, time after doses

and adverse effects, if

completed, it will not be

known where this vac-

cine can be administered

Experts believe that the

waiting period for EUA

will take at least another

month, if not ore. There

are three committees

which have to evaluate

the request from these

two companies, includ-

ing the vaccine subject

expert committee, the

technical panel and the

apex committee. The first committee, SEC,

has asked for more data

from the companies,

to people safely."

data requires time.

companies

the first time vaccines any. These phases have are being taken up under to be completed. Till it is

since years but Covid-19 will definitely improve the basic infrastructure facilities. In this regard we are conducting gap analysis to find out the needs of the PHCs," said OSD for Covid-19 for north Andhra and princi-pal of Andhra Medical College Dr P.V. Sudhakar.

In rural area, PHCs are grassroot-level government-run health centres that are responsible for last-mile providing health services. Once a vaccine is manufactured, it is transported from the manufacturer/supplier to the state or regional vaccine store. From there, the vaccine is distributed to districts,

which means that the

wait for the vaccine from

these two firms reaching

people has gotten much

The application by the

Indian arm of US phar-maceutical firm Pfizer

was not taken up for

Wednesday as the com-

pany sought more time

for making a presenta-

tion before the commit-

The recommendations

approved by the DCGI,

an official source was quoted by PTI to have

Bharat Biotech applied

to DCGI for EUA on

December 7 for Covaxin,

developed indigenously

by the firm in collabora-

tion with the Indian

Council of Medical

Research, while Pune-

based Serum Institute

sought a nod for its Oxford vaccine,

Covishield, on December

deliberation

tee, they said.

said.

which in turn send them to community health centres, primary health centres and the last point sub-centres.

The state government has directed the district administrations to form mandal level task force committees and similar committees at PHC and smooth functioning of the programme and ensuring involvement of all the line departments.

As per the available health workers, frontline staff of other depart-ments, 50 plus age group people and people below with co-morbidities will be vaccinated.

WOMAN FARMER

DC CORRESPONDENT

attempted to end her life

by consuming pesticide-laced water in front of

the revenue officials

who came to conduct a

survey for the construc-

tion of Rythu bharosa

kendra and wellness

Baipparedlapalle village

of Ramakuppam man-

dal in Chittoor district

on Wednesday. According to Ramaku-ppam tahsildar Sriniva-

sulu, the villagers from

Baipparedlapalle had

staged series of protests in front of the tahsildar

office, demanding construction of Rythu bharosa kendra and

wellness centre at a Banda Poramboke (gov-

ernment) land in the village.
Following this, the rev-

enue officials visited the

village on Wednesday

morning and started a

survey at the said gov-

ernment land – with Survey No. 144/11

(Extent - 1.95 acres). The

woman farmer Harathi,

who claimed that she

owns the land. She later

tried to end her life by

consuming pesticide

"As per records it is a

land, which belongs to

the government. The

woman has temporarily

covered the rocks in the

said land with some soil

and has been raising

groundnut crop which

has also dried up. We have requested the

woman not to obstruct

our duties. But she did-n't paid heed to our

words and tried to com-

mit suicide by drinking

said Mr Srinivasulu,

pesticide-laced water,

3 TV REPORTERS

ARRESTED FOR

EXTORTION

tahsildar

Ramakuppam.

Poramboke

survey was obstructed by

laced water.

'Banda

144/11

OBSTRUCTS

TIRUPATI, DEC. 9

woman

SURVEY

Project Director, Ship Building Centre Visakhapatnam, Vice Admiral K. Srinivas lays a wreath at the Submarine Cenotaph as part of Submarine Day celebrations at INS Virbahu inside Eastern Naval Command in Visakhapatnam on Wednesday. Guard pond in RINL,

Chairman and managing director of RINL, the holding company of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant, P.K. Rath inaugurated Guard pond in the plant

projects and works collective for completing the project within the stipulated time and said RINL was always at the forefront in implementing environment

Guard ponds are 'Safe discharge

constructed guard ponds at guard pond has 4 ponds with each having a capacity of 9,600 cubic meters for storing two days of treated effluent from Coke Ovens. Once the water is stored, it shall be permitted to be discharged into the marine environment after its quality is cross-checked by APPCB. This ensures that 100 per cent of the effluent being discharged into the marine environment is done only after it meets the prescribed norms. This is one more environment

Vizag steel, inaugurated DC CORRESPONDENT ments. In line with the statutory directives, RINL a cost of ₹10 crore. This

VISAKHAPATNAM DEC. 9

premises on Wednesday. Mr Rath congratulated the

friendly measures.

Guard' mechanisms for pre-'untreated/abnormal' effluents into marine environfriendly measure taken by

CYCLONE AFFECTED STAGE PROTEST DEMANDING ASSISTANCE IN NELLORE

DC CORRESPONDENT NELLORE, DEC. 9

immediate Demanding financial assistance, victims of the recent cyclone staged a protest in front of the office of the Mandal Revenue Officer in Nellore city on Wednesday.

The victims, who are residents of the areas inundated during heavy rains a few days back, squatted in front of the MRO's office and raised slogans against the government for ignoring

Speaking on the occasion

CPM Nellore city secretary M. Ramesh lamented over the plight of poor living in the colonies located in the outskirt colonies which were inundated due to flooding for more than three days. He said the deluge resulted in damage to essentials and electronic gadgets. Even power supply was not

people are still facing hard-

restored to many houses due to waterlogging.
Stressing that the affected

ships, Ramesh demanded immediate financial assistance from the state govern-

FORUM DOUBTS THE SAFETY OF KANDALERU DAM CITING SEEPAGE

DC CORRESPONDENT NELLORE, DEC. 9

Telugu Ganga Water Rights Committee blamed the engineers of Kandaleru dam for their inability to arrest the seepage from the dam after storage level increased to 60 tmc.ft for the first time.

The forum alleged that agriculture lands and lemon gardens in the villages such as Pulikallu, Venkatapuram, iparthi, Parvathapuram and Kummaragunta located adjacent to Kandaleru dam will be destroyed if water logging due to the seepage is

not stopped immediately. 1 Convener of the forum, M. Ramesh alleged that the discharge of seepage through Toe drain is very much higher than the stipulated norms. The purpose of Toe drain,

which is located along the downstream of embankment dams, is to capture the seepage from the embank-ment and safely discharge into the area downstream.

In a representation submitted to the executive engineer of Telugu Ganga project, Ramesh expressed con-cern over possible damage to the bunds.

NTR health varsity web counselling starts today

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 9

Dr NTR university of health sciences issued notification for exercising web options for the first phase web based counselling for admission into MBBS course Competent Authority Quota seats for the academic year 2020-21 from 8 am on December 10 to 8 am on December 13.

The Dr NTR university of health sciences in its notification issued here on Wednesday stated that it had notified the first phase of web based counselling for MBBS seats available under CAQ including special categories like physically challenged, police martyrs children and Anglo Indian in government, private, un-aided, non-minority and minority medical col-

leges and MBBS seats in

Sri Padmavathi Medical

College for Women, Tirupati for the academ-

ic year 2020-21 in AP. All

the eligible candidates

who are present in the

provisional final merit

The first phase of web based counselling for MBBS seats available under CAQ including special categories like physically challenged.

on the website on December 7, are asked to exercise their options at https://apmedam.apntruhs.in as per the seat matrix displayed in the w e b s i t e http://ntruhs.ap.nic.in.

The eligible candidates present in the provisional final merit position list of applied candidates, should give only one time option to be exercised for all medical colleges as per their order of priority. The same options will be considered for all phases of counselling including mop-up counselling and also for filling special category seats also as and when the final prioritised list from the authorities concerned is received.

didates only will be considered for competent authority quota seats in un-aided private minority medical colleges. If minority candidates are not available, then the seats will be converted to non-minority in the last phase of counselling and will be filled with eligible candidates. The seats reserved

under special categories like NCC, CAP and sports and games will be filled as and when the prioritised merit list is received. Therefore, candidates claiming under special category reservation are also informed to exercise their option for all colleges as per their order of priority. The unallotted seats under special categories quota will be converted and added to respective categories.

The selected candidates have to pay university fee of ₹10,500 through payment gateway. The Tuition fee is fixed at ₹10,000 in government medical colleges and ₹15,000 in private, un-aided, nonminority and minority Muslim minority can- medical colleges.

DC CORRESPONDENT NELLORE, DEC. 9 Buchireddypalem police have arrested three reporters working for Nellore based electronic channels for extortion

According to Nellore rural CI, Srinivasulu Reddy, the accused trespassed into the village secretariat Buchireddypalem

and assault on a public

servant on Wednesday.

November 6 night when two village volunteers were working and questioned the reasons for remaining in the office during the late hours. The reporters recorded

their presence in the cameras even when they said they are engaged in YSR Bima work and threatened to expose them while hinting about illegal activities in the office.

In a complaint, the volunteer woman alleged that the media men collected ₹12,000 from them for not telecasting the video footage. CI said that they arrested reporters based on the complaint. He said there were no illegal activities in the office.

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(A/2021/IC00081)

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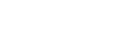


places in Tirupati urban district limits.









