

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA
CHENNAI | WEDNESDAY 4 | DECEMBER 2019



TABLOID
Truly a 'star' birthday

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Messi wins record sixth *Ballon d'Or*

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Pak court to hear Zardari bail plea



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WEATHER

Max: 31°C
Min: 25°C
Rainfall: 2 mm

ASTROGUIDE

Vikari: Karthigai 18
Tithi: Ashtami
Star: Sathayam
Rahukalam: 12 noon to 1.30 pm
Yamagandam: 7.30 am to 9 am
PRAYERS
Fajar: 5.00 am
Zohar: 12.02 pm
Asar: 3.14 pm
Maghrib: 5.40 pm
Isha: 6.55 pm
SUNSET TODAY 5.41 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.17 AM
MOONRISE TODAY 12.29 PM
MOONSET TOMORROW 12.29 AM

Navy forces Chinese naval ship to retreat from Andaman

New Delhi: Navy Chief Admiral Karambir Singh on Tuesday said a Chinese naval ship was driven away from India's Exclusive Economic Zone in the Andaman sea recently, asserting that such activities will be dealt with sternly. Military sources said the research ship Shi Yan 1 forayed into Indian waters in September but was forced to retreat after it was suspected to be involved in spying.

Sacked from Ayodhya case, says Rajeev Dhavan

New Delhi/Lucknow: Senior advocate Rajeev Dhavan, who represented Muslim parties in the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid title dispute case, on Tuesday said he has been sacked from further appearance and is no longer involved in the plea for a review of the Supreme Court verdict. A five-judge Constitution bench of the apex court on November 9 in a unanimous 5-0 verdict paved the way for the construction of a Ram temple at the disputed site at Ayodhya. ■ P6

Cabinet may clear Citizenship Amendment Bill today

New Delhi: While the whole of the Northeast is up in arms over the proposed Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB), the Centre, which was keen to bring the contentious law for clearance at the Union Cabinet meeting scheduled Wednesday, may now hold another meeting the next day — Thursday, December 5 — to get the legislation cleared. ■ P7

COUNTER POINT



At last they arranged 'Z' category security!

Market report

GOLD 24 ct (1 gm): ₹3,820.00
22 ct (1 gm): ₹3,628.00
SILVER Bar (1 Kg): ₹46,900.00
INDICES Sensex 40,675.45 pts
Nifty 11,994.20 pts
EXCHANGE USS: ₹71.66 Euro: 79.37

Chennai techie over the moon

Shan tracks down Vikram, leaves Nasa stunned

YAMUNA R | DC CHENNAI, DEC. 3

Chennai techie Shanmuga Subramanian has helped Nasa identify the crash site of Vikram lander of Chandrayaan-2 on the moon's surface just when the space science community began showing desperation at not being able to decipher the disappearance of the lander on September 7 when it was supposed to soft-land on lunar surface.

The 33-year-old engineer posted on Twitter that Nasa has credited him with finding the Vikram debris on lunar surface as his conclusions from Nasa images of the lunar surface helped the American premier space agency spot the exact location of the lander that reportedly broke into several pieces on crash-landing.

The IT professional went through Nasa's Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter Camera (LROC) images "pixel by pixel" to identify a single bright pixel from the its mosaic taken on November 11 and e-mailed his conclusion to both the Nasa and the Isro. While the US space agency responded, albeit a bit late



NO COMMENTS FROM ISRO "I do not wish to comment, I will not respond to any questions on Chandrayaan-2," was Dr K. Sivan's response when asked about spotting of the lander by Shanmuga and subsequent announcement by Nasa.

and apologized for that delay, there was silence of the outer space from the Isro.

While Nasa publishes the images of various findings, Isro does not indulge into the same. Once Isro starts doing something similar, it would be helpful for the scientific community. A large number of people have questioned Shanmuga regarding why he did not approach Isro with his findings, to which he replied that people from ISRO

never replied to him.

"I had gone through the LROC images pixel by pixel and found some minute variations at a spot on the lunar surface between the image of December 2017 and the one taken on September 7, when Vikram was supposed to land. I sent my finding to Nasa and what they did was to closely search the lunar surface based on the location I gave and pick up the location of the larger debris",

'SEARCHING PIXEL BY PIXEL'

I searched pixel by pixel (each pixel measures about 1.25 meters) of Nasa's images. I spent about 30 hours on two computers. I did not use any additional software tools, but only basic image viewing tools. — SHANMUGA



last known location, I knew it must be somewhere around that. I searched the 2x2 km sq area pixel by pixel—one pixel is around 1.25 m or something like that. Since the lander was so small, I had to search each and every pixel. I was able to find something out of ordinary over there and I sent out a mail to Nasa", recalled the proud 'space scientist'.

While the nation was plunged into sadness after the much-anticipated moon mission failed, Isro explained that contact with Vikram lander could have been lost due to 'hard-braking' in the final phase of its descent. The American space agency, Nasa, which has been closely following the mission—as also several international agencies—collaborated in the Isro search for clues about the lander's whereabouts. Nothing much happened, until Subramanian's mail landed at the two space agencies. "I feel happy I could find the debris. I had worked for close to seven hours every day for a week, going through the LROC images from Nasa. It was worth it", Subramanian said. ■ **More on P2**

Parliament passes bill to amend SPG Act

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, DEC. 3

The Rajya Sabha on Tuesday passed a bill to amend the Act governing the elite Special Protection Group. The bill had already been passed by the Lok Sabha last week.

The passage of the amendments to the SPG Act will pave the way for only the Prime Minister and his "immediate family residing with him at his official residence", as well as any former Prime Minister and members of his immediate family "residing with him at the residence allotted to him for a period of five years, from the date he ceases to hold the office of Prime Minister," to be given SPG cover. The Congress has been claiming that SPG Act has been amended only because of political vendetta.

Home minister Amit Shah, rejecting the Opposition's claim, said the government was concerned about security of all 130 crore Indians and not just the Gandhi family. Participating in the debate over the Special Protection Group (Amendment) Bill, 2019, Congress MP Vivek Tankha said everyone wants the Gandhi family to be protected and there should not be "a party politics" on it.

Owner arrested for wall collapse

DC CORRESPONDENT COIMBATORE, DEC. 3

Coimbatore, Dec. 3: A day after 17 people were killed in a compound wall collapse near here, the owner of the house around which the structure had been built was arrested on Tuesday on charges of causing death by negligence.

Sivasubramanian, who had been 'absconding' since the mishap, was arrested in Mettupalayam, about 45 km from here, police said adding they were interrogating him. A portion of the over 15-foot high compound wall, damp due to heavy rains lashing the area for the past few days, came crashing down on the adjoining four tiled-roof houses in the Dalit settlement in Nadur around 5 am on

CM, Stalin meet families of wall collapse victims
PAGE 4

Monday, killing the 17, including ten women and two children.

Police said a case under Indian Penal Code section 304 A (causing death by negligence) had been registered against Sivasubramanian, who runs a textile showroom in Mettupalayam.

Meanwhile, nearly 80 members of various organisations were arrested here for attempting to stage a protest seeking the release of 25 people detained on Monday, police said.—PTI

Anbu new IG idol wing after Pon Manickavel

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, DEC. 3

Three days after special officer of the idol wing Pon Manickavel refused to hand over all records and details of the cases pertaining to the idol theft, the state government on Tuesday posted the 2001-batch IPS officer T.S. Anbu who is Inspector General of Police (Administration) as IGP, Idol Wing, CID,

Chennai. Although Pon Manickavel won the praise from certain political parties for "recovering stolen temple idols," his appointment as special officer of the idol wing after retirement by the Madras high court, did not appear to augur well for his subordinates or the senior officials of the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (HR & CE) department. ■ **P3**

Not ready to shoot offenders with Nirbheek

VIKRAM SHARMA | DC HYDERABAD, DEC. 3

Post-Nirbhaya, the Indian Ordnance Factory (IOF), Kanpur, manufactured 'Nirbheek' — a .32 bore lightweight revolver designed for women. The 500 gram handgun was designed to easily fit in a woman's purse or shoulder bag.

After the recent 'Disha' episode, are Indian women, who often join the chorus for encounters or lynching for sexual offenders, ready to shoot attackers with this handy weapon — provided the government grants gun

According to IOF officials, only 53 women from around the country purchased Nirbheek revolvers from the factory soon after it was out in January 2014

licenses? In America with its long-standing and well-entrenched gun-culture, an increasing number of women buy guns for self-protection. In India, however, strict gun licensing laws comes in the way of women buying

weapons. This ends up in women relying pepper spray and mobile safety apps for their protection. Or just sheer luck.

According to IOF officials, only 53 women from around the country purchased Nirbheek revolvers from the factory soon after it was out in January 2014. Around 1,500 have been sold in total. "Two years ago, we opened sale for arms dealers who sold in their local markets," IOF additional general manager, Dinesh Singh, told DC. "Besides whatever was bought individually, there could be some who may have

purchased from dealers that we are not aware of."

About 5,000 revolvers of different makes, including Nirbheek, were purchased by arms dealers in the country in the last five years. Each Nirbheek has a range of up to 15 metres and is made of titanium alloy. It costs a little over ₹1.39 lakh, so not all women can afford it. "Even the trigger has been reduced for smooth operation," says Singh. Another model, Nishank, out in the market recently, is also designed for women. Several have made enquiries regarding it, he said. ■ **P6**



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Greetings

Greeting differently-abled people, Deputy CM O Panneerselvam on Tuesday said the government would protect their rights and promote their welfare

Shan: Blogger, coder, photographer, nerd

City techie has developed tools and apps

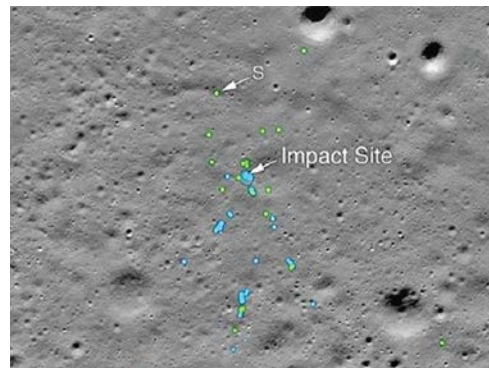
B R SRIKANTHI DC
BENGALURU, DEC. 3



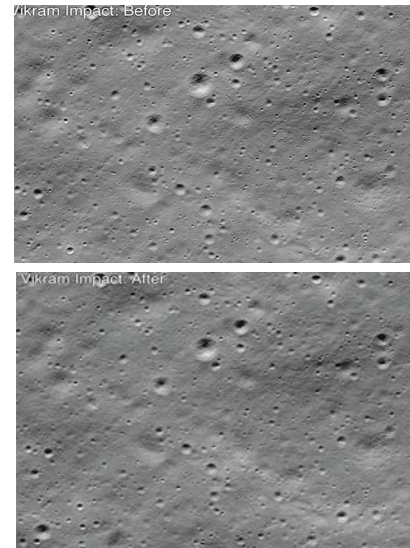
'Vikram' crashed while drifting towards a landing site near the Moon's South Pole, NASA credited the Chennai-based blogger, coder, photographer, and a nerd who dabbles in a wide array of interests like travel, space, philosophy, politics etc. "The Chandrayaan-2 Vikram lander has been found by our Nasa Moon mission, the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter. See the first mosaic of the impact site," Nasa said in a tweet, sharing images beamed by its Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter (LRO) before and after the crash of 'Vikram'. "The debris first located by Shanmuga is about 750 metres northwest of the main crash site and was a single bright pixel identification in that first mosaic," Nasa added. On September 7, Indian space scientists were

inconsolable when 'Vikram' veered off course and lost contact minutes before a soft touchdown on lunar soil. A few days later, on September 17, Nasa's Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter Camera (LROC) team released the first mosaic of images acquired during a flight over the site chosen by Isro for landing. Nasa also released a mosaic image of the site on September 26, inviting people to compare it with images of the same area before the crash to find signs of the lander. On October 3, Shanmuga Subramanian tweeted "Is this Vikram lander? (1 KM from the landing spot). Lander might have been buried in lunar soil", tagging Nasa and Isro about part of the debris, followed it with an email to Nasa on October 18. On November 17, he further zeroed in on his observations and tweeted about the possible crash site of the lander. "This might be Vikram lander's crash site (Lat: 70.8552 Lon:21.71233) & the ejecta that was thrown out of it might have landed over here. (The one on the left side was taken on July 16th & one on the right side was from Sept 17)," he said in a tweet accompanying the images.

This time, he was spotted on with his discovery of the debris of the lander, as revealed in a letter by John Keller, deputy project scientist, Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter Mission. "Using this information, the LROC team did additional searches in the area and located the site of the primary impact as well as other debris around the impact location and has announced the sighting on the Nasa and ASU pages where you have been given credit for your observation," he said in his congratulatory mail to Shanmuga. For Shanmuga, a graduate in mechanical engineering from the Government College of Engineering, Tirunelveli, locating 'Vikram' was a challenge as he, like most bleary-eyed Indians, was awake till dawn on September 7, watching the telecast of the descent of 'Vikram' with rover 'Pragyan' in its belly. In the past, he has watched the telecast of several satellite launches owing to his interest in space, but has no plans on giving up his other passion-writing codes and developing apps. "Some of these apps have been reviewed by New York Times and other publications," he says. You did India proud, Shan!



(L-R) Actual footage of the impact site and the point found by Shanmuga.



Picture of lunar surface before impact.

Picture of lunar surface after impact.

Vikram finder: Boost to citizen science in India

New Delhi, Dec 3: The discovery of Chandrayaan-2's crash site by Nasa, aided by Indian engineer Shanmuga Subramanian, is a shot in the arm for 'citizen science' in India and abroad with the free availability of data enabling amateurs to reach for the skies - sometimes literally. Citizen science involves the collection and analysis of data relating to the natural world by members of the public. The crash site of Chandrayaan-2's Vikram lander was discovered thanks to the availability of data from the American space agency for common citizens to analyse and interpret. Nasa's Exploration Mission Planning Office Chief, Nujoud Fahoum Merancy commended Subramanian's efforts and acknowledged the role of citizen science in a tweet. "Very cool to see citizen science in action with #NASA LRO! Good work @Ramanean!" she said. But this community-based approach to science has to be a collaborative effort with professionals guiding every step, cautions astrophysicist Sudip Bhattacharyya of the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) in Mumbai. "It is essential that most citizen efforts,

which aim to utilize the data of cosmic sources for scientific progresses, should be guided by expert professional astronomers," Bhattacharyya told PTI in an email interview. He reasoned that such expert guidance is particularly required "so that the interpretation of the data does not take a non-scientific route". In India, citizen science largely contributes to ecology and conservation studies. But the recent application of Nasa's Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter (LRO) data by Subramanian to find the Vikram lander's crash site has shown its potential even for other fields, including astronomy. "Astronomy is rapidly becoming such a free data-driven science, where citizens can participate, make discoveries, say of new planets, comets, asteroids and other cosmic sources, and take part to unravel the mysteries of the universe," Bhattacharyya explained. Citing an example, he said the Gaia satellite, a mission by the European Space Agency to chart a three-dimensional map of our galaxy, provides free data on billions of stars. Using tools available on the Gaia Archive website, he said

new types of light sources in the galaxy, like stars, and even "new aspects of physics, could be discovered when the data are studied systematically, extensively and in a suitable way, with the guidance of professional astronomers". According to Bhattacharyya, data from citizen science projects require an additional expert processing and interpreting them, using the professional knowledge of the subject. In his view, the participation of interested citizens in the process of cutting edge scientific research is extremely important as it can significantly help science take root in society and promote scientific temper. He said this is possible when a huge amount of scientific data and user-friendly tools to analyse these data are freely available. While citizen science is under the spotlight with Subramanian's discovery, it has been used in various fields in India. The India Biodiversity Portal initiated more than a decade ago, for instance, is a platform aiming to aggregate data on all species living in India, with a dedicated module running based on citizen science for more than eight years. —PTI

A storm is brewing within the DMK over local body polls. Hence, it is trying to derail it
— D Jayakumar, Fisheries minister

OTHER STORIES

Man wanted in gang-rape case, surrenders

Coimbatore: The key accused in the gang rape of a minor girl, out with her boy friend to celebrate her birthday, surrendered before a city court. Manikandan, alleged to be the brain behind the crime, surrendered before Mahila Court Judge J Radhika who remanded him to judicial custody till December 17. In all, six people were involved in the incident and four of them had been arrested a day later. A special police team was searching for Manikandan and another accused, who is still at large.—PTI

Neet opens applications for 2020

Chennai: The National Testing Agency (NTA) on Monday opened applications for Neet 2020. The exam is scheduled to be held on May 3, 2020, between 2 pm and 5 pm across India. Aspiring candidates can apply for the common medical entrance examination through the website ntaneet.nic.in. The NTA has announced that the last date for submission of these 'online' application forms will be Dec 31, 2019. The NTA has introduced new security 'features' in the application form, evidently in the wake of the Neet scam which was uncovered in Tamil Nadu. Students applying will now have to attest their fingerprints along with a 'stamp size' photo, apart from attaching a passport-sized picture. The photo should provide a clear image of the candidate's face (at least 80 percent of the face should be visible). The NTA has also announced that it will use software to screen the pictures provided. The software will match the photographs, flag identical photographs and detect the rest. In the latter cases, the candidates will be informed and will be provided with a link, which will enable them access to click a live photo. The software cross checks if the photo is live. It will then be matched with the 'problem' case in its database.

