



AAHANA'S HOMECOMING

Actor Aahana Kumra is thrilled to have returned to the Prithvi Theatre, which she calls her home

LEISURE P2



HUGE RELIEF

A US court has blocked two H-1B regulations which restrict American firms' ability to hire foreign employees

INTERNATIONAL P10



CONSOLATION VICTORY

Men in Blue register a consolation win in the third & final ODI against Australia, who seal the series 2-1

SPORTS P12

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12 PAGES | ₹4.00

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Are you sure you want to invite all these drug abusers, anti nationals, morally corrupt Bollywood people to our state?

SHORT TAKES

Bonded workers freed in Bolangir

Bolangir: Bolangir Police rescued as many as 74 labourers, including 13 children, when they were being transported to Hyderabad from Kantabanji railway station in Bolangir Wednesday. Among the labourers rescued from the railway station, 42 were men while 32 were women. Acting on a tip-off, Kantabanji police conducted a raid at the station and rescued the labourers. The investigation revealed that the labourers were from Belpada, Bangomunda, Muriabahal and Turekela in Bolangir district and Golamunda area of Kalahandi district.

P5

Fuel prices hiked after 2-day pause

Bhubaneswar: Petrol and diesel prices rose sharply by 43 paise per litre and 44 paise per litre respectively after a two-day pause Wednesday. After the surge, petrol prices stood at ₹83.12 per litre while diesel prices reached ₹79.14 per litre. Oil companies began increasing pump prices of the two petroleum products from last Friday after a nearly two-month-long hiatus in the fuel price revision. In five days, petrol price had gone up by 53 paise and diesel rate had risen by 95 paise per litre.

MARKET WATCH			
INDEX		VARIATION	
SENSEX	44618.04	↓	37.40
NIFTY	13113.80	↑	4.80
DOLLAR	74.21	↑	₹0.13
EURO	89.14	↑	₹0.80
GOLD	₹48,849	↑	₹574
SILVER	₹61,743	↓	₹175

WEATHER			
		BHUB	CTK
TEMP			
MAX	30.6°C	31.2°C	
MIN	15.0°C	14.2°C	
Humidity	61%	67%	
Rainfall	Nil	Nil	
		Forecast	
		Dry weather likely	

'No control' over pvt schools

In an affidavit to the Orissa HC on a fee waiver case, the state government makes it clear that it has no control over the fee structure of private schools

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Dec 2: The state government Wednesday submitted an affidavit to Orissa High Court on a case seeking waiver of fees by private schools in the wake of Covid-19 pandemic.

In the affidavit, the state government made it clear that it has no control over private schools. But, the MoU between the stakeholders has a provision for reduction of fees within the range of 5 to 30 per cent, said the affidavit.

The affidavit stated that there are many government schools in the state, but parents are still enrolling their children in private schools.

While hearing the case, a division bench of Chief Justice Mohammad Rafiq and Justice Bishwanath Rath sought to know whether the state has any Act on private schools.

In his reply, Advocate General Ashok Kumar Parija told the HC that the state does not have a private school Act.

The bench posted the next hearing on the case to December 7.

Earlier, the HC had November 23 directed the state government to submit

BURNING ISSUE

- The HC had November 23 directed the state govt to submit an affidavit mentioning its decision on the amount of waiver in private school fees
- The affidavit also stated that there are many government schools in the state, but parents still enroll their children in private schools



an affidavit mentioning its decision on the amount of waiver in private school fees.

November 10, the state government had requested the High Court to take a call on the waiver of private school fees. Notably, the Odisha Abhivhabaka Mahasangha, an outfit of parents, and

others had moved the HC seeking exemption of fees by private schools in view of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Confederation of Odisha Public Schools had also moved an intervention application in the Orissa High Court in connection with a PIL seeking exemption of tuition fees by private

schools during the lockdown, reports said. September 1, the HC had issued an order for mediation of the dispute and directed representatives from Confederation of Odisha Public Schools, representatives of the three PIL petitioners — Odisha Abhivhabaka Mahasangha, Mohamed Mustaq and Prahallad Rout — and representatives of Odisha Private Schools Teachers Association to participate in the process to be convened by the secretary of the school and mass education department.

In his report, department principal secretary Satyabrata Sahu said near unanimity could be achieved except for the representative of one of the three PIL petitioners. He said all 14 members had signed an MoU agreeing for waiver of fees in a 'flat rate'.

The HC had asked Sahu to examine whether any unreasonable and excessive fees are being demanded by private educational institutions.

"This could not be verified by inspecting various schools with varied fee structure, in view of the restrictions on movement of officials into the school campuses," Sahu said.

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7.71 pc growth in state's GST inflow

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 2: Odisha reported 7.71 per cent growth in gross Goods and Service Tax (GST) collection for the third month

in a row, commissioner of CT & GST said Wednesday. As per his statement, the state collected ₹2528.01 crore GST (CGST, ITST, SGST & Cess) against ₹2347.03 crore collected during the same period last year.

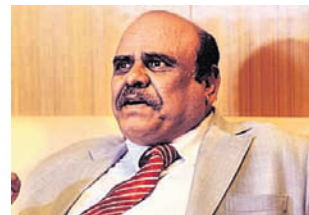
"State GST during September, October and November registered a

growth rate of 3.42%, 5.16% and -2.71% in comparison to the corresponding periods of last year.

The SGST collection was ₹631.08 crore, 660.09 crore and 681.96 crore during the said periods against the collection of Rs.610.19 crore, 627.73 crore and Rs. 700.96 crore during September, October and November of 2019, respectively," the

statement revealed. There is also a positive trend in collection of CGST, IGST and Cess during November, 2020.

EX-HC JUDGE KARNAN HELD BY TN POLICE



AGENCIES

Chennai, Dec 2: A former High Court judge, CS Karnan, was arrested Wednesday over offensive comments he allegedly made against woman judges and wives of judges, which were posted on YouTube.

Karnan had allegedly released the said videos, after which several lawyers had written to the Chief Justice of India against him. The apex court had asked them to approach appropriate authorities. The ex-judge was arrested by the Chennai police.

In October, Cyber Crime Wing of Chennai Police had registered a case against Karnan.

The complaint was filed by a non-practising advocate S Devika, a non-aggravated party and Karnan's contention was that only an aggravated party can file a complaint against any person.

Nevertheless, Karnan had appeared before the police for inquiry.

Meanwhile, a case was filed in the Madras High Court to register a case against Karnan.

Coming soon: Act on Lingaraj temple



CM Naveen Patnaik reviews the developmental project being undertaken at the 11th-century shrine in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 2: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Wednesday announced that a special act would be formulated for Lingaraj Temple on same lines of the mega heritage corridor project of Puri Srimandir.

Patnaik visited the Ekamra Khestra and reviewed development works carried out in the area.

"I express my sincere gratitude towards the people who have donated land for the development of Lingaraj temple area. I am delighted to see the progress of development works. Soon, there will be a special legislation for Lingaraj temple like we have for the Srimandir. It will boost the beauty and tourism of the area," he told reporters.

With the act, temple affairs will

be streamlined just like it was in case of Srimandir which is run according to the Shri Jagannath Act of 1955. The Act clearly talks about the formation of a temple committee and assigning of roles of the members of the panel.

When enquired about any deadline for the legislation, Patnaik declined to comment and proceeded with his officials works. Asked whether the state government has any plan for development of other heritage sites, he said, "There will be more, but we will discuss the matter."

"The special act for the Lingaraj temple will be enacted on the basis of Jagannath Temple Act, 1954. The act will first be approved by the State Cabinet and become a law after being passed in the Assembly," said Culture Minister Ashok Chandra Panda.

State gets all-in-one helpline

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 2: Odisha Wednesday launched emergency helpline '112' to provide all forms of assistance to the people in distress.

The '112' integrates emergency services such as police, ambulance, fire department and women's helpline under a Centre-sponsored scheme that is already functional in several states, officials said.

People in distress need to just dial '112' now, instead of remembering and calling different helpline numbers such as '100', '101', '102', '104', '108' and '181', they said.

All these numbers have now been clubbed into the single toll-free helpline of '112' for the convenience of the people, officials said.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said the unified emergency helpline will enable the police to provide services in a better and efficient manner. Patnaik expressed hope that the facility,

CALL 112

- People in distress need to dial '112' now, instead of remembering and calling different helpline numbers such as '100', '101', '102' & '104'
- The '112' integrates emergency services such as police, ambulance, fire department and women's helpline
- CM Naveen Patnaik said the helpline will enable the police to provide services in a better and efficient manner

which comes into force with immediate effect, will strengthen people's faith in the system. The chief minister also approved the creation of 1,098 posts in the police department for providing quick and efficient services to the people of the state through this facility.

Four Deputy Superintendents of Police, 151 Sub-Inspectors, 203 Assistant Sub-Inspectors and 740 Constables will be engaged to provide the '112' emergency service.

This apart, 198 call-receiver executives will be outsourced and 236 vehicles will be deployed for the purpose, it said.

The scheme is aimed at ensuring optimum utilisation of manpower and prompt action on emergency calls. The rescue and service vehicles of all services, including police, fire and ambulance, will be tracked on a real-time basis using a digital map and immediately directed to help those in need, officials said.

CBSE rules out online board exams

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Dec 2: Board exams in 2021 will be in written mode only and not online, Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) officials said Wednesday even as consultations on dates for conduct of the examination are still underway.

The officials of the board also said that if students were not able to sit for practicals in classes before

the exams, alternatives would be explored.

"No final decision has been taken regarding the dates for conduct of board exams, and consultations with stakeholders are still in process. The exams, as and when they are conducted, will be in written mode and not in an online mode. The exams will be conducted following all COVID protocols," a senior CBSE official said.

"In case students are not able to do practicals in classes before the exams, alternatives to practical exams will have to be explored," the official added.

Union Minister of Education Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' is supposed to hold an interaction with students, teachers and parents on December 10 on the issue of conduct of board examinations and competitive examinations next year.

UK gives Pfizer a shot, rollout in days

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, Dec 2: The UK Wednesday became the first country to approve the PfizerBioNTech vaccine against COVID-19, paving the way for mass vaccinations against the deadly novel coronavirus from as early as next week.

The British regulator, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), says the jab, which claims to offer up to 95 per cent protection against COVID-19 illness, is safe for roll out.

The UK government said the approval follows a rigorous analysis of the data, conducted at a faster pace but without any compromise on standards.

I am thrilled. Help is on its way...We can see the dawn. Let's re-



double our efforts to follow the lockdown rules, said UK Health Secretary Matt Hancock.

It's been a very tough 2020 but 2021 will be brighter, he said.

The government has formally accepted the recommendation from the MHRA, which means the two-dose vaccine can be injected into arms of high-risk categories within

The UK is expected to receive a total of 40 million doses by the end of 2021, enough to vaccinate up to a third of the population

The vaccine must be stored at around -70C and will be transported in special boxes, packed in dry ice. Once delivered, it can be kept for up to five days in a fridge

days. Around 10 million doses should be available soon, with the first 800,000 arriving in the UK in the coming days.

"The vaccine will be made available across the UK from next week. The NHS (National Health Service) has decades of experience in delivering large scale vaccination programmes and will begin putting their extensive preparations into action to provide care and support to

all those eligible for vaccination," said a spokesperson for the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC).

The UK's Joint Committee on Vaccinations and Immunisations (JCVI) will now publish its final advice for the priority groups to receive the vaccine.

Around 50 hospitals are on standby and vaccination centres in venues such as conference centres are being set up now, with military personnel being deployed to assist with the logistics.

The joint vaccine, produced by American pharmaceutical giant Pfizer and German biotech firm BioNTech, had recently claimed trials suggested it works well in people of all ages, races and ethnicities.

STIR GATHERS STEAM



Farmers stage protest at Singhu border against the Centre's new farm laws in New Delhi, Wednesday

PTI PHOTO

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

You are an imaginative and enterprising person, and today you may taste success. Ganesh says that you are ambitious but warns you not to take on more work than you can handle. You are positive about your capabilities, so work sincerely and have faith in God.

TAURUS

Today, you are likely to be more reckless than ever in splurging your hard earned money. Ganesh strongly advises you to leave your credit card at home today. Using it for making purchases will only make matters worse. Money wise, be very careful in your business dealings, about the commitments you make.

GEMINI

Your mind will be uneasy and anxious due to some reason today. You will be unable to express your anxieties. You will be able to secure the love of your partner by sharing your feelings. You need to let go of the past and strive to keep on moving forward with confidence, says Ganesh.

CANCER

A restless or irritating mood is indicated. Keep you cool and be calm even in adverse circumstances, suggests Ganesh. If you do so, you will always succeed in life. It is difficult to wriggle out of adversity, if you have hot temper.

LEO

You will seek the opinion of others in a lot of matters today. You need to patiently listen to others and keep your lips sealed during the course of conversations today. Your self-confidence may take a beating today, hence do not take any important decisions. It is time for a major change in your work or field of work, says Ganesh.

VIRGO

Ganesh says today you will be highly motivated. Your creative talents and abilities set you apart as an excellent artist. Words will flow if you give vent to your creativity, and if you choose to sing or dance, you will be the focus of attention. Ganesh advises you to pursue the performing arts or writing as hobbies.

LIBRA

Ganesh says you will showcase your ability and skills today in your work field and impress people. You will develop and express your inner love for art and artistic things and you will purchase a new work of art today. Ganesh showers you with all his blessings.

SCORPIO

You can be fondly called as 'the perfectionist' today. Right from being punctual to following a systematic method for your work, you do it all. All in all, you set an ideal example for the people around you, says Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS

Suddenly, you discover that you are fully dedicated to your family. Kith and kins form the crux of your life, says Ganesh. Showing your love and affection to your kids will give you a feeling of satisfaction. Spend some quality time with your partner!

CAPRICORN

Forced to some back-breaking work today, you will feel exhausted by the end of the day. It is a cut-throat competition when it comes to the business world. Your arch rivals are looking out for one small opportunity to damage your business and reputation. But, you are no less. You understand their moves.

AQUARIUS

Academically, you have performed exceptionally well, and Ganesh congratulates you for that. You will inspire and motivate a number of people, and may create a fan following, too. This, however, doesn't mean that you throw your weight around.

PISCES

The day will be exceptional for working people as the planets seemed to be aligned perfectly, portends Ganesh. You will achieve all the expected results in the office and/or at work today. Those looking to pursue further studies in foreign countries will also make progress and come closer to fulfilling their dreams.



STEVEN SPIELBERG GETS PROTECTION FROM STALKER

Filmmaker Steven Spielberg has secured a restraining order against a woman after she sent him death threats. The filmmaker took action against Sarah Char, claiming that she was harassing him for several months and even threatened to murder him.

PAGE CHANGES NAME TO ELLIOT, ANNOUNCES BEING 'TRANS'

Ellen Page, the Oscar-nominated star of *Juno* and *Umbrella Academy*, has announced a change of name. Page will now be known as Elliot, and the star also announced the decision of being identified as transgender.



John is PETA India's 'Person of the Year'

Mumbai: Actor John Abraham has been named the Person of the Year for 2020 by the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA).

In 2020, John had sent a letter urging e-retailer Quikr to stop trading in live animals. Over the years, he has teamed up with PETA India to push for a ban on animal circuses, speak up for Mumbai's dancing monkeys, and star in an ad-campaign urging everyone not to keep birds in cages. He also adopted a community dog, Bailey, urged authorities to stop illegal pig slaughter in Goa and put a football jersey on the auction block to benefit the organisations work to help animals.

"John Abraham has been helping PETA India advocate for animals since our inception, and he shows no signs of slowing down," said Sachin Bangera, PETA India Director of Celebrity and Public Relations.

Past recipients of the honour include politician Shashi Tharoor, former Supreme Court Justice KS Panicker Radhakrishnan, cricketer Virat Kohli, and actors Anushka Sharma, Sunny Leone, Sonam Kapoor, Kapil Sharma, Hema Malini, R Madhavan, and Jacqueline Fernandez.

inception, and he shows no signs of slowing down," said Sachin Bangera, PETA India Director of Celebrity and Public Relations.



'No time to bond on Nolan's set'

New Delhi: Veteran actress Dimple Kapadia says there is no time to bond while working on the set of filmmaker Christopher Nolan.

The actress worked with Nolan on his much-awaited film *Tenet*. "There is no time to bond," Dimple said while giving a glimpse of the work style on Nolan's set.

"It is Nolan's set. You don't bond here, you work here, you just work. There are early calls, like 4am, and finish work. There is non-stop hard work. By the time you are done, you are ready to collapse," she added.

Nolan's new film takes one on a thrilling time-bending mission with two secret agents, essayed by Robert Pattinson and John David Washington. In the film, Dimple is seen as Priya, who is crucial to the narrative. Her character emerges as a deadly person, splashed with various shades of grey. Talking about her own experience, she said: "When I am working, I become the baby of the set. I don't know why. They took care of me. There was a lot of love and affection and care."

Aahana Kumra feels at home returning to Prithvi Theatre

Mumbai: Actress Aahana Kumra, who calls herself a theatre kid, is thrilled to have returned to the Prithvi Theatre, which she calls her home, after one year.

Aahana took to her verified Instagram account Wednesday to share the news that Prithvi Theatre has reopened after a year and the actress described her experience with the hashtag #homecoming. She also became emotional after visiting the green room.

Aahana went to the theatre Tuesday evening to watch Makarand Deshpande's solo piece *Gandhi*. The actress shared her photographs from the theatre along with

Deshpande and other actors, who are her friends.

She wrote: "#HelloDecember, Last night was overwhelming! We returned home after a year! The feeling to be back at @prithvitheatre was unmatched! Prithvi Theatre, home to all of us has opened after a year and the energy was unparalleled! With all the safety norms we are equipped to make sure that the show goes on!"

On the work front, Aahana recently featured in the Zee5 anthology film series *Forbidden Love*, in the short film *Rules Of The Game* directed by Aniruddha Roy Chowdhury.