SHORT TAKES

TAMIL TELEVISION ACTRESS CHITRA COMMITS SUICIDE

Chennai, Dec. 9: Popular Tamil television actress Chitra was found dead at a hotel room here early on Wednesday and she is suspect-ed to have died by suicide,

The 29-year old actress, well known among television audience in Tamil Nadu was seen hanging from a fan at the hotel room — using her saree like a in suburban Nazarethpet when reached the spot, police said.

When examined, she was already dead, an official said adding her fiance, who was with her before her death was being questioned.

After a shoot at a nearby location, K. Chitra arrived at the hotel on the Bengaluru bypass and had told the man that she would be back after a bath and requested him to wait outside, police said quoting him. "He says he knocked on the door since she did not come out for long. He says, he then informed the hotel personnel and malical properties." sonnel and police was informed at 3.30 am. He is being questioned. A probe is on," the official said. The 32-year old man was

recently engaged to her and he was staying with her in the hotel room. Chitra became more popular among lovers of soap opera after she donned the role of 'Mullai,' in the ongoing television serial 'Pandian Stores.'

The body has been sent to Kilpauk Government Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

THREE AL-BADR **MILITANTS KILLED** IN ENCOUNTER

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC SRINAGAR, DEC. 9

A gunfight that broke out in a remote village of Jammu and Kashmir's southern Pulwama district overnight ended district overnight ended around noon on Wednesday after the security forced gunned down all the three mil-itants who had been holed up in a private house. The house owner was injured in the

clash, the officials said.

The Army and J&K police said that the slain men — all locals — belonged to Al-Badr, a pro-Pakistan militant outfit. Inspector General of Police

(Kashmir range), Vijay Kumar, said that the civilian who was caught in crossfire was immediately shifted to a nearby hospital for treatment and is said to be stable. Kumar out militants from Pulwama's riken vinage had sell-nched jointly by J&K police's counterinsurgency Special Tiken village had been lau-Operations Group, the Army's 55 Rashtriya Rifles and Central Reserve Police Force's 182 and 183 battalions.

The police claimed that the militants holed up in the area were given opportunity to surrender. "However, they fired indiscriminately upon the joint search party which was retaliated leading to an encounter Zamir Sadiq Lone in whose house the terrorists were hiding also received gunshot injuries.

DRDO LABS 'TALK' IN SUCCESSFUL **QUANTUM DEMO**

New Delhi, Dec. 9: The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) on Wednesday successfully demonstrated communication between its two labs using Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) technology, which is a "robust" way to share encryption keys, said an

official statement. In the QKD technology, encryption keys are sent as qubits in a fibre optic cable. Quantum computing uses qubits as basic resources, similar to how bits are used as basic resources in classical computing. The QKD is designed in a way that if an illegitimate entity tries to read the transmission, it will disturb the qubits — which are encoded on photons — and this will generate transmission errors, leading to legitimate end users

being immediately informed. "Secure communications are vital for defence and strategic agencies world over and distribution of encryption keys from time to time is an important requirement in this context... Quantum based communication offers a robust solution to sharing the keys securely," said an official state-Defence Minister Rajnath Singh congratulated the DRDO for successful demonstration of QKD-based communication between its two labs in Hyderabad, said the statement



Police keep vigil as Karnataka farmers participate in a protest rally in Bengaluru on Wednesday to press for repeal

Save India's annadatas, **Opposition urges Prez**

Anti-democratic farm laws threaten food security, says Oppn

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, DEC. 9

Opposition parties, led by the Congress and NCP, met President Ram Nath Kovind on Wednesday and sought repeal of the three farm laws against which thousands of farmers have been protesting on various borders of the national capital.

The five-member delega-tion included former Congress president Rahul Gandhi, NCP chief Sharad Pawar, CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury, CPI's D. Raja and DMK leader T.K.S. Elangovan.

The Opposition's memorandum to the President said, "We urge upon you, as the custodian of the Indian Constitution, to persuade your government not to be obdurate and accept the demands raised by India's annadatas.'

"The new agri-laws, passed in Parliament in an anti-democratic manner preventing a structured discussion and voting. threaten India's food security, destroy Indian agrilay the basis for the abolishment of the Minimum Support Price (MSP) and mortgage Indian agriculture and our markets to the caprices of multinational agri-business corporates and domestic corporates," it said.

'We met the President and informed him of our view regarding the three farm laws. We have asked for their repeal. We informed the President that it is critical that they are taken back," Gandhi told the media after the meeting.

He said the way the farm laws were passed in Par-liament, "we feel it was an insult to farmers and that is why they are protesting in the cold weather against them". He claimed that using the new laws, the government wants to hand over the farming sector to the "friends of the Prime Minister," but the farmers are fearless and will not back off, and will continue with their peace-

Kejriwal still under house arrest: AAP

New Delhi, Dec. 9: The AAP on Wednesday alleged that Delhi Chief Arvind Minister Kejriwal's movement is still "restricted" and the main gate of his residence remains closed by the Delhi Police, which denied the charge.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which had on Tuesday alleged that the Delhi Police put Kejriwal under house arrest after he met farmers protesting against the Centre's agri-

The Delhi Police had rejected AAP's charge against it as "totally base-less". Addressing a press conference on Wednesday, spokesperson Raghav Chadha said there is an atmosphere of "undeclared emergency" the around Minister's residence.

"I am telling you with full responsibility that the movement of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal is still restricted at the behest of the (Union) culture reform laws at the city's Singhu border, again claimed that it was being done at the behest of Union minister Amit Shah

Elders determined to keep up the fight

New Delhi, Dec. 9: "Come home only after we win this fight". His son's words to him as as he left his village in Punjab for Delhi ring in Gurdev Singh's ears and give the 71-year-old the strength to carry on with the protest against the new farm laws — so what if he is still recovering from a knee replacement surgery

The doughty sardar from village Nurpur Punjab's Jalandhar district is just one of the several elderly people camping at the Singur border for the last 13 days, determined to keep up the fight for a repeal of the Centre's

three new farm laws. It is getting colder by the day and they are hundreds of miles from home but the band of old men, among the many thousands of protesting farmers, mostly from Punjab and Haryana, are not giving up any time soon.

"As far as I can remember, all generations in my family have depended on agriculture for their livelihood. My sons, too, are farmers. I came to fight for the honour of our forefathers and the rights of my children," Gurdev Singh said, pumping his fists in the air. He had both his knees

replaced just four months ago and can't walk without support but isn't complaining. "This trouble is nothing compared to the issue we are protesting about.

My elder son told me, 'Come home only after we win this fight', and that is what I plan to do," the farmer said as two men help him climb down from a trolley.

Gurdev Singh's two friends from Nurpur, Sajjan Singh and Pritam Singh, both in their late 60s, echo his bravura spir-

BUSY FIGHTING FOR OUR RIGHTS, **SAY FARMERS**

New Delhi, Dec. 9: Caught between the Covid-19 pandemic and the agitation for their rights, farmers protesting farm laws said the fear of contracting the disease is "not enough" to detract them from their fight.

Thousands of farmers camping at the Tikri borders are largely seen without the basic preventive measure against Covid-19 — protective

"The government has already tied a noose around our necks with these laws... we cannot afford to be afraid of Coronavirus," Gagandeep Singh, a farmer from Bhatinda in Punjab, said.

He has been protesting at the Delhi-Haryana bor-der for the last 10 days. Demonstrating for 12 straight days, the farmers been demanding that the three laws be revoked. Sporting a long white beard, Gurvasan Singh said he was not afraid of the disease that has killed already 1.4 lakh people in the country.

"We are losing our rights. We do not have time to worry about Coronavirus," he said. According to Sachin Kumar from Delhi's Uttam Nagar, the government's refusal to hear the farmers' demands proved that it was creating the fear of the virus to shutdown the protest.

Kumar, whose family has land in Uttar Pradesh mocked, "It seems that the virus will infect us exclusively. What is shown on camera and the reality on ground is different.

Meanwhile, traffic was disrupted at border points with farmers agitating on the Singhu, Tikri and Ghazipur borders of

636 zila parishads, 21 zila panchayatas and 1,990 of Hailing the Rajasthan 4,371 panchayat samitis, local body polls results as "phenomenal," the BJP on primarily in rural areas. Thursday claimed that the results are farmers' man-

also people's support for the party across the coun-In Congress ruled Rajasthan, the BJP won 353 of 636 zila parishads, 21 zila panchayatas and cially farmers, have given 1,990 of 4,371 panchayat

rural areas. The party also cited its performance in the recently held local bodies polls in Hyderabad, Arunachal Pradesh and the Bihar Assembly polls to assert that the party and the Narendra Modi

samitis, primarily in

DC CORRESPONDENT

date for Modi govern-

ment's farm reforms and

NEW DELHI, DEC. 9

THE BJP won 353 of

Rajasthan PR poll results mandate on farm bills: BJP

said the saffron party's win in Rajasthan symbolises the trust the poor, farmers and labourers have in Modi's leadership, while senior party leader Union minister ash Javadekar Prakash Javadekar stressed that people, espe-

it a "decisive" victory. He said all these polls held were Parliament enacted three farm sector reform laws, which have drawn protest

Noting that the polls in Rajasthan were held primarily in rural areas, led central government has support in every region of the country.
BJP president J.P. Nadda

Javadekar said by opting for the BJP, voters reversed the trend of the state's ruling party win-

from a section of farmers, especially from Punjab.

ning most seats in the local polls in Rajasthan. "This is a huge victory.. This is farmers' mandate for farm reforms," said

the Union minister. When asked about Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's dig at the Union government alleging that "reform equals theft" for it, Javadekar took a jibe saying he does not want to respond to a "non-per-

forming politician. He said the Central government is holding talks with the protesting farmer union leaders with an open mind and expressed confidence that resolution will be

reached.
The minister pointed out that these wins have come for the BJP amid the Covid-19 pandemic, economic troubles caused by it and "misinformation campaign by the opposition against the BJP over

Nadda attacks TMC as he begins poll campaign

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, DEC. 9

BJP president J.P. Nadda on Wednesday attacked the ruling Trinamul Congress in West Bengal as a family-run party after embarking on a two-day visit to the state to set "dynasty politics" on the agenda in next year's Assembly elections.