'Discovery serendipitous'

"It appears that the initial searches looked at wrong locations and this discovery by Shan was serendipitous," Dibyendu Nandi, a professor at Kolkata's Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), told PTI. The image processing and feature recognition ability of the human brain is difficult to easily automate. So what could not be achieved by feature recognition software was achieved by a curious member of the general public, Nandi said.

He said Subramanian's findings about Vikram's "kinematics", the study of motion at the time of impact, made the discovery more interesting. For example, the depth of the impact crater compared to the spread of Vikram's debris hold clues to deciphering the speed and angle of impact, Nandi said. "This information would be useful in reconstructing what went wrong with the landing manoeuvre, and at what height above the lunar surface the anomaly set in," he said.

Shan's been Chennai's Rainman

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, DEC. 3

Shanmuga Subramanian, social media sensation now, has been sharing his knowledge about 'outer space' for quite some time now. Subramanian is also the man behind the famous Chennai Rains page on Facebook, which provides live updates on rainfall in Chennai by inferring crucial information from satellite images put out by Isro and IMD. His Facebook page is presently followed by 10,972 users and is liked by 10,646 people. The page also

seemingly serves as an interactive platform between Subramanian and various weather observers, enthusiasts and the public who interact over the regular weather and rain updates posted on this page. An avid weather enthusiast and amateur astronomer, Subramanian has been receiving accolades from all parts of the world for his work. Several took to the micro-blogging site Twitter to congratulate him and his Facebook page has since been flooded with congratulatory messages.

NETIZENS APPLAUD SHANMUGA

Amid the huge heap of praise from proud Indians for their own 'space researcher' Shanmuga Subramanian were a few posts on the social media poking fun at the ISRO for its silence when the Chennai

techie sent mail informing the premier Indian space organisation about his discovery from the maze of Nasa images. "Did you send the mail to ISRO as well? Did they respond?" was the refrain from many on twitter, while

hailing Shanmuga as "the Beautiful Mind". remember the Hollywood movie by this name featuring Russel Crowe as a Nobel Prize mathematician? Also, there was much praise for Nasa too; with

many pointing out on social media that the American space agency was good enough to acknowledge that the breakthrough was from Shanmuga's interpretation of the Nasa images. Would the ISRO give him credit

so willingly, asked a few. And then, Shanmuga Subramanian himself pointed out that while Nasa makes its pictures public and he got his finding of the crash site from examining those images, pixel by pixel—the ISRO

does not. The Isro should put out its data and images so that researchers like him could benefit, he has said. "Well done Shan. I am from ASU and I will be studying LRO images in December for a personal

project in Deep Learning. Hoping that I can perform similar analyses from Chandrayaan-2 images as well", posted researcher Aikya Shah on Twitter, demonstrating how Shanmuga's work has inspired many.

Paradise lost and regained in namma Pallikaranai marshland

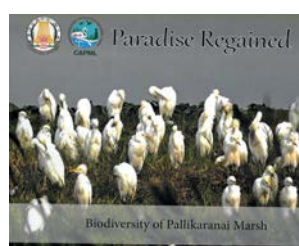
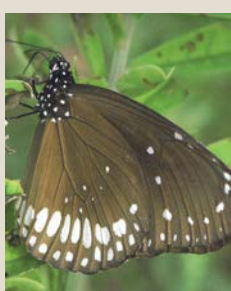
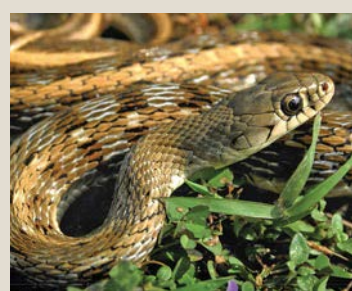
B. VIJAYALAKSHMI | DC
CHENNAI, DEC. 3

Want to know about Pallikaranai marshland's unique characteristics, its marine ecosystem, its various habitat types and its different species of birds, plants and animals? Pick up *Paradise Regained: Biodiversity of Pallikaranai Marsh*, a coffee table book, published by Conservation Authority of Pallikaranai Marshland, Chennai.

The book has nuggets of information on various types of wetlands of South India and Tamil Nadu. Pallikaranai's biodiversity, its geographical and ecological significance and its degradation through land settlement. The marshland has shrunk from 6000 Ha in 1960 to 593 Ha in 2002. Stress is also laid on the importance of Ramsar Convention's wise use of wetlands.

Efforts made by the conservation authority have borne fruit with the marshland playing host to thousands of migratory and resident birds now. It has been a treat for bird watchers.

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle* V. Subbiah, District Forest Officer, Chennai Division, said, "We don't have any official record or literature on



Cover page of *Paradise Regained: Biodiversity of Pallikaranai Marsh*, a book by Conservation Authority of Pallikaranai Marshland.

IT'S HOME TO...	
Number	Species
625	Birds and animals
8	Cockroaches
20	Dragonflies
34	Butterflies
25	Snails and allies
50	Fishes
11	Frogs and toads
15	Snakes
10	Lizards
65	Migratory birds
105	Resident birds
10	Mammals
167	Plants

Pallikaranai marshland. This book, with valuable information, aims at raising an awareness among the younger generation and the public on the significance of this marshland and the need to safeguard it. Those residing in the vicinity of

the marshland must know its crucial ecosystem helps in flood mitigation and groundwater recharge." The photographs (see a few above) vividly capture the inhabitants and winged visitors of the marshland in all their natural grandeur.

SELECTION DAY



Dance selection going on for cultural programme for Republic Day at G. S. S. Jain College for Women at Vepery on Tuesday.

Rocket launcher's used fuel tank sent to Isro

Puducherry, Dec 3: A four-member team from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota, on Tuesday inspected the used fuel tank of the PSLV rocket-launcher that was found by fishermen near here, and transported it back to

Isro which houses the space centre. The team arrived on an intimation by the Puducherry government to the Indian Space Research Organisation about the fuel tank, a senior official of the department of revenue and

disaster management told PTI. The government informed the space research organisation about the tank and the team came and took the tank back, the official of the Revenue and Disaster Management said.

On Monday, fishermen found the tank after it fell into their net. Not knowing what the object was, they brought it to shore and were told that it was a used fuel tank of the rocket-launcher.

—PTI



DMK support

Recalling that it was DMK govt that provided them 3% reservation in employment and also formed a welfare board, party president Stalin pledged continuous support for the differently-abled



Tamil Nadu ranks third among states in taking punitive action against law offenders

— C. V. Shanmugam, Law minister

BRIEF

Prof cons man of ₹15L, held

Chennai: A 48-year-old college professor was arrested for allegedly cheating a man of ₹15 lakh under the pretext of getting him a government job. Police identified the accused as M Tirumalai (48) of Thiruvanniyur, a faculty at Pachaiappa's College in Chetpet. Sources said he received ₹15 lakh from one Manikandan, but had neither fulfilled his promise of getting him a job nor returned the money. Hence, Manikandan lodged a complaint with the Thiruvanniyur police. Following investigations, Tirumalai was arrested and remanded in judicial custody.

Gold worth ₹15 lakh seized in airport

Chennai: Customs officers at the Chennai international airport seized ₹15 lakh worth gold from two passengers on Tuesday. Airport sources said on Tuesday, Parthiban (22) from Cuddalore and Jabarullah Khan (35) from Pudukottai who arrived from Sharjah by Air India flight and another by Sri Lankan airlines, were intercepted by officials. On a personal search of Parthiban, semi-finished crude gold chain weighing 190 grams valued at ₹7.5 lakh was recovered. This was kept concealed in his trouser pocket. Jabarullah Khan appeared to be nervous and on questioning, he admitted to having concealed two bundles of gold in rubbery spread which was recovered from the rectum. On extraction, 195 grams of gold valued at ₹7.70 lakh was recovered. In Total, 385 grams gold valued at ₹15 lakh was seized from the two passengers. Investigations are on.

Sex abuse of minor: Five arrested

Chennai: The Triplicane all-woman police on Monday arrested five men on charges of sexually assaulting a minor girl. Police identified the accused as Anbazhagan, Pushparaj, Kottachi, Anand and Vicky. Sources said the class - IX girl of Perungudi here, visited Marina beach alone on Sunday evening. Anbazhagan (22), native of Virudhachalam, who worked in an electronics shop on the Marina beach, befriended her. He took her to the electronic shop and sexually assaulted her, said police. Enquiries revealed that the girl was sexually assaulted by the four other friends of Anbazhagan. The girl was rescued by Childline volunteers when she was being forcibly taken by Anbazhagan to Egmore railway station to board a train to Virudhachalam. Based on her statement, police arrested Anbazhagan and the four others.

Tragedy while taking bath in Palar Teenage boy meets with watery grave

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, DEC 3

A 14-year-old boy who was bathing in Palar river in Chengalpet district in the early hours of Tuesday, reportedly drowned and the body was fished out after three hours flowing an extensive search by police and fire and rescue personnel.

Police said, the boy S. Akash was the son of one Sugumar, a worker from Palur in Chengalpet district. The deceased was a class-nine student at a government-aided school in Chengalpet.

Around 6 am on Tuesday, Akash and four other friends went to take bath in Palar. While they were taking bath,



S. Akash

Refund student's fees, forum tells IIT coaching centre

Chennai: The District Consumer Disputes Redressal Forum, Chennai (South), directed a popular coaching institute to refund ₹2 lakh to an IIT aspirant for failure to conduct coaching classes properly. In the petition, Tharani of Velachery submitted that her son P. Pranav Keerthan, was studying class XI in a private school at Velacherry. He joined the '3-year classroom' programme offered by FIITJEE for IIT-JEE weekend contact classes by paying a total of ₹3,78,230 in April 2017.

Tharani had admitted her son in the coaching institution hoping that he would perform well in competitive exams conducted by the IIT or other similar competitive examinations, after completion of 10+2. Only later, she came to know that the branch had no sufficient staff for conducting coaching program and none of the staff were from IIT.

The existing staff was unable to teach and clarify doubts of the students. The institution was not properly functioning. Her son was not interested to continue the course. Many students had discontinued the course due to lack of staff and facilities in the branch. She issued notice to the institution in Jan 2019. As there was no response, she filed the petition.

Ankur Jain, Director, M/S. FIITJEE Ltd, Chennai Region and Rajni, Head, K.K. Nagar, had not appeared before the forum.

Fire breaks out in office building, none injured

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, DEC 3

A major fire broke out on Tuesday morning at the third floor of a building in T. Nagar. No injuries were reported as the incident happened before staff could arrive for work, police said.

Police sources said the building houses SR Infra Developers Limited owned by businessman J. Sekar Reddy.

Fire and rescue services personnel said the blaze could have been caused by an electrical short circuit. A security personnel spotted thick smoke emanating from the top floor of the building on Vijayaraghava Road in T. Nagar at around 8 am and alerted the management.

Police and Fire and Rescue Services personnel from Saidapet

police with the help of fishermen and fire and rescue personnel joined the search.

However, the body of Akash was washed ashore three-kilometres away from the place where he was taking bath.

Police recovered the body around 9 am and sent it to the Chengalpet government hospital for post-mortem. Palur police registered a case under and are investigating.

Earlier on Monday morning, the body of a newborn girl was found floating in the Palar river near Madurantakam, Kanchipuram. Padalam police recovered the body and have launched a search for the parents of the child.

reached the spot immediately after receiving the alert. Fire tenders from T Nagar, Guindy, Teynampet and Ashok Nagar were also sent to the spot.

An aerial ladder platform also reached the spot, and the fire was extinguished in less than an hour.

J. Sekar Reddy, a mining baron, issued a statement on the blaze shortly after it was reported. He said, "The fire is believed to have been caused by an electrical short circuit and was extinguished by 9 am. There was no injury to any staff or loss to the property except damage to some furniture in two rooms. We are fully cooperating with the fire service officers who are investigating the incident to assess the cause of the fire and the actual extent of the damage."



Fire and rescue services personnel try to douse the fire with the help of aerial ladder platform to reach the spot on the third floor of a building in T. Nagar. —DC

Supreme Court stays contempt proceedings

FROM P1

His action, especially in arresting a few senior HR & CE officials made the latter allege that he was being "vindictive." They even grumbled that he had not arrested any real culprits in the temple idol theft cases nor filed any chargesheet. While he and the senior HR&CE officials were at loggerheads, the temple executive officers and staff alleged that they were being targeted.

In a strange turn of events, the state govt's move to transfer the idol theft cases to the CBI ran into rough weather with the Madras high court quashing the transfer order in Nov last year. And the court appointed him as special officer for a year, though he was to retire on Nov 30, 2018.

Now with Manickavel's term as special officer ending on Nov. 30, the state government had on Friday directed him to hand over all the case records and work he and his team had done during his term in office. However, the retired IPS official had replied that it was "legally impermissible" in the absence of a specific direction from the Madras high court or the Supreme Court, as the court made his appointment.

He also initiated contempt proceedings in the Madras high court against the government officials. But on Monday, the Supreme Court stayed the contempt proceedings and upheld the government order directing him to hand over all case files to the Additional Director General of Police, Idol Wing.

Following this, on Tuesday, the State government transferred Mr. Anbu (IGP administration) and posted him as IGP, Idol Wing, CID, Chennai, in the newly created post. Mr Anbu has held several senior positions in Tamil Nadu police, including that of Joint Commissioner of the Central Crime Branch and Deputy Commissioner, Chennai East.

TAKING CONTROL



HR&CE officials seal the buildings for violating norms near Sri Arunachaleswarar temple and Sri Varadaraja perumal temple in Sowcarpet in Chennai on Tuesday. —DC

CBI probe into IIT suicide deaths: orders reserved

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, DEC 3

The Madras high court has reserved orders on a Public Interest Litigation, which sought a direction to the Tamil Nadu government and police to hand over the investigation to CBI in respect of suicidal deaths committed from the year 2006 onwards in IIT-Madras campus.

A division bench comprising Justices M. Sathyanarayanan and R.Hemalatha reserved orders on the PIL filed by Saleem Madavoor alias Muhammed Salim, National President, Loktantarik Yuva Janathadal, Kerala, after hearing both sides.

According to petitioner, one Fathima Lathief, a resident of Kerala, who was studying M.A Integrated Course at IIT-Madras died on November 9, 2019. The father of the deceased has

given a representation to the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu and Kerala seeking fair investigation and the case of his daughter was homicide. From the year 2006 onwards, so far 14 students committed suicide in IIT campus. It was learnt from the students community that the dean was adamant to listen to the grievance of students. Every time, a student commit suicide the student point out, "how ineffective the present mechanism in the IIT". It was learnt that 5 students from Andhra Pradesh, 3 students from Telangana, 3 students from Kerala and 2 students from Tamil Nadu, 2 students from Uttar Pradesh and one each from Puducherry, Jharkhand and Rajasthan committed suicide. They have faced discrimination on the basis of religion, caste, language, he added.

He said in the present case of Fathima, there was religious discrimination and she faced harassment at the hands of some professors. It was found that through her cell phone she has named some professors. Though she named some professors, till date there was no action taken either by the IIT Dean or police authorities, to arrest those persons. Therefore when the investigation was conducted by the local police there may be apprehension of social unrest and there will not be fair investigation because of the influence of IIT authorities. This was a case of continuous suicides from the year 2006 onwards. So far the local police or the state government not conducted any enquiry in respect of suicidal deaths. So unless the CBI conducts investigation, the truth will not come out, he added.

SHRC directs Tangedo to file electrocution report

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, DEC 3

State Human Rights Commission has directed CMD, Tangedco, to file a report in connection with electrocution of a woman in Chennai.