'India key market for Japanese entertainment industry'

THE JAPANESE FILM FESTIVAL IN INDIA FOCUSSES ON STRENGTHENING TIES BETWEEN PEOPLE OF THE TWO NATIONS, SAYS KAORU MIYAMOTO OF JAPAN FOUNDATION

Indian interest towards Japanese culture has been growing significantly over the last few years, especially amongst Gen Z, believes Kaoru Miyamoto, Director General, Japan Foundation, New Delhi.

The Foundation is set to launch the fourth edition of the Japanese Film Festival (JFF)-India 2020 digitally amid the pandemic, starting December 4.

Miyamoto, ahead of the event, expresses his views on a host of subjects **On impact of Japanese lifestyle on the Indian population**

India and Japan share close resemblance in terms of the culture, food, clothing, art, and social practices. Needless to say, Japanese culture is permeating in India, advancing and strengthening the relationship between the two countries.

On Indian viewers' response towards Japanese culture

Cinema depicts all dimensions of a nation's culture. The interest



SOCIO-CULTURAL BONDING

Screengrab of a Japanese movie

towards Japanese culture has been growing significantly over the last few years, especially amongst the Gen Z. The fourth edition of Japanese Film Festival will not only be successful and bigger with the virtual access but also promote the appreciation of Japanese culture and cinema in Indian landscape.

On genres that receive more traction among Indians

Usually international award-winning films like the Cannes' winner *Shoplifters* or popular anime features like *Weathering with You* have been quite well-received in India, in fact, becoming the first of their kind commercial releases of Japanese films in India.

On increasing popularity of Japanese content

The demand of Japanese films is significant beyond the metros and tier 1 cities. Entertainment has been the most potent source to share knowledge and therefore India is a key market for Japanese entertainment industry. The festival however focusses on strengthening the bond between the people of the two nations.

On similarities in cultures of Japan and India

Be it the love for tea or rice being a staple, there is a striking resemblance between the customs of the two countries. In terms of culture and heritage, both have similarities and are connected due to their common practices and closeness with each other. Japan has a fascinating and multifaceted culture, known for its traditions, hospitality and value system. As we know, the same values are followed in India as well.

FUN post

PEANUTS



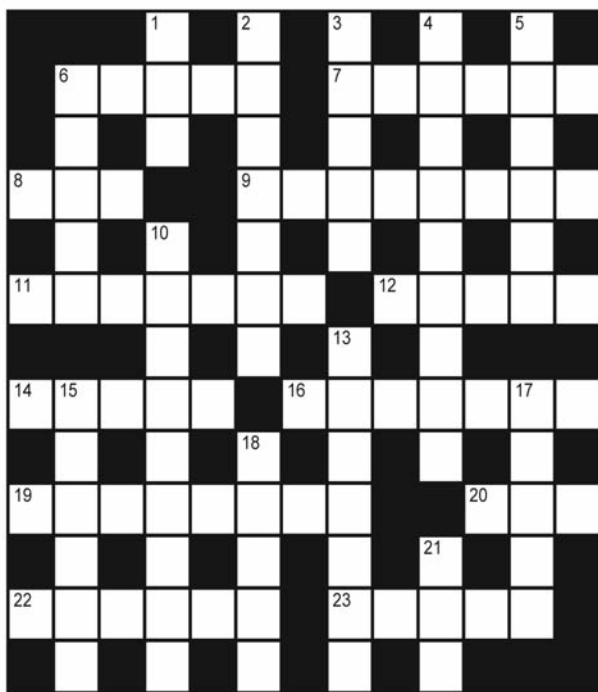
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



CROSSWORD



Across

- 6 Dirigible
- 7 Justification
- 8 Missile's path
- 9 Forebear
- 11 Trounce
- 12 Petrol unit
- 14 Inundate
- 16 Dissect
- 19 Just so-so

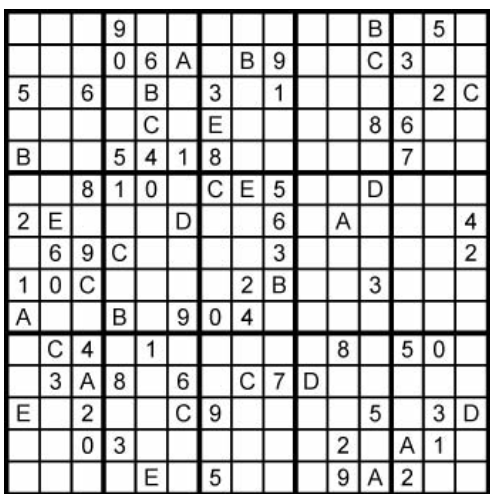
Down

- 20 Family room
- 22 Plump
- 23 Coconut holders
- 1 Lend a hand
- 2 Clothes
- 3 Armistice
- 4 Mediterranean port city

- 5 Azure, for one
- 6 Aquamarine
- 10 Vulgar and offensive
- 13 Scruffy
- 15 Stay out of sight (3,3)
- 17 Garden starters
- 18 Corrosive liquids
- 21 Ancient

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, each row, column and box must contain the numbers 0 to 9 and the letters A to E.

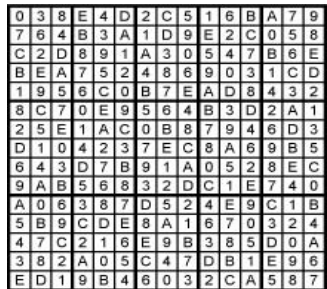


SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

I-T dept urged to probe ‘tax evasion’ by Pathak

SUSPENDED IFS OFFICER ABHAY KANT PATHAK AND HIS SON AKASH PATHAK TAKEN ON 3-DAY POLICE REMAND

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 2: The Special Vigilance Court here Wednesday allowed the police to take suspended IFS officer Abhay Kant Pathak and his son Akash, who have been arrested on charges of amassing assets disproportionate to their known sources of income, on a three-day remand for further investigations into the case, sources said.

Meanwhile, suspecting tax evasion in view of a staggering ₹9.48 crore cash deposits and deposits by transfers to the tune of ₹5.29 crore – totalling upto ₹14.77 crore – in three bank accounts belonging to the Pathak senior without any income tax returns, the state Vigilance has referred the matter to the Income Tax (I-T) department for investigation. “The Income Tax department has been urged to investigate the matter in accordance with the Income Tax Act, 1961 and Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act, 1988,” read a statement issued by the state Vigilance.

Suspecting money laundering activities by the father-son duo, the



File photo of IFS officer AK Pathak

The Income Tax department has been urged to investigate the matter in accordance with the Income Tax Act, 1961 and Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act, 1988

Suspecting money laundering activities by the father-son duo, the anti-corruption wing of the state police has also referred the issue to the ED for conducting a probe under Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002, said the statement.

Meanwhile, the Special



BEAUTIFICATION PLAN

Puri administration demolishes Punjabi mutt near the South Gate of Srimandir, Wednesday, to facilitate the heritage corridor project

AYUSH doctors seek reinstatement

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 2: More than 267 AYUSH doctors Wednesday wrote to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik demanding their reinstatement in services as part of pandemic management.

In the letter, they said, “We 267 AYUSH doctors (130 in Ayurveda and 137 in Homoeopathy) beg to state that we were posted under Covid-19 in Odisha, from May 12, 2020 to July 31, 2020 on contract daily remuneration basis under the office of CDM and PHO in all districts. Then our contracts were extended till October 31. But after that



we are now disengaged.”

Stating that they had rendered their duty sincerely and dedicatedly at Covid care centres, OPD and Covid hospitals, the doctors said that not a single death occurred in Covid care centres during their entire duty period. “Many of us also had been affected seriously by Covid-19 during the duty but we did our duty without hesitation,” they added.

Since the WHO and health experts have predicted a second wave of Covid-19 due to the onset of winter, the public health system needs to be strengthened, they said in the letter. “Based on these aspects, we make an earnest request before you for our kind consideration to engage us in activities like treating Covid patients, sensitising people, guiding ASHA, ANMs for identification of patients with symptoms among others,” they said.

COVID-19 TRACKER			
	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	6,44,19,703	4,46,69,606	14,91,338
India	94,99,710	89,31,798	1,38,159
Odisha	3,19,583	3,13,394	1,750

GRACEFUL MOVES



Artistes perform on the second day of Konark Festival, Wednesday

OP PHOTO

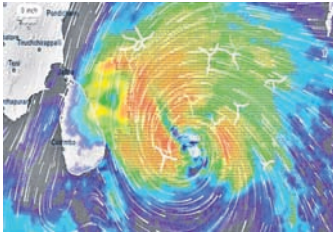
Cyclone Burevi to spare Odisha: IMD

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 2: Another cyclonic storm Burevi which has formed over southwest and adjoining southeast Bay of Bengal will have no impact on Odisha, said the regional centre of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) here, Wednesday.

The IMD confirmed that the impact of the cyclonic storm will only be felt in Tamil Nadu December 4. Bhubaneswar Met Centre Director HR Biswas said, “There will be no impact of the system on Odisha and there is no such warning. Weather will remain dry for next five days and there will be no major changes in minimum temperature during the period.”

However, there is a possibility of shallow to moderate fog in some parts of the state including Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Sundargarh, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj and Subarnapur December 4 and 5,” added Biswas.



The IMD confirmed that the impact of the cyclonic storm would only be felt in Tamil Nadu December 4

The IMD in its latest bulletin said that the deep depression over southwest and adjoining southeast Bay of Bengal has intensified into a cyclonic storm-Burevi and moved west-northwestwards with a speed of 12 kmph during past six hours and lay centered over southwest Bay of Bengal about 300 km east-southeast of Trincomalee (Sri Lanka), 530 km east-southeast of Pamban (India) and 700 km nearly east of Kanniyakumari (India).

“It is very likely to intensify further during the next six hours. It is very likely to move west-northwestwards and cross Sri

Lanka coast between latitude 7.50N and 9.00N, close to Trincomalee during evening/night of December 2 as a Cyclonic Storm with a wind speed of 75-85 kmph gusting to 95 kmph. It is very likely to move nearly westwards thereafter, emerge into Gulf of Mannar and adjoining Comorin area on December 3 morning,” said the IMD.

The department also predicted that it would then move nearly west-southwestwards and cross south Tamil Nadu coast between Kanniyakumari and Pamban around early morning of December 4.

BJP seeks CBI probe into Pari ‘murder’ case

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 2: Apprehending involvement of an organ trade racket in the alleged abduction and murder of ‘Pari’, a minor girl of Nayagarh district, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Wednesday demanded a CBI probe into the incident.

BJP’s state unit president Samir Mohanty Wednesday told the media that the parents of the deceased have levelled serious allegations. “They suspected stealing of eyes and kidneys of Pari. The government has claimed that there was no trace of any attempt to outrage her modesty,” Mohanty said. He also added, “The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data claims that several children are missing from the state. The report said that the cases



BJP's state president Samir Mohanty and other party leaders address the media

of human trafficking have increased in Odisha and the state has seen non-performance of the police. Organ smuggling racket is flourishing in Nayagarh district. There should be a CBI enquiry into the matter.”

The leader also said that the parents of the deceased as well as the villagers are now being pressured by the ruling

dispensation to suppress the issue. “The parents have often raised the names of some BJD leaders and hinted at their involvement. The police have been putting pressure on the families of the deceased and on the villagers. The parents have raised their allegations before the media against the police. The local sarpanch has been put

The party said Pari’s parents and the villagers are now being pressured by the ruling dispensation to suppress the issue

under pressure not to protest against the incident and stay silent,” he said. He also said that there is need to investigate the alleged involvement of a Cabinet minister in the state. “This is disturbing for the people of Odisha as to how the accused in the case have been let off the purview of investigation,” he said. He also alleged that the BJD and the Congress are hand in gloves and suppressing the case for political benefits.

CORRECTION

Apologies to the news item with the headline ‘Only 7% of DMF funds spent in mining-affected areas’ that appeared on November 28 issue of this newspaper, the Public Relations Officer, Planning and Convergence department, Government of Odisha, has sent the following contradiction: Sir, I am directed to say that the news item titled “Only 7% of DMF funds spent in mining-affected areas” published on 28th November, 2020 in **Orissa POST** based on the reply given by Hon’ble Minister, Planning and Convergence in the Odisha Legislative Assembly has come to the notice of the State Government. It is in all likelihood liable to create a wrong impression amongst the stakeholders of District Mineral Foundations (DMFs) about utilization of DMF Funds.

The information stated in the news item is factually incorrect. The %age of DMF Funds spent in the directly mining affected areas i.e. within 10kms radius of the mine, was misrepresented in the above-mentioned news item as Rupees in crores utilized out of DMF Funds in various Districts. For example, 63.80% has been spent in directly affected areas in Keonjhar district and not Rs 63.80 crore as per the newspaper report. It is therefore, requested to kindly publish the factual position as stated in the reply to the Unstarred Assembly Question No-654 in Odisha Legislative Assembly by the Hon’ble Minister, Planning and Convergence on 26th November, 2020, through a suitable correction or clarification in your esteemed Daily, which may help in removing wrong impression created by the published news item in the minds of the stakeholders of DMF not only within Odisha, but at the National Level, lest they may take it as a point of reference in future.

Editor’s Note: We sincerely regret the inadvertent mistake.

VOLUNTEERS LEARN WASTE SEGREGATION SKILLS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 2: The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), Wednesday, began training and education for various associations and volunteers on effective garbage segregation in order to ensure smooth functioning of micro composting centres (MCCs) in the city.

The training which began in all the three zones saw programmes and sensitisation of about 150 organisations from three zones. With about 50 members from each zone, the volunteers and NGOs were trained about segregation of wet and dry wastes which will help in smooth functioning of the MCCs.

“The programme is being carried out under decentralization of waste initiative. Since MCCs are being set

up in the city for decomposing organic wastes, it’s imperative to segregate waste at source and not mix them up which will defeat the purpose. Thus sensitisation is important part which will help the MCCs in the long run,” a BMC official said.

Notably, the BMC has planned to complete construction of as many as 32 MCCs out of the proposed 43 by end of December this year. As of now, four MCCs – one each at Nicco Park for Ward No – 55, Laxmi Sagar for Ward No – 32 and 33, Unit – VIII for Ward No-51 and another at the Temporary Transit Centre (TTS) near Sainik School for Ward No – 12 and 17 – are operational. While MCCs at TTS, Nicco Park, Laxmi Sagar can process wastes up to 5 tonne per day, the capacity of Unit – VIII is 3 tonne per day.

2 MORE HELD IN IIFL HEIST CASE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Dec 2: The Commissionerate Police arrested two more accused in connection with the much talked about dacoity at India Infoline Finance Ltd (IIFL) of Nayasarak in Cuttack.

According to Lalbagh police, the accused were identified as Debasish Hazra and Nilamani Saha, associates of Lala Amrit Ray. The total number of arrests over IIFL loot has reached 13 till date.

Notably, gold traders Saroj Prusty of Mangalabag and Lalit Kumar Sodhi of Alanchand Bazaar in the city including IIFL security guard Harmohan Das were arrested by the police last November 28.

Ray and his accomplices had executed the dacoity plan by threatening a staffer of the firm with a toy gun November 19. Acting on an FIR lodged by the firm’s territory manager Tapas Ranjan Swain, Lalbagh police had registered a case and initiated the probe.

Pact for promotion of green energy

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 2: Atal Incubation Centre-Nalanda Institute of Technology Foundation, Bhubaneswar (AIC-NITF) has signed an agreement with Odisha Corporate Foundation (OCF) for industry partnership at a solar energy conclave organised by AIC-NITF recently.

The memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed to promote renewable energy in Odisha and create a new direction for young entrepreneurs to promote renewable energy. The pact was signed between Atal Incubation Centre CEO Durga Prasad Gowda and OCF president Hrishikesh Behera.

On the occasion a seminar on Renewable Energy for Inclusive Development-Policies and Strategy was also organised. In the seminar, Upendra Tripathy, Director General, International Solar Alliance, stressed the idea that solar energy should be used for the benefit of the common man. He also hinted that World Solar Investment Summit is going to be organised in



India in the coming days.

Former additional chief secretary Gujarat government, Maheswar Sahoo, in his address emphasised on the development of a Centre of Excellence in AIC-Nalanda to promote startups in solar energy sector. While ORERA chairperson Siddhanta Das presented a carbon sequestration project which is claimed to be the first-of-its-kind in India,

The MoU was signed between Atal Incubation Centre CEO Durga Prasad Gowda and OCF president Hrishikesh Behera

Prof Saroj Ku Nayak gave example of solar lighting in tribal hamlets of Damanjodi ushering in inclusive growth.

Likewise, former chairman-cum-managing director of NALCO Tapan Kumar Chand stated that India is the third largest solar capacity in the world and the country is well poised to make solar energy as an alternative to traditional energy base. Chand was requested in the session to join as Director-General of AIC-NITF.

AIC-NIT Foundation, Bhubaneswar is a technology business incubator supported by Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog to promote culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in the eastern region of India.