He also led a rally of Aar Noy Onnyay (no more injustice) campaign, a door-to-door outreach initiative of the BJP, on Girish Mukherjee Road in Bhowanipore, the home turf and Assembly con-stituency of Chief stituency of Mamata Minister Banerjee, to make the saffron party's presence felt

On Thursday, the BJP chief is likely to visit Diamond Harbour, the base and Lok Sabha constituency of the CM's Abhishek nephew, Banerjee, in South 24 Parganas.

Inaugurating the state BJP election office in Hastings and nine district party offices, Nadda, in an Banerjee's residence at Harish Chatterjee Street in Kalighat, which is also the heart of the TMC, said, "Karyalay is the centre of culture and tradition. Interestingly, BJP is run from the Karvalay. But for other parties, home is their Karyalay from where they are run." He said, "To other par-

ties, party means one par-ticular *parivar* (family) and is restricted only within the parivar, which is spread like a net from top to bottom. And the TMC is no exception to it. It has also become a party of *parivar*. But the BJP is a party which itself is a parivar. We are part of a big *parivar*. This is evident for us because *Karyalay* is not run from any leader's home."

Contrasting Trinamul Congress supremo with Asahishnuta, Nadda argued: December 7, 1935, Jan Sangh founder Syama



BJP national president J.P. Nadda flashes the victory sign as the party begins campaigning for West Bengal Assembly elections. -P

Didi says refugees will not need CAA

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, DEC. 9

Desperate to get back the votebank of the Matuas, a community of Hindu migrants in West Bengal, from the BJP, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday asserted that the refugees would not need the Citizenship Amendment i (CAA) io siay as iegai citizens here.

Accusing the BJP of cheating the refugees in the name of the CAA in the poll-bound state, the Trinamul Congress supremo once again ruled out of allowing the National Register of (NRC) and Citizens National Population Register (NPR) also here. Her

announcement came in wake of the BJP national general secre-Kailash Vijayvargiya's announcement that the CAA implementation for the would migrants underway from either January or February. Banerjee told a TMC

rally at the domain of the Matuas in Bongaon of

There are lot of refugees who live here after coming from Bangladesh. It is your home like ours. There is no need to get a fresh certificate because all of you are citizens. You are being cheated in the name of the CAA. If it gets underway, your grandparents' age proof will be sought. Can you

She informed that all the 94 refugee colonies, under the state government, were legalised already to give its residents citizenship in exchange of nothing.

"There were 250 more such colonies which existed privately on central government premises. We have legalised them also to give citizenship to its residents. Remember, the state government, not the central government, holds the main power. Work of the two governments is different. The state government decides who will live in the state. So there is no point in lying in the name of CAA. We will not allow the NRC and NPR to happen, Baneriee

front of Scottish Church College — Cultivate the habit of discipline and toleration. Surrender not to the convictions you hold dear but learn to appreci-Prasad Mookerjee said in ate the points of view of your opponents. This is very much relevant to Bengal even today. If we look at Mamataji, intolerance thy name is Mamata. Intolerance is growing so

RUSSIA UNHAPPY

"The West is attempting

to undermine our close

partnership and privi-

leged relations with

India. This is the goal of

the US' very tough

pressure on New Delhi,

minister Sergey Lavrov

Observers point out that the remarks high-

light Russia's unease

WITH CLOSE

INDO-US TIES

From page 1

Russian

BACK | HOME Tigress was translocated to Satkosia reserve in 2018 Mehbooba Mufti 'Sundari' to relocate to MP detained again

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC

Former chief minister and People's Democratic Party (PDP) leader Mehbooba Mufti on Wednesday said that she has again been placed under house arrest, the third time in less than a fortnight. Taking a jibe at Niti Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant, she said "too much

democracy indeed. Kant had on Tuesday said, "Tough reforms are very difficult in the Indian context. We are too much of a democracy. For the first time, the government has had the courage and determination to carry out hard-headed reforms across sectors." The PDP chief tweeted,

"Illegally detained today for the third time in less than a fortnight. Too much democracy indeed." She also said, "If my movements are curbed due to 'security concerns' then why are BJP ministers allowed to campaign freely in Kashmir while I've been asked to wait until the culmination of DDC elections?" On Tuesday, she was barred from visiting the families, mainly nomad Gujjars, evicted from their dwellings in the government's ongoing anti-encroachment drive in J&K's central district of Budgam. She uploaded a video on Twitter in which she stands by the locked entrance of her residence here and takes a jab at the J&K administration.

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh on Wednesday gave his nod for relocation of tigress 'Sundari', translocated to Satkosia tiger reserve in Odisha in a re-introduction programme in 2018, in Kanha National Park in

CHOUDHURY | DC

BHOPAL, DEC. 9

Chouhan's decision to restore Sundari to her original home in Kanha tiger reserve has ended after almost an vearlong impasse over relocation of the wild animal with MP forest department hitherto unwilling to take back her contending that she was not fit to be released

In a letter to his Odisha

counterpart Patnaik, Chouhan said MP would take back Sundari. He, however, indicated that it would take some time for relocation of Sundari in Kanha tiger reserve.

'It has been decided to relocate Sundari in the Ghorela re-wilding centre in Kanha tiger reserve to make her fit to be released in the wild. But, an orphan cub is currently being trained in the centre to restore its wild character. Sundari could be relocated to the centre only after the tiger cub was released in the wild", the letter written in Hindi

Chouhan said an expert team from MP which visited Sundari in her enclosure in Satkosia tiger reserve has found that the wild animal was not fit to live in the wild since she has become habituated to human presence due to her prolonged captivity in the enclosure. "It is learnt from media

reports that rehabilitation of Sundari in the enclosure in Satkosia tiger reserve was not done as per provisions of wildlife Act, leading her to lose her natural wild nature", the letter said.

A male tiger, Mahavir, and a female big cat Sundari, were translocated within a gap of a couple of months to Satkosia tiger reserve in 2018 from Madhya Pradesh in a rein-

troduction programme. This was the first experimental interstate translocation of tigers in the

However, Mahavir was allegedly killed by locals a

few months after his translocation. Later, Sundari killed 2 humans in the tiger forcing reserve, Odisha forest department

to shift her to a small

enclosure in the reserve forest. Later, National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) and Odisha government requested the MP

government to take back Sundari. A wildlife activist moved Madhya Pradesh high court seeking a directive

to the MP government to take back Sundari. The court last month ordered the MP government to relocate Sundari

with India's growing proximity and strong strategic ties with the United States, with whom Russia has had a deteriorating sharply relationship.
It also highlights
India's challenge in con-

tinuing to maintain excellent ties with both Russia and the US.

CHOPPER CRASH IN FRENCH ALPS KILLS 5, 1 HURT

Paris, Dec. 9: Five members of a mountain rescue team were killed and a sixth was seriously injured when their helicopter crashed in the French Alps, authorities said. The helicopter was carrying the team on a training mission in the Savoie region on Tuesday evening. The helicopter came down at an altitude of 1,800 meters (5,905 feet), the prefecture of Savoie said in a statement. The surviving crew member was able to give the alert.

He has been transported to a hospital in the city of Gren-oble, the prefecture said. Weather conditions were particularly bad, local authorities said. French President Emmanuel Macron paid tribute in a tweet overnight to rescuers who "to save lives, are taking all the risks."

GERMAN POLLS TO BE HELD ON SEPT. 26, 2021

Berlin, Dec. 9: Germany's next parliamentary election, which will determine the country's new leader after Chancellor Angela Merkel's long rule, will be held on September 26, 2021.

Frank-Walter President Steinmeier's office said Wednesday that the head of Steinmeier's state set the date in line with a recommendation from the government. It will be post-World War II Germany's 20th parliamentary election Germany holds elections every four

The lower house of parliament, or Bundestag, elects the chancellor. That may not hap-pen until well after the election, because the process of putting together a governing coalition can be lengthy. After the 2017 election, it was nearly six months before Merkel was sworn in for her fourth term

ETHIOPIA DENIES PROBES INTO TIGRAY CONFLICT

Nairobi, Dec. 9: Ethiopia's government is rejecting calls for independent investigations into the deadly conflict in its Tigray region, saying it 'doesn't need a baby-sitter.

The declaration comes amid international calls for more transparency into the monthlong fighting between Ethiopian forces and those of the fugitive Tigray regional government that is thought to have killed thousands, including civilians.