She died after a electric wire snapped and fell on her in Red Hills, a few days ago. Based on newspaper report, SHRC judge D Jayachandran initiated suo motu proceedings and directed the CMD to file report in four weeks.

In the report, Kavery, 36, of Red Hills was waiting near road to drop her son Suryaprakash in a school van.

Her mother-in-law Padmavathy also came to the place. While they were waiting at the place an overhead electric wire snapped and fell on Kavery. She suffered serious burn injuries and died at the spot. Padmavathy and Suryaprakash sustained injuries.

Local residents staged an agitation demanding action against Tangedco officials responsible for the incident. —DC

HC grants anticipatory bail to priest who 'slapped woman'

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, DEC 3

The Madras high court has granted anticipatory bail to Nataraj Ganesh alias Dharsan, one of the hereditary priests of the Arulmighu Natarajar Temple in Chidambaram, who apprehended arrest in connection with a case relating to allegedly slapping a woman devotee, after she picked up quarrel with him for not performing pooja on the occasion of her son's birthday.

Justice N. Seshasayee granted anticipatory bail to Nataraj Ganesh alias Dharsan on the condition that he should appear before the Judicial Magistrate, Rameswaram for 15 days and thereafter before the executive officer of the temple concerned.

In his petition, Nataraj Ganesh submitted that on November 16, 2019 when he was trying to perform the day's last pooja, before closing temple, an unknown woman came along with some men and insisted for performing pooja. He had stated that it was the time for closing the temple. But since they insisted again, he performed pooja, while so, the lady started quarrelling with him and alleged that the voice of the performance of pooja was not heard and hence she and her men insisted to perform pooja once again. He once again stated that it was the closing time. But the woman raised her hand towards him. In a self defence act, he pushed her away from him. However, the said woman and her men stage managed and made false allegations and preferred a complaint. The complainant falsely, intentionally and willfully made allegations against him, he added.



'PLEDGING' ONIONS

In a novel protest against the skyrocketing onion prices, members of the CPI led by the party's taluk secretary, Muruganandham, agitated before a nationalised bank branch in Rameswaram on Tuesday, "seeking to pledge" the "high-value onions" to the bank in return for cash, as onion prices they said might get as dear as gold. —SP. LOGANATHAN

PIL filed to constitute Police Complaints Authority

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, DEC 3

An advocate has approached the Madras high court to direct the Tamil Nadu government to immediately constitute a police complaints authority at state and districts level as mandated by the Supreme court to secure justice for the innocent victims of police harassment in the state.

A division bench comprising Justices M. Sathyanarayanan and R. Hemalatha, before whom the PIL filed by advocate A.P.Suryaprakasam came up for hearing, posted to January 20, 2020 further



hearing of the case. When the petition came up for hearing, advocate general Vijay Narayan informed the court that the state government has already constituted Police

Complaints Authority on November 14, 2019. The Secretary in-charge of the Home department is the chairperson of The State Police Complaints Authority and DGP and Additional DGP are its members. The District Police Complaints Authority is headed by the District Collector and Superintendent of Police and senior most additional Superintendent of Police are its members, he added. Opposing the same, M.L.Ravi, counsel for the petitioner submitted that the state government cannot constitute such authority because the State Police Complaints Authority

should be headed by a retired judge of the high court and the District Police Complaints Authority should be headed by a retired District Judge. Even, in Puducherry, a retired high court judge has been appointed as Chairperson of the Authority, he added. According to Suryaprakasam, of late there was a sudden spurt in the offences being committed by the men in uniform. Previously not much was known about the atrocities committed on the helpless citizens in Tamil Nadu but in view of the advancing technology, the next minute people were able to see such

atrocities though social media. But in all such cases the response of the higher officials was lacking and in most cases, the helpless victims have to wait patiently for years together to get justice from the top officials of the state police which lethargic attitude also in most cases help the delinquent officials who gets their promotion in the meantime and also reap the benefits. In the year 2006, the Supreme court in Prakash Singh case mandated constitution of Police Complaints Authority. But even after a lapse of more than 13 years, the Tamil Nadu government wantonly and willfully

failed to constitute the Police Complaints Authorities while all the neighbouring states seems to have constituted such police complaints authorities in their respective states to assist the innocent victims to secure justice for their sufferings. If the state government forms such authority headed by a retired judge of this court, and district level committees headed by a retired district judge that will not only provide speedy and swift justice but also enhance the confidence of the victims in the grievances redressal system, Suryaprakasam added.



Anti-Hindi

Former DMK minister Thangam Thennarasu criticised Tamil Culture minister K. Pandiarajan for allocating funds for Tamil researchers to learn Hindi



5 cities to have climate-resilient water supply, sewage, drainage infra

J.V. SIVA PRASANNA KUMAR | DC CHENNAI, DEC. 3

Five cities in Tamil Nadu will soon boast of having climate-resilient water supply, sewerage and drainage infrastructure, thanks to the Asian Development Bank (ADB), which has come forward to advance \$ 206 Million loan to the government to strengthen urban services in the 5 cities.

The project is aimed at improving the lives of the people in the identified cities by providing universal access to water supply and sanitation and improving sewage treatment and drainage systems. The initiative is also expected to help the State develop the requisite ecosystem for economic growth, according to Additional Secretary (Fund Bank and ADB) of the Department of Economic Affairs in the Ministry of Finance Sameer Kumar Khare.

This is the second project loan for the ADB-supported \$500 million multi-tranche financing for Tamil Nadu Urban

Flagship Investment Program, approved in September 2018, that will overall develop climate-resilient water supply, sewerage, and drainage infrastructure in 10 cities of Tamil Nadu. The first project under the program with \$169 million financing is currently under implementation.

The project will target four cities: Ambur, Tiruchi, Tiruppur, and Vellore, for developing sewage collection and treatment and drainage systems by setting up or rehabilitating sewage treatment plants, pumping stations, and connecting all households in the project area to the sewerage network, including below poverty line households. Waste-water reuse for industry will also be achieved in at least 4 cities.

Improvement to water supply systems would be targeted in Madurai and Tiruppur through the commissioning of over 1,260 km of new distribution lines to connect nearly 1,90,000 households with metered water supply, including

below poverty line households. In addition, nearly 200 km of new transmission mains and 230 km of feeder mains would be constructed, along with two new water treatment plants.

The project will also strengthen the capacity of the Commissionerate of Municipal Administration in Tamil Nadu for new project development, and monitoring and benchmarking quality of services across the 135 urban local bodies in the State.

The signatories to the loan agreement were Mr. Sameer Kumar Khare and ADB Country Director for India Mr. Kenichi Yokoyama.

"The project interventions will benefit residents, workers, and industries in the State's economic corridors, thereby, building industrial competitiveness and creating good jobs. It also supports urban reform agenda such as better service delivery through private operators and with quality benchmarking," Mr. Yokoyama said.

Extention of Chennai-Tindivanam NH is a 15-year dream come true for people. PMK is to be credited for its implementation

— Dr S Ramadoss, PMK founder

SHORT TAKES

Civic polls: 5,462 rural posts in Thanjai

DC CORRESPONDENT THANJAVUR DEC. 3

Local body elections will be held for 5462 posts in rural areas in Thanjavur district.

Official sources said that there are 589 panchayats in the district. Besides presidents for these panchayats 4569 ward members will be elected for them.

There are 14 panchayat unions and 276 ward members will be elected for these unions. There are 29 wards in Thanjavur panchayat union, 18 in Thiruvaiyaru, 16 in Budlaur, 22 in Thiruvaidamaruthur, 17 in Thiruppanandal, 21 in Papanasam, 17 in Ammapettai, 31 in Orathanadu, 15 in Thiruvaiyaru, 27 in Kumbakonam, 19 in Pattukottai, 13 in Madukkur, 15 in Peravurani and 16 in Sethubavachathiram.

Elections will also be held for 28 ward members of Thanjavur district panchayat council.

Total electorate in the rural areas is 13,50,870. Men voters are 6,63,602, while women voters are 6,81,999 and others (trans-genders) are 69.



ANNUAL CONVOCAION

Governor Banwarilal Purohit presents a medal to a graduate at 40th Annual Convocation of Anna University in Chennai on Tuesday.

— DC

HC: Govt servants appointed on or after April 1, 2003, not entitled to pension

J. STALIN CHENNAI, DEC. 3

The Madras high court has held that those government servants /employees, who are freshly appointed on or after April 1, 2003, are not entitled to pension in view of proviso to Rule 2 of Tamil Nadu Pension Rules, 1978 inserted by G.O dated August 6, 2003.

The Full Bench comprising Justices R.Subbiah, P.T.Asha and C.Saravanan gave the ruling while answering the reference made to it on a batch of petitions and appeals from individual employees and state government.

The Full Bench said such reference came to be made by the division bench on noticing that there were two conflicting decisions rendered by the division benches of this court. In one of the judgments, it was held that persons who

The Full Bench held that those government servants/employees appointed prior to April 1, 2003 whether on temporary or permanent basis in terms of Rule 10 (a) (1) of Tamil Nadu State and Subordinate Service Rules will be entitled to get pension as per the Tamil Nadu Pension Rules, 1978

were absorbed and/or regularized to service after April 1, 2003 were not entitled to count half of the past service rendered by them for the purpose of conferment of pensionary benefits along with the service rendered by them after regularization. Another division bench held that such persons, whose service came to be regularized after April 1, 2003 were entitled and/or eligible to count half of the services rendered by them

on daily wage basis prior to their regularization, for the purpose of conferment of pensionary benefits. Thus, this contrary view taken by two division benches of this court has led to the present reference to this Full Bench, the Full Bench added.

The Full Bench held that those government servants/employees appointed prior to April 1, 2003 whether on temporary or permanent basis in terms of Rule 10 (a) (1) of Tamil Nadu State and Subordinate Service Rules will be entitled to get pension as per the Tamil Nadu Pension Rules, 1978.

In case, a government employee/servant had also rendered service in non-provisionalised service, or on consolidated pay or on honorarium or daily wage basis and if such services were regularized before April 1, 2003, half of service

rendered shall be counted for the purpose of conferment of pensionary benefits, the Full Bench added.

The Full Bench said those government servants who were appointed in the aforesaid four categories before the cut off date and later appointed under Rule 10 (a) (1) of Tamil Nadu State and Subordinate Service Rules and absorbed into regular service after April 1, 2003 will not be entitled to count half of their past service for the purpose of determination of qualifying service for pension.

Those government servants, who were appointed in the aforesaid four categories before April 1, 2003 but were absorbed in regular service after April 1, 2003 will not be entitled to count half of their past service for the purpose of determination of qualifying service for pension, the Full Bench added.



Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami and Dy CM O. Panneerselvam inspect wall collapse spot in Mettupalayam near Coimbatore on Tuesday.

CM meets families of wall collapse victims

■ Totally ₹10 lakh aid each for victims' kin

Coimbatore, Dec 3: Chief Minister K. Palaniswami on Tuesday met bereaved families of the 17 Dalits who were killed in a wall collapse near here and conceded their demands, including enhanced solatium and construction of houses. In addition to the ₹400 lakh from the Disaster Relief Fund already announced, ₹60 lakh each would be provided from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund, he said. Speaking to reporters after calling on the families at Nadur village, where the tragedy occurred on Monday, he also said orders had already been issued to provide suitable jobs to the next of the kin of deceased.

A portion of the over 15-foot high compound wall, damp due to heavy rains lashing the area for the past few days, came crashing down on the adjoining four tiled-roof houses in a Dalit settlement in the village, over 50 km from here, killing 17 people, including ten women and two children.

Palaniswami, accompanied by his deputy O Panneerselvam, Local Administration Minister S P Velyamani and MPs and MLAs, consoled the families of the victims and termed the incident as most painful. Noting that besides the damaged four houses, other dwelling units in the surroundings were also tiled-roof and not safe, he said concrete houses will be built in their place. The chief minister said his government had already decided to make Tamil Nadu a slum-free state and concrete houses will be constructed for those living in low lying areas, on river banks and in unsafe conditions, he said.

On the demand for registering a case under the SC/ST Act against the owner of the house of the compound which collapsed, he said action would be taken in accordance with the law after proper inquiry. He noted that the owner, Sivasubramanian, had been arrested on Tuesday. When asked about DMK president M K Stalin's remarks that the district



DMK president M.K. Stalin on Tuesday consoles the kin of the victims at Nadur village in Mettupalayam near Coimbatore.

Stalin blames govt officials' inaction for wall collapse

Coimbatore, Dec 3: A day after 17 people were killed in a compound wall collapse near here, the owner of the house around which the structure had been built was arrested on Tuesday on charges of causing death by negligence, police said. Sivasubramanian, who runs a textile showroom in Mettupalayam, was arrested in Mettupalayam, about 45 km from here, police said adding they were interrogating him.

The arrest of the house owner, absconding since the incident, came amid demands by the locals and some Dalit outfits besides political leaders, including

DMK president M K Stalin who alleged officials had failed to act on complaints about the stability of the wall. Police said a case under Indian Penal Code section 304 A (causing death by negligence) had been registered against Sivasubramanian, who runs a textile showroom in Mettupalayam.

The DMK leader M K Stalin on Tuesday visited the kin of the victims at Nadur village and consoled them. Later speaking to reporters, he claimed despite complaints from the villagers about the stability of the wall, the district collector and officials

failed to take action, resulting in the incident, he said. Condemning the police action against the crowd at the hospital, Stalin said strict action should be taken against those responsible for the "brutal attack" on the villagers.

He also sought increase in the solatium of ₹4 lakh announced by Chief Minister K. Palaniswami and government jobs to the members of families. Meanwhile, nearly 80 members of various organisations were arrested here for attempting to stage a protest seeking the release of 25 people detained on Monday, police said. — PTI

administration failed to remove the wall despite complaints, Palaniswami said the former wanted to politicize each and every issue. The wall collapsed due to heavy rains and so

"where is the question of the government's involvement in it," he added.

Stalin claimed despite complaints from the villagers about the stability of the wall, the district collector and officials failed to take action, resulting in the incident. Police said Sivasubramanian, a textile businessman, was arrested on charges of causing death by negligence. — PTI

WELCOMING SHOWERS



A vendor arranges colourful umbrellas on New Avadi Road in Chennai on Tuesday.

— DC

DMK not afraid of polls, says Duraisamy

D. SEKAR / DC CHENNAI, DEC. 3

Even as the DMK is awaiting the hearing of its petition regarding conduct of elections to local bodies, following the State Election Commission on Monday notifying the polls only for rural local bodies, in the Supreme court on Thursday, a senior leader of the party said DMK has never been afraid of polls.

"The DMK has witnessed many wins and defeats in the elections; it is not just a political party but a social movement; we are only insisting that the local bodies elections are held without any bungling," the party's deputy general secretary, V P Duraisamy said. Explaining the DMK's objections to the holding of the local bodies polls in the way the AIADMK government was going about it, Mr. Duraisamy said under the Panchayati Raj and Nagarpalika Acts, these

HC rejects plea to provide reservation in local body polls

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, DEC. 3

The Madras high court has dismissed petition which sought a direction to the Commissioner, the Tamil Nadu State Election Commission to take action for notifying local body elections only after ensuring reservation of seats for Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribe in accordance with the provisions



of the Tamil Nadu Panchayat (Reservation of seats and Rotation of reserved seats) Rules, 1995. Justice T.S.Sivagnanam dismissed the petition filed

elections will have to be held once in every five years.

However, during the last three years, the ruling AIADMK had not come forward to hold the elections,

which has deprived funds to the tune of Rs.18,000 crore from the Centre to the State, said Duraisamy.

Stating that the delimitation of wards for the local bodies had not been done

by D.Rusendra Kumar, state secretary, Puratchi Bharatham.

Meanwhile, a division bench comprising M.Sathyannarayanan and R.Hemalatha posted to December 17, the hearing of a Public Interest Litigation filed by Pulavar Esu Mani, challenging an Ordinance introduced by the state government for indirect elections of Mayor and Chairman.

Mr. Duraisamy said the Supreme Court could either stay the notification until these anomalies were rectified. But if the Apex court still says the polls could be held, the DMK was ready to face the elections, he added.

erstwhile districts, district panchayat councilors would find their areas split between two districts, but they would be able to allocate funds only for one district. So this is a major anomaly that has to be addressed, he urged.