RELiance HOME FINANCE		RELiance HOME FINANCE LIMITED			
Branch Office: Plot No. 2863/3719, 3rd Floor, Gitanjali Complex Lewis Road, Bhubaneswar, Orissa 751002, Registered Office: - 11th Floor, The Ruby, Plot No. 29 Ruby Mills Compound, Senapati Bapat Marg, Dadar West, Mumbai-400028					
POSSESSION NOTICE (As per Rule 8(1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002)					
Whereas the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Reliance Home Finance Ltd. under the Securitization, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13(4) read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued Demand Notices upon the Borrowers/Co-borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.					
The borrower/Co-borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Co-borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates.					
The Borrower/Co-borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of Reliance Home Finance Ltd.					
Name of The Borrower / Address	Co-Borrower And Guarantor Name	Date & Amount mentioned as per Demand Notice	Date & Amount mentioned as per Possession Notice	Date of Symbolic Possession	Property Address of Secured Assets
SATYAJIT PATI, residing at SAI GOVINDAM JEWELLERS WARD NO 27 PLOT NO 200442 HOLDING NO 546/C AT B K ROAD PO MANGALABAG, CUTTACK – 753001, Also at : RESIDENTIAL PLOT NO 426/1779 KHATA NO70/13 PLOT NO 409/1780 KHATA NO 350/28 MZ RAMDASPUR TAHASIL, BARANGA, CUTTACK- 754006	2) SARAT CHANDRA PATI 3) BISWAJIT PATI, Both all residing at SAI GOVINDAM JEWELLERS WARD NO 27 PLOT NO 200442 HOLDING NO 546/C AT B K ROAD PO MANGALABAG, CUTTACK – 753001,	31st August, 2020 Rs. 20,58,031/- (Rupees Twenty Lac Fifty Eight Thousand and Thirty One only)	30th November, 2020 Rs. 20,77,688/- (Rupees Twenty Lac Seventy Seven Thousand Six Hundred and Eighty Eight only)	30th November, 2020	Description of immovable Property SCHEDULE OF PROPERTY Dist. Cuttack, S.R.O Cuttack Sadat, Tahasil: Cuttack Sadar, Tahasil No.231, PS: Baranga, PS. Na____, Revenue Village: Mouza: Ramadaspur (1) Khata No. 70/13, Plot No.426/1779, Area: Ac. 0.04 decimals; Kisan Sarad-It; Sabik Mouza: Ramadaspur, Sabik Khata no.30, Sabik Plot No. 426, Area.Ac. 0.24 decimals; (2) Khata No. 350/28, Plot No. 409/1780 Area—0.04 decimals; Kisan: Sadar -III; Sabik Mouza: Ramadaspur, Sabik Khata No. 204, Sabik Plot No. 409 Area: Ac.0.12 decimals; NORTH :- Dinabandhu Pal SOUTH :- Netrananda Pal EAST :- Dinabandhu Pal WEST :- BY Road
1) KUSHA CHANDRA BEHERA residing at NILACHAKRA LANE SIDHAMAHABIR PATNA STATION ROAD SARBODAYA NAGAR PURI - 752002, and also at KHATA- 84/457, PLOT- 195/872, SUB PLOT- 22(P & 23(P), MZ- SEREIKONA, TAHASIL PURI (684) PURI SADAR (100), DIST-PURI PURI – 752002.	1) SABITA BEHERA, residing at KHATA-84/457, PLOT-195/872, SUB PLOT-22(P & 23(P), MZ-SEREIKONA, TAHASIL PURI (684) PURI SADAR (100), DIST-PURI PURI – 752002	08th September, 2020 Rs.11,75,749/- (Rupees Eleven Lac Seventy Five Thousand Seven Hundred and Forty Nine only)	30th November, 2020 Rs.12,48,315/- (Rupees Twelve Lac Forty Eight Thousand Three Hundred and Fifteen only)	30th November, 2020	Description of immovable Property SCHEDULE OF PROPERTY District-Puri, Sub-Registrar Office - Puri, P.S.: Purisadar No. 100, Tahasil: Purisadar No. 684, Mouza: Sereikona, sthitban status Mutation Khata No. 84/457 (eight four by four hundred fifty seven), Plot No. 195/872 (one hundred fifty five by eight hundred seventy two), Kisan: Gharabari, sold area Ac0-020.7 decimal (twenty point seven decimals) out of Ac0.190dec. out of Ac1-466.67dec.(According to one thousand decimals – one Acre) with annual rent Rs. 4.00/- (Rupees four) only. Corresponding to 1977 settlement ROR Khata No. 66, Plot No. 195 Part. in spot measurement Eastern & Western side Arm 45' and Northern & Southern side Arm 20' total 900 sqft. Bounded by : East : Vendor, West : Vendor, North : 18 ft wide proposed Road, South : Revenue plot No. 192. The land is not leasehold or an endowment land. The land is not within the consolidable limit.
The Borrower/co-borrowers/Mortgagor(s) attention is invited to the provision of Section 13(8) of the SARFAESI Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.					
Date: 03-December-2020 Place: Orissa					
					Sd/- (Authorized Officer) Reliance Home Finance Limited.

State logs 6 more Covid fatalities

ODISHA REPORTS 480 NEW CORONAVIRUS CASES IN 24 HOURS, TAKING THE CASELOAD TO 3,19,583



PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Dec 2: State's Covid-19 tally mounted to 3,19,583 Wednesday as 480 more people tested positive for the disease, while six fresh fatalities pushed Odisha's death toll to 1,750, a senior Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department official said.

Of the new cases, 276 were reported from various quarantine centres and 204 detected during contact tracing.

Khurda district recorded the maximum number of fresh cases at 51, followed by Angul at 41 and Mayurbhanj at 36. Two districts Gajapati and Sambalpur have not registered any fresh case, said the official.

IN NUMBERS

Khurda recorded the maximum number of fresh cases at 51, followed by Angul at 41 and Mayurbhanj at 36

Ganjam district recorded two deaths, while Khurda, Balasore, Jharsuguda and Mayurbhanj reported one fatality each

The positivity rate stands at 5.35 per cent

Over 59.77 lakh samples have so far been tested in the state including 37,069 Tuesday

Taking to Twitter, the H&FW department said, "Regret to inform the demise of six Covid pos-

NOW, RT-PCR TEST AT ₹400 IN PVT LABS

BHUBANESWAR: The state government Wednesday slashed the price of RT-PCR tests for detection of Covid-19 at private laboratories to ₹400 from the existing ₹1,200, a notification said.

In July, the state government had capped the price of RT-PCR tests at private laboratories at ₹2,200 and it was then reduced to ₹1,200 in August.

According to the notification issued by the Health and Family Welfare department, anyone undergoing RT-PCR test at private laboratories, within the state, will now have to pay a maximum amount of ₹400 including GST.

The tests will be conducted by private laboratories under the supervision of Regional Medical Research Centre (RMRC), Bhubaneswar, following ICMR

The tests will be conducted by private laboratories under the supervision of RMRC Bhubaneswar following ICMR guidelines

(Indian Council of Medical Research) guidelines, it said, adding that the tests at government laboratories are free of cost.

The state has four ICMR approved laboratories where RT-PCR tests can be done. With the latest reduction of testing prices, Odisha has landed amongst a few states where the price of the testing has come down to ₹400.

In another major development,

the department Wednesday issued notification to the district Collectors, Municipal Commissioners and other officials asking them to discontinue with the practice of pasting posters in front of the houses of Covid-19 patients.

"In inviting a reference to the subject I am to say that the number of Covid-19 positive cases is declining steadily in the state. It is now felt that identification of the houses of Covid-19 patients under home isolation by pasting of posters outside their houses is not a requirement anymore. You are therefore requested to discontinue the practice of affixing of posters outside Covid-19 positive patients under home isolation immediately," the notification from the department said.

Since April, 8L given employment in kendu-related work

The info was shared during the state-level coordination meet chaired by the Chief Secy with higher officials of Forest dept



FILE PHOTO

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 2: The state Forest and Environment department Wednesday informed Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy that around eight lakh persons have been given employment in kendu leaf-related works since April this year.

The information was shared during the state-level coordination meeting chaired by the Chief Secretary with the higher officials of the Forest department. "A total of 7,54,631 pluckers and 18,223 binders were engaged in the work among whom nearly 80 per cent were women. More than 60 lakh man-days were created during the current year in the works like bush cutting, procurement of leaves, phadi repairing, leaf drying and storage, processing, binding, bagging and transportation," said Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (kendu leaf) Pravakara Behera.

The department is optimistic about generation of a trade surplus of ₹100 crore from the kendu leaf operations in the current fiscal. Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy directed the officials to ensure more bush cutting in convergence with the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Generation Scheme (MGNREGS).

He said that the bush cutting works can pave way for better production and production of the processed leaves for which the state is known in the country. Meanwhile, the Development Commissioner

A total of 7,54,631 pluckers and 18,223 binders were engaged in the work among whom nearly 80 per cent were women. More than 60 lakh man-days were created during the current year in the works like bush cutting...

PRAVAKARA BEHERA I
PCCF (KENDU LEAF)

Suresh Mohapatra asked the officials to prepare a district-wise plan of bush cutting in convergence with the Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water department.

Additional Chief Secretary, Forest department Mona Sharma also apprised the top bureaucrat about the latest developments. She said that the procurement of kendu leaves was taken up during April-May and near about 2 lakh quintals of leaves of worth about ₹119.57 crore were procured from the pluckers. The cost of the leaves was directly disbursed to bank account of the pluckers.

As per the official data, during last year, the value of kendu leaf sales stood at Rs377 crore. During 2020 (till November), the sales reached up to ₹321 crore. The government claims that it is likely to gain additional ₹100 crore as around 50,000 quintals of kendu leaves are in the process of sales.

City IIT to hold its 9th Annual Convocation

The institute will confer degrees to 446 students including 35 Ph. D., 141 M. Tech., 70 M.Sc. and 200 B. Tech students



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 2: IIT Bhubaneswar is all set to celebrate its 9th Annual Convocation December 4, 2020, live by a hybrid mode where students participate with physical presence or by online in view of the pandemic time. Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank, Union Minister of Education will grace the occasion via online as the Chief Guest and address the Convocation. Sanjay Dhotre, Minister of State for Education will be the Guest of Honour and Rajendra Prasad Singh, Chairman, Board of Governors (BoG), IIT Bhubaneswar will preside over. Prof RV Raja Kumar, Director, IIT Bhubaneswar will present the report and award the degrees to the students.

During the 'hybrid convocation', the institute will confer degrees to 446 students including 35 Ph. D., 141 M. Tech., 70 M.Sc. and 200 B. Tech.

The President of India Gold Medal will be awarded to Aditya Pal of the Computer Science and Engineering for the best academic performance among the entire outgoing B. Tech. batch of students.

The Director's Gold Medal will be awarded to Sanket Dey Chowdhury of the School of Infrastructure for the best academic performance among the entire outgoing M. Tech. batch of students.

The Director's Gold Medal will be awarded to Souvik Chakraborty of the Physics, School of Basic Sciences for the best academic performance among the entire outgoing M. Sc. batch of students.

Clerk comes under Vigilance scanner

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jagatsinghpur, Dec 2: Vigilance sleuths raided several places belonging or having links with senior assistant Sanjukta Das who works at Jagatsinghpur sub-Collector's office Wednesday on charge of amassing assets disproportionate to her known sources of income.

According to sources, searches were conducted by the anti-corruption department officials on her residential building at Satapura area and another double-storied building at Panisalia in Jagatsinghpur district, a 3-BHK flat at Mahanadi Vihar in Cuttack including her office in the district.

Important documents and bank passbooks including her lockers were being searched. The total value of the disproportionate assets in possession of the clerk was to be ascertained. Raids were still underway when the last reports came in, the sources added.

Challenges ranging from trying to access sanitation services for PWDs to prevent the virus, to securing social protection including financial assistance and necessary support for developing alternative livelihood were discussed

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Dec 2: When the pandemic was on the verge of hitting the peak in state around July this year, the government adopted some rationalisation measures in the wake of economic downturn.

In a move to enhance capital investment for revival of the economy and generation of livelihood, and

facilitate higher public spending within the resources, the government has decided to relax some expenditure rationalisation measures adopted by the Finance department July 7, 2020.

The state government had completely banned the purchase of new equipment except medical equipment and equipment required for internal security. However, as per

the latest order of the Finance department, equipment required for promoting digital communication can be procured within the delegated financial power without reference to Finance department.

"The government has been successful in minimizing the impact of the COVID-19 on the state economy as well as realization of resources. After initial shortfall in resources

in the early part of the financial year following enforcement of lockdown and shutdown, the resources are now looking up due to partial recovery in the State economy, and some innovation in mobilization of resources," stated Odisha Finance Secretary Ashok Meena in a letter to all the departments.

There shall be complete ban on sanction and drawl of new Long-

term Advances (HBA, Motor Car Advance, Computer advance etc.) and other advances. However, if a part of the HBA out of the total sanctioned amount is drawn, the balance will be allowed to be drawn.

The ban on sanction and drawl of new Long-term Advances (HBA, Motor Car Advance, Computer advance, etc.) and other advances have now been relaxed and allowed.

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

SECURING A POST-PANDEMIC WORLD INCLUSIVE FOR ALL

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 2: On the eve of International Day for Persons with Disabilities a webinar titled "Towards a disability-inclusive, accessible and sustainable post COVID-19 world" was organised by Centre for Advocacy and Research, Wednesday.

The webinar focused on the challenges that persons with disabilities (PwD), are facing in the context of COVID-19. The challenges ranging from trying to access essential sanitation services to prevent the virus to securing social protection including financial assistance and necessary support for developing alternative livelihood were discussed. The event was supported by Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, Blind Association of India and Bhubaneswar and Odisha Livelihood Mission.

Akhila Sivasadas, executive di-

rector, CFAR in her opening remarks, said, "This webinar is the third in the series and today we are here not only to take stock, reflect but also act together to address the present crisis that the disabled living in informal settlements are facing especially in trying to access adequate water, sanitation and hygiene services and facilities."

Pramodini Maharana, 42, of Bastibikash association, highlighted the plight of disabled persons. Speaking about this, she said, that "after a lot of struggle, when persons with disabilities were able to earn their livelihoods doing petty business, the



OP PHOTO

The webinar in progress

pandemic has once again pulled us down." She went on to add that the government has not extended enough support to help them overcome their day to day travails. She urged the government to think of some doable ways of supporting

The government should come up with a plan to map the vulnerabilities of persons with disabilities and respond to their acute distress and deprivation

SANNYASHAI KUMAR BEHERA I
SSEPD DEPT

tion." Behera added that a special package should be made available to take care of the livelihood activities of the disabled who are poor and living in cramped spaces.

Basant Nayak, programme manager, Centre for Youth and Social Development, Bhubaneswar underlined that behind any intervention, budgeting is the most essential component and when we talk about budgeting for disabled, data segregation is the most essential element. The government must enumerate persons with disabilities to know the actual size of the population and allocate the resources accordingly.

Water, sanitation and hygiene are essential for prevention of COVID-19 and more importantly for persons with visual impairment, limited mobility and those who are mentally challenged stated Dr Bhushan Punani, executive secretary, Blind People's Association.

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‘Scam’ in free rice scheme in Sambalpur

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, Dec 2: Massive irregularities in advance distribution of free rice to PDS beneficiaries during the Covid-19 restrictions have been alleged in the district, a report said.

The state government and the Centre issued directions for advance distribution of free rice to the beneficiaries so that they will not face hardship in arranging their food during the Covid induced lockdowns and shutdowns.

The rice was to be distributed in advance for a period of five months under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana. However, the welfare measure did not have a smooth sailing as allegations of irregularities in rice distribution rocked the district administration.

It was alleged that a major racket was involved in the irregularities as many of the beneficiaries failed to get free rice during this period. This happened as the civil supplies officials failed to make timely verification of rice supply, its stock and distribution. Moreover, it was also alleged that the irregularity is



The rice was to be distributed in advance for a period of five months under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana. But, the welfare measure did not have a smooth sailing over allegations of irregularities

A racket was allegedly involved in the scam as many beneficiaries failed to get free rice as the civil supplies officials failed to verify rice supply and stocks

Some civil supplies officers, level-2 contractors, supply assistants of panchayats and the municipal corporation are hand in gloves in the wrongdoing, it was alleged. The prob order has left many unnerved

not limited to the Sambalpur Municipal Corporation area alone but is spread to Redhakhol and Kuchinda sub-divisions.

The matter came to the fore after vernacular daily ‘Dharitri’ published a report in this regard in its

November 22 edition.

The report rocked the district administration as the district civil supplies officer, Subodh Mallick, sought a probe.

It was alleged that that some civil supplies officers, level-2 contrac-

tors and supply assistants of panchayats and the municipal corporation are hand in gloves in the wrongdoing.

The order unnerved many as the sale and stock registers of supply assistants were not updated during the verification for which they have been asked to update the same within a particular time frame.

Attempts are being made to get the sale and receiving dates of rice from the level-2 contractors and update the same in their sale and stock registers. A supply assistant on condition of anonymity sought to clarify stating that the government ordered distribution of rice, pulses, wheat, kerosene during the Covid restrictions. This pushed them into severe stress as they had to handle huge stocks that arrived for distribution among the beneficiaries.

It was nearly impossible for them to make regular entries in the sale and stock registers. Delay and short supply of food stocks by the contractors was a regular affair for which they had to sign and receive the stocks in the report. The CSO said an investigation has been ordered.

Covid aid: No trace of ₹29.10L utilisation

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, Dec 2: Ration card holders were provided Rs 1000 each as Covid assistance under the National Food Security Act, but there is no trace of the utilization of Rs 29.10 lakh in Ganjam.

The managing director of the state civil supplies corporation has issued a letter (14960) dated November 27 to the district civil supplies officer in this regard.

In the letter, it was stated that Rs 29.10 lakh has not been utilized and is pending at the district administration.

During the pandemic, the state civil supplies corporation had provided over Rs 76.19 crore as Covid assistance to ration card holders.

The district administration has submitted utilization certificates for over Rs 72.96 crore.

Meanwhile, Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange has issued show causes to BDOs of Chhatrapur and Belagantha and the executive officer of the Buguda NAC.

BOMBS HURLED AT GROOM HOURS BEFORE WEDDING

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, Dec 2: In a shocking incident late Tuesday night, a youth sustained critical injuries hours before his marriage was to be solemnised Wednesday as unidentified people opened fire at Manikapur village under Khallikote police limits in Ganjam.

According to police sources, the injured was identified as Jitendra Barik. The youth was admitted to MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur in critical condition.

The incident occurred when the groom visited his relative's house in Manikapur village in the district. The miscreants came from rear and opened fire at him. They also hurled bombs to create panic and fled from the spot soon after committing the crime.

Family members of Barik rushed him to hospital for treatment. Khallikote police initiated a probe in this connection.

Woman Maoist with ₹4L on head surrenders in Koraput



POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, Dec 2: A woman Maoist, carrying a cash reward of Rs 4 lakh on her head and allegedly involved in several incidents of crime and violence, surrendered before police in Koraput district, Wednesday.

The woman Maoist, Rame Madkani, is a resident of Koraput district. She gave up arms to return to the mainstream, said police.

Madkani, who had joined the outlawed CPI (Maoist) seven years ago, worked as an Area Committee Member (ACM) in the group of dreaded Maoist leader RK.

She has 10 cases pending against her at various police stations in Koraput and Malkangiri.