At least one large-scale massacre has been documented, and others are feared. Senior government official Redwan Hussein told reporters on Tuesday evening Ethiopia will invite others for assistance only if it feels that 'it failed to investigate.'

To assume the government can't carry out such probes "is belittling the govern-ment," he said.

Frustration is growing as the northern Tigray region remains largely cut off from the outside world, with food and medicines desperately needed by the population of 6 million — some 1 million of them now thought to be dis-

INDIA'S WEAPONS PURCHASE FROM US AT \$3.4 BILLION

Washington, Dec. 9: India's weapons procurement from the United States jumped from a meagre \$6.2 million to a whopping \$3.4 billion in the final year of the Donald administration, Trump's

according to official data. As per the data released by Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), the jump in the sale of American weapons to India comes at a time when sale of weapons from the US to other countries has dipped to \$50.8 billion in 2020 from \$55.7 billion in 2019.

In 2019, the sale of US weapons to foreign countries was \$55.7 billion. In 2017, it was \$41.9 billion, it said. Major buyers of American weapons in 2020 were India (\$3.4 billion up from \$6.2 million in fiscal year 2019), Morocco (\$4.5 billion up from \$12.4 million), Poland (\$4.7 billion up from \$673 million), Singapore (\$1.3 billion up from \$137 million). Taiwan (\$11.8 billion up from \$876 million), and the United Arab Emirates (\$3.6 billion up from \$1.1 billion), the data

showed. Several countries reported a drop in purchase of weapons from the US.



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu attends a ceremony to mark the arrival of a plane of the international courier company DHL, carrying over 1,00,000 of doses of the first batch of Pfizer vaccines which landed at Ben Gurion Airport near Tel Aviv, on Wednesday.

UK body issues allergy warning for Pfizer jab

Caution was given after 2 NHS workers suffered allergic reactions

Don orders vaccine

priority for America

London, Dec. 9: Britain's medicines regulator on Wednesday issued a warning for people with "significant" history of allergic reactions to medicines, food or vaccines to

not have the Pfizer/BioNTech jab, a day after the first set of patients were administered their first of two doses of the vaccine against Covid-19.

The warning comes after two National Health Service (NHS) workers experienced "anaphylactoid reaction" symptoms shortly after being injected, but are now said to be recovering well. NHS England said all its trusts involved with the mass vaccination programme have been informed and from Wednesday, all patients scheduled to receive the vaccine will be asked if they have a history of allergic reac-

"As is common with new vaccines, the MHRA have advised on a precautionary basis that people with a significant history of allergic reactions do not receive this vaccination after two people with a history of significant reactions allergic responded adversely," said Professor Stephen Powis, medical director for the NHS in England.

An anaphylactoid reaction tends to involve a skin rash, breathlessness and sometimes a drop in blood pressure and both the NHS workers who experienced this are said to have a history of serious allergies and carry adrenaline pens around with them.

"We have been advised by MHRA [Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency] of two yellow card reports that may be associated with allergic reaction due to administration of the Covid-19 BNT162b2 vaccine," Pfizer UK said in a statement. "As a precautionary measure, the MHRA has issued temporary guidance to the NHS while it conducts an investigation in order to fully understand each case and

its causes," it said. Dr June Raine, the head of the MHRA, told a joint select committee hearing on Tuesday that "realtime vigilance" will continue throughout the vacprocess. rollout

Biden promises 100 mn vaccine shots in 100 days has claimed more than 1.5

Washington, Dec. 9: US President-elect Joe Biden has said that in the first 100 days of his administration, he would mandate everyone to wear a mask, ensure 100 million Covid-19 vaccinations and reopen the majority of schools as he assured Americans that his "crisis-tested" team of experts will deliver better healthcare and revive the economy.

The US is in the midst of a deadly pandemic that has infected almost 15 million Americans and killed 2,86,000. Globally, there are 68.2 million Covid-19 cases and the pandemic

Washington, Dec. 9: US

President Donald Trump

has signed an executive

order that prioritises

Americans' access to

Covid-19 vaccines before

the US potentially begins

If necessary, Trump said, he is ready to invoke

the Defence Production

Act to ensure that Covid-

19 vaccines first get to the

The Defence Production

Act allows a president to

force private manufactur-

ers to ramp up production

and give the federal gov-

ernment priority on any

American companies, he

said, were the first to pro-

duce a verifiably safe and

"Together, we will defeat

the virus, and we will

soon end the pandemic,

and we will save millions

and millions of lives, both

in our country and all

over the world. And we've

already started," Trump

said during signing the

executive order on Tuesday at a White House

'Operation Warp Speed',

effort to produce and dis-

Trump told reporters

vaccines for Covid-19.

celebrating

tribute safe and effective Pfizer/BioNTech jab.

administration's

effective vaccine.

Americans.

helping other nations.

Announcing his national health team, Biden asked

the Trump administration to act now to purchase the doses it has negotiated with Pfizer and Moderna and to work swiftly to scale manufacturing for the US population and the world. "This can be fixed. If it

does, my team will be able to get at least 100 million vaccinations done in my first 100 days. Third, it should be a national prior-ity to get our kids back into school and keep them in school," he said. — PTI

THE DEFENCE

Production Act allows a

president to force pri-

vate manufacturers to

ramp up production and

give the federal govern-

American companies, he

produce a verifiably safe

that his administration

provided a total of \$14 bil-

lion to accelerate Corona-

virus vaccine develop-

ment and to manufacture

all of the top candidates

As a result of this "unprecedented invest-

ment", both Pfizer and

Moderna have announced

that their vaccines are

approximately 95 per cent

effective, he said.
Pfizer has developed its

vaccine outside of 'Oper-

ation Warp Speed', but is

collaborating with the US

government on manufac-

turing and distribution.

The UK on Tuesday began

its vaccinations with the

with their first of two

long in advance.

said, were the first to

and effective vaccine.

ment priority on any

orders it places.

MERKEL BACKS TOUGHER VIRUS RESTRICTIONS

Berlin, Dec. 9: German Chancellor Angela Merkel advocated tougher restrictions on public life and pleaded with her compatriots to cut down on socializing as the country reported its highest single-day death toll of the Coronavirus pandemic on Wednesday.

Germany is gradually moving toward a tighter lockdown, at least for a limited period after Christmas, as new virus cases remain stubbornly — and are even beginning to creep higher - despite a partial shutdown that started on November 2.

U.S. SANCTIONS HINDERING ACCESS TO VACCINE: IRAN

Tehran, Dec. 9: Iran's President Hassan Rouhani said on Wednesday that US sanctions are making it difficult for Iran to purchase medicine and health sup plies from abroad, including Covid-19 vaccines needed to contain the worst outbreak in the Middle East.

President Trump's administration has imposed crippling sanctions on Iran's banking sec tor and its vital oil and gas industry since unilaterally withdrawing the US from Iran's nuclear deal with world powers in 2018. While the United States insists that medicines and humanitarian goods are exempt from sanctions, restrictions on trade have made many banks and companies across the world hesitant to do business with Iran, fearing punitive measures from

first set of people injected Washington. The country is also cut off from the international banking system, making it difficult to transfer pay-

Biden picks retired Army general to lead Pentagon

Washington, Dec. 9: US President-elect Joe Biden has announced retired Army general Lloyd J. Austin as his nomination for Defence Secretary. If confirmed by the Senate, 67-year-old Austin would be the first African-American to lead the Pentagon.

The nominee for the 28th Secretary of Defence comes with a distinguished record of military service spanning four decades. "General Austin shares my profound belief that our nation is at its strongest when we lead not only by the example of our power, but by the power of our example.

Throughout his lifetime of dedicated service—

and in the many hours we've spent together in the White House Situation Room and with our troops overseas — General Austin has demonstrated exemplary leadership, character and command," Biden said while making the announcement on

"He is uniquely qualified to take on the challenges and crises we face in the current moment, and I look forward to once again working closely with him as a trusted partner to lead our military with dignity and resolve, revitalise our alliances in the face of global threats, and ensure the safety and security of the American people," the Democratic leader said. An accomplished, respected and trailblasing figure in the US military history, Austin retired from the Army in 2016 after over 40 years of service.

African-American to serve as Commander of US Central Command, Austin is a trusted and crisis-tested leader who has overseen some of the most complex and impactful operations in the history of the armed services — including serving as the chief continuing as Prez have denied any such

Washington, Dec. 9: Days before the official certification of the November 3 US presiden-tial elections in favour of his Democratic opponent Joe Biden, President Donald Trump claimed that he would continue to hold the position as he has won the elections.

Trump has been making unsubstantiated claims about widespread voter fraud and electoral malpractice in the presidential polls. State election officials and the media Election officials have declared Biden as the

President-elect as received more than the required 270 of the 538 electoral college votes. The elections are officially scheduled to be certified next week. However, Trump is continuing his legal efforts to upend Biden's victory. He has allowed the official start of Biden's transition to power but has not yet con-

U.S. TOP COURT REJECTS GOP BID TO HALT BIDEN'S PENNSYLVANIA WIN

Trump: Hopeful of

Washington, Dec. 9 (AP) The Supreme Court has rejected Republicans' lastgasp bid to reverse Pennsylvania's certification of President-elect Joe Biden's victory in the electoral battleground.