In re-drawing the boundaries of wards, the distribution of population has not been even, Duraisamy said, adding, this was another major issue. In places, one ward has 18,000 voters and another ward only 800 voters. Further, the reservation for ST/women has not been done properly, he said, adding, all these issues have been raised in the DMK's petition before the Apex court.

Mr. Duraisamy said the Supreme Court could either stay the notification until these anomalies were rectified. But if the Apex court still says the polls could be held, the DMK was ready to face the elections, he added.



Provide jobs

DMDK founder Vijayakanth has urged the govt to provide jobs to the next of kin of the deceased in Mettupalayam tragedy



Discovery of 'Vikram Lander' by Shanmuga Subramanian foretells, realising 'Chandrayaan-II dream is not far off' — TTV Dhinakaran, AMMK founder

SHORT TAKES



A water logged locality in Rameswaram town after heavy rains on Tuesday.

Several areas in Rameswaram water-logged

Rameswaram: The continuing rains in Rameswaram and its neighbourhood in the last three days has left several areas water-logged in the pilgrim island. The rains were accompanied by strong winds, affecting the normal life of the people. In areas like Gandhinagar, Thiruvalluvar nagar and Anna nagar, the rainwater has entered houses in low-lying areas, making it very difficult for the people to go about their daily chores. Residents have urged the municipal and other government authorities to take immediate steps to pump out the stagnant water as it also posed health hazards.

NMR services suspended again

Ooty: The hill train services in the Nilgiris Mountain Railway (NMR) have once again been suspended till December 8. It is pertinent to note that the hill train services in NMR resumed on November 30 after a gap of 14 days. But, it lasted for only two days as the Southern Railway suspended train services between Mettupalayam and Ooty till December 3. Now, due to the continuing rains in the hills, the southern railway has announced that the hill train services in NMR is suspended till December 8.

Man wanted for bike theft held near Tiruchy

Tiruchy: Police arrested a history-sheeter and seized 30 motorcycles and two cars from him, at suburb Tiruverumbur near Tiruchy on Monday. Police said the accused person Augustin of Thanjavur who was released from prison four months ago, after completing his one year detention under the draconian Goondas Act. A police team engaged in routine vehicle check at Malaikovil area intercepted his vehicle and arrested him again. Further investigations are on, police said, adding, the accused was wanted in several cases.

Amman temple idol goes missing

Tiruvavur: A panchaloka (an alloy of five metals) icon belonging to Sri Mani Amman Temple in a village near Koradacheri in Tamil Nadu's Tiruvavur district has allegedly been stolen, police said on Tuesday. The incident came to light on Monday after some men involved in repair work at the temple found the door to the sanctum sanctorum broken open and the idol missing, police sources said adding, further investigations were on. —PTI

Jumbo tramples mahout in zoo park

ZAKEER HUSSAIN | DC SALEM, DEC. 3

Tragedy struck at the Kurumbapatti zoological park, a mini zoo situated in the foothills of Shervaroyan hills near Yercaud, about 10 km from here on Monday evening, when a female elephant trampled its mahout to death.

The 68-year-old pachyderm, Aandal, brought to the park from Alagar Kovil near Madurai in 2009, had in a sudden fit of anger, when it was being examined by a veterinary doctor, lifted aloft mahout Kaliappan standing near it, thrashed him on the floor and trampled him underneath her massive feet, forest department sources said on Tuesday.

As part of the routine medical check-up, veterinarian Dr Prakash had come with his team and was examining the elephant closely when she suddenly went uncontrollable. Shocked by its behaviour, the veterinarian and his team ran for cover even as the badly mauled mahout Kaliappan, who hails from Pollachi, lay dead near her feet.

On information Forest department officials led by DFO A. Periyasamy rushed to the spot, tranquilized the elephant by administering an injection and slowly retrieved the mahout's body and sent it to Salem GH post-mortem.

Poor Kaliappan is survived by wife, three sons and a daughter. Aandal has a history of throwing up violent tantrums and it had similarly killed a woman here, forest department sources said, adding, it was a problematic elephant even when it was in Alagar Kovil where three others had met with similar fate.

The department now plans to shift Aandal to some other camp. The zoological park set up in 1981 and extending up to an area of 31.73 hectares, has a variety of flora and fauna including deer, reptiles, marine species like crocodiles, birds, etc and is a tourist attraction for visitors to Salem.



The veterinarian examining the elephant before the tragedy. —DC

tion and slowly retrieved the mahout's body and sent it to Salem GH post-mortem. Poor Kaliappan is survived by wife, three sons and a daughter. Aandal has a history of throwing up violent tantrums and it had similarly killed a woman here, forest department sources said, adding, it was a problematic elephant even when it was in Alagar Kovil where three others had met with similar fate.

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Farmer robbed of ₹55 lakh near Salem

ZAKEER HUSSAIN | DC SALEM, DEC. 3

In a shocking development, a farmer was robbed of ₹55 lakh by four masked men when he was returning home with the cash near Talaivasal in Salem district on Tuesday.

The miscreants suddenly appeared on the highway from a nearby bush, intercepted the two-wheeler which the farmer M. Chinnadurai, 38, of Navakuruchi village near Talaivasal was riding, sprinkled chili powder on his face before threatening him and snatching the cover containing the cash from him, police said. The robbers then sped off in the farmer's two-wheeler to Chennai after collecting the ₹55 lakh from a friend there for purchasing lands in his village, police said. He had while earlier going to Chennai parked his two-wheeler at the Talaivasal tollgate and took another mode of transport from there to Chennai. A dazed Chinnadurai managed to reach Talaivasal police station and filed a complaint. Investigation is on.

Babri case: IUML not for review of SC verdict

Tiruchy: The Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) national president Prof. K.M. Khader Moideen reiterated that those who have faith in democracy should accept the recent Supreme Court verdict in the Babri Masjid land title case. He told newsmen at Puthanatham near here on Tuesday that the IUML, right from the beginning, had insisted that everyone should accept the apex court verdict to avoid any situation of religious unrest.

Referring to the review petition filed by the All India Muslim Personal Law Board, he denied the AIMPLB claim that 99 per cent of the Muslims were supported the move. —DC

Patient jumps off GH terrace, dies

DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUCHY, DEC. 3

A 34-year-old in-patient of the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial government hospital committed suicide by jumping off the sixth floor of the hospital on Tuesday.

Police said the deceased, N. Ganesamoorthy of Kallukuzhi area in the city, working in a spinning mill in Coimbatore, came here to celebrate the Deepavali festival.

Here, he suffered from a virus fever for which he was admitted to a private hospital on November 13, and subsequently shifted to the government hospital on November 22. A clinical analysis confirmed that Ganesamoorthy was suffering from dengue.

Then he was shifted to a super specialty ward with a room allotted on the sixth floor, and was finally cured. Doctors attending on him discharged him on Monday, but his parents wanted his hospitalisation to be extended a little more, since they feared that he was not fully cured.

Upset over this, the deceased went to the hospital terrace around 07:30 hrs and jumped out from there. He died in a few minutes.

Hospital police recovered the body and sent it for post-mortem.

Hospital dean, Dr K. Vanitha, told newsmen that the entrance to the terrace was always kept under lock and key every day. Only the plumber used to go there daily.



Initiated by an NGO, children from government schools in Tarapuram town, Salem district, flew down to Chennai along with their 10 guardians, on Tuesday. —DC



Children stage a play creating an awareness on saving trees organised by Govt. Stanley Medical College and Hospital. —DC



Participants at 'accessible walkway' in Marina beach set up by the Greater Chennai Corporation on Tuesday. —DC

Couple end lives after killing kid

M. ARULOLI | DC TENKASI, DEC. 3

An auto driver along with his wife committed suicide near here after poisoning his two children, but one of their children miraculously survived the ordeal and is undergoing treatment.

Kandasamy (37), an auto driver of Kattalaikudiyiruppu village near Puliyarai in Tenkasi district, was found dead in his house along with his wife Esakkiammal alias Indhumathi (30) and elder son Chinnathirani (5).

Kandasamy's younger son, a one-and-half-year old baby, lying along with them however, was found alive and hence rushed to the hospital, where he is undergoing treatment.

Preliminary investigation by the Puliyarai police revealed that Kandasamy and his wife resorted to this extreme step of committing suicide by consuming poison due to debt problem. But before ending their lives, the couple forced their children consume poison and allegedly strangled them.

Father-son injured in house collapse near Ambasamudram

M. ARULOLI | DC TIRUNELVELI, DEC. 3

Two tile-roofed houses at Ambasamudram collapsed injuring two persons in the wake of incessant rains in Tirunelveli district.

The roof of the house reportedly caved in the wee hours of Tuesday at Illathar North street, injured Lakshmanan and his son. Lakshmanan's wife and daughter, who were also sleeping in the same house, however miraculously escaped uninjured.

Another house in the same area too collapsed

the same day. However no one was injured as the house owner Kandasamy along with his family was out of station, police said. The continuous rains resulted in flash flood in the river Thamirabarani that was in spate with around 25,000 cusecs of water flowing into the river.

Lack of storage facility in the southern districts too resulted in the wasteful draining of around 20,000 cusecs in to the sea at Punnakayal in Thoothukudi district, complained the farmers. The district registered an average rainfall of

● Ambasamudram region experienced the highest level of 49-mm and Manimutharu 34.20 mm of rainfall.

15.60 mm till Tuesday morning, with Ambasamudram region experiencing the highest level of 49-mm and Manimutharu 34.2 mm.

Tenkasi district registered an average rainfall of 14.7-mm till Tuesday morning. As all the falls were in spate on Tuesday in Courtallam, tourists were not allowed to take bath.

The younger child, however escaped death, according to the police, who added that the auto driver's wife had allegedly taken multiple loans from a private

micro finance company and from the self-help group in which she was a member.

In the inner wall of their house, it was found written, presumably by the couple,

that they resorted to commit suicide due to poverty and debt and that nobody else is responsible for their death. The police are examining the wall writing.

Cauvery delta farmers met Chhattisgarh Chief Minister



G.SRINIVASAN | DC THANJAVUR, DEC. 3

A group of farmers led by Sundara Vimalanathan, secretary of Thanjavur district Cauvery farmers protection association, met the Chief Minister of

Chhattisgarh Bhupesh Baghel at his office at Chhattisgarh and thanked him for giving ₹2,500 per quintal for paddy as price in the state.

They presented coconut seedlings to the Chief

Minister. Vimalanathan, at a press release said that in Tamil Nadu the price is ₹1,820 per quintal. Chhattisgarh Chief Minister had added ₹750 to the minimum support price announced by the Central government,

which is ₹1,750 and has given a price of ₹2,500 per quintal. This price is only in Chhattisgarh and not in any other state in India. "We wanted to appreciate him and thank him," he said. The Chief Minister of

that state reportedly told the farmers that 1,540 traditional varieties of paddy are cultivated in Chhattisgarh and appealed to the farmers from Tamil Nadu to cultivate traditional varieties of paddy. He also said

that a national-level festival on traditional varieties will be organised in Chhattisgarh to popularise them.

Anbalagan, secretary to Chhattisgarh government was also present at the meeting.

HPF site for Ooty medical college unsuitable, Greens tell Chief Minister

B. RAVICHANDRAN | DC OOTY, DEC. 3

The Nilgiris Documentation Centre (NDC) has written to the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Mr. Edappadi K. Palaniswami to reconsider the site for the proposed government medical college in Ooty.

Dharmalingam Venugopal, director of NDC, in the letter stated that the huge investment for the medical college could have positive multiplier and acceleration effect for the whole district if it is done with care and planning. The college could propel medical tourism including sports medicine, he said. The success of the medical college would depend on the site chosen for it. The location chosen should be in a relatively warmer area with convenient approachability from



Dharmalingam Venugopal.

all parts of the district as well as easier connectivity to Coimbatore for complementary and advanced treatment. However, the site chosen to set up the college-cum-hospital now at the erstwhile Hindustan photo films (HPF) premises in the Wenlock Downs area do not appear to fulfill these requirements.

Besides, there appears to be some patently disad-

vantageous factors. The site adjoining the golf club lacks easy and convenient approach and accessibility. The site is one of the coldest locations in the district. The temperature regularly dips below Zero degree Celsius followed by severe ground frost during winter.

Lamenting various interferences that have taken place in the 20,000 acre Wenlock Downs in the name of development, Nilgiriologists have observed, "Resource management which does not consider the total systemic impact of development projects may regretably lead to the destruction of numerous rare and fascinating forms of life".

In view of the above, the TN government shall reconsider the present site for the medical college and constitute a search committee to identify a

'Present site is viewed as inauspicious'

B. RAVICHANDRAN | DC OOTY, DEC. 3

Mr. Venugopal stated that one reason why most projects on the Wenlock Downs failed or were constantly beset by problems could be the violation of the sentiments and beliefs of the indigenous people.

According to the 'Badaga - English Dictionary,' Malladu or Wenlock Downs, the name of the extensive tract of hills and grazing land on the Nilgiri massif stretching

some 20-km west of Ooty is the path of the souls after death.

The Nilgiris indigenous communities including the Todas and Badagas believe their souls after death reside in the western part of the Nilgiris.

That is why no habitation was ever established west of Nanjanad.

Therefore, it may be unwise to locate a life-giving hospital and college in what may be considered an inauspicious location in the district.

suitable site for the col-

lege, he stated.

Boulders cripple vehicular traffic on Ooty-Kovai NH

DC CORRESPONDENT OOTY, DEC. 3

The falling boulders and the hanging boulders between Coonoor and Marapalam sector of the Ooty-Coimbatore NH crippled traffic flow in this busy national highway for the second consecutive day on Tuesday as rains continued in the hills.

Though the disaster management teams and the NH staff sweated out throughout Monday to clear the debris due to landslips in about dozen spots between Coonoor and Burliar sector of the Ooty-NH, hopefully to resume traffic from Tuesday morning things changed for worst as the heavy showers on Monday night in the hills again triggered landslips in a couple of places in the Coonoor-Marapalam sector of the Ooty-NH.

At a particular spot, a few meters away from the Katteri park, a huge boulder rolled down the slopes and perched on the middle of the

road. While this instantly halted any plans of resumption of traffic in this road, the NH officials took all out efforts right from Tuesday morning to remove the boulder from the road. Though the works were dragging well into the Tuesday evening, now, some "hanging boulders" which are precariously placed along the slopes there have begun to pose threat for traffic.

The traffic from Ooty and Coonoor to Mettupalayam and Coimbatore are diverted via Kotagiri on Tuesday too. Sources said that efforts will be taken to remove the so-called "hanging" boulders there to ensure safety to resume traffic in this road.

The rainfall (mm) recorded on Tuesday morning in various spots in Nilgiris is as follows: Coonoor-132, Kodanad-107, Ketti-91, Kundah-85, Kotagiri-72, Burliar-58, Geddai-52, Ooty-51, Emerald-41 and Kinnakorai-33.



'Speedy verdict'

Verdict in rape cases should be pronounced in as many months as victim's age, says Union minister Harsimrat Badal

Women shy away from real weapon — guns

Post Nirbhaya incident, a special revolver was designed for women but it remains largely unsold

FROM PG 1

GUNS & GIRLS

Post-Nirbhaya, the Indian Ordnance factory (IOF), Kanpur, manufactured "Nirbheek" — a .32 bore lightweight revolver designed for women.

Only 53 women from around the country purchased Nirbheek revolvers after it was out in January 2014

request for gun licenses," said Cyberabad police commissioner V.C. Sajjanar. "But I do not think issuing more licenses will solve the problem."

Hyderabad Police Commissioner Anjani Kumar similarly said that license can be granted to anyone who applies but fulfills the criteria.

Other senior officials say that guns have been misused earlier. Also, nothing indicates that guns prevent rape or other violent crime, barring exceptions. We have come across cases wherein license holders have intimidated people

just by showing the weapon," these officials say. "We do not want a gun culture like the USA's and therefore more rejections."

What if the police is slow or ineffective? Officials had little to offer.

But do guns assure safety for women? Numerous studies in the US suggest that the increasing guns bought by women for self protection have proved ineffective during an emergency. According to a study by the Violence Policy Center, the message that firearms make women safer actually had the opposite effect. In a majority of domestic violence cases, a gun at home ended up killing a woman by a relative. In only a few instances did a woman use a firearm for self-defence. "In America, guns are not used to save lives but to take them," sums up the report.

Another senior IPS officer feels, however, that in an emergency, a woman pulling out a weapon is enough to deter and repel her attackers. "They need not actually fire the weapon," he says. "Once the attacker notices that the woman is armed, he realises it can be dangerous."