Suspected to be involved in many incidents of crime, including assault and killing of civilians, exchange

Security stepped up as Maoists observe ‘PLGA Week’

MALKANGIRI: The Malkangiri district administration has tightened security as Maoists are observing the ‘People’s Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA) Week’, starting Wednesday. It will continue till December 8. The Maoists have decided to observe the event to regain their hold on the region. The Red rebels are determined to increase their control in the region by making new recruits.

“Elaborate security arrangements have been made by the district administration in order to avert any untoward incident. High

of fire with security forces and destruction of government properties, Madkani told police that she decided to give up the path of violence as she was disillusioned by the Maoist leaders.

Koraput SP Mukesh Kumar Bhamoo hailed the decision of the woman Maoist to shun violence and join the mainstream.

Bhamoo said, Madkani saw various developmental activities being undertaken by the government in this area and realized the futility of

the violent path of Naxalism before deciding to join the mainstream of the society.

Their cadres became disheartened with the organisation and they are surrendering as they realized that Maoists are not for the development of the region or for the welfare of people, he said.

Madkani will be provided with monetary assistance as per the surrender and rehabilitation scheme of the state government, Bhamoo informed.

lakh more was used for upgradation of the project.

It was alleged that due to technical defects and botched work, the canals have collapsed. As canals remained unused for a long time, iron gates of the canal had been stolen in 2013. In 2016, canals also suffered complete damage due to floods.

Farmers in the area said the project has been mired in irregularities and there is a need for a vigilance investigation into it.

Big money spent, Udaysagar is no use for farmers



and 2009. In 2009-10, the department had spent Rs 9, 98, 445 for its multiple repairs under MGNREGS.

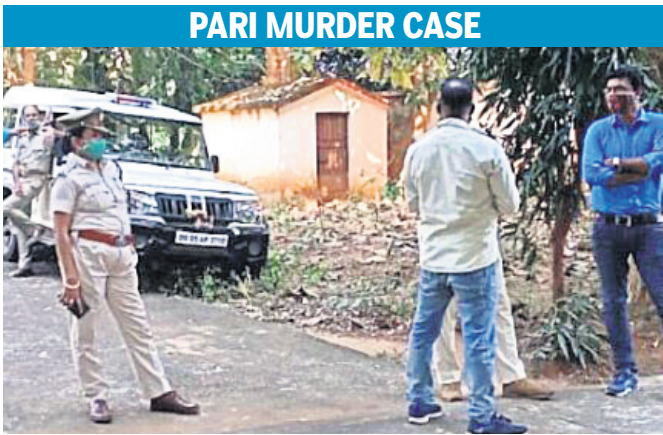
Under the MR grant, Rs 22 lakh was spent for the project in 2010-11 while another Rs 22 lakh was under RRAR scheme. Rs 3 lakh was used for building shutters while Rs 9 lakh was spent for canal lining work under the MGNREGS.

Under the Biju KBK Yojana, Rs 7.45 lakh was used for a part of left canal in 2012-13. In 2019-20, Rs 20



Even as temperatures dip in Daringbadi area of Kandhamal district, people huddle around fire to keep them warm

SIT questions prime accused



POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh, Dec 2: The Special Investigation Team (SIT) formed by the state government to investigate the alleged murder of minor girl Pari in Nayagarh district, interrogated prime accused Babuli Nayak Wednesday. The team led by IPS officer Arun Bothra questioned Nayak at Nayagarh Town police station for close to two hours from 11 am to 1.30 pm. The SIT members also held discussions with district cops who were earlier investigating the case.

Police had earlier conducted a polygraph test on Pari's parents, her uncle (father's elder brother) and aunt (wife of father's elder brother). They are still awaiting the results of the tests. The parents of the girl November 24 attempted self-immolation demanding justice in front of the Odisha Assembly. They were saved in the

nick of time by the police. At that time, the couple said they went for the extreme as they were failing to get justice for the alleged murder of their daughter. So they had decided to end their lives in front of the Assembly.

“We are yet to get justice for our Pari (victim). No one is listening to our complaints. Instead of delivering justice to us, we are being harassed. There is no reason for us to live,” Pari's father had said.

The five-year-old girl was found dead at Jadupur village under Sadar police limits of Nayagarh district under mysterious circumstances June 14. Her body was recovered from a spot 50 metres from the place where she went missing a day earlier.

The Nayagarh Sadar police had registered a case under Sections 363, 364, 302, and 201 of the IPC on the basis of a complaint lodged by Pari's parents.

74 bonded labourers rescued in Bolangir

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kantabanji, Dec 2: Labour migration and trafficking are rampant in Bolangir district even as the pandemic is raging in the state. Police rescued 74 labourers including 13 children when they were about to be transported to Hyderabad from Kantabanji railway station in Bolangir district, Wednesday morning.

Among the labourers rescued from the railway station were 42 men and 32 women.

Acting on a tip-off, Kantabanji police conducted a raid at Kantabanji railway station and rescued the labourers. The investigation revealed that the labourers were from Belpada, Bangomunda, Muribahal and Turekela in Balangir district and Golamunda area of Kalahandi district.

The labourers said a middleman was taking them to Andhra



Pradesh to engage them at a brick kiln. The middleman, however, managed to escape from the railway station.

Source said the labourers had taken Rs 30,000 each from the contractor to get engaged in Vishakhapatnam. According to the rescued labourers, every year people leave Odisha for other states as bonded labourers as they don't get enough work in their localities. This year, they were devoid of work due to the pandemic. So they had no other choice but to leave for other states. Later, the Kantabanji Tahasildar made arrangements to send them back to their respective homes.

Coriander leaves fetch them lakhs of rupees

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Dec 2: Kadagad under the sadar block in Keonjhar is known for its vegetable cultivation. Coriander leaves produced in this village have high demand in Cuttack market. Some farmers earn from this in lakhs every season. They do not go out to sell their leaves; traders instead come to their doorsteps to buy leaves.

Turning away their focus from traditional paddy farming, some farmers in the village have found the coriander leaf farming as lucrative, a report said.

A major portion of the leaves produced here is sent to Chhatra Bazar market in Cuttack every day. About one and a half quintals of leaves is sent by buses to Cuttack regularly.

Reports said, Chandrabhanu Dehuri is a successful coriander farmer in the village. This year, Dehuri has cultivated coriander in three acres of land.

Dehuri used to work in the mining sector. After closure of the mine, he was rendered jobless and looked for an alternative source of livelihood.

He wanted to start coriander farming. He said a kg of coriander leaf is sold for Rs 100. A bundle of coriander is now sold for Rs 10 in



the market.

20 other farmers of the village have also cultivated coriander.

Chandrabhanu had earned Rs 2 lakh from selling coriander leaves last year. “Till Baliyatra, coriander leaves are sent to Cuttack. Then, we start vegetable farming like tomatoes, brinjals and palak leaves,” he said.

“Every year, we get good returns from coriander leaves for three months. For the past

two years, we have been growing tomatoes, leafy vegetables,” the farmer said.

They pointed out that market rates for coriander are skyrocketing. A bundle is now sold for between Rs 5 to Rs 10.

Farmers in the village make use of the water from Sanamachhakandana creek for raising dhania leaves. They buy seeds from outside for Rs 300 a kg.

Chandrabhanu has been cultivating co-

A major portion of the leaves produced in Kadagad is sent to Chhatra Bazar market in Cuttack every day. About one and a half quintals of leaves is sent by buses to Cuttack regularly

Chandrabhanu Dehuri is a successful coriander farmer, who has cultivated coriander in three acres of land this year. He earned Rs 2 lakh from selling coriander leaves last year

20 other farmers of the village have also cultivated coriander. “Till Baliyatra, coriander leaves are sent to Cuttack. Then, we start vegetable farming like tomatoes, brinjals and palak leaves,” he said

riander for 20 years and running his family with whatever he earns from this. “There are good profits in coriander farming. Absence of market facility in the area is a major problem. Cold stores are needed for farmers for preservation of vegetables,” he observed.

The other farmers who earn from this farming are Bimbadhar Dehuri, Khirod Amant, Nabina Amant, Chhabina Amant and Muralidhar Amant.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
No. B-485

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
GANJAM (R&B) DIVISION NO.-II, BERHAMPUR

Phone/Fax: 0680-2233996, E-mail: eernb2_bam@yahoo.co.in

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB) [e-Procurement]

TENDER CALL NOTICE

Bid Identification No. SC (R&B)-GM-II-19/2020-21

No. 9367
Dated: 26.11.2020

1. The Executive Engineer, Ganjam (R&B) Division No. II, Berhampur on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate bid in Double cover system to be received in ONLINE MODE only for the work as detailed below:

2. Nature of Work : Building Work

3. No. of Work : 02 Nos.

4. Tender Cost : Rs. 10,000/-

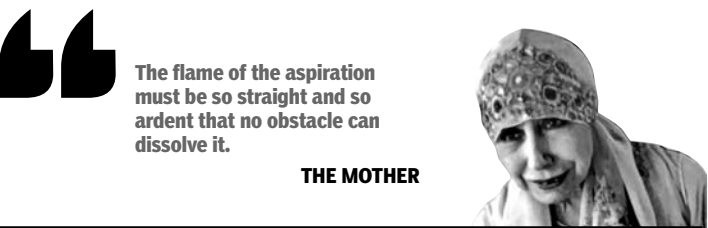
5. Class of Contractor : 'B' Class & 'A' Class

6. Availability of bid documents : From 08.12.2020, 10.00 A.M. to 23.12.2020, 4.00 P.M.

7. Date of Opening of Bid : 24.12.2020 at 11.30 A.M.

8. The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website https://tendersorissa.gov.in. (Sd./- T.K. Panigrahy) Executive Engineer Ganjam (R&B) Division No. II

OIPR-34080/11/0010/2021



The flame of the aspiration must be so straight and so ardent that no obstacle can dissolve it.

THE MOTHER

Sameness of all beings

It is only Western philosophy that draws a dividing line between human and animal (‘man and beast’). The religions - that emerged from the earth organically - have never done so. Hindu dharma holds that all creation is interconnected—vasudhaiva kutumbakam - and has always acknowledged animals as sentient beings. Finally science is catching up with what our belief systems have always known.

Over the last 50 years, with increasing frequency and accuracy, countless studies are proving the ‘sameness’ of all living beings. Human beings have a left and right side of the brain which both do different things. Till now this was assumed to be specific to the human brain. But chickens have the same brain as humans. The chicken’s brain subdivides its cognitive processing so that the right hemisphere (left eye) is specialised to detect unexpected stimuli and the left hemisphere (right eye) to categorise stimuli based on past experience. The right hemisphere has broad spatial attention, while the left hemisphere has focussed attention. Chicks can attend to at least two visual tasks simultaneously. The tasks used in tests, done by University of New England, were a) searching for foodgrains scattered on a background of small pebbles, and b) detecting a predator moving overhead. The left hemisphere is specialised to carry out the former task and the right hemisphere to carry out the latter.

Have you ever found yourself humming a song that’s stuck in your head? That’s just like dolphins. At an aquatic park, Planete Sauvage in France, a group of five captive dolphins has been recorded making whale-like noises late at night — despite the fact that they have only heard whale sounds as recordings during their daytime shows. Ethologist Martine Hausberger, of the University of Rennes, and her colleagues had hung microphones in the tank to hear what dolphins sound like at night. One night, they heard 25 new sounds that the dolphins had never made before. Because dolphins are known for mimicry, the researchers examined their daytime environment for clues. They found that the park was playing music, sea gulls’ calls, the dolphins’ own whistles, and humpback whale calls. The dolphins, all of whom were born in captivity, had never had the opportunity to hear a whale sing, except on the soundtrack, yet they were singing whale songs.

Do you remember your mother yelling after you that you had forgotten your lunchbox? According to goat specialist Dr Daniel Waldron (cited in Wickman, 2013) goats are great yellers too. Both sheep and goats have larynxes and vocal tracts similar to humans and they use them to great effect. When a mother goat is separated from her kid, she will yell; when it’s time for them to be fed, the herd will yell to remind you. And the similarity doesn’t end there. Like humans, goats too develop different accents depending on the company they keep. According to recent research by Briefer and McElligott (2012), the calls of goats within the same social group became more similar over time. Comparing the calls of goats at one-week-old and five-weeks-old, they found that the calls of kids raised in the same social groups were more similar than those from different groups. The same is true of cows. After English dairy farmers noticed their cows had slightly different moos, depending on which herd they came from, a study revealed that cows have regional accents like humans. So, clearly animals can modify their vocalisations according to their social environments, which means they can learn languages easily as well.

While on the subject of communication, remember the Mahabharata story of how the unborn child, Abhimanyu, heard the secret of the maze when it was told to his pregnant mother, Subhadra? It is now widely accepted that babies in the womb respond positively to external stimuli like music and conversation. Expectant mothers can often be seen crooning and whispering to their unborn child. It is the same with animals. A mother hen talks to her chicks before they are born. She will cluck and purr softly while sitting on the eggs or moving them around under her. This early messaging imprints on them their mother’s voice and enables newborns to distinguish their mother’s call from rest of the flock. Towards the final hours of the hatch, you can hear them responding to Mama as she encourages them to break out of the shell, reassuring them that they are safe. It has also been proven that mother hens can modify their teaching of their chicks based on their understanding and aptitude. If the chick is a slow learner, Mama will slow down the pace of the lesson. And just like our mothers push our veggies at us and our colas away, so too do mother hens encourage their children to eat healthy. In a recent study, mother hens were conditioned to identify one colour of food as preferable and another colour of food as unsuitable. From a separate room they were given to watch as their chicks chose to eat the colour of feed they (the hens) deemed less preferable. Perceiving the chicks making an error, the mother hens responded by pecking and scratching the ground more frequently in an attempt to attract their chicks away from the bad food and toward the better food. Mums will be Mums.

Now that even science can no longer deny that animals think, speak and behave just like us, how can we deny them even the basic consideration that we, as humans, take for granted?

It would be so much happier to embrace their sameness and celebrate their differences. I know that before I die I would like to hear the lovesong of the Ecuadorian Hillstar Hummingbird. The male inflates his throat, causing his throat feather to glisten an iridescent purple, and then launches into an opera that only birds of his kind can hear. That’s because the mating call is at 13.4 kilohertz. And birds can’t hear above nine or 10 kilohertz. Then why so high-pitched? So that the sound of love can transcend the sound of mountain winds, streams, and the songs of other birds. Simply amazing!

To join the animal welfare movement contact gandhim@nic.in, www.peopleforanimalsindia.org

WISDOM CORNER

- True life is lived when tiny changes occur. **LEO TOLSTOY**
- Vision is the art of seeing what is invisible to others. **JONATHAN SWIFT**
- Every blessing ignored becomes a curse. **PAULO COELHO**

WORDSWORTH

Violent

In the Canterbury Tales, Geoffrey Chaucer wrote “In woman violent is no defence, This known lechours by experience,” meaning that lechers succeed by getting women drunk, since violent means intemperate or addicted to wine. It has nothing to do with violence, but is from Latin violentus in the same sense, obviously enough a relative of vinum, wine. Chaucer’s use is easily its most famous appearance in literature, because violent has never been common and indeed has almost completely vanished from the English language (though a web search did turn up a firm apparently willing to print the word on a T-shirt for you; if you were one it might provoke spectators to ask whether you were boasting or complaining).



Kaushik Basu

AT LEAST
UNTIL A SAFE,
EFFECTIVE
COVID-19
VACCINE
BECOMES
AVAILABLE,
ALL COUNTRIES
NEED DIFFERENT
FORMS OF
TAILORED,
LIMITED
LOCKDOWNS
AND RULES OF
BEHAVIOUR



Maneka Gandhi

Now that even science can no longer deny that animals think, speak and behave just like us, how can we deny them even the basic consideration that we, as humans, take for granted?

SPECTRUM DISABILITY

Society should overcome its handicaps



Harish Barthwal

AS A THUMB RULE,
WHEN WE FOCUS
ON SOMEONE'S
FLAWS, WE ARE
OFTEN DISABLED
TO APPRECIATE
THEIR TALENT,
ABILITIES
AND SKILLS

Ever pondered how the disabled persons with bowl in hand, some on wheelchair, pass their day around the religious and tourist spots or in row at a corner in market with soliciting eyes. These hapless, helpless persons also witnessed loitering at road crossings or on footpath, are often derided at, reprimanded and scorned. A section of them is those of cursed children who were cruelly crippled, and dragged into begging by the mafias.

No one is perfect. As a thumb rule, when we focus on someone’s flaws, we are often disabled to appreciate their talent, abilities and skills. Robert Hensel of Guinness World Record fame, himself having inborn disability said, “There is no greater disability in society than the inability to see a person as more.” What matters in the context of disability is our perception and not the lacuna in someone. “The only disability in life is a bad attitude,” said Scott Hamilton.

In India, prevalence of disability is higher in rural than in urban areas, gender-wise it is more among males than females. Overriding the 1995 Act, the amended Right of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 defines debility as “a person with

FOCUS PANDEMIC

LANGUAGE & LOCKDOWNS

Our recent experience with COVID-19 and the word ‘lockdown’ once again illustrates the power of language to influence our lives and wellbeing. The infinite variety of reality, and the finite number of words and phrases we have to describe it, creates an inescapable philosophical challenge to articulating policy. Adding to the challenge is our tendency to regard a person’s usage of certain words as a signal of their political ideology.

In managing the pandemic, much of the policy discussion has coalesced around lockdowns. But reducing the issue to a binary question (Should we lock down or not?), or even a linear one (How much should we lock down?), oversimplifies a complicated problem.

The binary tendency has been prominent in US President Donald Trump’s recent statements. At an Iowa campaign rally shortly before the presidential election, Trump claimed that, “The Biden plan will turn America into a prison state, locking you down.” He also tweeted that, “Biden wants to LOCKDOWN our Country, maybe for years. Crazy! There will be NO LOCK-DOWNS.” Trump’s brazen politicisation of the COVID-19 policy debate put left-wing groups on the defensive, because, unlike the president, they accepted the science and usually favoured certain aspects of lockdowns.