The court without comment on Tuesday refused to call into question the the certification process in Pennsylvania.

architect of the effort to defeat ISIS in Iraq and

US President-elect Joe Biden has also selected Ohio Rep. Marcia Fudge as his housing and urban development secretary, according to three people familiar with the deci-

Fudge was first elected

vania"s results had been in doubt, he still would have more than the 270 electoral votes needed to become president. -AP

Governor Tom Wolf

already has certified Biden's victory and the state's 20 electors are to

meet on December 14 to

cast their votes for Biden.

votes, so even if Pennsyl-

Biden won 306 electoral

Syria, and working closely with Biden to bring nearly 1,50,000 American military personnel home from Iraq, the transition said.

to Congress in 2008 to represent a district that includes Cleveland, and

had been considered a leading candidate for agriculture secretary in the Biden administration. Her intended nomination was confirmed on

Tuesday by three people familiar with the decision who spoke on condition of anonymity to avoid pre-empting the president-elect's announcement.

She enjoys the strong backing of South Carolina Rep. Jim Clyburn, the No. 3 House Democrat who gave Biden a key nod of support in the primaries.

Pak lawmakers to resign to paralyse govt: PDM chief

stan has deepened after alliance announced that this month from parliament to paralyse the government and force Prime Minister Imran Khan to call early snap polls.

The decision was taken after the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), an alliance of 11 Opposition parties formed in September this Opposition year to overthrow Prime Minister Khan's government, held a marathon meeting in Islamabad. PDM chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman announced on Tuesday night that a consensus was reached on resigning from parliament.

"All lawmakers will submit their resignation letter to their party chiefs by 31st December," he said, flanked by PML-N leader Maryam Nawaz and PPP Bilawal Bhutto

Zardari. The exact timing of stomping out of assemblies would be decided later, said Rehman. Soon after the election in 2018, he had urged the Opposition leaders not to take oath to join parliament due to alleged rigging. But his idea was overruled by others, chiefly by the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and the The Pakistani Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). It is

Islamabad, Dec. 9: The political crisis in Paki-PAKISTAN TO BUY RAJ KAPOOR'S **ANCESTRAL HOUSES IN PESHAWAR** their lawmakers will resign en masse by the end of history and their lawmakers will resign en masse by the end of history and their lawmakers will resign en masse by the end of history and their lawmakers will resign en masse by the end of history and their lawmakers will resign en masse by the end of history and their lawmakers will resign en masse by the end of history and their lawmakers will resign en masse by the end of history and their lawmakers will resign en masse by the end of history and their lawmakers will resign en masse by the end of history and their lawmakers will resign en masse by the end of history and their lawmakers will resign en masse by the end of history and the histo

nkhwa government has determined the price of the ancestral houses of Bollywood legendary actors Dilip Kumar and Raj Kapoor in the heart of this city at ₹80,56,000 and ₹1,50,00,000 respectively. The provincial govern-

ment in September decided to purchase their ancestral houses to conserve the historic buildings which are in dilapidated condition and facing demolition threat.

The two buildings, located in the heart of this northern Pakistani city have been declared as national heritage. Deputy Commissioner Peshawar Muhammad Ali and Works Department, fixed the price of Dilip Kumar's four Marla house for ₹80,56,000 while that of Raj Kapoor's six Marla house for ₹1,50,00.000. Marla, a traditional unit of area used in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, is considered as equal to 272.25 square feet or 25.2929 square metres. The archaeology depart ment has sent a formal

request to the provincial government for releasing over ₹2 crore for purchasing both the historic buildings, where the two greats of the Indian cinema were born and raised in their early days before the Partition.

believed that en masse resignation is the only way to bring the government on its knees and force it to call early elec-

The PPP government in the Sindh province was considered as a hurdle as it was not sure if that it would sacrifice its government to help the Opposition alliance.

The leaders also agreed to go ahead with a rally in Lahore on December 13 as a show of power to the government. It will be the sixth rally after similar gatherings held Gujranwala, Karachi, Quetta, Peshawar and Multan.

The Opposition parties succeeded in attracting a huge number of people despite hurdles created by the government. Prime Minister Imran Khan rejected the demand to step down or call early elections and consistently advocated that Opposition was protesting to put pressure to stop probes in corruption cases against

MISSION | MARS | Automatic engine abort occurred with just 1.3 secs remaining in countdown, no word on next flight

doses

SpaceX aborts test Starship flight in last second

Dec. 9: The first high-SpaceX's futuristic Starship was aborted at the last second in Texas

on Tuesday. SpaceX came close to launching a prototype of the rocketship that company chief Elon Musk is designing to carry people to Mars.

The goal was to shoot Starship to an altitude of

tres) — the highest yet and then bring it back to a vertical landing. But an automatic engine abort occurred with just 1.3 seconds remaining in the countdown.

SpaceX announced on its web broadcast it was done for the day, and there was no word on when it might try again. SpaceX already has conducted five Starship test

THE GOAL was to shoot Starship to an altitude of eight miles (12.5 kilometres) — the highest yet — and then bring it back to a vertical landing. But an automatic engine abort

flights, but these earlier. simpler models have gone no higher than 490 feet (150 metres.) The stain-

occurred with just 1.3 seconds remaining in the countdown.

THE STAINLESS steel version on the launch pad on Tuesday was the first to feature a nose cone.

less steel version on the launch pad on Tuesday was the first to feature a nose cone, body flaps and

Boca Chica in the far southeastern corner of Texas, near the Mexican border, to build and test its Starships. The compaintends to use Starships — the upper stage atop Super Heavy boosters — to deliver massive satellites into orbit around Earth, and send people and cargo to the moon and Mars.

three Raptor engines.



image shows SpaceX full-size Starship SN8 rocket protobefore its launch.

Chronicle

Democracy and reforms: How much is too much?

a point on it, between India's democracy and the government's think tank on economic affairs that was created as the National Institute for Transforming India (Niti) by dismantling the Planning Commission, which had planned to achieve balanced development of the various regions to remove poverty. Probably not, if putative observations of the Niti Ayog CEO, Amitabh Kant, made recently,

The transformation of India in the conception of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is the chairman of the think tank he created in January 2015 through a mere cabinet decision and not the constitutional route, is to be achieved, fundamentally through de-regulation in all fields of economic activity. This means taking away any role for the government through "hard reforms" that Mr Kant spoke of while

addressing an event virtually on Tuesday. The country's major news platforms quoted the Niti Aayog operational chief as

The agri-laws were rammed through **Parliament virtually** without discussion in an example of the 'political will' shown by the regime

saying that "tough reforms" were very difficult in the Indian context because there was "too much democracy" in the country. He also noted that the Modi government had shown the "political will" to drive hard reforms. He reeled off examples such as mining, agriculture and labour.

The political meaning of this is obvious — that the rules, regulations and the culture of debate, dissent and protest in a democracy will not yield "tough reforms" needed to deliver economic prosperity. This is a discredited notion and Mr Kant evidently ran for cover when the implication of his remarks was revealed to him. He flatly denied say-

ing the words attributed to him though it is highly unlikely that all reputed media outlets would misquote him. The videos of his only underscore that his clarification and denials are to be regarded with a stiff dose of skepticism.

Mr Kant went to the extent of saying that India can compete with China only through "hard reforms" and not through holding seminars. Seminars imply discussion and debate. This China reference would also suggest that in the Niti Aayog CEO's scheme, debates are not the way to push "tough reforms", implying a failure of the well-known basis of democracy. Presumably, then, hard reforms can only be achieved through bulldozing, the way it is done in China, a totalitarian state where a single leader is all knowing and all-powerful.

Examples of so-called "hard reform" (even when they undervalue public welfare by privileging the market principle on an exclusive basis), pushed through the methods of democracy, have evidently eluded Mr Modi's most powerful economic bureaucrat. He could have recalled, for instance, that former Britain PM Margaret Thatcher battled and debated in Parliament and the media to get her way in scuttling welfare measures of an earlier era to set her country on a new path.

In fact, to make economic reforms non-sliding, acceptance by the widest sections of the people is a necessity, not a luxury, and the political principle of democracy provides for the most thorough means to install a new idea or practice. The present regime has failed to do just that, the most recent egregious example being the contentious agri-laws against which a storm is brewing. These were rammed through Parliament virtually without discussion — in an example of the "political will"

The rise of Everest

easured in 2005 by a Beijing survey to be 8,844 m, Mt Chomolungma (meaning mother goddess) was a harder climb from the Chinese side, but also Shorter by a good four metres. It prompted mountaineers to rush over to Nepal to summit Sagarmatha (literally, top of the world) whose height was generally acknowledged to be 8,848 metres. It cost the Communist country no small amount of Everest tourism.

Following the 2015 earthquake in Nepal which left 9,000 dead, including some climbers, the country's survey department experts, fearing that the mountain had become shorter, called for a fresh taking of measurement. So far, Nepal had been following the findings of the 1954 Survey of India, which had put out the second fig-ure. An American survey in 1999, however, had calculated Everest to be higher, at 8,850 metres. It added grist to speculations as to whether the young-fold mountain

The speculators were correct. The two newest satellite aided surveys — Nepal's in 2019 and the one completed by China earlier this year — finally agree —the height of Everest is 8,848.86 metres — the mountain having grown by three feet or 86 centimetres. It is 164 years after Radhanath Sikdar used trigonometry and machines called theodolites to first calculate it on behalf of Sir George Everest to be 8,839 metres, making it the highest peak of the world.