Strict licensing laws ensure that not all get armed. Law enforcement agencies should consider circumstances and issue licenses to those who require it," said M.S. Shafiq of "Gun Affairs" in Banjara Hills. "Importantly, no license holder in Hyderabad has misused the weapon. As for Nirbheek, not a single woman has purchased it yet. However, there could be about 50 to 100 women who have gun licenses in Hyderabad, which they may have obtained long ago." Though the police is tight-lipped over the number of licenses in Hyderabad, rough estimates suggest it could be over 5,000.

The Indian Arms Act says threat perception and a police record are the key aspects based on which gun licenses are issued. "Many people apply, but most are rejected," said Shafiq. "People living in remote areas feel unsafe, as do those in farmhouses. The police should consider this and issue licenses. If there is misuse, the agencies can always cancel the license."

"We will examine each



Women shout slogans during a protest of Delhi Commission for Women against the Hyderabad rape-murder case and alleged rise in the number of incidents of crime against women at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi on Tuesday. — PTI

Previous UP govts gave out benefits of welfare plans based on caste, religion — Yogi Adityanath, UP chief minister

SHORT TAKES

OBC groom attacked for riding on horse

Agar Malwa, MP: A 28-year-old man from an OBC community was beaten up for riding a horse during his pre-wedding party allegedly by members of the Rajput community in Agar Malwa district, police said on Tuesday. Eleven people have been arrested in connection with the incident which occurred in Bhadwasa village, 42 kms from Agar Malwa on the night of December 1. "The incident occurred when the pre-wedding procession of Dharmendra Luhar, who belongs to an OBC community, was being taken out," said Badod police station in-charge Rajiv Uike. — PTI

Guj: Man dies after being hit by MLA car

Ahmedabad: A 47-year-old man was killed after his scooter was knocked down by a car belonging to Gujarat Congress MLA Shailesh Parmar in Ahmedabad city, police said on Tuesday. While family members of the deceased - Praful Patel — alleged that Parmar's son was driving the car, the police and the MLA said the latter's driver Devendra Bhavsar was behind the wheels. The mishap took place in Memnagar area here on Monday night, a police official said, adding that Bhavsar was absconding since then. The car is registered in the name of Parmar. — PTI

3 directors of PMC Bank arrested

Mumbai: The Economic Offences Wing of Mumbai Police on Tuesday arrested three directors of Punjab & Maharashtra Cooperative Bank in connection with the alleged ₹4,355 crore fraud which is under investigation, an official said. Jagdish Mookhey, Mukti Bavis and Trupti Bane were arrested following extensive interrogation in connection with credit facilities provided by the bank to Housing Development and Infrastructure Limited and its group companies. Mookhey was a director of the bank and member of its audit committee since 2005, whereas Bavis was director and member of its loans and advances committee, he said. — PTI

SC VERDICT ON PC BAIL PLEA IN INX CASE TODAY

New Delhi: The Supreme Court is scheduled to pronounce verdict on Wednesday over Congress leader P Chidambaram's plea seeking bail in the INX Media money laundering case. A bench headed by Justice R Banumathi had on November 28 reserved judgement on the appeal filed by Chidambaram who has challenged the November 15 verdict of the Delhi high court denying him bail in the case. During the arguments, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) had claimed in the apex court that the 74-year-old former finance minister continues to wield "substantial influence" on crucial witnesses in the case even from the custody, while he said that the agency cannot "destroy" his career and reputation by making baseless allegations. Opposing his bail plea, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the ED, maintained that economic offences like money laundering are grave in nature as they not only affect the nation's economy but also shake people's faith in the system, especially when it is committed by people in power. Senior advocates Kapil Sibal and A.M. Singhvi, representing Mr Chidambaram, had countered Mr Mehta's submissions and said there was no any evidence linking Chidambaram to offence directly or indirectly. — PTI

Odisha: Puri minor girl gangraped, 2 arrested

DC CORRESPONDENT BHUBANESWAR, DEC. 3

In the wake of the Disha gangrape-murder last week, a minor girl's alleged gang-rape in Odisha's Puri district has left many shocked. She was on Monday evening waiting for a bus at Nimapara Square to go to Kakatpur. Four persons, including former constable Jitendra Sethi, stopped their car and offered her a lift. She turned it down. The four then forced her into the car and locked the doors. They then took her to a government quarter (allotted to Jitendra) near Jhadeswari Club in Puri, and raped her.

Two of the four including Jitendra were arrested on Tuesday.

Jitendra was dismissed from the Odisha police in February for misconduct. "Dismissed constable Jitendra Sethi and Rajesh Sethi have been arrested so far," deputy inspector general of police Ashish Singh said. "Four teams are investigating. We will also seek trial in a fast-track court. Charge-sheet will be filed within 20 days."

Cases under the IPC and POSCO were registered. The DIG said special lawyers would be enlisted to ensure severe punishment.

Jitender Sethi was dismissed from service in February by the then SP of Puri after multiple charges of misconduct including physical harassment were reported against him.

He continued to use a police identity card, so an additional case has been filed against him. "Misusing of police ID card is a criminal offence," the DIG said.

22-year-old arrested for 'vulgar' Facebook post

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, DEC 3:

A 22-year-old man who vulgarly commented on "Disha" on social media was arrested by the Hyderabad cyber-crime police on Tuesday. Chavan Sriram (22) from Fakirabad in Nizamabad posted nasty comments through Facebook. Police are looking for four others for derogatory posts.

After veterinarian Disha's gangrape-murder at Shamshabad, the nation largely condoned her death and supported her family. A few, however, used social media to demonstrate their anti-social behavior.

Sriram, an ITI graduate, worked at a fast food outlet in the city and returned home two months ago. He was jobless since. He used Facebook with the profile 'Stalin Sriram' and posted vulgar thoughts about Disha. His comments were objectionable.

Sriram is a migrant from Maharashtra. His parents are vegetable ven-

dors who were at a loss as to why their son was picked up by the police.

On coming across the posts the Hyderabad cyber-crime police registered a suo moto case on November 30. Technical clues helped trace Sriram. He was produced in court and was remanded to judicial custody. Police are hunting for others like him, but they turned off their mobile phones and went underground.

Cyber crime inspector N Mohan Rao said: "Teams are working to trace and nab the others."

Meanwhile, the Rachakonda cyber-crime police have also registered a case against a person who posted objectionable content about Disha on social media. A team has gone to Guntur in Andhra Pradesh. However, the accused absconded before the cops arrived.

Separately, the Cyberabad cyber crime police also registered a case against a person for making derogatory comments about the CM.

Ayodhya case: Row after Jamiat 'sacks' its lawyer

PARMOD KUMAR NEW DELHI, DEC. 03

A row has erupted amongst the Muslim litigants, who were parties to title suit after Jamiat Ulama-e-Hind — saying that they wanted to file the review petition on December 2 itself but Mr Dhavan was unwell and not available to settle the petition.

Mr Madani sought to justify the dropping of Mr Dhavan as the lead lawyer, saying that they wanted to file the plea for the reconsideration of November 9 verdict on December 2 and Mr Dhavan was not available to settle the petition.

However, sources within the Muslim litigants said that it was decided that all the petitions

seeking the reconsideration of November 9 verdict that were being drafted under the supervision of Rajeev Dhavan would be filed simultaneously on the same day.

A source, who is watching the developments from close quarters, said that Jamiat's action amounted to sealing a march over other, who too were ready with their petitions seeking the review of Ayodhya judgment.

Mr Dhavan in a social media post said, "I have been informed that Mr Madani has indicated that I was removed from the case because I was unwell. This is total nonsense."

Other suggestion: Time-bound punishment for culprits

MPs' panel wants ban on porn for kids

SREPARNA CHAKRABARTY NEW DELHI, DEC. 3

Seeking ways to prevent heinous crimes against women like the Hyderabad gangrape and murder, a group of Rajya Sabha MPs feel that there should be a total ban on children's access to pornography.

The informal group of 14 MPs called the "Study Group", which has representatives from 10 political parties met for the first time at AIADMK MP Vijila Sathyanath's residence on Monday evening. The group briefed Rajya

Sabha chairperson M. Venkaiah Naidu Tuesday morning and said that one of the foremost suggestions was that children's access to pornography should be banned.

"Nowadays everybody has a smart phone and with it the access to internet and pornography. This issue needs to be addressed first and foremost," one of the MPs who briefed the chairperson said.

Some of the other suggestions are control over the sale of alcohol and time-bound punishment for culprits.

The group has decided to hold further discus-



Vijila Sathyanath

sions with stakeholders to be consulted which include civil society groups, parent groups, law enforcement agencies, regulators like TRAI and social media companies like WhatsApp, Google and Facebook, sources said. The Informal Group

Man arrested for raping minor after 'marrying' her

Mandsaur, MP, Dec. 3: A man was arrested in Mandsaur town of Madhya Pradesh on Tuesday for allegedly raping a 17-year-old girl after fraudulently marrying her, the police said. Sonu Kumawat (24), the accused, and the girl knew each other for

some time, a police official said. Two days ago, he took her to a hotel room where he put a garland around her neck and applied vermilion on her forehead, telling her they were now married, and later allegedly raped her, said police SI.

Girl raped, shot dead, burnt in Bihar's Buxar

NAYEAR AZAD PATNA, DEC. 3

The burnt dead body of a young woman was recovered on Tuesday in Kukudha village in Buxar district of Bihar.

The local police suspect that the girl, who appears to be a minor, was shot dead and burnt after being allegedly raped by the criminals. According to the Buxar police, the killers used stubble from the nearby fields and petrol to burn the dead body.

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(E)-TENDERS
Tenders are invited for the supply of following materials for various units:
E-Tenders (web portal): etenders.kerala.gov.in | L.D. Polythene Film (43 M.T.), Rainguard Adhesive (175 M.T.) Manure (Urea-136 M.T., M.O.P.-132 M.T., M.R.P.-216 M.T.), G.I.Wire (11.5 M.T.) Sulphuric Acid (250 M.T.), Last Date of Submission: 16.12.2019, 5 P.M.
Sealed Tenders : Polythene Strips (2.68 M.T.), Stapler Pin (15,078 Pkts.) & Machine (482 Nos.) Plastic Cup-900 ml. (1,87,000 Nos.), Spouts (5,742 Kg.), G.I.Bucket - 14,18,46 Ltr. (675 Nos.) Plastic Scrap Basket (779 Nos.). Last Date of Submission : 16.12.2019, 2 P.M. Place: H.O. Kottayam. (Ph:9496076007) See website for further details.
(Sd/-) Managing Director

TENDERS / NOTICES

INDIAN RAILWAYS
Government of India
Ministry of Railways (Railway Board)
No. 2019/Track-III/MC/10 New Delhi, dt. 03.12.2019
Procurement of Multi Purpose Tamper (MPT) (Broad Gauge 1676mm) for Indian Railways.

- Electronic bids are invited for and on behalf of the President of India for Multi Purpose Tamper (MPT).
- The interested tenderers are advised to visit the website <http://ireps.gov.in> for details, downloading of the tender documents and submission of their e-bids.

Dinesh Tripathi
Director Track (MC), Railway Board.
3876/2019

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TENDER NOTICE FOR SUPPLY OF STORES ITEMS

E-TENDER NOTICE No.: NIT/14/19/10, Dated 27.11.2019

South East Central Railway has implemented an e-system. On the behalf of the President of India, Principal Chief Material Manager, South East Central Railway invites e-tenders for supply of the following items. Advertised tenders will be dealt through e-procurement system only. No manual offer will be entertained. These tenders can be accessed under the link www.ireps.gov.in.

Sr. No.	Tender No.	Brief Description	Tender Closing/Opening Date	Qty.
1.	05191315A	2MBPS Digital Modem	16.12.2019	100 Pairs
2.	07191437	Printing and Supply of Drivers and Guards Train Report	19.12.2019	12,38,750 Sets
3.	01193816	ELEMENT FUEL OIL FILTER	20.12.2019	561 Nos.
4.	06193001A	Soft blanket camel shade	20.12.2019	7,500 Nos.
5.	04192387A	VRLA Cells of 6 V Mono block 120 AH capacity	23.12.2019	40 Sets
6.	06193004B	Handiroom Cotton Bed Sheet	23.12.2019	1,25,000 Nos.

Tender Closing/Opening Time: At 10.30 Hrs.

Railways reserves the right to issue any Corrigendum to the tenders. Corrigendum & Important Notice to vendors may be seen in the link www.ireps.gov.in.
Corrigendum: Nil.
CPR/10/340 For Principal Chief Materials Manager, Bilaspur.
f South East Central Railway @secrail

TAMILNAD MERCANTILE BANK LTD
(Regd. office at 57, V.E.Road, Thoothukudi)
CHITLAPAKKAM BRANCH
D.No.46/87, 1st Floor, Plot No.1, Gayathri Nagar, Hasthinapuram, Chitlapakkam, Chennai-64.

Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Properties through E- Auction
E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 6 (6) & (9) (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower Mrs.K.Lalitha (W/o.M.Kumar) Prop : M/s.Sri Ganapathi Enterprises, 549, Surya Apartments, 2nd Floor, Welcome Colony, 5th Street, Park Road, Anna Nagar West Extension, Chennai — 600 101 and Guarantor Mr.M.Kumar (S/o.Muthiah), 549, Surya Apartments, 2nd Floor, Welcome Colony, 5th Street, Park Road, Anna Nagar West Extension, Chennai — 600101, that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive/physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Limited, Chitlapakkam Branch, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" on 26.12.2019 for recovery of Rs.1,02,30,067/- (Rupees One Crore Two Lakh Thirty Thousand Sixty Seven Only) as on 31.10.2019 due to the Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Limited Chitlapakkam Branch.

The Reserve Price will be Rs.1,01,00,000/- (Rupees One Crore One Lakh Only) and the Earnest Money Deposit will be Rs.10,10,000/- (Rupees Ten Lakhs Ten Thousand Only).

Description of the Property : UDS of land to the extent of 670.33 Sq.ft in 8044 Sq.ft (as per document No.5789/2011 - 118 Sq.ft and as per document No.345/2015 - 335.16 Sq.ft), situated at S.No.159 Part and residential flat thereat measuring 1608 Sq.ft (5B/U), bearing Flat No.5, Second Floor, Block No.49, Surya Apartments, Park Road, Welcome Colony, 5th Street, Anna Nagar West Extension, Chennai — 600 101, Padi Village, Ambattu Taluk, standing in the name of Mrs.K.Lalitha. Boundaries : North by : Flat No.49A, South by : 20 Feet Road, East by : Flat No.49/6, West by : 60 Feet Road.

Terms & Conditions	
1. E - Auction website	https://sarfaesi.auctiontigger.net
Upset Price	Rs.1,01,00,000/- (Rupees One crore One Lakh Only)
Date and time of E - Auction	26.12.2019 between 12:30 pm and 01:00 pm with auto time extension of 5 minutes each, till sale is concluded.
Earnest Money Deposit	Rs.10,10,000/- (Rupees Ten Lakhs Ten thousand Only).
Last date for submission of bid form with EMD	Bid form along with Demand Draft in favour of Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Ltd, should be submitted on or before 24.12.2019 within 06:00pm.
Place of Submission of BID form and EMD	Authorized Officer, TAMILNAD MERCANTILE BANK LTD., Chitlapakkam Branch, D.No.46/87, First Floor, Plot No.1, Gayathri Nagar, Hasthinapuram, Chitlapakkam, Chennai — 600 064.
Bid Multiplier	Rs.1,00,000/- (Rupees One Lakh Only)

Other Terms & Conditions :

- The successful bidder shall have to deposit 25% of the Bid Amount (less EMD) on the same day or the next working day without fail and EMD shall be adjusted towards 25% of the bid amount immediately, on the sale being knocked down in his favour. In case of default in deposit of 25% of the bid amount as stated above, the EMD will be forfeited and the property shall forthwith be sold again.
- The successful bidder shall deposit the balance 75% of the bid amount within 15 days of the sale or such extended period as agreed upon in writing by the Authorized Officer/Secured Creditor at his discretion. In case of any default in depositing the amount within the stipulated period, the deposit will be forfeited as per sub Rule (5) of Rule (9) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 and the property shall be resold and the defaulting purchaser will forfeit all his/her claims to the property or to any part of the sum for which it may be subsequently sold.
- No interest shall be payable on any amount deposited for participation in the bid under the SARFEASI Act.
- To the best of knowledge and information of the Authorized Officer, the properties are not subject to any encumbrance.
- The Authorized Officer will not be held responsible for any charge, lien, encumbrances, property tax or any other dues to the Government or anybody in respect of the properties/ies under sale.
- The successful bidder should bear the charges/fee payable for conveyance such as registration fee, stamp duty etc., as applicable as per Law.
- The Authorized Officer has absolute right to accept/reject/postpone or cancel the sale without assigning any reason, whatsoever.
- The property/properties will not be sold below the reserve price fixed above.
- The intending bidders should submit photo copy of any one of the proof of identity, i.e., adhaar card, passport, driving license, ration card, Voter ID, PAN card etc., along with the bid form.
- The sale certificate shall be issued in the name of the purchaser/bidder and will not be issued in the any other name. The purchaser shall bear stamp duty, registration charges and all other connected fees, duties, taxes etc., in relation to the execution of the sale certificate.
- The successful bidder/purchaser will deduct TDS@1% on sale proceeds as per sec. 194(1-A) of the Income Tax, 1961 & deposit the same by furnishing the challan in Form 26QB and submit the original receipt of TDS Certificate to Bank.