To see why linearising the lockdown debate is equally problematic, consider a restaurant where the menu asks how salty, on a scale of 0-10, you want your food to be. Chaos will ensue, with some customers who ordered a seven complaining that they received a salty dessert, and others who asked for a zero (because they wanted a pudding) grumbling about their bland pizza.

Tragically, this situation has parallels in the real world of pandemic management, where there are a thousand dimensions to policy. For example, governments can lock down bars while keeping schools open, or ask people who do not wear face masks to remain at home while allowing those who do to go outside. They can also in-



India’s number of daily COVID-19 cases rose without interruption for six months, a trend seen in very few places. India’s crude mortality rate (CMR) of 99 is now the highest among South and East Asian countries (and higher than in most of Africa), largely because the ‘lockdown’ actually unlocked the coronavirus and scattered it nationwide

sist on social distancing for vulnerable populations while imposing fewer restrictions on those with immunity to COVID-19. To ignore these choices when designing so-called non-pharmaceutical interventions is to court disaster.

Having said that, one big pattern that has not received enough attention is the geography of COVID-19. The difference between the Americas and Europe, on one hand, and Africa, Asia, and Oceania, on the other, in terms of cases and deaths is too great to be attributed to policy alone.

For example, it would be utterly disingenuous for Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte to proclaim the success of his pandemic policies by comparing his country’s crude mortality rate (CMR) – the number of COVID-19 deaths per million people – of 76 with Spain’s CMR of 964. In fairness, it would be equally fallacious to say that US policy has failed because America’s CMR is 827 while that of Vietnam, a much poorer country, is only 0.4.

The geographic pattern is so marked that there has to be an explanation in terms of past ill-

nesses and immunities, viral strains, ecology, or some other factor that we are yet to identify. To see the effect of policy, we need to make within-region comparisons (as I recently argued in a co-authored paper for the Brookings Institution).

The experience of India also demonstrates the risks of lockdown semantics. On March 24, the Indian government announced a ‘lockdown’ that supposedly was even more severe than those in Europe, often described as the strictest possible. The problem with this policy became evident after a week or two. The authorities had made no provision for the country’s poor migrant workers who, stranded in urban centres without work or pay, had no choice but to walk hundreds of miles back to their homes, mostly in the countryside. So, although India’s cities, towns, and economy were locked down, the opposite was true of 23-40 million migrant workers. For them, this could be described as the ‘Great Unlocking.’

This misstep is now showing up in the statistics. India’s number of daily COVID-19 cases rose without

interruption for six months, a trend seen in very few places. India’s CMR of 99 is now the highest among South and East Asian countries (and higher than in most of Africa), largely because the ‘lockdown’ actually unlocked the coronavirus and scattered it nationwide.

But instead of lamenting the past, we need to move on. At least until a safe, effective COVID-19 vaccine becomes available, all countries need different forms of tailored, limited lockdowns and rules of behaviour. And as far as possible, this should be implemented through persuasion and leadership rather than by police enforcement.

Here is one suggestion. We have to begin to rely on people who have already had COVID-19 and are now immune. Instead of resorting to compulsion, we should offer people with certified immunity attractive pay to take jobs that involve physical human interaction and contact. This will help to keep supply chains open and the overall economy running.

Once governments take the lead, market forces will kick in and do the job. As we discuss in the Brookings paper, this option is not risk-free. But it has huge potential, and economies that develop a functioning ‘immune labour market’ can reap big benefits.

Now that the US election is over, there seems to be more flexibility in the lockdown debate. Encouragingly, many on the left support tailored lockdowns and rules of behaviour that can enable the bulk of the economy and society to remain open. Assuming that Trump, who has adamantly opposed any lockdown, does not lock himself down in the White House beyond January 20, 2021, the US response to COVID-19 is likely to be overhauled accordingly.

The writer, a former Chief Economist of the World Bank and Chief Economic Adviser to the Government of India, is Professor of Economics at Cornell University and Nonresident Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution.

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Compensate acid attack victims

Sir, The neglect on the part of the states to provide compensation to acid attack victims is glaring. Reports say that till October 2018, nearly 60 per cent of acid attack survivors had not received compensation that was rightfully due to them under Section 357 B of IPC. The systematic time frame fixed by the provisions of the criminal law amendment, for payment of compensation, has had no takers in the governments. Reimbursement of medical expenses is vital for the victims to withstand the trauma, and undergo quick surgeries that most of them require. Not all hospitals possess facilities and faculties to manage acid attack survivors. All hospitals should be directed to admit acid burn patients and provide priority treatment before shifting them to specialty hospitals. On an average, 300 to 500 cases of acid attacks on women are reported in a year in India. The actual number is much more. There is also a large gap between acid attack incidents and police chargesheets. Section 326(A) of IPC provides for a punishment of not less than 10 years that may extend to imprisonment for life with or without fine. Many women who have survived acid attacks have lived with grit, courage, dignity and determination sending a firm message that their willpower cannot be destroyed by meek sadists hoping to scar their bodies. Unfortunately, the efforts of governments have not matched with that of survivors. In 2013, the Supreme Court mandated videography of acid buyers, by sellers, for easy identification; but the rule has been, more often than not, flouted. States were directed to allow only select stores to sell acid, and ensure there was no over the counter business of acid. One cannot say states have not taken stock of the situation. But it is also true that the SC order has not been implemented with seriousness.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Stalemate continues

Sir, Talks between the Centre and the farmers who are demanding a rollback of the three recent farm sector legislations ran into rough weather, with the farmers’ unions rejecting the government proposal to set up a small expert committee to examine the three controversial laws. Railway Minister Piyush Goyal and Minister of State for Industries Som Prakash represented the government. It will be interesting to see if the government adopts a new strategy to break the stalemate when the two sides meet again Thursday.

NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

of the day quote

There is not even one year left of this BJP government's tenure now. As the elections are drawing closer, the Yogi Adityanath has started travelling to other places like Hyderabad, Mumbai, West Bengal and Bihar. His becoming active in other states, leaving his duties behind, only shows that he has sensed people's disenchantment with the BJP

AKHILESH YADAV |
SAMAJWADI PARTY (SP) PRESIDENT

Chandrababu Naidu's frustration is understandable, he must be thinking if Jagan Mohan Reddy's regime continues the way it is going now with welfare then he and his party will fall into oblivion

V. VIJAYSAI REDDY | YSRCP LEADER

The crisis is a closed chapter now. Suwendu Adhikari will remain in the party. There were some misunderstandings, but it has been resolved through dialogue

SAUGATA ROY | SENIOR TMC LEADER

SHORT TAKES

Amarinder to take first vaccine shot

Chandigarh: Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh will take the first shot of the anti-Covid vaccine in the state after it is cleared by the ICMR following which 1.25 lakh health workers would receive it. The state government has also prioritised nearly 23 per cent of its three crore population, totalling 70 lakh, comprising healthcare workers, frontline workers, the elderly population above the age of 50 years and people with comorbidities for the first phase of vaccination, an official statement said Wednesday. The CM made this announcement at a virtual Cabinet meeting here, convened to discuss the Covid situation in Punjab and the state's preparedness to roll out the vaccine, it said.

5 students killed in road accident

Silchar (Assam): In a tragic road accident, at least five college students were killed on the spot and one was critically injured at Cachar in southern Assam Wednesday, the police said. According to the police, the mishap occurred while an Alto vehicle and a truck collided head-on at Kalain in Cachar district. The critically injured student was taken to the Silchar Medical College and Hospital.

Three drown

Shahdol (MP): Three minor girls drowned in a pond Wednesday in Madhya Pradesh's Shahdol district, police said. The deceased were in the age group of 5 to 9 years. The incident occurred this afternoon when four girls entered the pond while playing, Sohagpur police Station in-charge Sudeep Soni said, adding that parents of the girls were working in nearby agricultural fields at the time of the incident.

Cop shoots man

Azamgarh (Uttar Pradesh): A police man in Uttar Pradesh has allegedly shot at a man who objected to his sexually harassing women. The injured man, Kishan Lal, has been admitted to a hospital in Varanasi for treatment. The accused policeman has been identified as Sarvesh, who is presently posted in Gonda district. The incident took place in Kamalpur village Tuesday.



Being a tribal-dominated state, Chhattisgarh should be given priority in the first phase of vaccination drive and the vaccine should be allocated for free

BHUPESH BAGHEL |
CHHATTISGARH CHIEF MINISTER

SUSHIL MODI FILES NOMINATION FOR RS BYPOLLS

Former Bihar Deputy Chief Minister and BJP leader Sushil Kumar Modi Wednesday filed his nomination for the upcoming Rajya Sabha bypolls in Bihar



CCTVs must in CBI, ED and NIA offices: Top court

WELCOME MOVE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 2 : The Supreme Court directed the Centre Wednesday to install CCTV cameras and recording equipment at the offices of investigating agencies, including the CBI, the ED and National Investigation Agency (NIA), which conduct interrogations and have the power of arrest.

A bench headed by Justice R F Nariman said that states and Union Territories (UTs) should ensure that CCTV cameras are installed at each and every police station, making them imperative at all entry and exit points, main gate, all lock-ups, all corridors, lobby and reception area as also areas outside the lock-up room.

The apex court, which had earlier ordered installation of CCTV cameras in police stations to check human rights abuses, said that as most of the probe agencies including Narcotics Control Bureau, Department of Revenue Intelligence and Serious Fraud Investigation Office carry out interrogation in their offices, CCTVs be "compulsorily installed" in all offices where such questioning takes place and accused are kept.

It said the CCTV systems must be equipped with night vision and have audio as well as video footage and it shall be mandatory for the Centre, states and UTs to purchase such system which allows storage of data for maximum period possible, and in any case not below one year. "In addition, the Union

of India is also directed to install CCTV cameras and recording equipment in the offices of: Central Bureau of Investigation, National Investigation Agency, Enforcement Directorate, Narcotics Control Bureau, Department of Revenue Intelligence, Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO), any other agency which carries out interrogations and has the power of arrest," said the bench, also comprising Justices K M Joseph and Aniruddha Bose.

"As most of these agencies carry out interrogation in their office(s), CCTVs shall be compulsorily installed in all offices where such interrogation and holding of accused takes place in the same manner as it would in a police station," the bench said in its order.

The top court said that in September this year, it had impleaded all the states and UTs in the matter to find out the exact position of CCTV cameras in each police station as well as constitution of Oversight Committees in accordance with the April 3, 2018 order.

The apex court, while dealing with a matter related to custodial torture, had in July this year taken note of a 2017 case in which it had ordered installation of CCTV cameras in all the police stations to check human rights abuses, videography of crime scene and setting up of a Central Oversight Committee and such a panel in every states and Union Territory.



NGT imposes total ban on crackers in NCR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 2: In a fresh directive, the National Green Tribunal has directed that there would be a total ban on the sale and use of all kinds of firecrackers during COVID-19 pandemic in the NCR and all cities/towns in the country where the ambient air quality falls under the 'poor' and above category.

The green panel, however, said during Christmas, and new year, green crackers can be used from 11:55 pm to 12:30 am only at places where air quality is 'moderate' or below.

A bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel said its direction to restrict the use of firecrackers in cities/towns where air quality is 'moderate' or below to green crackers and for the duration of not more than two hours will continue.

Other than specified festivals,



Representative image

prior permission of the District Magistrate of the area will be required for use of crackers for limited period which will be given having regard to air quality, the tribunal said.

"There will be a total ban on the sale and use of all kinds of firecrackers during COVID-19 pandemic in the NCR and all

cities/towns in the country where the ambient air quality falls under the 'poor' and above category," the bench said.

"Since pandemic is still continuing and aggravated by the addition of pollution by fire crackers, having potential of damage to public health, invoking precautionary principle under section 15 and 20 of

ENJOYING SUNBATH



A lovely bird takes Sun-rays on the branch of a tree during winter season in Daltonganj area under Palamu district , Jharkhand

'2nd wave of nCoV in K'taka likely in Jan-Feb'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Dec 2: The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for COVID-19 in Karnataka has said the second wave of the pandemic is expected in early 2021 and has made a slew of recommendations including banning public celebrations ahead of the new year in a bid to avert a crisis.

It has also recommended clamping night curfew during that period, but the government said it was yet to take a call on the matter.

The TAC has said the second wave of the pandemic was expected in January-February next year.

It has asked to keep ready by first week of January, clinical facilities at October level (when daily cases were about 10,000 per day) in terms of beds, ICUs, ventilators, and so on, both in government and private hospitals or this could be ramped up at a short notice of 2-3

days maximum. It has also recommended a ban on new year public celebrations from December 26 to January 1 and impose night curfew (8 pm to 5 am) during this period. The TAC, based on the deliberations at its 53rd meeting held November 24, has given advisory on recognition and containment measures for the second wave of COVID-19 in Karnataka.

According to TAC, early recognition of the second wave of COVID-19 in the state can be done by closely monitoring the 7-day average growth rate and reproduction number (R0) at district and state levels.

It said an epidemic intelligence team shall be supporting the state war room for early recognition of the second wave and alert the Additional Chief Secretary and Commissioner of the Health and Family Welfare department.



COVID-19 in Karnataka.

'Make community service must for mask rule violation'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, Dec 2: The Gujarat High Court Wednesday ordered the state government to come up with a notification, making it mandatory for those violating the face mask rule to do community service at COVID-19 centres as a punishment in addition to the fine imposed on them.

A division bench of Chief Justice Vikram Nath and Justice J B Pardiwala said the community service at COVID-19 centres shall be non-medical in nature and shall be for four- six hours for a period of 5 to 15 days, as authorities deem it fit and necessary. The HC also asked the government to widely publicise this in the media so it could have a "desirable deterrent effect", noting that a person not wearing a mask is not only putting himself at risk, but putting the community at risk.

"Hence, the said violator must extend services to the community which is put at risk," the court said.

59% Indians sceptical about vaccine

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Dec 2: With chances of affordable Covid-19 vaccine likely to be available by February 2021, 59 per cent Indians divulged that they will not rush to take it, a survey revealed Wednesday.

The last few weeks have given hope to the world with three vaccine makers -- Pfizer, Moderna and Oxford-AstraZeneca releasing their efficacy data. Oxford-AstraZeneca has a partnership with Serum Institute of India for production and reports suggest that the vaccine could be available as early as February at Rs 500-600 per dose.

With the possibility of an affordable vaccine by February 2021, a survey was conducted by 'LocalCircles' to understand the hesitancy levels. The survey received more than 25,000 responses from citizens across 262 districts of India.

The first question in the survey asked, "The Covid-19 vaccine is likely to be available from February 2021 via private and Government channels. If that happens, what will be your ap-



proach to taking this vaccine?"

Responses from 8,936 citizens were received. Of which, 8 per cent said, "I am a health or frontline worker and will get it on priority through the government", 13 per cent said "will get it as quickly as it becomes available via any healthcare channel", 11 per cent said "will get it as quickly as it becomes available via private healthcare channel".

Another 59 per cent of re-

spondents said that they will not rush to take the vaccine even if it is available in the near future. The perception of the majority of citizens sceptical on taking vaccine has not changed much as compared to the result of the survey conducted in mid-October by LocalCircles.

Sixty-one per cent of 8,312 voters at the time had said they are sceptical about COVID-19 vaccine and will not rush to take it in 2021 even if it is available.

Closer home in India, where Serum Institute of India is conducting trials for the vaccine under name Covishield, a participant who undertook the trial has alleged the vaccine of causing him serious side-effects, both neurological and psychological filing for damages against Serum.

Serum has dismissed the claims as "oblique pecuniary motive" maintaining that the participant's suffering was independent of the vaccine trial he underwent and has sought damages for malicious allegations in excess of Rs 100 crores.

India's readiness prompts China to scramble for high-altitude gear

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Dec 2: China is making last minute efforts to make emergency procurements of high-altitude gear and clothing for its troops as they were caught unaware with India's readiness for the harsh winter atop the Eastern Ladakh heights -- that has been the bone of contention between the two Asian majors.

India has occupied critical mountain heights on the southern bank of the Pangong Lake including Rechin La, Rezang La, Mukpari that were unmanned till now.

This along with some other peaks allows India to dominate Spangur Gap under Chinese control and also the Moldo garrison on the

Chinese side. This has irked the PLA which has made multiple attempts to dislodge Indian troops leading to instances of warning gunshots being fired.

Now, witnessing that India continues to occupy heights even as dark winter months approach just as temperatures have started to dip beyond minus 20 degrees Celsius, China is making emergency procurements to keep their troops also deployed at more than 16,000 feet.

Intelligence sources said that Chinese had procured bulk winter clothing meant for 9,000-10,000 feet but with no disengagement taking place and the standoff continuing, China started bulk procurements to winter gear. Both the Asian majors have refused to blink despite a long



and harsh winter ahead, deployment is being enhanced on either sides. Sources said that PLA Joint Logistics Support Force (JLSF) has constituted a Quality Supervision Team for emergency procurement of Extreme Cold Climate clothing.

This team has now been tasked to ensure good quality clothing and fast delivery to forward area troops.

Whereas Indian Army -- having an edge of experience of troop deployment at Siachen heights -- in October made procurement of ad-

ditional high altitude winter clothing from US keeping in mind the needs of the enhanced troop deployment in Ladakh in peak winter amid the military tussle with China.

It was purchased under the Logistics Exchange Memorandum Agreement (LEMOA) between India and US that facilitates logistical support, supplies and services between the armed forces of the two countries.

These include clothing, food, lubricants, spare parts, medical services among other essentials. Apart from that the Indian Army has also completed establishment of habitat facilities for all troops deployed in the sector, sources said. The living accommodation that will protect the troops from the severe cold and

wind chill factor includes fast erectable modular shelters. The force has also made state of the art habitat with integrated arrangements for electricity, water, heating facilities, health and hygiene have been recently created to accommodate the troops. These shelters can withstand temperatures dipping to minus 50 degrees Celsius.