It wasn't easy measuring the earth's tallest mountain this time either. Surveyors had to climb the mountain with a GPS receiver. A Nepali surveyor who stayed at the summit for two hours lost a toe to frostbite.

Now comes the key question — can this incre merely icecap, as China once claimed? Yes and no, says Sridevi Jade, plate tectonics expert. The Himalayas stand on the boundary between the Indian and Eurasian plates. Jade calculates that the Indian plate is slipping under the Eurasian plate by about five centimetres a year. After accounting for erosion on the top, Everest is gaining about one centimetre every 10 years. So while the quake may have taken off centimetres, replicating Hillary and Norgay's feat just got harder.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

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Boris' fumbling holds lessons for the world



Sunanda K. Datta-Ray

Reflections

important lesson for the pandemicstricken world remember as challenge after challenge casts its shadow on Prime Minister Boris Johnson's beleaguered government in London is that no opinion — not even that of a suspected adversary — should be dismissed or derided at a time of grave international danger.

More of that later. Immediate attention focuses on another aspect of the coronavirus crisis which inspired Britain's Agra-born business minister, Alok Sharma, to grandiloquently: "In years to come, we will remember this moment as the day the United Kingdom led humanity's charge against this dis-He meant — as every British spokesman repeats ad nauseam that the UK is the first country to agree to use the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine against Covid-19.

Not everyone is equally boastful. While the boastful. ador reminded listeners that the vaccine represents European collective enterprise, the tiny oilrich island kingdom of Bahrain quickly muscled into the limelight to share Britain's glory with its own agreement with Pfizer/BioNTech. Another critic with little stomach for bombast that resound applause in Mr Sharma's ancestral Uttar Pradesh sharply reminded him that this moment might also be remembered for "the UK having one of the worst death rates and the worst economic impact

due to poor governance". Going beyond the United Kingdom's 1.71 million Covid-19 cases and 61,014 deaths, he might have been speaking of the frantic last-minute parleys in Britain's pro-

Britain's defence budget over the next four years, despite the pandemic's calamitous damage to the economy. Such gestures appease the Americans, as do accusations of the Kremlin trying to pene-trate Britain's secret scitracted divorce negotiations with the European Union which suggest that entific research prothe Prime Minister, Boris grammes and promises to reveal Russia's alleged Johnson, did not think things through when he covert interference in British politics. played up to domestic separatists with his aggressive Brexit agenda. With Initially, Mr Johnson rejected pressure, American as well as from time running out for the December 31 deadline, the rightists among his this week's last throw of own Conservatives, to the dice (as it's called) in ban the Chinese technolothe negotiations may be heading for a breakdown

rather than a break-

through. If so, it would be

catastrophic for both par-

ties who cannot escape

their interdependence.

While British waters are

much richer in fish than

the seas surrounding Europe, British trawlers

make their money selling

to the European nations.
As Mr Johnson contin-

ues to pander to the insu-

lar lobby by accusing the

EU of riding roughshod

over British sovereignty

Rachel Reeves, a senior member of the Labour

Party's shadow cabinet,

"needs to deliver the deal

he promised the British

people". He can't ignore her for Brexit has

exposed his reliance on

Labour votes in the

House of Commons

Neither can he ignore the new Cold War against

China and Russia that US

President Donald Trump

had launched with vehe

ment diatribes against the so-called "Wuhan

virus" to woo American

voters ahead of the presi-

With talk of Washington

International Emergency Economic Powers Act to

blacklist the popular

TikTok as "an unusual

threat", Mr Johnson has

taken up the cudgels for the United States like

another British leader,

Tony Blair, who kow

towed to George W. Bush

and joined the American

invasions of Iraq and

video

the 1977

extraordinary

dential election.

invoking

Chinese

and

warned that he

gy company, Huawei, from any role in building the UK's 5G infrastructure. He has since done a volte face and now cites "sound technical reasons" for giving Huawei marching orders. But although Huawei is said to threaten British security and is excluded from the 5G network, Mr Johnson cannot be seriously concerned since the eviction will become effective only over seven

Neither this anomaly nor the ban itself seems to have attracted much public attention in Britain. The reason may be that people are genuinely horrified by China's oppression of the Uighurs, its tightening grip on Hong Kong, the military assertiveness South China Sea and muscle-flexing in Ladakh. But the Brexit controversy makes Britain vulnerable, and succumbing to American pressure at this juncture may compound London's depen-

Dr Hans Kluge, who heads the WHO's European operations, says that lockdowns are unnecessary if 95 per cent of the population wears masks. Sadly, many **European and** American leaders dismissed masks then as politically unacceptable.

bly explains the sudden Instead of taking back £16 billion increase in control of his country's destiny — the publicly reiterated reason for leav-ing the EU in the first place — Mr Johnson might end up by moving closer to the old joke of Britain as the 51st state of the United States of America. Obviously, the pandemic aggravates the impact

of all other crises. Covid-19 might also have caused less suffering and spread less terror if a sane approach had been followed from the beginning. Dr Hans Kluge, who heads the World Health Organisation's European operations, says that lockdowns are unnecessary if 95 per cent of the population wears masks. This should have been far more widely and forcefully propagated when the pandemic was exploding across the world. Sadly, many European and American leaders dismissed masks then as politically unacceptable.

As Britain and the EU nations were going into lockdown, Dr George Fu Gao, director-general of the Chinese Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, China's main public health body, corroborated Dr Kluge's view. Asked about the mistakes being made by other countries trying to control coronavirus, he replied that "the big mistake in the US and Europe, in my opinion, is that people aren't wearing masks".

That opinion should have been taken seriously even though China had already been cast as the adversary. According to independent observers, China's return to normality was largely the result of old-fashioned public health measures, with a heavy emphasis on testand-trace and travel bans, vigorously enforced by mobilising the country's vast resources and, of course, invoking the state's coercive authority. There's a lesson there for the rest of the suffering world.

> The writer is a senior iournalist, columnist and author

CAPITAL LOCATION

The AP government is 100 per cent correct in asserting its right to decide on the location of new capital city. Its right should not be questioned even by a court of law. At the most the HC could ask for state's plans on how it will use the land acquired by the previous government at huge cost. Evidently all those who parted with their lands either voluntarily or under duress, had anticipated huge profit from cost escalation of

Govardhana Myneedu Vijayawada

COVID CASES

It is heartening that people are getting back on horse again after the Covid-19 cases are showing a consistent downfall. At the same time, Covid-19 protocols need to be adhered to strictly till not a single case is reported. The onus is on the people not to throw caution to the winds and pay a heavy price. **Dr C. Ghanshyam**

Visakhapatnam

LOPSIDE PRIORITIES

Even after 70 years of Independence, the suburbs are without potable water and motorable roads. Throughout the country it is the same scenario. We see multiple activities like washing of clothes, cattle and the picking up drinking water from another point along a stream passing through a village or a suburb. No wonder people often get afflicted with waterborne diseases and are prone to other ailments. This is due to negligence and lopsided priorities of rulers.

D.S.P. Rao

High Court upholds Mulki rules

From our legal staff reporter

HYDERABAD, Dec. 9. The full bench of the Andhra Pradesh High Court today held that the Mulki rules relating to appointment of public servants in so far as they are applicable to Telangana

YEARS AGO IN region revive Chronicle and survive to continue

after judgement of the Supreme Court striking down in 1969 Section 3 of the Public Employment Act 1957.

The full bench consisted of Chief Justice Kumarayya, Mr. Justice Gopal Rao Ekbote and

Leher Sethi



Is pollution a greater pandemic than Covid?

s a parent, I dread Delhi winters, not just because of the cold, but because of the terrible pollution in the air. We live in the city with the worst air quality in the world. Air quality index is generally Moderate (101-200) between January and September, and then it drastically deteriorates to Very Poor (301-400), Severe (401-500) Hazardous (500+) between October and December.

It amazes me how year after year, as the winter approaches, there is a huge outcry over pollution in the city and then it dies down its own natural death as the summer returns. There is no urgency to tackle this pandemic!

Although some of us are still getting used to wearing masks, to many of us with little children, this is nothing new because our kids have been wearing masks for the past couple of winters. In my son's Montessori preschool, it was made compulsory for the little babies to wear masks to school. Back then, it felt like I was entering a science fiction film set every time I would go to school. Little did I know that it would become the

new normal soon! As per the current data, as on

November 28, 2020, there have been 1.35,906 deaths due to the coronavirus in India. Globally, there have been 1.45 million deaths. Now, compare this to the deaths caused due to pollution. In 2019, exposures to outdoor high average levels of PM 2.5 caused 9,80,000 deaths in India — nearly 60 per cent of all air pollution — attributable deaths. Globally, there were 4.14 million such deaths in 2019. Even if we were to double the coronavirus-related deaths, they would still amount to just about 27 per cent of the deaths caused due to air pollution in India. Then, why is this pandemic being ignored?

What will it take for the authorities and the government to wake up to its reality? Is it that the awareness of this epidemic is only with the educated and urbane few, that it will only become important once the vote bank of the poor make it an issue?