The sale notice is also uploaded/published on website (www.tmb.in).

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Opportunities

NCP MP Supriya Sule on Tuesday said PM's offer to make her cabinet minister reflects magnanimity, but couldn't happen.



Congress rally in Delhi on December 14 will 'shatter arrogance' of Centre

— Ashok Gehlot, Rajasthan chief minister

SHORT TAKES

No pardon given to Rajoana: Amit Shah

New Delhi: Union home minister Amit Shah on Tuesday told the Lok Sabha that no pardon has been given to Balwant Singh Rajoana, who was convicted for the assassination of the then Punjab chief minister Beant Singh in 1995. During the Question Hour, Congress member from Punjab Ravneet Singh Bittu sought a response from Mr Shah on why Rajoana was pardoned. Bittu is the grandson of Beant Singh. Asking the member not to go by media reports, the home minister said, "koi maafi ki nahi gayi (no pardon has been given)". —PTI

Vadra: SPG removal was political move

New Delhi: Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's husband Robert Vadra on Tuesday described as a "very big" security lapse the incident of unidentified people driving up to the porch of their home last week, and alleged that the removal of the Gandhi family's SPG cover was a "political" move. The Congress general secretary's office has taken up the issue of the November 26 security breach with the Central Reserve Police Force. "Our security is not important as much as the security of the women in the country. The government should think about it at the national and state level," said Vadra.

Odisha govt cancels auction of 20 mines

Bhubaneswar: Odisha government on Tuesday announced to cancel the auction process of 20 operational mineral blocks initiated via Notice Inviting Tenders (NITs) in October this year. The government asked the director of mines to conduct a fresh auction of the leases with a few added conditions. The fresh auction of the leases will begin from December 6, 2019, the government said in notice. Odisha steel and mines department of the has issued a notice saying a decision has been taken to annul the auction process of 20 mining blocks.

BJP DEMANDS APOLOGY FROM ADHIR RANJAN

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, DEC. 3

Bharatiya Janata Party MPs in Lok Sabha on Tuesday demanded an apology from Congress lawmaker Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury for his comments on calling finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman 'powerless' (nirbala), and for referring to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union home minister Amit Shah as "migrants from Gujarat". The ruling party's member Poonam Mahajan called the Congress leader 'powerless' for defending only the rights of the women of Gandhi family. Despite constant slogan shouting by the treasury benches, Mr Chowdhury, who had raised the issue of rising onion prices, refused to come down and later staged a walk out from Lok Sabha along with other Congress MPs. The brouhaha began just as the Zero Hour commenced with several BJP MPs rising to their feet and shouting slogans against the Mr Chowdhury, who is also the leader of the Congress in the lower house. Minister of state for Parliamentary affairs Arjun Ram Meghwal sought an apology from the Congress MP for his comments. At this point, BJP MP from Mumbai North Central Poonam Mahajan sought the Speaker's permission under Rule 353 to speak on the issue.

Sources claim it could make a strong bid to torpedo the BSY government

K'taka polls: BJP Suicide squad ready

K.N. REDDY KALABURAGI, DEC. 3

Denial of cabinet berths which was one of the prime reasons for the collapse of the previous JD(S)-Congress coalition government in the state, could soon haunt the B.S. Yediyurappa government too with a section of disgruntled BJP MLAs set to rock the boat even if the CM secures a simple majority in the Assembly after the December 5 bypolls.

Sources claim that a 'suicide squad' is taking shape within the BJP which could make a strong bid to torpedo the Yediyurappa government and ensure the installation of prominent Congress leader from the Hyderabad-Karnataka region — Mallikarjun Kharge as CM — a post which has eluded the veteran more than once. Most BJP leaders are



Fomrer CM and JD(S) leader H.D. Kumaraswamy campaigns for Mahalaxmi Layout candidate Girish K. Nashi ahead of the Assembly bypoll, in Bengaluru. —PTI

relaxing after a hectic bypoll campaign confident that the party will romp home in at least eight seats and ensure the stability of their government. There is however a lurking danger 'within' —with a group of BJP legislators who could be described as the 'suicide squad,' fuming over being neglected by the party top brass and more so, by the undue importance accorded to disqualified legislators who have all been promised ministerial berths after the bypolls.

They are quietly waiting for the post-bypoll scenario after the December 9 results, when major political developments can be expected in the state.

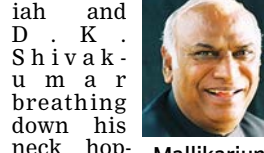
According to a prominent legislator of Hyderabad-Karnataka, who is an active member of the squad, a group of ten legislators drawn from various districts have decided to strike at the opportune time as they feel they do not have a bright future in the party, especially after the entry of the disqualified legislators into the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

"We have been legislators for three or four terms and most of us got elected due to our individual charisma. This being the case, we should have been rewarded with cabinet berths but we have been treated badly. On the contrary, the role of the disqualified legislators in helping the BJP form the government is being eulogised day in and day out, which we find difficult to digest," he said.

Kharge dials Gowda to decide on alliance

DC CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI, DEC. 3

With Congress leaders Siddaramiah and D. K. Shivakumar breathing down his neck hoping to take a shot at the CM's post if B.S. Yediyurappa's position becomes shaky after the bypoll results, veteran, Mallikarjun Kharge has reportedly spoken to Janata Dal (S) supreme H.D. Deve Gowda on the possibility of reviving the defunct JD(S)-Congress coalition.



Mallikarjun Kharge

A highly placed JD(S) source quoted Mr Kharge as saying that both parties should join hands again if the BJP failed to get the numbers required for a simple majority in the by-elections and do a repeat of what happened in Maharashtra where the Sena-NCP-Congress combine foiled the BJP to seize power. It is not clear when the conversation happened but it revolved around the topic of both parties coming together to keep the BJP out.

Mr Gowda reportedly asked Mr Kharge the obvious question, why did he not intervene when some Congress leaders created problems for the previous coalition government headed by his son H.D. Kumaraswamy? "And why are you now thinking of reviving the alliance?" It is unclear what Kharge said in reply. The Congress veteran feels it is a now or never chance for him to realise his unfulfilled dream of becoming CM.

BJP MP seeks ban on social media

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, DEC 3

A day after being massively trolled on the social media following a BJP MP's comments on GDP



Nishikant Dubey

which he had said that it has no relevance and should not be treated as 'Bible, Ramayan and Mahabharat', BJP MP Nishikant Dubey on Tuesday urged the government to frame a law to regulate social media with regard to Parliament proceedings. He also sought protection from the Lok Sabha Speaker for lawmakers from being trolled for their remarks made on the floor of the House.

Speaking during Zero Hour in Lok Sabha, Nishikant Dubey said following his comment on GDP on Monday, media, especially the social media, has criticised the statement. Many of the comments on social media were personal, he alleged.

During debate on Taxation Laws Amendment Bill, 2019 on Monday, Mr Dubey had said that the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has no relevance and it should not be treated as 'Bible, Ramayan and Mahabharat'.

Simon Kuznets, who designed GDP, in his report in 1934 said he himself was not satisfied by the GDP.

The statement on the GDP was made on basis of evidence which was not taken very well in the social media, Mr Dubey said, adding, abuses were lashed out to him and his family.

He pointed out that the proceedings of the House has to be properly reported.

Respond to Opp's attacks but with caution: Rajnath to MPs

He also asked party MPs to attend Parl discussions

NITIN MAHAJAN NEW DELHI, DEC. 3

Peeved over attacks by the Congress and opposition parties against Prime Minister Narendra Modi, BJP chief Amit Shah and finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman, BJP parliamentary party was told by defence minister and former BJP chief Rajnath Singh on Tuesday to retaliate, albeit within parliamentary maryada (dignity).

In an address to the parliamentary party meet, Mr Singh said the MPs need to be prepared to take on the opposition

when they term the Prime Minister and the home minister intruders and call the country's finance minister as "nirbala" (powerless).

A combative defence minister also asked the MPs to be prepared to defend their leaders and retaliate against the opposition lies. "The defence minister, however, asked them to be cautious in these counter measures and to maintain the maryada of the House while making any statements," sources stated.

The comments of the former BJP chief came soon after the leader of Congress in LS Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury made statements against the senior leadership of the BJP. Mr Singh also lamented the fact that several party MPs were not regular in attending the House proceedings, underlining Prime Minister Narendra Modi's dissatisfaction over lack of their adequate presence at many times.

The defence minister asked the party's elected representatives to maintain good attendance record and ensure presence in Parliament during discussion on important bills or issues.

CABINET TO CLEAR CAB TODAY

ANIMESH SINGH NEW DELHI, DEC. 3

While the whole of the Northeast is up in arms over the proposed Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB), the Centre, which was keen to bring the contentious law for clearance at the Union Cabinet meeting scheduled Wednesday, may now hold another meet-

ing the next day — Thursday, December 5 — to get the legislation cleared.

The change in plan had to be made after home minister Amit Shah's meeting with the chief ministers of all north-eastern states and other civil rights groups, which had begun on Tuesday evening, and is likely to continue till the early hours Wednesday. High drama and tense scenes were seen at the meeting, which at the time of reporting, was going on at Assam Bhavan in New Delhi. Apparently, all north-eastern states have threatened to stall the bill if there is no unanimity on its contentious aspects, sources said.



A German Parliamentary delegation pose for a photograph at the statue of Mahatma Gandhi at the Parliament House in New Delhi on Tuesday. —PRITAM BANDYOPADHYAY

Cong MLA slits palm to write anti-govt slogan with blood

MANOJ ANAND GUWAHATI, DEC. 3

In what has come as a shocker to many, an Assam Congress legislator on Tuesday slit his palm with a shaving blade at the entrance of the Assembly to write anti-government slogan with his blood.

The Congress MLA Rupiyoti Kurmi who is known for different protest within and outside the party forum on Tuesday staged a walk out from the state Assembly and sat in front of the entrance of the Assembly and slit open his left palm with a blade. He used the blood to

write slogan on a huge placard that he was carrying.

The slogan that was written in Assamese read that Assamese people's sentiments would not be allowed to be sold, in a direct reference to the Centre's move to amend the Citizenship Act of 1955 in order to give citizenship to non-Muslims from neighboring countries.

Mr Kurmi who wrote the slogan by his blood in front of television cameras that was streaming the incident live also demanded revival of two paper mills of Hindustan Paper Corporation Ltd. Whose liquidation has been ordered by the

Centre recently. He also alleged that the BJP-led government was planning to hand over the Namrup fertilizer factory and a tea garden to private companies.

Assam has witnessed strong protests against the privatisation move, with most demanding the government to revive the PSUs. "I took this step as the government has neglected the peaceful protest. Today's protest should be considered as a message that Assam would witness bloody protests in the days to come if the government does not listen to the peaceful protests and relent," he said.

The admission rate in govt school is less than 60%

'Govt must adopt PPP model for quality edu'

ANIMESH SINGH NEW DELHI, DEC. 3

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP and veteran film artiste Hema Malini on Tuesday in Lok Sabha criticised the laxity on part of several states including the party-ruled Uttar Pradesh towards implementing the Centre's education schemes, due to which the admission rate in government-run schools is poor and the student-teacher ratio is completely lopsided.

Highlighting the importance of introducing the public-private partnership (PPP) model in school education across the country, Ms Malini while speaking during Zero Hour, noted that it was



Hema Malini

only after the introduction of the Right To Education law (which was enacted by the erstwhile UPA regime) in 2009 that the number of schools had increased, teachers appointments had gone up and children's enrolment in government schools had seen



PARLIAMENT DIARY

BY GAUTAM LAHIRI

NEW MAHARASHTRA MINISTERS IN DELHI FOR LOBBYING



Some of the recently sworn-in Cabinet ministers of Maharashtra have reached the capital for lobbying with the Congress high command. Officially, they say that they had come for a courtesy call with Congress president Sonia Gandhi. But Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray has neither expanded his cabinet nor has decided the portfolios. On Tuesday, Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut got a huge reception from many MPs. Informally, it was discussed that for the time being Shiv Sena will keep the home portfolio and NCP will be given finance. Now, it's almost certain that both former CM Prithviraj Chavan and Ashok Chavan will be sworn in as Cabinet ministers. But speculation is going on who will get the irrigation portfolio as NCP's Ajit Pawar, who was facing a SIT probe, was ultimately given clean chit.

OPP IN RS FOLLOWS NEW STRATEGY TO DRAW ATTENTION OF CHAIR

Opposition members of Parliament (MPs) in Rajya Sabha were not sure whether their notice for a discussion on electoral reforms would be accepted by the chair. They have now formulated a new strategy for signing the notice to draw attention of the chair. Last week, the chair allowed detailed discussion on the economic situation of the country. Leaders of main Opposition parties have now decided to sign the notice by a fresh set of MPs who have not asked for discussion on any subject. As they have convinced the leaders of Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) for the discussion on electoral reforms, it's now sure that their demand will be accepted.

NAIDU'S LUNCH HOSTING IN MID-SESSION RAISES SPECULATION



Rajya Sabha chairman Venkaiah Naidu will host a lunch for some of the Opposition leaders on Wednesday where Union ministers will be present. Generally, the chairman hosts the lunch for the MPs at the end of the session. But hosting a lunch in the middle of the ongoing session has created lot of speculation. Now that the government is determined to bring Citizenship Act amendment bill in the current session of the Parliament, many MPs speculate whether the Rajya Sabha chairman has created a platform to discuss about the timing of tabling the controversial bill. Some MPs believe that though the Cabinet will meet on Wednesday, the decision for taking up the bill may take another day.

Chinese Navy presence grows in Indian Ocean

RAJIB CHOWDHURI KOLKATA, DEC. 3

The Chinese Navy has been found to have increased its presence in the Indian Ocean for snooping on India. The revelation comes close on the heels of reports of a PLA research vessel forced by the Indian Navy to return from the exclusive economic zone off Andaman & Nicobar Islands recently.

"The Chinese Navy is all over the Indian Ocean. Right now the Chinese Navy and Pakistan Navy are doing an exercise. It is the international water after 12 nautical miles. Everybody can come. You cannot stop it. But as long as we know they are present there, we track them," naval officer in charge (West Bengal) Commodore

► The revelation comes close on the heels of reports of a PLA research vessel forced by the Indian Navy to return from the exclusive economic zone off Andaman & Nicobar Islands recently

Suprobho K. De said at IVS Netaji Subhas on Tuesday on the eve of the Navy Day celebration.

"To enter the Indian Ocean, the ships have to pass through certain choke points like Strait of Malacca. As long as we can monitor those choke points, nobody can enter without being detected. Once you pick up, our aircraft can monitor the ship which moves slowly," he added.

Cmde De pointed out, "Say if we find a ship somewhere, it will be found by the aircraft in the same area after 10 hours for its slow speed. That is how we keep track. We can ensure full surveillance of the Indian Ocean with the P8i aircraft, a force multiplier."

He noted, "Snooping by the Chinese ships, including submarines' movements in the Indian Ocean has increased. Their boats are focussed. In next two years, they will have one more carrier. By 2050, they will have 10 aircraft carriers."

Cmde De also said that a plan has been made for showcasing a decommissioned Sea Harrier fighter aircraft at the proposed TU 142 museum on around two acres of land at New Town in Kolkata.