India and China are engaged in an eight-month-long standoff at the Line of Actual Control in Eastern Ladakh. Despite several levels of dialogue, there has not been any breakthrough and the deadlock continues. On June 15, at least 20 Indian soldiers and an unknown number of Chinese troops were killed in a violent clash in the Galwan Valley.

of the day quote

Since the pre-Independence era, people who had come from other states played a crucial role in Bengal's development. Most of those who worked at mills and factories here were from other states. So those from outside played a bigger role than the Bengalis in developing the state

DILIP GHOSH | WEST BENGAL, BJP CHIEF

The Indian Navy did play a crucial Role in preventing any misadventure by the Chinese Navy in the Indian Ocean Region during the peak of the border standoff between the two countries

VICE ADMIRAL AK CHAWLA | INDIAN COMMANDING OFFICER

Because of Ayushman Bharat all over the country, we could have witnessed growth in the medical world unfortunately some could not (take) part in this great venture, our state of West Bengal could not, our health infrastructure was stressed on that count

JAGDEEP DHANKHAR | WB GOVERNOR

SHORT TAKES

Modi invites Boris as R-Day chief guest

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has formally invited UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson to be the chief guest for the Republic Day celebrations January 26, 2021. The invitation was extended by Modi to Johnson during their phone conversation November 27, sources said. It is after a gap of 27 years that a UK Prime Minister will be the chief guest at India's 70th Republic Day next month. John Major was the last British Prime Minister to attend the Republic Day parade in New Delhi in 1993. The government is yet to confirm Johnson's visit. However, Prime Minister Modi hinted in a tweet on November 27 that India-UK are embarking on an ambitious partnership.

Man stripped over dispute

Khambhalia (Guj): Five persons have been Arrested for allegedly stripping a man and parading him naked in a busy market here in Gujarat after he accused them of indulging in cricket-betting, police said Wednesday. The incident took place on Tuesday following which the accused uploaded a video of the incident on social media. They were angry with the man as he had posted a video on Facebook, accusing them of indulging in cricket-betting, a police official said.

Pakistan Rangers violate ceasefire

Jammu: Pakistani Rangers opened fire at border outposts along the International Border (IB) in Hiranagar sector of Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district, drawing retaliation from the Border Security Force, officials said Wednesday. There was no report of any damage on the Indian side.

4 of family killed in road mishap

Kondagaon: Four members of a family were killed and a relative was seriously injured when their car rammmed into a stationary truck on a highway in Chhattisgarh's Kondagaon district, a police official said Wednesday. The accident took place Tuesday night on the National Highway No. 30 near Joba village when the victims, all natives of Bijapur district, were returning from a wedding.



There won't be any reshuffle in the cabinet. The minister (Lobo) never discussed the issue with me. It is not for the minister, but for the party to decide about the reshuffle

PRAMOD SAWANT | GOA CHIEF MINISTER

RHEA'S BROTHER SHOWIK GETS BAIL

A Mumbai court Wednesday granted bail to actress Rhea Chakraborty's brother Showik Chakraborty, who was arrested in a drugs case linked to actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death case



Farmers seek spl session to repeal new laws

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Dec 2: The agitating farmers Wednesday urged the Union government to convene a special session of Parliament to repeal the three farm laws, besides threatening to hold a nationwide protest December 5.

Addressing a press conference at the Delhi-Haryana border in Singhu, Darshan Pal, President of the Krantikari Kisan Union, said, "We will celebrate December 3, when the Bhopal gas tragedy took place several decades ago, as anti-corporate day. On December 5, we will protest against the Modi government and the corporate houses and burn their effigies."

It will be a nationwide protest where the farmers will burn the effigies. He said that artistes and sportspersons have given a call to return the awards they have received from the government.

"We thank the people who have announced to return their awards to the government and we are hopeful that those who have got national awards will also return them as a mark of solidarity with the farmers' movement," Pal said.

He added that the farmer leaders



Members of Bharatiya Kisan Union during their Delhi Chalo protest march against the Centre's new farm laws, in Noida, Wednesday

PTI PHOTO

will give a written 7-10 page recommendation on why they want the farm laws to be repealed.

"We demand the government to call a special session of the Parliament to repeal the three farm laws," Pal said. He informed that during the meeting with the government Tuesday, it seemed to them that the government tried to divide them and tried to mislead them on the three farm laws.

The press conference was held after the farmers' groups held talks earlier in the day. Pratibha Shinde of Lok Sangharsh Morcha while addressing the media said that they

shall burn effigies in every district of Maharashtra December 3.

"We shall burn the effigies of government and corporates in Maharashtra December 3 and in Gujarat December 5," she said, adding that Thursday is the last chance for the government to take a decision to repeal the laws otherwise this movement will become huge and the government will fall.

Even as the farmers threatened the government, Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar told the media that they will hold discussions with the farmers' leaders Thursday.

ON A MISSION



Youngsters participate in a run as part of preparations for recruitments in security forces, in Ranbir Singh Pura Sector, near Jammu

PTI PHOTO

India, Russia hold talks on UNSC issues

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 2: India and Russia Wednesday held consultations on UN Security Council related issues and agreed to deepen cooperation on counter-terrorism at multilateral platforms.

The consultations come ahead of India taking up the non-permanent seat at the UNSC for the period 2021-22. The Indian delegation for the consultations was led by Vikas Swarup, Secretary (West), Ministry of External Affairs, while the Russian delegation was led by Sergey Vasilyevich Vershinin, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation and included other Russian Foreign Ministry officials. The Russian side welcomed India taking up the non permanent seat at the UNSC for the period 2021-22, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in a statement.

Both sides held wide ranging discussions on issues on the UN Security Council agenda and recent developments, the MEA said.

Sasikala applies for remission

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Dec 2: Late Tamil Nadu Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa's close aide V K Sasikala, serving a four-year jail term on graft charges, has sought remission and early release from prison, official sources said Wednesday.

Sasikala, lodged at the Parappana Agrahara prison here, is expected to come out on January 27, 2021 after she deposited ₹10 crore fine at a special court.

The prison authorities have forwarded her application to higher officials. "She has applied for remission of her jail term and it has been forwarded to the head of the department for their consideration," a source said. Authorities are yet to take a call on it. After the

Supreme Court restored the trial court judgment in toto against Sasikala and two of her close relatives in the disproportionate assets case, she surrendered before the court in Karnataka on February 15, 2017 and has been lodged in Parappana Agrahara Central Jail since then.

Her two relatives are also undergoing four years simple imprisonment and all three of them were slapped with a fine of ₹10 crore each. With the death of Jayalalithaa in 2016, who was the first accused in the case, the appeal by Karnataka against her stood abated. As per the norms, three days of remission for good conduct is available for every month in jail and so far, she has completed 43 months, making her eligible for a reduction of 135 days in prison.

CHINA TURNS TO INDIA FOR RICE

REUTERS

Mumbai, Dec 2: China has begun importing Indian rice for the first time in at least three decades due to tightening supplies from Thailand, Myanmar and Vietnam and an offer of sharply discounted prices, Indian industry officials said.

India is the world's biggest rice exporter and China the biggest importer. Beijing buys in around 4 million tonnes a year but has avoided purchases from India, citing quality issues.

India has tightened rules for investments from China and banned dozens of Chinese mobile apps, including from tech giants Tencent, Alibaba and ByteDance.

Although the public mood in India has been anti-China, the country has remained engaged with Indian businesses.

"For the first time China has made rice purchases. They may increase buying next year after seeing the quality of Indian crop," B.V. Krishna Rao, president of the Rice Exporters Association, said Wednesday.

Indian traders have contracted to export 100,000 tonnes of broken rice for Dec-February shipments at around \$300 per tonne on a free-on-board (FOB) basis, industry officials said. China's traditional suppliers, such as Thailand, Vietnam, Myanmar and Pakistan, have limited surplus supplies. Thailand, the world's

second-largest rice exporter and key supplier to China, suffered a drought this year that has affected the rice crop. Its shipments in 2020 could fall to 6.5 million tonnes, the lowest in 20 years. "Thailand, Myanmar and Vietnam are struggling due to limited supplies. China eventually was left with no option but to buy from India," said Himanshu Agarwal, executive director at Satyam Balajee, India's biggest rice exporter.

"China buying rice from India, or US or any country, is just adding some flavor to the domestic market," said Yin Xiuying, analyst with trade website www.ChinaGrain.CN, based in Harbin, capital of China's north-eastern province of Heilongjiang.

on-year tally. The cases and fatalities have declined significantly by 21.27 per cent and 20 per cent, respectively in the year 2019 (3,38,494 cases, 77 deaths) as compared to 2018 (4,29,928 cases, 96 deaths).

"The total number of malaria cases reported in 2020 till October (1,57,284) has further decreased by 45.02 per cent as compared to the corresponding period of 2019 (2,86,091)," the ministry said.

Malaria elimination efforts were initiated in the country in 2015 and intensified after the launch of the National Framework for Malaria Elimination (NFME) in 2016 by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

The National Strategic Plan for Malaria Elimination (2017-22) was

launched by the health ministry in July, 2017 which laid down strategies for the next five years.

The first two years saw a 27.7 per cent decline in cases and 49.5 per cent reduction in fatalities; 11,69,261 cases and 385 deaths in 2015, and 8,44,558 cases and 194 deaths in 2017.

The states of Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Meghalaya and Madhya Pradesh disproportionately accounted for nearly 45.47 per cent (1,53,909 cases out of India's 3,38,494 cases) of malaria cases and 70.54 per cent (1,10,708 cases out of India's 1,56,940 cases) of falciparum malaria cases in 2019. The health ministry said 63.64 per cent (49 out of 77) of malaria deaths was also reported from these states

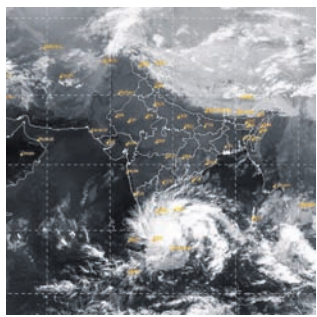
AGENCIES

Chennai, Dec 2: Cyclonic storm Burevi is expected to cross the south Tamil Nadu coast amidst Pamban and Kanniyakumari between December 3 and December 4 with a wind speed of 70-80 kmph, gusting at 90 kmph, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said Wednesday.

In a weather bulletin, the IMD said Burevi, over southwest Bay of Bengal, moved west-north-westwards with a speed of 25 kmph during past six hours and lay centred, as at 11.30 a.m., about 140 km east of Trincomalee (Sri Lanka), 370 km east-south-east of Pamban (India) and 550 km nearly east-northeast of Kanniyakumari (India).

It is very likely to cross Trincomalee coast Dec 2 evening/night. According to the IMD, December 3 noon, Burevi will be centred close to Pamban.

The IMD has warned of squally weather, with wind speed reaching 45-55 kmph and gusting to 65



kmph, over Ramanathapuram, Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli and Kanyakumari districts Wednesday.

Similarly for Thursday and Friday, it has warned of squally weather with wind speed, reaching 70-80 kmph and gusting to 90 kmph, as likely to occur over Ramanathapuram, Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli and Kanyakumari districts.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke with the Chief Ministers of Tamil Nadu and Kerala Wednesday and discussed the situation prevailing in parts of the states.

Eighteen killed in separate accidents in UP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, Dec 2: At least 18 people were killed in separate accidents in Uttar Pradesh, police said Wednesday.

While eight people were killed in Kaushambi, three were killed in Shravasti, two each in Unnao and Jalaun and three in Chitrakoot, they said. In Kaushambi, eight people were killed when a sand-laden truck overturned on a stationary SUV in Kada Dham area of the district Wednesday, police said.

The victims were returning to Shahjapur after attending a wedding ceremony in Deviganj in the district when the accident took place.

Superintendent of Police, Abhinandan, said the bodies were taken out of the vehicle with the help of gas cutters and sent for postmortem.

Two girls travelling in the SUV managed to come out the window, police said, adding that they sustained minor injuries. The truck driver is absconding and police is trying to trace him.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has condoled the loss of lives and directed the local administration to provide all possible help to family members of the victims.

In Shravasti, three people, including two women, were killed in a collision between two vehicles.

In Unnao, two people were Wednesday killed and as many injured when a car collided with an unidentified vehicle on the Lucknow-Agra expressway near Guluapur village here, police said. In the accident, two people were killed on the spot, police said.

All of them were going to Gorakhpur from Gurugram, they said adding bodies have been sent for postmortem. In Jalaun, a woman and her son died when two bikes collided in Kuthaundh area Tuesday.



The government will work on a priority basis to grant the provisional provincial status to Gilgit Baltistan
IMRAN KHAN | PAKISTAN PM

NEW REVELATION

Using computer simulations, scientists have shown that the relatively safer far-ultraviolet C (UVC) light can be used to disinfect in-room air, an advance that may pave the way for a new solution to kill aerosolised novel coronavirus in enclosed environments such as hospitals



of the day quote

China stands ready to work with India and other members to coordinate and communicate and work together to elevate the SCO and open up another decade of development and cooperation of SCO



HUA CHUNYING | CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON

President-elect Biden and I, with this economic team, will be ready to hit the ground running on day one. Because that's what this crisis demands. And that's what the American people deserve



KAMALA HARRIS | US VICE PRESIDENT-ELECT

I want maritime border talks with Israel to succeed and disagreements during the last round of negotiations can be resolved based on international law



MICHEL AOUN | LEBANON'S PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

5 militants killed

Baghdad: Iraqi security forces carried out an operation against militants of the extremist Islamic State (IS) group in the northern part of Salahudin province, killing five militants, said a provincial police source Wednesday. The troops, backed by the army's artillery and US-led international coalition aircraft, attacked IS hideouts in Makhmour mountain range which extend in the provinces of Salahudin and Nineveh, Mohammed al-Bazi told Xinhua. The operation resulted in the killing of five IS militants and the capture of two others including a local IS leader, al-Bazi said, adding weapons and ammunition were seized during the operation.

4 mowed down

Berlin: At least four people, including a baby, were killed and at least 15 others injured in Germany's Trier town on Tuesday afternoon as a speeding car, driven by a drunk man, ploughed through people in a pedestrian zone, reports said. The driver, a local resident identified as 51-year-old Bernd W., has been arrested, police said. According to police, Bernd was drunk and there were no indications that the incident was politically motivated, the BBC reported.

Migrants rescued

Athens: A search and rescue operation has been launched in the eastern Aegean Sea after a dinghy carrying migrants either sank or overturned off the Greek island of Lesbos, the Greek coast guard said Wednesday. It said 32 people — 15 men, 14 women and three children — had been rescued from the sea, while two women were missing. The migrants were located during a routine patrol in early Wednesday. Two Greek patrol boats, one vessel from the European border agency Frontex and two helicopters were participating in the search and rescue operation.

Two injured

The Hague: Two people were injured in a stabbing Wednesday in a shop in the center of The Hague and a suspect has fled the scene, police said. The city's police force tweeted that there also was a fire at the store that was quickly extinguished. The two injured people were being taken to a hospital by ambulance. Police launched an investigation and appealed for witnesses.

Court strikes down Trump admin's H-1B rules

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, Dec 2: In a huge relief to tens of thousands of Indian professionals and top American IT firms, a US court has blocked two H-1B regulations proposed by the Trump administration to restrict the ability of American companies to hire foreign employees.

H-1B visas is a non-immigrant visa that allows American companies to employ foreign workers in speciality occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise. The US issues up to 85,000 H-1B visas each year. Usually, they're issued for three years and renewable. Most of the nearly 600,000 H-1B visa holders are from India and China.

In his 23-page order on Tuesday, US District Judge Jeffrey White of Northern District of California blocked the Trump administration's recent policy that required employers to pay foreign workers on H-1B visas significantly higher wages. He also set aside another policy that narrowed the eligibility of H-1B valued by US tech firms and



H-1B visas is a non-immigrant visa that allows American companies to employ foreign workers in speciality occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise

The US issues up to 85,000 H-1B visas each year. Usually, they're issued for three years and renewable. Most of the nearly 600,000 H-1B visa holders are from India and China

other employers. As a result of the ruling, the Department of Homeland Security rule on occupations and other issues that was to come into effect from December 7, stands invalid. The Department of Labour rule on wages, which took effect on October 8, is also now no longer valid.

The COVID-19 pandemic has wreaked havoc on the nation's health, and millions of Americans have been impacted financially by restrictions imposed on businesses, large and small, during the pan-

demic; the consequences of those restrictions has been a fiscal calamity for many individuals, the judge wrote.

"However, the history of the US is in part made of the stories, talents, and lasting contributions of those who crossed oceans and deserts to come here. The national government has significant power to regulate immigration. With power comes responsibility, and the sound exercise of national power over immigration depends on the nation's meeting its responsibility to

Russia to begin mass COVID-19 vaccinations

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Moscow, Dec 2: Russian President Vladimir Putin told health officials Wednesday to start widespread vaccinations next week, adding that the country had produced close to 2 million doses of its Sputnik V vaccine.

The announcement came the same day Britain approved the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for a roll-out starting next week. Last week Russia announced that interim test results showed the Sputnik V vaccine was 95 per cent effective, a higher efficacy than its international competitors. Sputnik V — named after the Soviet-era satellite — is in its third and final stage of clinical trials involving some 40,000 volunteers. "I would ask you to organise the work so that by the end of next week we will have started this vaccination," Putin said, speaking in a video conference call with Deputy Prime Minister Tatiana Golikova.

HK activists jailed

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hong Kong, Dec 2: Hong Kong pro-democracy activists Joshua Wong, Agnes Chow and Ivan Lam were sentenced to jail Wednesday on charges related to an unauthorised anti-government protest last year at the city's police headquarters.

Wong, who pleaded guilty to organizing and participating in the protest, received 13 1/2 months behind bars. Chow, who also pleaded guilty to participating in the protest and inciting others to take part, received 10 months, while Lam received 7 months after pleading guilty to incitement.

The protest took place on June 21 last year, and saw thousands surround the police headquarters as they demonstrated against excessive force by police against protesters, as well as a now-withdrawn extradition bill that would have allowed suspects to be extradited to mainland China. The trio were members of the now-defunct political group Demosisto. It is the first time that Chow, 23, has been given a jail sentence.