As per the State of Global Air 2020 report (SoGA 2020) released on October 21, a report published by the US-based think-tank, Health Effects Institute, there were at least 1,16,000 infant deaths due to air pollution recorded in India last year.

For the youngest infants, most deaths were related to complications

from low birth weight and premature birth — direct outcomes of mothers exposure to air pollution during pregnancy. More than half of the infant deaths were due to PM2.5 in outdoor air and the rest were linked to household air pollution due to use of solid fuels such as charcoal, wood and animal dung for cooking, as per the study that claims to be the first-ever comprehensive analysis of air pollution's global impact on newborns. There is a growing body of evidence about the link between infant death and air pollution and several Indian and international studies have tried to explain it.

In 2019, India's population-weighted annual average concentration of PM 2.5 was recorded at 83.2 micrograms per cubic metre — seven times higher than the WHO's safe standards of 10 μg/m3 - and remained highest in the world. (The "population-weighted annual average concentration" is the average level of air pollution to which a country's population is exposed.)

As per the American Lung Association, children face special risks from air pollution because their lungs are growing and because they are so active and breathe in a great deal of air. Children's exposure to air pollution is a special concern because their immune system is not fully developed when exposure begins. Just like the arms and legs, the

largest portion of a child's lungs will grow long after he or she is born. Eighty percent of alveoli develop after birth. Children have more respiratory infections than adults, which also seems to increase their susceptibility to air pollution.

Furthermore, children don't behave like adults, and their behaviour also affects their vulnerability. They are outside for longer periods and are usually more active when outdoors. Consequently, they inhale more polluted outdoor air. They are also closer to the earth, where the pollutants are higher.

As per a study titled "State of Global Air 2019", the average life of a South Asian child growing up in the current high levels of air pollution will be shortened by two-and-a-half years. This means that a child born today will die 2.5 years sooner, on average. That is a really scary prospect, and one that makes me want to leave this city, and country, along with my child. Doing a little bit of research on my own, here's what I found:

■Children are more at risk from the effects of pollution since they have faster breathing rates, and their lungs are still developing.

Mr. Justice Sambasiva Rao.

■Children exposed to high pollution are more likely to have reduced lung function as adults.

■Long term exposure to air pollution may cause asthma and other health risks, including cancer, in children.

■Air pollution is one of the leading threats to child health, accounting for almost one in 10 deaths in children under five years of age.

■Pregnant women exposed to air pollution can hinder the development of the brain and lead to cognitive problems later in the children.
As per the World Health

Organisation, in Delhi, poor air quality irreversibly damages the lungs of 2.2 million or 50 per cent of all children. My child and your child could be part of that number! There is no way of sugarcoating this; as a parent, I am afraid for my child.

If this is not a national emergency, then what is? Our children are the future, and the future is at stake here!

Leher Sethi is an entrepreneur and social activist











Barcelona, Dec. 9: Cristiano Ronaldo struck

twice from the penalty

spot to win his battle with

rival Lionel Messi and

guide Juventus to a 3-0

win over Barcelona on Tuesday, earning the

Champions League Group

G.
The former Real Madrid

striker and his Argentina counterpart traded Ballon

d'Or wins for a decade between 2008-2017 and

were figureheads for the

duelling Spanish giants,

but there was only one winner at the Camp Nou

as they met for the first

departure for Juve in 2018.

against Barcelona in

October without Ronaldo,

sidelined with Covid-19,

but were greatly improved

and earned the first

Champions League away

win against Barcelona since Bayern Munich tri-

Both sides, tied on 15

points, were assured of

qualification before kickoff, but Juve's three-goal

victory handed them a

Ronald Koeman, reeling

from Barcelona's 2-1

defeat by promoted min-nows Cadiz on Saturday

in La Liga, reacted by

making four changes but

It only took 13 minutes

for Ronaldo to break the deadlock, slotting home

from the penalty spot after

the referee deemed Ronald Araujo's challenge on him

a foul. Juve's did not

relent and their pressure

led to a second goal.

Weston McKennie volley-

clipped cross in the 20th

THE RESULTS

(Ronaldo 13-pen, 52-

(Angelino 2, Haidara

(Fernandes 80-pen,

(Jorginho 28-pen)

Borussia Dortmund 1

(Piszczek 68, Witsel

Manchester United 2

pen, McKennie 20)

sweetly

home

Cuadrado's

Juventus

Barcelona

RB Leipzig

Pogba 82)

Krasnodar

(Cabella 24)

Zenit Saint

Petersburg

(Driussi 16)

Chelsea

13, Kluivert 69)

minute.

the hosts started badly.

head-to-head

umphed in 2013.

superior

record.

Juventus lost 2-0 at home

since Ronaldo's

top spot

in

Italians



SHORT TAKES

Ex Argentina coach

Sabella no more

Buenos Aires: Former coach Alejandro Sabella, who led the 2014 World Cup runner-up Argentina team, died on Tuesday at a clinic in Buenos Aires suffering from heart dis-

He was 66 years old. The former boss of Estudiantes de La Plata died at the Cardiovascular Institute of Buenos Aires, where he had been admitted on November 25 - the day soccer legend Diego Maradona died - after suffering

an arrhythmia. The medical center said in a statement that Sabella was the victim of "secondary dilated heart disease and long-standing cardiotoxicity.

Ben Stokes' father

passes away at 65 Christchurch: England all-

rounder Ben Stokes lost his father Ged, who died here on Tuesday after a year-long battle with brain cancer. He was 65

Stokes is currently with the England team in South Africa for the limited over series. He had played all three T20Is and was rested for ODIs, which was cancelled on Monday after multiple cases of Covid-19 were

detected in the bio-bubble. Ged, a former rugby player and coach, had been suffering from brain cancer for some time and Stokes was there in

Christchurch for more than a month taking care of his ailing

Stokes' famous "bent middle finger" gesture during the 2019 South Africa series was a tribute to his father's amputated finger. Ged had to remove a part of his finger in order to continue playing.

Former runner Earnest is dead

Hyderabad: Former middle distance runner and secretary of Ranga District Athletics Association B. Earnest Das passed away on Monday night.

He was 81. Das participated in the Indo-German Athletics Test held in Hyderabad in 1965. An international athletics official, he officiated in the 1982 Asian Games in New Delhi, 2002 Asian Grand Prix in Hyderabad and the 2003

Afro-Asian Games in Hyderabad. He also served as manager of the South Central Railway Athletics team for 30 years.

His son B. E. Stanley Jones is Athletics Federation of India's Technical Committee chairman **Telangana Athletics** Association general secretary K. Sarangapani and Hyderabad **District Athletics Association** president Prof. Rajesh Kumar mourned the demise of Das and

Chess tourney

offered condolences to the

family members.

at the weekend

Hyderabad: The Brilliant Chess Academy is conducting the 175th Brilliant Trophy Open chess tournament online on Saturday and Sunday. A total of ₹10,000 will be given to Top 20 places in the Open category. Special prizes will also be given to top two places in the Under 7, 9, 11, 13, 15 age groups for boys and girls separately. For further details contact J.

Live on TV

Big Bash League: Hobart Hurricanes vs Sydney Sixers from 1.45 pm on Sony Six

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

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

Europa League: CSKA Sofia vs Roma from 11.25 pm on Sony Ten 3; Dundalk vs Arsenal from 11.25 pm on Sony Ten 2; Napoli vs Real Sociedad from 11.25 pm on Sony Ten 1: Sparta Prague vs AC Milan from 1.30 am (Friday) on Sony Ten 1: Tottenham Hotspur vs Antwerp from 1.30 am (Friday) on Sony Ter 2; Wolfsberg vs Feyenoord from Leicester City vs AEK Athens from 1.30 am (Friday) on Sony Ten 3

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record their fourth victory on the trot in the Indian Super League here Subrahmanyam on 9247399717. on Wednesday. Fondre

smashed in a 75th-minute winner after Hernan Santana (45th) had cancelled Jakub Sylvestr's first goal.

Bambolim, Dec. 9: Mumbai City FC rallied

to eke out a 2-1 win over

Chennaiyin FC and

The Sergio Lobera's team maintained the top spot in the ISL table. Chennaiyin FC had a perfect start and would from inside the box, was

have been ahead in the second minute if it was not for Sylvestr missing a sitter. Rafael Crivellaro delivered a perfect corner which was flicked in by Enes Sipovic and found Sylvestr, who missed the

Paris, Dec. 9: Manchester United were

Champions League after a

3-2 defeat by RB Leipzig

on Tuesday, while Paris

Saint-Germain's qualifi-cation for the last 16 was

overshadowed by a racism

row involving a match

official that caused their

game against Istanbul

Basaksehir to be suspend-

Requiring just a point to advance, Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's side fell

behind to an Angelino

goal inside two minutes in

Haidara soon added a sec-

ond and United and were

trailing 3-0 heading into

the final quarter after a

Bruno Fernandes's penalty and a deflected

Paul Pogba header gave

United a lifeline but

Leipzig, who reached the

semifinals last term, held

on to move top of Group

Leipzig must wait until

Wednesday to find out

whether they finish first

or second in the section,

after the contest between

last season's runners-up

PSG and Turkish champi-

ons Basaksehir was inter-

in the 14th minute.

rupted with the score 0-0

'H' on 12 points.