► She said that students in villages are not getting quality education and even in modern times, schools are running under trees.

an improvement after playgrounds and toilets had been set up for them. However she lamented the fact that despite the initiatives of the Centre, the situation is such that the admission rate of children in government schools is less than 60 per cent and children are not going to school. "This is mainly due to the fact that several states have not implemented the Centre's policies properly and shown a lot of laxity. I

have seen in many states like Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and even in Uttar Pradesh as well as in my own parliamentary constituency (Mathura) that four to five schools are running from a single building, and for 100 students only one teacher is there. While in many cases students are without teachers and vice versa," Ms Malini pointed out.

She further added that poor students in rural areas are not getting quality education and even in modern times, schools are running under trees. "Therefore to ensure quality education, Centre should take up the PPP model just like it is done in the field of higher education," the noted actress said.

Art attracts us only by what it reveals of our most secret self

Do what you feel in your heart to be right — for you'll be criticised anyway

DECCAN Chronicle

4 DECEMBER 2019

Homilies, impotent rage hide the sickness within

Parliament was rightly exercised over the gruesome crime against Hyderabad vet "Disha" (police officially adopted this pseudonym long after millions had already chanted her real name in street protests, social media posts and newspaper debates). She was the victim of a spontaneous crime by four men who then, perhaps fearing the consequences of their actions given the existing stringent punishment enacted by Parliament with the Nirbhaya law of 2013, burned her with diesel purchased "loose" at a nearby petrol pump. The nation is shocked, and that was reflected as members across parties rose to speak their anguish of a young and promising life snuffed out.

However, Parliament expressed its impotence by wrongly resorting to bloodlust. "Lynch them," said Rajya Sabha member Jaya Bachchan — in English. Vice-President Venkaiah Naidu spoke of showing no mercy to the rapist-murderers, just in case anyone was contemplating being merciful. Both he and Leader of Opposition Ghulam Nabi Azad spoke of bringing in stringent laws and nipping these crimes in the bud. Others used the occasion to settle political scores. A bunch of homilies which generated a lot of heat but shed no light.

The laws are stringent enough. Indeed, the law includes capital punishment which is of dubious value when it comes to deterrence of crime — nowhere in the world has capital punishment led to a downward trend in heinous crimes. Certainly none of the four accused would have thought that they might end up on the gallows when they suddenly hatched their plot, reportedly in a haze of alcohol. But as is increasingly the case, once they embarked on the crime and realised it could turn out badly for them, they burned Disha's body. It was not enough for them to get away with it, but it highlighted the trend of rapists killing their victims so as to wipe out any evidence

It is a fundamental change we have to bring to our collective thinking the pathology of which was manifest in Hyderabad lately by people searching porn sites for videos of Disha's rape, or by the sight of families stopping at the site where she was raped and killed — for a selfie

of their crime.

And still, in Parliament, they talked not just about capital punishment as a panacea for rape, but also of lynching. As it is, state-sanctioned murder is something civilised societies ought to steer clear of, and here some parliamentarians were talking of society-sanctioned mob violence. The test of our civility is our adherence to law in the face of the most heinous and ghastly crimes that occur.

As for nipping it in the bud: the only way to do so is for our glorious civilisation to overhaul itself. It is not just the patriarchy, or the objectification of women, or the putting on a pedestal the son by Mommy dearest, or our political leaders telling women what clothes to wear; it is a fundamental change we have to bring to our collective thinking, the pathology of which was manifest in Hyderabad lately by people searching porn sites for videos of Disha's rape, or by the sight of families stopping at the site where she was raped and killed — for a selfie. Truly, we are a sick society, and no

What's happening in Iran?

Since Iran's media isn't free and the state is authoritarian, and Western reporting must be viewed with caution due to the curbs in place, it isn't easy to ascertain the political impact of the protests that rocked the country in November, and the strong governmental repression that followed.

The protests after the November 14 rationing of already very cheap petrol, and raising of its price by 50 per cent, spread rapidly across Iran, suggesting public receptivity. At some places it turned violent. Initial reports of deaths after police firing were modest, but later Amnesty International spoke of 208 deaths, which Tehran denied.

This figure is unsubstantiated. But the official Iranian media too have spoken of many deaths in police action, though no figure was provided. What is undeniable is the frequency of large-scale public protests that spread quickly. In December 2017-January 2018, nationwide protests were set off by a hike in food prices. Two years later, petrol is the trigger.

Officially, Tehran accepts that 75 per cent of the population is vulnerable. The US sanctions under President Donald Trump's "maximum pressure" policy, after Washington resiled from the 2015 nuclear agreement with Iran last year, have evidently taken their toll. The economy contracted nine per cent, inflation is at 40 per cent, and unemployment is high. It's probably to address this situation that President Hassan Rouhani's government decided last month to cut petrol subsidies to meet other pressing needs of the bulk of the 82 million population.

But the timing of implementing the IMF-mandated move seems odd as parliamentary elections are due in two months. If that suggests a quiet move within the higher levels of the ecclesiastical regime to embarrass the moderate President, more information is needed for a confirmation.

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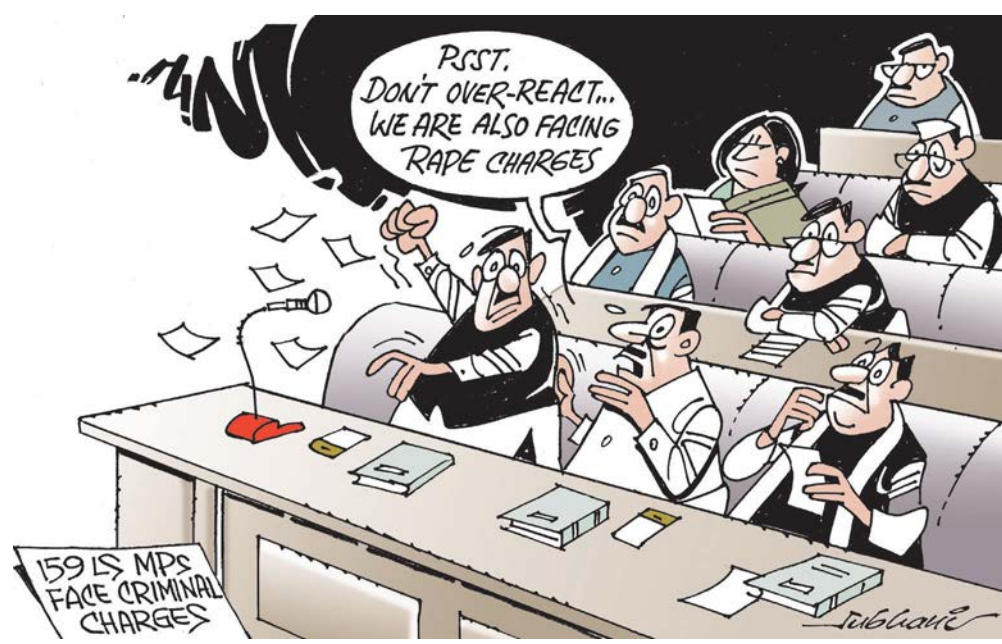
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Subhani



If trust breaks down, a society cannot survive



Patralekha Chatterjee

Dev 360

Imagine going to a restaurant, ordering a meal, paying for it, expecting to be served and then discovering that neither the dishes you ordered, nor anything else that you fancy, are available. Imagine if the person managing the place also tells that you can't have your money back since he does not have change, and that you can come back the next day for your meal. Or imagine the reverse — that you are a restaurant owner and a customer refuses to pay after having had a meal.

Luckily, this does not happen often because there is tacit trust between a consumer and a service provider and both parties respect the deal that something that has been consumed has to be paid for, and vice versa.

As we know from our day-to-day experience, without a degree of trust, no economic transaction is possible.

Trust lies at the heart of today's complex global economy.

Prosperous countries often tend to be those where business relations between people can be conducted on the basis of trust, such as Germany, Japan and (perhaps surprisingly) the United States, as political scientist Francis Fukuyama famously argued in his 1996 bestseller *Trust: The Social Virtues And The Creation Of Prosperity: Human Nature and the Reconstitution of Social Order*.

One should not have to reaffirm such first principles. But recent statements by several public figures, including a former Prime Minister, zeroing in on how mistrust is corroding not only the social fabric but also the health of the economy, tells you how critical it is to address the issue.

In a widely talked

about commentary in *The Hindu*, former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, a globally-renowned economist, linked the deeply worrying trends in the economy with a deeper underlying malaise. As nominal GDP growth falls to a 15-year low, joblessness rises to a 45-year high, household consumption sinks to a four-decade low, bad loans in banks breaking all records, and growth in electricity generation standing at a 15-year low, Dr Singh argued that the functioning of any economy is the result of the combined set of exchanges and social interactions among its people and institutions and that "mutual trust and self-confidence are the bedrock of such social transactions among people that foster economic growth. Our social fabric of trust and confidence is now torn and ruptured".

Lack of trust in the fairness of the system plays out at several levels. If you fear that your action or word may be misconstrued, you could retreat into a shell of silence and inactivity. Dr Singh said that many industrialists have told him that they live in fear of harassment by the government authorities, that bankers were reluctant to give new loans for fear of retribution and that entrepreneurs were hesitant to put up fresh projects for fear of failure attributed to ulterior motives.

In a commentary in the *New York Times*, titled "India and the Mistrust Economy", Kaushik Basu, a former chief economic adviser to the Government of India and now a Cornell University professor, also pointed out: "A drop in investment is usually connected to a lack of trust in the present and the near future. When businesses worry about

a country's policy environment, they hesitate to sink money into it."

Is it only economists who are critical of the Narendra Modi government and are flagging the urgent need to restore trust in the social and economic fabric of the country?

What should an ordinary Indian make of two eminent Indian entrepreneurs publicly talking about the debilitating nature of fear and the lack of trust in the past week?

Biocon chairperson and managing director Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw has been quoted in the media saying that the government did not want to hear any criticism of the economy, while expressing hope that it reaches out to India Inc to work out solutions to revive growth. Her observations come soon after veteran industrialist Rahul Bajaj told home minister Amit Shah at a public event in Mumbai that there was an "atmosphere of fear" and that people were afraid to criticise the government because they do not have the confidence that the government will appreciate any criticism.

Last year, Ravi Venkatesan, a well-known business leader and former chairman of Microsoft India, publicly pointed out that the strident and polarised debate around Aadhaar was actually a reflection of the fact that India is a low-trust society and this has profound consequences for our future.

"Why are so many people nervous about Aadhaar despite the assurances of the government and Nandan Nilekani, the well-respected father of

Aadhaar? It's the fear of descent into an Orwellian state. In the Hollywood conspiracy thriller, *Enemy of the State*, rogue elements of the American NSA use technology to falsely implicate the character played by actor Will Smith, gets him fired from his job, and shuts down his phone, credit cards and bank accounts. All these technologies are being deployed today so it's hard to dismiss them as mere fantasy. In a country where corruption is rampant, where trust in the government — any government — is low, where predatory rogue officials abound, where institutions are routinely subverted to settle scores and where the judiciary cannot be counted on to reliably uphold the rule of law and protect citizens' rights, it is no surprise that there is so much angst around the extension of Aadhaar to scenarios well beyond its original scope," Mr Venkatesan observed.

Much of what these eminent persons say is well known. They are articulating that the economy doesn't exist in a vacuum, that to do well it needs rules of the game, and it is the elected government's job to create institutions that make sure that the rules are fairly and equally applied to everyone. Without this, economic transactions, investment and risk-taking can't proceed with minimal costs and smoothly.

That is currently not happening in India. Arguably, the absence of trust between citizens and the state is not entirely a new phenomenon. But with the Indian economy in dire straits, articulation of these thoughts by public figures is something that can't be ignored. Shooting the messenger, or dismissing them as people with ulterior motives, would be unfortunate.

The writer focuses on development issues in India and emerging economies. She can be reached at patralekha.chatterjee@gmail.com

It is the elected government's job to create institutions that make sure that the rules are fairly applied to everyone. Without this, transactions, investment and risk-taking can't proceed with minimal costs and smoothly.

LETTERS

HYDERABAD CASE

It is not a surprise that Samajwadi Party MP Jaya Bachchan has advocated lynching of all the accused in the 25-year-old veterinarian rape and murder case in Hyderabad and many others have also sought capital punishment to be awarded to rapist-murderers. Of late, we come across many such rapes and murders freely committed mainly because of our legal system which drags such cases for years together. Meantime, the accused come out on bail and continue to lead a normal life unmindful of the mental and physical agony the victims and their families undergo. In some cases, they even get exonerated on benefit of doubt the prosecution failing to establish the case with right witnesses / evidences to nail them. Unless stringent laws are enacted to try such crimes in fast track courts with a reasonable timeframe to award punishment, this menace is going to continue unabated.

Shalini Gerald, Chennai

'INFILTRATOR' JIBE

Apropos your report on Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury's comment that both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and home minister Amit Shah are infiltrators. This is an insult to voters who had voted them to power. If the Congress feels that they are the infiltrators, then what about their own former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh and finance Minister P. Chidambaram, who got elected to the Rajya Sabha out of their own states. If they can migrate to other states to be in power, why not leaders like Modi and Shah. This is a stupid argument by the Congress leader, who owes an apology to voters who preferred Modi to govern the nation.

Capt N. Viswanathan, Coimbatore

LONE-WOLF ATTACKS

That lone-wolf terror attacks have continued to pose a grave threat to peace and tranquillity in Europe especially in bustling metros like London, the latest being the London Bridge knife attack, resulting in the death of two people. It is a pointer to growing radicalisation among youth and the imperative need to curb it through de-radicalisation programmes. The most dreaded terror group Islamic State (IS) may have been in shambles, but its radical ideology still remains a magnet for many youths across the globe and continues to motivate them to indulge in sinister acts of terror. While taking steps to eliminate terrorism in all its manifestations and forms, the international community needs to factor in the present pernicious trend of educated youth gravitating towards radical ideology and unleash terror. De-radicalisation efforts aimed at preventing youths to gravitate towards terrorism have assumed much significance than ever.

M. Jeyaram, Sholavandan



Umair Javed

Here's why the Chinese model is unsuitable for Pakistan's govt

Every few months or so, the demand for a 'presidential system' of government in Pakistan makes an appearance on various social media sites. This happens most prominently on Twitter, where a number of users share similarly worded tweets, all using the same hashtag.

On its own, there's nothing wrong with the demand for a constitutional redesign. Political systems are, theoretically, not set in stone, and neither are constitutions. Parties in a number of countries have contested for power on platforms that seek to change electoral systems, voting formulae, power-sharing arrangements between different social groups, and relations between the executive, legislature, and the judiciary. If anything, initiating a public conversation on institutional redesign is certainly more practical and preferable than cheerleading for ad hoc interventions by a particular organ of the state.

The most recent chorus of presi-

dential fetishism is also slightly different from previous iterations on at least two counts. One is its frequency, which seems to be picking up pace since this government took office in July 2018. It appears an ever-increasing number of people from one side of the partisan divide believe that the lack of executive authority with the Prime Minister's Office, the reliance on largely incompetent ministers, and the cumbersome legislative procedures required to push through 'change', are holding the country back.

The second change is the citation of two countries as case studies worthy of emulation — China and Turkey. While the infatuation with Erdogan has been around for a while, the systemic embrace of Turkey is relatively new. What's also interesting is that believers in the 'China model' seem to be increasing in proportion to the country's enhanced footprint on Pakistan's economic and strategic decision-making. The drawing room logic is some variant of 'if their sys-

tem allows them to build a motorway at lightning speed, it's surely worth importing'. Less facetiously, high growth rates, 'strict rule of law', zero tolerance for corruption, and the overall welfare success of this developmental model are usually cited as reasons for systemic emulation.

This is curious because China's actually existing political system (what drives its well-publicised growth story) is considerably under-discussed in mainstream political conversations across Pakistan. The print and electronic media doesn't report on China's domestic politics, and it rarely reveals any insight into what drives economic growth. There's a recurring caricature of strong leadership, mythical levels of anti-corruption, and decisiveness, in drawing rooms, WhatsApp groups, and TV studios alike, but that's where the depth of it ends.

Leaving aside the moral and functional desirability of parliamentary democracy in ethnically fractured societies, and China's own authori-

tarian behaviour with minority groups, it is worth clarifying some important features of China's political economy before embracing it as an ideal.

In an excellent new book on the past, present, and future of economic systems, titled *Capitalism, Alone*, Branko Milanovic draws a sharp contrast between two ideal types of capitalism that have shown relative durability. Liberal meritocratic capitalism, exemplified by the US, and increasingly characterised by plutocratic levels of inequality and disparity. And political capitalism, exemplified by China, which stands as the only present-day alternative to organising politics and economics in a particular configuration, since the imposition of communism (or state socialism).