Sri Lankan fishermen arrange their accessories on the beach as they prepare for cyclonic storm 'Burevi' on the Bay of Bengal coast in Colombo, Sri Lanka, Wednesday

PTI PHOTO

China's Chang'e-5 probe collects moon samples

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, Dec 2: On the most complex mission to the moon, China's Chang'e-5 probe drilled the lunar surface, collected samples Wednesday in the first such effort in over 40 years and began preparations to bring the precious soil to earth, the country's space authority said.

The Chang'e-5 probe has collected moon samples after landing on Tuesday, the China National Space Administration (CNSA) announced on Wednesday. The unmanned probe landed in the area called Oceanus Procellarum, also known as the Ocean of Storms, on the near side of the moon and started rolling out its solar panel wings and unlocking some of the payloads on-board to prepare for sample collection.

The lander first drilled a 2-meter-deep hole, digging out soil, and sealed it up at 4:53 a.m. on Wednesday. Next, it will use its robotic arms to scoop up more samples from the lunar surface for backup, state-run media reported. About two kgs of samples are expected to be collected and sealed in a container, CNSA officials said.



State-run media has shown photos of the lander on the lunar surface after it landed successfully. "We designed two methods for the spacecraft to collect samples. One is to sample the lunar surface, and the other is to drill underground. The two methods could increase the chance of getting more diverse samples," Peng Jing, deputy chief designer of the Chang'e-5 probe said.

It is China's maiden attempt to retrieve materials from an extra-terrestrial body. The United States sent astronauts to the moon to collect samples. In the Soviet Union's unmanned lunar sampling missions, the spacecraft took off from the moon and returned to Earth directly.

China planned Galwan Valley incident: US report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, Dec 2: The Chinese government had planned the Galwan Valley incident in June, potentially including the possibility for fatalities, a US Congressional Commission has said, asserting that Beijing "provoked" the first deadly clash on the Sino-India border in nearly half a century.

The ruling Chinese Communist Party employs its armed forces as a coercive tool during peacetime, carrying out large-scale intimidation exercises around Taiwan and in the South China Sea, the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission said in its latest annual report to Congress. "This year, it provoked the first deadly clash on the China-India border in nearly half a century. China's rising aggression has not gone unnoticed," the report said. In June, China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) and Indian troops engaged in a massive physical brawl in the Galwan Valley, located in the far-western Ladakh region along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) separating the two countries, said the report dated December 1.

The clash, which followed a se-



ries of standoffs beginning in early May along multiple sectors of the LAC, led to at least 20 Indian deaths and an unconfirmed number of Chinese casualties, the first time since 1975 that lives were lost in fighting between the two sides.

"Some evidence suggested the Chinese government had planned the incident, potentially including the possibility for fatalities," the report said. For instance, several weeks prior to the clash Chinese Defence Minister Gen. Wei Fenghe made a statement encouraging Beijing to "use fighting to promote stability."

Just over two weeks before the incident, in another potential indication of Chinese leaders signalling their intent to escalate tensions, an editorial in China's state-owned tabloid Global Times warned that India would suffer a "devastating

blow" to its trade and economic ties with China if it got "involved in the US-China rivalry."

Further satellite images depicted a large Chinese buildup in the Galwan Valley including potentially 1,000 PLA soldiers, the week before the deadly skirmish, said the Congressional Commission created in 2000 for monitoring and investigating national security and trade issues between the US and China.

China and India have engaged in multiple physical clashes along their border for decades, but since General Secretary Xi Jinping assumed power in 2012 the two countries have seen five major altercations along their border. The exact motivations behind the Chinese government's provocative behaviour on the LAC this year remain unclear, it noted.

More midwives could save millions of lives per year by 2035: Study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, Dec 2: Increasing the number of midwives and their level of care could save up to 4.3 million lives per year over the next 15 years, particularly in low and middle income countries, according to a study published in The Lancet Global Health journal.

This modelling study estimates that scaling up the provision of midwife-led care across the world could potentially reduce maternal deaths by 67 per cent, newborn deaths by 64 per cent and stillbirths by 65 per cent if midwives were enabled to provide a range of interventions from family planning to

post-natal care. This could equate to saving 4.3 million lives per year by 2035, the researchers noted.

"Supported by appropriate professional education, regulation and improved working environments, it is possible to achieve a substantial increase in the level of provision of essential interventions delivered by midwives. This could save millions of lives," said study lead author Andrea Nove from Novametrics Ltd. UK.

"However, there are numerous barriers to fulfilling this level of scale-up, particularly in low to middle income countries," Nove said. These limitations, he explained, include inequitable dis-

tribution of qualified midwives, poor transport links, lack of supplies and equipment and, in some countries, a lack of trust from the public, adding there is need for greater recognition of the importance of supporting and enabling this service to reach its potential.

The new study follows a past report on midwifery in The Lancet journal and uses the Lives Saved Tool (LiST) which models the deaths that could be avoided, assuming a specific uptake, effectiveness and impact of a range of interventions.

Using an updated version of LiST, the current study aimed to provide a more accurate estimate of the impact of increasing the provision of



midwife healthcare around the world. The study used the LiST to model effects on mortality at a country level of about 30 essential interventions which can be delivered in their entirety by competent and enabled midwives, the researchers said. These were treatments, responses

and procedures that can be provided before conception, in antenatal care, during labour and birth and after birth, such as family planning, hypertension screening, induction of labour and the use of antibiotics for newborn sepsis, they said. The study modelled the effect of changes in the level of provision of healthcare interventions delivered by midwives for 88 countries and amalgamated the results.

This was also done for three groups of countries that were categorised according to their level of development. If current mortality rates persist, in these 88 countries there will be over three million stillbirths per year by 2035, three mil-

lion newborn deaths per year by 2035 and over 400,000 maternal deaths per year by 2035, according to the researchers.

They estimated that relative to the current provision of healthcare by midwives, a 25 per cent increase every five years in the 88 countries would result in 41 per cent fewer deaths of mothers, 26 per cent fewer stillbirths and 39 per cent fewer deaths of newborn babies.

The researchers noted that this would mean averting 170,000 maternal deaths, 852,000 stillbirths and 1.2 million newborn deaths per year by 2035, adding the reduction in deaths was estimated to be greater in the least developed countries.

business

of the day quote

India's exports declined by 17.84% during April-November this fiscal while imports contracted by 33.56% in the same period whereas the trade deficit has come down



ANUP WADHAN | COMMERCE SECRETARY

The all-new Nissan Magnite marks the beginning of a new chapter in the Nissan NEXTstrategy for both the Indian and global market. Built on the philosophy of 'Make in India, Make for the World', it comes with more than 20 first-in-class and best-in-segment features



SINAN OZKOK | PRESIDENT, NISSAN MOTOR INDIA

Since the lockdown began, we have worked relentlessly to ensure the transport of vital goods and medical supplies to all corners of India and the world. We have been preparing for the humongous task of transporting medicines, vaccines, and temperature-sensitive cargo by developing end-to-end cold chain logistics solutions



AJAY SINGH | CHAIRMAN AND MD, SPICEJET

SHORT TAKES

Razorpay, PayPal join hands

New Delhi: Financial solutions provider Razorpay has said it has partnered with global digital payments platform PayPal to facilitate international payments for small businesses and freelancers. The company's partner businesses can now integrate with PayPal and accept payments from international customers from across 200 markets in a convenient, fast and secure manner, Razorpay said in a release. Razorpay said that having faced stiff challenges due to the pandemic, the domestic SMEs are hoping to bounce back soon.

Porsche gets new India head

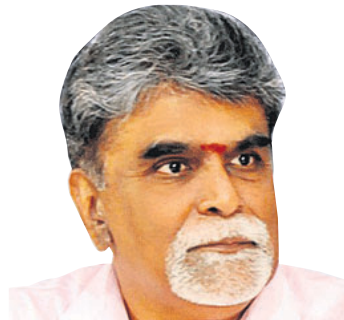
New Delhi: Luxury sports car maker Porsche Wednesday said it has appointed Manolito Vujcic (48) as the new head of India operations. Porsche Middle East and Africa FZE announces the appointment of Vujcic as the new Head of its Division in India, the company said in a statement. Vujcic would start his tenure from February 2021, following his departure from the position of Porsche Brand President at PAIG (China) Automobile Investment Co in Hangzhou, China, it added.

Rhizen Pharma gets USFDA nod

New Delhi: Rhizen Pharmaceuticals, an associate company of Alembic Pharmaceuticals, said it has received approval from the US health regulator to commence phase one clinical trials on retroviral oral drug for the treatment of COVID-19. The Switzerland-based firm, has received approval for its investigational new drug application from the USFDA to study its oral DHOHD inhibitor for SARS-CoV-2 infection.

Extended contract for Wipro

Bangalore: Wipro Limited Wednesday announced that it has won a multi-year contract from Verifone, a global leader in payments and commerce solutions, to drive agility across its cloud services offerings. Bangalore-headquartered Wipro said it would develop new features, capabilities and interfaces for Verifone's Cloud Services offerings, enabling seamless and flexible transaction processing for the company.



The formation of a dedicated export promotion council for technical textiles will help boost shipments from the sector and promote domestic manufacturing

A SAKTHIVEL | CHAIRMAN, AEPC

GDP to see positive growth in Q4: NITI

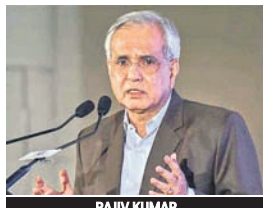
The second quarter GDP figure reflects that the economy is coming out of this pandemic-induced degrowth phase and my expectation is that in the third quarter, we will achieve the same level of economic activity as the year-ago period

RAJIV KUMAR | VICE CHAIRMAN, NITI AAYOG

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 2: The Indian economy is coming out of the pandemic-induced degrowth and GDP growth will enter the positive territory in the fourth quarter of this fiscal, Niti Aayog Vice Chairman Rajiv Kumar said Wednesday.

Kumar, also said the Centre's new agriculture reform laws are aimed at increasing the income of farmers and the present agitation was a result of misunderstanding and miscommunication which need to be removed. "The contraction of



RAJIV KUMAR

7.5% reflects that the economy is coming out of this pandemic-induced degrowth phase and my expectation is that in the third quarter, we will achieve the same level of economic activity as the year-ago period.

"And the fourth quarter will show a small but positive growth over the previous year because the government

has... Ushered in many structural reforms and some more are in the pipeline," he said.

Stating that all those reforms will provide a very strong foundation for accelerating the economic growth in the fiscal year 2021-22 and beyond, Kumar said, "we have now shrugged off the negative impact of the pandemic and are moving towards a sustained high growth trajectory in the coming years".

About India's growth figure in the current fiscal year, he said it will be better than negative 9 or 10%, as has been forecast by many, including the RBI.

Kumar noted that the

COVID-19 pandemic had an unprecedented negative impact on economic activities but this was completely in the nature of a natural disaster and not related to the regular economic cycle.

"Therefore, it is quite irrelevant to talk about the economy being in a technical recession," he emphasised.

On better than expected manufacturing growth of 0.6% in the second quarter of 2020-21, Kumar said this has come as a pleasant surprise but there is a base effect but nonetheless, it is also endorsed by the higher collection of GST in the last three months, he said.

ADB inks \$50mn loan pact with Centre



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 2: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) Wednesday said it has inked a \$50 million (around ₹369 crore) loan pact with the Indian government for improving fiscal management in West Bengal.

"The ADB and the Government of India today signed a \$50 million policy-based loan to improve financial management procedures and operational efficiencies aimed at achieving more fiscal savings, promote informed decision making, and improve service delivery in the state of West Bengal," ADB said in a release.

The signatories to the West Bengal Public Finance Management Investment Program were CS Mohapatra, Additional Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance and Takeo Konishi, Country Director of ADB's India Resident Mission.

West Bengal's financial and information systems through this whole-of-government approach will help improve delivery of public services and generate fiscal savings that could help the state augment growth-enhancing development financing, Mohapatra said. Konishi said: "Through support to interoperable e-Government platforms, the programme will ensure streamlining of social protection benefits such as pension and provident fund, facilitate gender-disaggregated data, tax payments, and revenue collection."

ADB said development projects could be better tracked and monitored with the help of a new module within the integrated financial management system leading to improved project management. A center for fiscal policy and public finance will be established to deepen capacity of the state government officials on public finance management, it added.

Parcel cargo trains transport 1,373 tonne of commodities

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 2: Khurda Road railway Division, Bhubaneswar Parcel office recorded the highest transportation of essential commodities through Parcel Cargo Express trains and Parcel vans surpassing last year's record. The division transported parcels by an additional transport of 64 tonnes.

In the month of November-2020, 1,373 tonnes of essential commodities like fish, hatching eggs, betel leaves, cashew, household articles, machinery parts, scrap and other hard parcels were transported from Bhubaneswar Parcel office to different parts of the country. Also, it added revenue of ₹64.12 lakh to the administration. This is an additional parcel loading of 64 tonnes in comparison to the corresponding month of 2019.



SC stays NCLAT order for CCI probe against Flipkart

A bench of Chief Justice SA Bobde and Justices AS Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian, which initially was of the view to send back the matter to NCLAT after setting aside March 4 order, later stayed appellate tribunal's decision

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 2: The Supreme Court Wednesday stayed the March 4 order of National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) asking fair trade regulator CCI to again initiate the probe against e-commerce major Flipkart for an alleged use of its dominant position.

A bench of Chief Justice SA Bobde and Justices AS Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian, which initially was of the view to send back the matter to NCLAT after setting aside March 4 order and decision on all aspects including the issue of dominant position being enjoyed by Flipkart, later stayed appellate tribunal's decision.

The top court issued notice to All India Online Vendors Association (sellers association) and Competition Commission of India (CCI).

Senior advocate Harish Salve, appearing for Flipkart, said that CCI doesn't look at the findings of the Government and relied on the tax department findings and misread the findings of the tax tribunal. He said that the other e-commerce major Amazon is against his client company and if he is not a dominant player then the allegations of predatory pricing does not apply on Flipkart.



Salve submitted that the predatory pricing is an issue to be considered against the dominant player as a case of abuse of power but his client has not been held as a dominant player.

The bench said that the CCI has rendered a categorical finding that Flipkart does not have the dominant position and the NCLAT has not reversed the findings on the dominant position.

It told the counsel for vendors association that if they are agreed that the NCLAT should have considered the issues of dominant position then it can remand back the matter. To which counsel appearing for All India Online Vendors Association (sellers association)

said that they would like to argue the matter.

The bench then issued notice and stayed the March 4 order of NCLAT and listed the matter for further hearing. On March 4, the NCLAT has set aside the earlier order passed by the CCI absolving Flipkart of unfair practices using its dominant position and directed it to ask its probe arm Director General (DG) to investigate into the allegations. The NCLAT said that the All India Online Vendors Association (AIOVA) had successfully made its case here.

In November 2018, the AIOVA had approached the CCI alleging abuse of market dominance by e-commerce major.

BIZ BUZZ

New production director joins Nalco

Bhubaneswar: Bijay Kumar Das took over as the Director (Production) of the Navratna CPSE National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO) with effect from December 1, 2020. Prior to the new assignment, he was serving in the company as Executive Director (Projects) at Corporate Office, Bhubaneswar. Das, a graduate in Mechanical Engineering from NIT, Rourkela, began his career in NALCO as a Graduate Engineer Trainee in 1984. He was posted in Nalco's Captive Power Plant in Angul since the inception of the project, where he held different key positions before taking over the challenging assignment of Business Development. He subsequently took over as GM (Corporate Planning & Strategic Management) to plan and strategise the growth path of Nalco before being elevated to Executive Director (Projects).



Infosys, Rolls-Royce ink strategic p'ship

New Delhi: Indian IT services firm Infosys and Rolls-Royce, an aerospace and defence technology major, Wednesday announced signing a strategic partnership for sourcing engineering and R&D Services for the latter's Civil Aerospace business. As part of the overall partnership, Rolls-Royce will "transition a significant part of its engineering centre capabilities for civil aerospace in Bangalore to Infosys", a statement said. However, the number of people who will move to Infosys was not disclosed. "Leveraging its expertise in core engineering services, digital transformation capabilities, Infosys will provide a full range of high-end engineering and R&D services," it added.



Conditions to improve for Indian corporates in 2021: Moody's

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Dec 2: Conditions will improve for Indian corporates next year as economic activity picks up steam post-lockdown and earnings grow on the back of widespread demand revival across sectors, Moody's Investors Service said Wednesday.

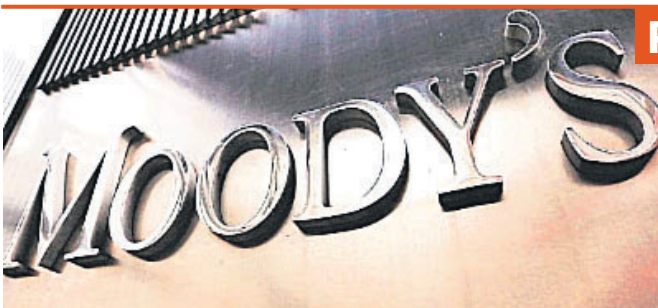
Most companies' earnings will grow as demand starts to recover following a sharp slump, and financially strong companies will maintain good access to funding, but speculative-grade issuers will face challenges, it said.

"Broad-based demand revival and a low base in 2020 will support

strong GDP growth of 10.8 per cent in India in fiscal 2022 ending March 2022, following a decline of around 10.6 per cent in fiscal 2021 – the country's first contraction in four decades," Moody's Analyst Sweta Patodia said.

In 2021, conditions will improve for Indian corporates as economic activity gathers pace post-lockdown and earnings grow on the back of widespread demand revival across sectors, underpinning Moody's stable outlook for the corporates next year, Moody's said.

"A combination of higher earnings and reduced capital spending will support deleveraging over the next 12-18 months," Patodia added.