Justin Kluivert strike.

Amadou

ed for 24 hours.

Germany.

knocked out of

Mumbai were not at their best and took time to settle. But they did have their moments. The home side's best chance came in the 25th minute when Adam Le Fondre had a clear sight on goal, but his powerful drive

a statement on his official

twitter and instagram

The left-handed batsman

scored nearly 1700 runs

(1696) across formats with

934 runs (6 half centuries)

coming in the longest for-

In ODIs, he scored 736

runs with four half-cen-

turies and a highest score

of 95. He effected 72 dis-

missals in Tests, which

include 62 catches and 10

Parthiv burst onto the

account.

straight at keeper Vishal Kaith. The rebound fell to Bipin Singh, but he couldn't utilise the opportuni-

stadium in Paris on Tuesday.

Paris amid allegations of

racism by the fourth offi-

cial, in an unprecedented

incident in European foot-

ball's elite club competi-

The row erupted after

Basaksehir assistant coach Pierre Webo, the

tion.

Mumbai hammer Chennaiyin 2-1

Ronaldo bests Messi

Cristiano nets brace as Juve crush Barcelona 3-0

Cristiano Ronaldo (right) of Juventus lines up a shot to score his team's third goal against Barcelona during their

Racist slur halts PSG game

ty. Chennaiyin were clearly the better side in the opening quarter creating chances Lallianzuala through Chhangte, Sipovic and Crivellaro. The Chennaibased side took the lead in the 40th minute. Sylvestr scored probably the easiest goal of the sea-

son. Chhangte deserved credit for his initial spadework on the right before he played a low cross from the byline to find Sylvestr, who slotted

Kylian Mbappe (third from right) of PSG looks on after the game was suspended

League Group 'H' football match against Istanbul Basaksehir at

Players walked off in former Cameroon inter-

amid allegations of racism by one of the match officials during the UEFA Champions

card during a fierce row

on the touchline with staff

from the Turkish club

appearing to accuse the

official of using a racist

Television microphones

picked up a furious Webo

it in.
Just when it looked like Chennaiyin would walk into the breather with a advantage Mumbai's Santana had different plans. The Spaniard, who was unmarked at the far post, nodded in a Hugo Boumous' corner to restore parity post which they doubled the lead in the 75th minute through another set-piece. -PTI

KASHMIR INTO SEMIFINALS

repeatedly asking why a

racist term had been used

Turkish President Recep

Tayyip Erdogan said he "strongly" condemned the

incident, while UEFA

announced it would open

a "thorough investiga-

to describe him.

Kolkata, Dec. 9: Real Kashmir and United SC secured their second successive wins to seal semi final berths from their respective groups in the 123rd IFA Shield here on

Wednesday. Fresh from a 2-1 win over Peerless SC, the Snow Leopards were caught unawares by the aggressive brand of football by Aryan SC before they finally broke the deadlock with a Mason Robertson strike in the 72nd minute.

Parthiv announces his retirement

9: ney, I feel heavier with the gratitude for many," the ayed 35-year-old Parthiv said in New Delhi, Dec. Parthiv Patel, one of the youngest to have played Test cricket for India at the age of 17, on Wednesday announced his retirement from all forms of the game, three month's short of his 36th birthday.

The baby-faced Parthiv, who made his Test debut under Sourav Ganguly, aged 17 years and 153 days, played 65 international games for the country, which included 25 Tests, 38 ODIs and two T20

Internationals. "Today, I announce retirement from all forms scene in early 2002, when he was sent to England of cricket and as I bring after having played for down curtains on this 18 year-old cricketing jour- India A in South Africa



Parthiv Patel

and even before he made his Ranji Trophy debut. "The BCCI showed generous amount of confidence and faith in a 17year-old boy to play for India. I have enormous gratitude towards them for guiding me and hand

holding me in the formative years of my young career," Parthiv further stated

In fact, he played his first Ranji Trophy after he was dropped from the India squad in 2004 due to below-par glovework on tours of Australia and Pakistan.

He was thankful to all his captains and "especially Dada", referring to BCCI president Sourav Ganguly.

Parthiv Patel called his first Test captain Sourav Ganguly a "leader in true sense" along with the legendary Anil Kumble and said their influence in his life went beyond the crick-

"I would always hold Sourav Ganguly as a leader in true sense with his man management skills. Sourav and Anil Kumble were great leaders and they made me the kind of person I am,' Parthiv said.

"I still have the Test cap with my name wrongly printed 'Partiv' that Dada gave me. The victories at Headingley (2002) and Adelaide (2003-04) and the half-century opening the innings at Rawalpindi will be my favourite mem-

He said that retirement was on his mind for the last one year and that the timing couldn't have been

Injured Warner out of first Test

Sydney, Dec. 9: Australia's star opening batsman David Warner has been ruled out of the first Test against India, but will try to return for the blockbuster second instalment on Boxing Day, Cricket Australia said Wednesday.

Warner is recovering from a strained adductor muscle that forced him to limp out of Australia's second one-day international against India last month, after a knock of 83.

"I feel I have made great progress in a short amount of time and it's best for me to stay here in Sydney to continue working on getting back to full fitness,' Warner said. "The injury feels a lot bet-

ter, but I need to be able to satisfy in my own mind and to my team-mates that it is 100 percent ready for Test match conditions. 'That includes running

between the wickets and being agile in the field. Right now I feel I am short of being able to play at peak fitness and another 10 days will make a difference," he added.

The day-night first Test



David Warner

will begin in Adelaide on December 17, kicking off a four-match series.

It is not yet clear who will take Warner's place in Adelaide, but Cameron Green's century this week for Australia 'A' against a strong India 'A' attack featuring Ravichandran Ashwin, Umesh Yadav and Mohammed Siraj — has

put him in the running. In contrast, Will Pucovski and Joe Burns, in line to form Australia's top order, both flopped in the warmup match and Pucovski also had to leave the field with concussion symptoms after a delivery struck his

RAHUL CRUISES INTO

Dubai, Dec. 9: India captain Virat Kohli moved up a place to eighth while K. L. Rahul broke into the top three in the latest ICC rankings for T20 batsmen, after their impressive performances in the three-match series against Australia.

Taking the third spot in the chart, Rahul has bagged 816 rating points and is 55 points behind second-placed Babar Azam in the current standings.

England batsman Dawid Malan (915 points) retained the top spot, while Australian limited-overs skipper Aaron Finch slipped to the fourth spot. — PTI

Kohli rues DRS miss in last tie

Sydney, Dec. 9: Captain That Ibw was a strange Virat Kohli wasn't happy that his team lost out on a perfect DRS call just because replay of the delivbowled to Matthew Wade was shown on giant screen before the permissible limit of 15 seconds.

India lost the third T20 International by 12 runs and one of the reasons could be attributed to the fact that Wade, who could have been adjudged leg before off T Natarajan at a score of 50, got a lucky reprieve and added 30 more runs.

"That lbw was a strange one because we were still discussing whether the ball was going down and within the 15-second time, they showed the replay on the screen. We decided to go for the review but the umpire said they have already shown the replay on the screen," Kohli said.

In fact had the review been taken, TV replays showed that the umpire would have been forced to reverse his decision.

one because we were still discussing whether the ball was going down and within the 15-second time, they showed the replay on the

> — VIRAT KOHLI Indian cricket captain

"I had a chat with Rod (Tucker, the umpire) and said: 'what do we do in this situation' and he said 'nothing can be done. It's a mistake from TV'," Kohli

narrated the incident. He said the Indian team management had made its displeasure clear with the authorities, saying a mistake of this magnitude in an international game is unacceptable. "I thought from the management perspective, a message has to be passed that this can't be done at the highest level because in a very impor-tant game, it can be very costly," he said.

Gopi delves into athletes' minds

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, DEC. 9

Badminton guru Pullela Gopichand has stepped up his training by a notch, and has decided to delve into the minds of his trainees. On Wednesday, the champion coach launched Dhyana for Sports, an app that measures mental aspects via meditation and helps achieve emotional fitness.

Vouching for its mechanism, Gopi termed the application a 'game changer' and stressed on the importance of mental training. As many as 10 meditation sessions designed, voiced by him-self and inspired from his on-ground training sessions will now be available on the app that tracks

mindfulness. The 10 sessions in the 'Dhyana for Sports' section in the app — Uniting Your Innerself, Forgive, Winner Instincts, Gratitude, Visualisation, Stillness. Strengthen Discipline, Pre-Post-Workout Workout,

to be fruitful to anyone wanting to become the best version of themselves. In sport, you need to be a warrior and possess killer instinct. This is what we talk about in the app — the winning attitude," the chief national coach said, adding, "I am so proud to be associated with it.'

to athletes and assist them

monitoring

analysing their state of

meditation in order to help

inculcate a champion's

"I am certain that these

guided sessions will prove

mindset.

Athletics coach Ramesh echoed Gopi's opinion. "This is a huge plus for track and field athletes, who have very little time to recover between the heats and the finals, that's when strength comes into play," he said.

"Physical abilities can make you a national champion but if you want to excel on the international stage and stay there, mental ability is a must," the Dronacharya















and End of the Day — cater



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