MOODY'S RATES 21 INDIAN CORPORATES ACROSS 5 KEY SECTORS: OIL AND GAS, TELECOMMUNICATIONS, AUTOMOBILE MANUFACTURERS AND SUPPLIERS, STEEL AND MINING

Overall recovery will remain fragile as new infections continue

to grow – although at a slower rate – and therefore new lockdowns can-

not be ruled out, which would hinder consumer demand and recovery

PATH TO RECOVERY

MOST COMPANIES' EARNINGS WILL GROW AS DEMAND STARTS TO RECOVER FOLLOWING A SHARP SLUMP

CONDITIONS WILL IMPROVE FOR THE CORPORATES AS EARNINGS GROW ON THE BACK OF WIDESPREAD DEMAND REVIVAL ACROSS SECTORS

OVERALL RECOVERY WILL REMAIN FRAGILE AS NEW INFECTIONS CONTINUE TO GROW

VIVO MANUFACTURES SLIMMEST 5G PHONE

Smartphone maker Vivo has said the slimmest 5G phone from its stable, V20 Pro, is being manufactured at the company's factory in Greater Noida. The company has started the sale of Vivo V20 Pro across retail stores and e-commerce portals priced at ₹29,990 per unit



Exporters seek extension of tax benefits for SEZs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 2: Exporters Wednesday suggested to the government a series of steps, including extension of fiscal benefits to SEZ units, presumptive tax for cross-border e-commerce and free trade pacts with countries like the US and UK, to boost domestic manufacturing and outbound shipments.

These recommendations were made by the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) at a meeting of the Board of Trade (BOT) which was chaired by Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal. Other suggestions included permitting duty free import of equipment required for R&D and product development; setting up of a Niryat Vishwavidyalay; extension of interest subsidy scheme in the new foreign trade policy; and immediate release of GST and drawback funds.

Further, the federation recommended refund of GST to foreign tourists, RoDTEP (Remission of Duties or Taxes on Export Products) scheme covering all products; and amnesty scheme for schemes prescribing export obligation.

FIEO Director General Ajay Sahai said that these measures would help in significantly promoting manufacturing and boosting the country's exports.

He further said the minister asked the officials present in the meeting to examine these suggestions. Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC) Chairman A Sakthivel sought resolution of operational issues for ease of doing business and redressal of the issue of duty disadvantage in



REPRESENTATIONAL PIC

The recommendations were made by the FIEO at a meeting of the Board of Trade which was chaired by Piyush Goyal

overseas markets by entering into early negotiations for free trade agreements (FTAs). He also asked for changes in the Export Promotion Capital Goods (EPCG) scheme to take care of the growing need of capital investment in the sector.

He added that the entire process of flagging an exporter as a 'risky exporter' to removal of the tag and resumption of refunds should be completed within 30 days, and a protocol must be developed for transparent flow of information.

Engineering exporters too suggested for easing of GST refund rules and extending affordable credit to the sector.

Measures to boost exports, manufacturing and the new foreign trade policy figured in the meeting.

The board, which includes members from both public and private sector, advises the commerce and industry ministry on policy measures related to foreign trade policy (FTP). Secretaries of different departments, heads of various government bodies, representatives of apex industry associations and export promotion councils are members of the BOT.

SOMETHING TO SMILE FOR

HARDIK, JADDU, KOHLI AND BOWLERS HELP INDIA SECURE A CONSOLATION VICTORY OVER AUSTRALIA IN THE FINAL ODI; CONCEDE THE SERIES 1-2



IMPRESSIVE DEBUT: Indian players surround debutant Thangarasu Natarajan after his maiden wicket in ODIs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Canberra, Dec 2: Pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah found his mojo and the Indian team their winning ways in a morale-lifting 13-run triumph over Australia in the third and final ODI Wednesday, salvaging some of the lost pride in a 1-2 series defeat. An in-form Hardik Pandya blasted 92 not out off 76 balls and Ravindra Jadeja's useful 66 off 50 took India to a healthy 302/5 in 50 overs after an inept show in the first 30 overs. It was at least 30 runs short of a par-score on a good batting track but a rejigged bowling attack managed to restrict the home team to 289 all out in 49.3 overs. Shardul Thakur (3/51) and debutant Thangarasu Natarajan (2/70) did their bit but it was Bumrah's (2/43) controlled effort with some swing upfront and the dismissal of a marauding Glenn Maxwell in the nick of time which ultimately turned the match in India's favour. The cushion provided by his 'senior' helped Natarajan to start bowling his yorkers under pressure and Thakur also chipped in with necessary wickets. The inconsequential match became something of consequence for Virat Kohli and his men as they



Jasprit Bumrah reacts after casting Glenn Maxwell to end Oztightback

gear up for the next white-ball series – three T20Is in less than 48 hours. India's bowling attack had a different look and it did perform way better compared to the first two games. Natarajan was very steady in his first spell and got his maiden wicket when Marnus Labuschagne (7), in an unfamiliar role as opener, dragged a wide delivery back onto the stumps. Thakur, replacing a rested Mohammed Shami, was also lucky

when Steve Smith (7) tried to tickle one down on the 'fifth leg stump' to be caught by KL Rahul behind the stumps. Moises Henriques (22) and skipper Aaron Finch (75) looked good during their 51-run stand for the third wicket before the former failed to keep a pull-shot down off Thakur's bowling. However, what was more heartening was Kuldeep Yadav's (1/57) restrained bowling in the middle overs with the last over punishment by Maxwell being more of an aberration. Jadeja (1/62), who had a field day, topped up a solid batting show with the prized wicket of the rival captain Finch as Shikhar Dhawan managed to make an easy catch look difficult at long-on. Maxwell and the calm Alex Carey (38) looked like doing an encore of their victorious effort against England at Old Trafford last September. But just when they settled down, Carey went for non-existent single only to be sent back by Maxwell as Australia were reduced to 210/6. Earlier, an in-form Pandya and the effective Jadeja helped India make an impressive recovery after the team struggled during the first 30 overs with only skipper Kohli's

SCORECARD
INDIA INNINGS
Shikhar Dhawan c Agar b Abbott 16, Shubman Gill lbw b Agar 33, Virat Kohli c Carey b Hazlewood 63, Shreyas Iyer c Labuschagne b Zampa 19, KL Rahul lbw b Agar 5, Hardik Pandya not out 92, Ravindra Jadeja not out 66; Extras: 8 (B-1, LB-1, NB-2, W-4); TOTAL: 302/5 (50 OVERS).
Fall: 1/26 (Dhawan), 2/82 (Gill), 3/114 (Iyer), 4/123 (Rahul), 5/152 (Kohli).
Bowling: Josh Hazlewood 10-1-66-1, Glenn Maxwell 5-0-27-0, Sean Abbott 10-0-84-1, Cameron Green 4-0-27-0, Ashton Agar 10-0-44-2, Adam Zampa 10-0-45-1, Moises Henriques 1-0-7-0.
AUSTRALIA INNINGS
Marnus Labuschagne b Natarajan 7, Aaron Finch c Dhawan b Jadeja 75, Steve Smith c Rahul b Thakur 7, Moises Henriques c Dhawan b Thakur 22, Cameron Green c Jadeja b Kuldeep 21, Alex Carey run out 38, Glenn Maxwell b Bumrah 59, Ashton Agar c Kuldeep b Natarajan 28, Sean Abbott c Rahul b Thakur 4, Adam Zampa lbw b Bumrah 4, Josh Hazlewood not out 7; Extras: 17 (LB-6, NB-2, WD-9); TOTAL: 289 ALL OUT (49.3 OVERS).
Fall: 1/25 (Labuschagne), 2/56 (Smith), 3/117 (Henriques), 4/123 (Finch), 5/158 (Green), 6/210 (Carey), 7/268 (Maxwell), 8/278 (Abbott), 9/278 (Agar), 10/289 (Zampa).
Bowling: Jasprit Bumrah 9.3-0-43-3, T Natarajan 10-1-70-2, Shardul Thakur 10-1-51-3, Kuldeep Yadav 10-0-57-1, Ravindra Jadeja 10-0-62-1.

fighting half century being the bright spot. Coming together in the 32nd over, Pandya and Jadeja stitched 150 runs for the unbroken sixth wicket to change the complexion of the game, which would make no difference to the final score-line as Australia have already sealed it with back-to-back wins in Sydney. It looked like India would barely reach 250 but Pandya and Jadeja made it a different story. The duo took some time to settle down before opening the floodgates of boundaries. They scored 53 runs from the 46th to 48th over. In all, 76 runs came from the last five overs.



Hardik Pandya bottom-edges one during his splendid innings against Australia in Canberra, Wednesday

PHOTOS: ESPNCRINFO

How they reacted...

VI RAT KOHLI SAYS

We were put under the pump in the first half and in the second half of Australia's innings. Shubman (Gill) and others coming in, it brings in a bit freshness. The team needed that kind of a boost... I think the pitch was much better for the bowlers. So the confidence levels go up. Playing international cricket for so long, that's the challenge you face. We were clinical with the ball and in the field... Happy with the performance and hopefully we take the momentum forward. I would have liked to go on for a bit longer, but it was a great partnership between Pandya and Jadeja.

HARDIK PANDYA SAYS

It's (winning the match) fantastic. You need to be on your

toes to compete against Australia. I feel that you always have that extra edge in you when you play against Australia, you want to face up to that challenge.

AARON FINCH SAYS

I thought we fought really well. It was a great partnership between Hardik and Jadeja. If we got one of those wickets, we could have chased 240 max. Cameron Green (debutant) came in and made an impact with ball and bat, and showed he belongs here... Agar bowled beautifully, it was a good day in terms of the changes we made. The impact that the two spinners are having, that's important. It's nice when the guys in the top order contribute and then Maxi (Maxwell) can come in and do his thing with Carey and other guys.

KOHLI FASTEST TO 12K ODI RUNS

Canberra: India captain Virat Kohli Wednesday became the fastest cricketer to score 12,000 ODI runs, breaking a record held by legendary compatriot Sachin Tendulkar. Kohli reached the milestone during the third and final match against Australia here. Kohli, who needed 23 runs for the landmark coming into the match, touched the figure in his 242nd innings when he took a single off Sean Abbott in the 13th over of India's essay. In comparison, it took Tendulkar 300 innings to get there. The 32-year-old Indian captain was playing in his 251st ODI and averages close to 60 in the format with 43 hundreds and 59 half centuries. He made his debut in 2008. Tendulkar scored 18,426 runs from 463 ODIs between 1989 and 2012 at an average of 44.83 with the help of 49 hundreds and 96 half centuries.



Oz move to top of ICC Super League table, India sixth

Dubai: Australia Wednesday jumped to the top of the ICC World Cup Super ODI League points table following their 2-1 series victory over India, who are placed sixth. With the series win, Australia moved to 40 points, overtaking second-placed England (30 points). On the other hand, India are sixth with nine points. Australia had defeated England 2-1 in their previous series of the 13-team championship, which was introduced this year to bring context to ODI cricket and also to decide the seven direct qualifiers for the ICC World Cup 2023. India, though assured of a berth as hosts, were to use the opportunity for long-term preparation.



STARC JOINS WARNER IN AUSTRALIA'S INJURY LIST

Canberra: Australia pacer Mitchell Starc is nursing a back and rib niggle, captain Aaron Finch revealed Wednesday after the pacer was not named in the playing XI for the third and final ODI against India here. Starc, who struggled in the first two matches of the ongoing ODI series, joined David Warner in the injury room. "Starcy has got a little bit of a back and a rib niggle. The medical staff thinks he will benefit from a few days off," Finch said at the toss. In the first two ODIs in Sydney, Starc took just one wicket for 147 runs. He conceded a whopping 20 runs, bowling four wides and a no ball, in the opening over in the first match. Australia won the ODI series 2-1, Wednesday.

Liverpool advance, Real in deep mess



Liverpool's Curtis Jones wheels away in celebration after scoring the winner against Ajax at Anfield, Tuesday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paris, Dec 2: While former champions Liverpool and Porto eased to the knockout stage of the Champions League, record 13-time champion Real Madrid faces an embarrassing group-stage exit after losing 0-2 at Shakhtar Donetsk. Zinedine Zidane's side would have advanced with a win Tuesday, but they have defended poorly all season and it was undone by counterattack goals in the second half. Instead of progressing, Madrid dropped to third place in Group B behind the Ukrainian side and Borussia Monchengladbach. Six-time champion Liverpool overcame injury problems to beat four-time winner Ajax 1-0 at Anfield, thanks to a second-half goal from midfielder Curtis Jones. Two-time winner Porto held already-qualified Manchester City to a 0-0 draw at home, although City ensured the top spot. No drama in those two groups, but plenty in Madrid's as Gladbach missed the chance to advance after losing 2-3 at home to three-time champion Inter Milan, who had to win. Atletico Madrid did not do enough, drawing 1-1 at home to Bayern Munich even though the de-

fending champion fielded a weakened side having already qualified. Madrid has advanced to the knockout stage in all 24 of its previous group-stage campaigns but things are looking tense. Madrid have conceded nine goals in five games for their worst-ever defensive record at this stage, losing twice to a Shakhtar side who leaked 10 goals in two defeats to Gladbach. Brazilian forward Dentinho profited from a mix-up between Ferland Mendy and Raphael Varane to net in the 57th minute following a counterattack. Zidane's players failed to take heed and the second stemmed from another counter as substitute Manor Solomon finished confidently. Over in Germany, Inter had to win to have a chance at reaching the next round and the ever-reliable Romelu Lukaku saw that with two goals. Midfielder Matteo Darmian netted early on for Inter and French striker Alassane Plea nodded the home side level, only for Lukaku to net twice after the break before Plea replied again. Remarkably, all four sides in Group B can still qualify. Gladbach needs only draw at Madrid, while last-place Inter advance with a home win over Shakhtar next week unless Gladbach and Madrid draw.

ATK Mohun Bagan challenge ahead of Odisha FC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Margao, Dec 2: Fresh from their Kolkata derby win, ATK Mohun Bagan (ATKMB) will aim to continue their red-hot form in the Indian Super League (ISL) when they take on bottom-placed Odisha FC at the Fatorada Stadium here Thursday. The two sides have witnessed contrasting fortunes so far this season. Odisha are winless and find themselves in the bottom half of the table, having accumulated just one point after their opening two games.

For ATKMB, a third-straight win Thursday could put them on top of the table. They had beaten rivals SC East Bengal 2-0 in the first ISL derby, November 27. Odisha FC came from behind to secure their first point of the campaign against Jamshedpur FC but there will be concerns over their backline that has appeared shaky. Stuart Baxter's side has conceded 29 shots so far, joint-most by a team this season. ATKMB striker Roy Krishna, with two goals in as many games, will look to continue his fine form. Antonio Habas' side, having scored



all their goals from open play, will once again aim to hit their opponents on counter-attacks. Baxter is, however, well aware

Eze saves JFC the blushes

AGENCIES

Goa, Dec 2: Stephen Eze's late equaliser helped Jamshedpur FC (JFC) snatch a point from Hyderabad FC (HFC) as the teams played out a 1-1 draw in their third match in the Indian Super League (ISL) at the Tilak Maidan here, Wednesday. Aridane Santana handed the lead to HFC in the 50th minute but Eze's equaliser in the 85th minute sealed a point for the Men of Steel. It was a cagey start to the match as both teams took a safety-first



Stephen Eze (L), who scored JFC's equaliser, in action during the match

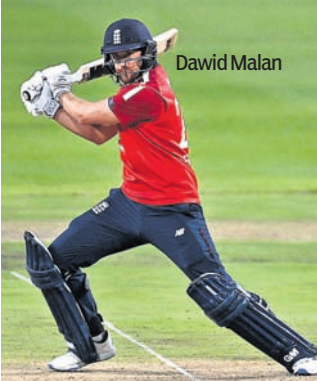
approach. As the game progressed HFC grew into the game in spite of them playing with just three overseas players. They were dominating proceedings and were frequently venturing into the attacking third but lacked the final pass which would split open the backline. The best opportunity of the half was carved out by Hyderabad's Halicharan Narzary when the winger shrugged away Dinliana and fired in a curler from the left side of the penalty box. The keeper was beaten but the ball hit the

wrong side of the far post before going out of play. Hyderabad took an early lead in the second half thanks to some sloppy goalkeeping by Pawan Kumar. Hitesh Sharma sent a long ball for Halicharan, who cut in from the left inside the box and attempted a shot on goal. Pawan unconsciously slapped the ball away from going in but Aridane pushed the rebound ball into the net. Coyle brought in Isaac Vannmalsawma and Aniket Jadhav around the hour mark in search of an equaliser. Marquez, on the other end, focused on sitting back and protecting their lead. Jamshedpur were denied a genuine goal in the 76th minute when Kattiman's attempt to fist Aitor Monroy's free-kick hit Aridane and went in. But the linesman flagged Peter Hartley offside and ruled out the goal. The replays though suggested the Jamshedpur skipper was in no way in an offside position. The Men of Steel finally restored parity in the game in the 85th minute thanks to a thunderous strike from Eze. Valski initiated the move with a cross which Adil Khan cleared but the ball fail to Monroy who set up for Eze to shoot and the Nigerian found the back of the net.

Malan, Buttler help Eng conquer SA T20Is

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cape Town, Dec 2: England swept the T20I series against South Africa 3-0 with a blistering 99 not out (47b, 11x4, 5x6) from Dawid Malan seeing the tourists romp to a nine-wicket win in the final game here. Malan knock made a difficult run chase look like a breeze as England overhauled South Africa's 191/3 with more than two overs to spare. England finished on 192/1 in 17.4 overs, with Malan and Jos Buttler (67 n o, 46b, 3x4, 5x6) sharing an unbroken partnership of 167 for the second wicket to take England charging home at Newlands. It was England's highest partnership in T20s and the eighth-highest of all time. The only disappointment was Malan missing out on a second T20I century, which he could have got if he'd hit what turned out to be the last ball of the game for a boundary. Instead, with him on 98 and England needing one to win, he took a single out on the off side and then appeared to re-



alize his error: South Africa appeared in good position to take something from the series when Faf du Plessis (52 n o, 37b, 5x4, 3x6) and Rassie van der Dussen (74 n o, 32b, 5x4, 5x6) put on 127 for the fourth wicket. Their stand resurrected South Africa from 64/3. **BRIEF SCORES** South Africa 191/3 (Rassie van der Dussen 74 n o, Faf du Plessis 52 n o) lost to England 192/1 (Dawid Malan 99 n o, Jos Buttler 67 n o) by 9 wickets.