China's political capitalism, according to Milanovic, rests ironically on certain pillars some of which seem to be at odds with its popular caricature in the Pakistani imagination. Tracing the current system

back to Deng's reform period, Milanovic argues that political capitalism exhibits two main features: The first is a highly skilled, technocratically efficient, and meritocratically recruited bureaucracy. This bureaucracy (which is clearly the primary beneficiary of the system) has as its main duty to realise high economic growth and implement policies that allow this goal to be achieved. Growth is ultimately needed for the legitimisation of continued bureaucratic and party rule.

The second feature is the absence of rule of law, rather than its unequivocal application. This, Milanovic argues, is necessary to ensure that the interests of businessmen (and the private sector in general) are never in a position to become primary drivers of government behaviour. Instead, the state retains authority and autonomy precisely because it can choose to apply the law to whomever and wherever it wishes.

By arrangement with Dawn

One who believes the US government perpetrated or allowed 9/11

A jobless person who has access to money — especially a trust fund income — and who affects a bohemian lifestyle

DECCAN CHRONICLE

WEDNESDAY | 4 DECEMBER 2019 | CHENNAI

Will Hyd get 5 acres to build a new Charminar?



Mohan Guruswamy

The Charminar is to Hyderabad what the Eiffel Tower is to Paris or the Hawa Mahal is to Jaipur. It is its signature monument. The former Hyderabad state had the Charminar on all its coinage. It is as old as Hyderabad itself.

Muhammed Quli Qutb Shah (1580-1611 CE), the fifth sultan of the Qutb Shahi dynasty of Golconda, laid the foundation of the iconic Charminar to symbolise the founding of Hyderabad. He was a contemporary of both Akbar and Jehangir. Hyderabad was intended as a citadel of Muslim power in the Deccan. Qutb Shah was an accomplished poet and wrote his poetry in Persian, Telugu and Urdu. His famous ghazal "piya baaj pyaala piya jaye na, piya baaj ek din jiya jaye na" is still a favourite at soirees today. While laying the foundation of Charminar, Qutb Shah

recited a couplet in Dakkhni: "Mere shahr logon se mamoor kar, Rakhiyo joto darya mein machhli jaise (Fill this city of mine with people as You filled the river with fishes, O Lord)." Clearly the Lord listened to his prayers, for now Hyderabad is India's fastest growing metropolis, and was listed by *National Geographic* magazine in 2015 as the second best place in the world to visit.

How Hyderabad came to be called that is a now a legendary love story that begins with the young prince falling in love with a beautiful Hindu woman he espied at the exact spot the Charminar stands today. More contemporary versions have another Salim-Anarkali tale in the Deccan. Only this time beauty was rewarded with a city. In 1589, Muhammed Quli Qutb Shah married the Hindu woman, Bhagmati, reputed to be a courtesan, who remained with him as his queen till his death in 1611. The sultan bestowed the title of Hyder Mahal on Bhagmati,



Charminar earlier; Charminar now



and hence the name of the new city came to be Hyderabad. Bhagmati's lowly origins evoked some harsh opinions. Shaikh Abu al-Faiz ibn Mubarak, popularly known by his pen name, Faizi, who was the Malik-ush-Shu'ara (poet laureate) of Akbar's court, after a visit to Hyderabad wrote to Akbar that the place commemorates "a hardened whore".

According to Jean de Thévenot, a French traveller of the 17th century whose narration was complemented with the available Persian texts, the Charminar was constructed in the year 1591, to commemorate the beginning of

the second Islamic millennium year (1000 AH). The event was celebrated far and wide in the Islamic world, thus Qutb Shah founded the city of Hyderabad to celebrate the event and commemorate it with the construction of this building. Due to its architecture, it is also called the Arc de Triomphe of the East.

There is now a sectarian conflict brewing out of a plan to expand the Bhagalaxmi Temple growing out of the south-eastern corner of Hyderabad's iconic Charminar. One must relate the name of this temple to the demand in cer-

tain rabid RSS quarters to rename the city as Bhagyanagar. A BJP MLA, Raja Singh, from the nearby Hindu-dominated constituency of Maharajganj, has been quite shrill about this. Given Bhagmati's questionable antecedents, the likes of Raja Singh need a better genealogy for Bhagyanagar, hence the concocted story of a temple of Bhagalaxmi. The existence of this shrine and its expansion now threatens the syncretic culture of Hyderabad.

Contrary to a widely held misconception, the monument has no religious overtones. It has never been used as a mosque. To me it

There is now a sectarian conflict brewing out of a plan to expand the Bhagalaxmi Temple growing out of the south-eastern corner of Hyderabad's iconic Charminar

an unauthorized construction. The Hyderabad high court has stopped any further expansion of the temple. While the origin of the temple is now disputed, the current structure that houses the idol was erected in the 1990s.

Several magazines and newspapers have published old photos that show the temple never existed. A temple became visible in the Charminar photos only after 1990.

I have been visiting the Charminar since I was a child and have also seen the small stone with vermilion applied, which grew from a passerby's whim to a small shrine, and now a full-blown temple. It is also said that a stone was placed in that corner as a RTC bus doing a turn around the Charminar brushed it, and the stone was placed to protect it from future errant drivers. In time the stone gathered vermilion on it. The present governor, a RSS appointee, even visited the temple to offer prayers, further sanctifying its illegality. It has grown like a giant carbuncle and right under the nose of the Charminar police station.

Over the years I have been asking various people in authority to demolish it. Neither the police, nor any chief minister or even the Majlis (MIM) leadership

care about it or dare to do anything about it. Now the temple's builders are claiming it was the Charminar that came up around it. This is a travesty, and an outright lie. This temple must be removed and the Charminar restored to its original conception. The two "then" and "now" photos tell the truth.

Over the years we have a tacit understanding that religious encroachments on public spaces and even property will not be removed, even if it causes the people much dislocation and distorts the original pristinity. Thus, we have mandirs and mazars rampantly encroaching on public space and our sensibilities. We need a serious conversation on this. Secularism does not mean indifference to lawlessness. It actually means greater respect for the law. Now that is something for the courts to once again define. I wonder how the courts will view the Charminar's desecration. Maybe they will give the people of Hyderabad five acres of land elsewhere to build a new Charminar?

The writer, a policy analyst studying economic and security issues, held senior positions in government and industry. He also specialises in the Chinese economy.

Ordinary Muslims ready to accept Babri ruling, but who's listening?



Javed Anand

The high priests of Indian Islam have decided to file a review petition challenging the recent decision of the apex court in the Ayodhya land dispute. In his recent column on these pages (Ayodhya: Seek compromise, don't stoke fires', Nov. 22) Saeed Naqvi indicated that a pollster is planning an opinion poll among Indian Muslims on where they stand on the mandir-masjid row. That, I think, is a splendid idea. Leaders don't think they ever need to consult the herd: the shepherd must herd his flock and that's that. So the outcome of the opinion poll may leave the self-proclaimed custodians of faith unmoved. But it could be an eye-opener for the rest of us. While we await the results of such a poll, for a foretaste of what the opinion seekers might find, here read the responses of three Muslims from three different districts of Maharashtra.

Meet Akbar Shaikh, a small farmer, author, poet and social activist from Ujni village in Madha taluka, Solapur. Asked what he thought of the proposed review petition, pat came the response: "Woh kahte hain masjid bachao, mai kehata hoon Musalman bachao" (They

say save the mosque, I say save the Muslims). He proceeded to add: "Hamare jaise naujawan Musalman apne paas ki masjid to jaate nahin; phir hajar meel door Ayodhya ki masjid ko bachane ki kisko padi hai? Hamare asli sawaalon par koyee kyon nahin jor deta? (Young Muslims like me do not even frequent our neighbourhood mosque; why on earth should we be worrying about a mosque a thousand miles away? Why doesn't anyone focus on what our real issues are?)"

Meet political activist Khalil Deshmukh, a native of Lasgaon village, Pachora taluka, Jalgaon. About 25 per cent of the population in this Hindu-majority village is Muslim. When the first gram panchayat was set up in Lasgaon in the 1950s, Khalil's father, Dada Miyan Deshmukh was elected the sarpanch and he stayed in that post for 12 uninterrupted years. Years later, Khalil was sarpanch for 10 long years. Even today, the Lasgaon village credit society is run by a team that looks up to Khalil for inspiration and direction.

Does Lasgaon not have a Hindu-Muslim, mandir-masjid problem? "It's not just my village, inter-community relations continue to be cordial in our part of

the world", says Khalil, "It's all a question of how we deal with issues as they arise."

By way of illustration, he cites an example from the time when he was sarpanch. In Lasgaon the gram panchayat office, an Urdu medium school and a small Maruti temple had stood cheek by jowl. In the late 1980s, Hindus demanded more space for a grander temple. "As sarpanch, I fully supported the demand. The gram panchayat office and the Urdu medium school were relocated and the whole issue was amicably resolved," Khalil recalls.

What does he think of the proposed review petition? Khalil: "Muslims must gracefully accept the verdict of the Supreme Court. Whether we agree with the judgment or not, we should desist from doing anything to vitiate the atmosphere. We should treat this issue as a closed chapter and concentrate on issues of peace and progress, for the community and the country."

Meet Halim Siddiqui, social activist and editor of *Bedari*, a monthly Urdu magazine published from Malegaon, a Muslim-majority textile town in north Maharashtra. A soft-spoken person, he normally measures his words. But ask him what he thinks about the review petition and he erupts.

"Review se kya nikle ga? Bus itna hi na ki hamare ulema aur digar Muslim leadron ki dukaan kuch aur saal chamkegi? Yeh sab hawayee jahaz se hawa mein udenge, taqreer jhadenge. Inke liye shahar

'Young Muslims like me do not even frequent our neighbourhood mosque; why on earth should we be worrying about a mosque a thousand miles away? Why doesn't anyone focus on what our real issues are?'

shahar mein shandaar dawatein sapenge. Babri Masjid to wapas banne se rahi, kya mile ga aam Musalman ko is review se? (What will the review achieve? Except that it will keep our ulema and other leaders in the limelight for some more years? They will fly around from city to city, deliver stirring speeches, feast on lavish spreads arranged in their honour. Forget the Babri mosque ever being rebuilt, what will the common Muslim gain from this review?)"

While the Babri mosque in Ayodhya remains among the top priorities of the ulema and leaders such as Asaduddin Owaisi, what continues to agonise Halim is the status of the Muslims of that temple town. Since the mosque's demolition in 1992, he has made three trips there, the last being two years ago. The purpose of his visit each time was the same: to talk to as many as he can, to understand their situation and to enquire if the national leadership which is so concerned with the mosque also ever thinks of the Muslims of Ayodhya.

"Except for Zafaryab Jilani who has been there once or twice, no religious or political leader has ever thought it fit to visit Ayodhya and meet those they claim to lead," laments Halim.

Here is how he began an article he wrote in *Bedari*, following his last trip to Ayodhya in 2017: "In Ayodhya there is no Muslim doctor, no lawyer, no engineer, no teacher. Muslims there do not have a single school or college of their own. There's not even a madarsa, no Muslim organisation, no businessman, no organisation for the welfare of the community worth mention... Such is the fate of Ayodhya's Muslims 25 years after the demolition."

The article notes that survival for a large number of Muslim families depends on the flower garlands the women make daily, for the Hindu pilgrims to offer to the gods at the over one thousand temples in Ayodhya. It also talks of the many mosques in the town which are routinely short of *namaazs*. And several others where no *namaaz* is offered post sunset as the local Muslims cannot afford to pay electricity bills.

For the Muslim leadership, the demolished Babri Masjid remains a national concern. As for the Muslims of Ayodhya, who cares?

The writer in convener, Indian Muslims for Secular Democracy, and co-editor, Sabrang India Online

Let's not abandon elders who suffer memory loss

Elisa Segrave

My beloved grandmother died at 90, and my mother at 89, after having Alzheimer's for 11 years. So I am not rattled by the old; I find their memory lapses challenging rather than frightening. (If I were the full-time carer of an elderly husband, it might be another matter. One woman described it as being strangled slowly by a python.)

I recently visited 96-year-old Sir Peregrine Worsthorne, former columnist, journalist and editor of the *Sunday Telegraph*, at his house in Bucks. In May, his wife (writer Lucinda Lambton) and a kind Croatian carer were present. This time, the two of us were alone for three hours. Perhaps this made it easier for Perry, and me, to focus.

I brought up key figures from his past. When I mentioned the deceased *Telegraph* writer Colin Welch, Perry responded: "Yes, we were great friends. We were at school together. We went into the army together. We were in a show together. His son came here a few days ago. He comes very often."

(I checked with Welch's daughter Frances and she confirmed all this; her brother Nick visits frequently.) He could recall some incidents with clarity. "Do you remember going to Italy, you and me?" he asked, with a

laugh. Yes, we had driven together from Pisa airport to his father-in-law's house. "I remember it all very clearly!" he declared.

At other times, his memories were more muddled. I mentioned Pamela Berry, wife of Michael Berry, his former *Telegraph* employer. "I was very fond of her. Is she still alive?"

When I said she'd died a while ago (1982), he exclaimed "Oh no!" and then declared: "She had a lavish life." What about old family? Did he remember his mother? "Very distantly." Although he was physically helpless for all of my visit, Perry retained his beautiful manners and seemed concerned when I brought his lunch that I might not be going to have some too. I found his company soothing and didn't mind that he couldn't always summon the words that were in his brain. After all, it was more frustrating for him than me.

Many readers will be familiar with the sorts of excuses one hears far too often from friends of those who are suffering from memory loss. "No point visiting. He's too far gone." "No, I haven't been to see her. I gather she's out with the fairies." Are diagnoses of Alzheimer's or dementia perhaps giving potential visitors a get-out? These medical terms, though important concerning medication and future cures, tend to separate 'us' from 'them'. There's also the fear of ending up like 'them', as is elo-

quently illustrated by the psychiatrist Colin Brewer's new book title: *O, Let me not get Alzheimer's*. Sweet Heaven! I understand it's painful to see someone you've known as full of life sometimes talking gibberish, but we must not abandon that person.

Cynthia Kee, who turned 90 in May, is another friend of mine with memory loss. It was in her house in Goodge Street that I first met Perry, at one of her parties. Cynthia can be vague about the present but she tells lively anecdotes about her early life. She was told she was too fat to be a dancer (though in her eighties she jitterbugged regularly at the 100 Club on Oxford Street) so instead she became a journalist. She got a job on *Smallholder* magazine.

For her first story she had to cover a reception — "John Innes No. 2 Compost". She ended up writing a weekly 'Pig and Poultry' piece. After winning the Vogue talent contest, she went on to work at the photojournalistic magazine *Picture Post*, and then became one of the few women in television at the time, where she found interviewees as a researcher on the BBC's *Tonight* programme. (Nina Simone, her favourite, asked Cynthia for "haff a boiled egg".)

We must keep listening to the very old. It's like panning for gold — every so often we may find treasure.

By arrangement with the *Spectator*

The right measure of life: Abide by Buddha's three great truths



Moin Qazi

"Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself."

— George Bernard Shaw

Epictetus was born into slavery in the eastern outreaches of the Roman empire. Sold as a child and crippled from the beatings of his master, Epictetus was eventually freed. He rose from

his bitter beginning to establish an influential school of Stoic philosophy. Epictetus dedicated his life to outlining the simple way to happiness, fulfilment, and tranquillity. Epictetus' teachings rank among the greatest wisdom texts of human civilisation. His greatness lies in simple yet sagely suggestions on how one can lead an ideal life.

At the heart of Buddha's teachings are the three great truths known as the Seal of the Tree Laws: first, "All things are impermanent," that is, all things and phenomena constantly change; second, "Nothing has an ego," which is to say, all things in the universe exist in interrelationship with one another; and third, "Nirvana is quiescence," that is, the ultimate freedom lies in getting rid

of greed, aggression and self-delusion. The law, or truth, "All things are impermanent," refers to the unceasing changes occurring in our minds, in all phenomena as also in solid, physical manifestation of matter as trees and stones.

Buddha believed that all things are impermanent subdues the proud and gives hope to the wretched, encouraging them both to make spiritual progress. By his own action he showed the wisdom of moderation.

He was born into a life of great luxury, and he soon got tired of it. Then he tried a life of excessive mortification, and before long he grew weary of that too. At last he chose a middle course and found true happiness in the doctrine of "nothing too much". He taught self-control as against self-indulgence. He was equally opposed to the intoxication of lust, the intoxication of power and the intoxication of conquest. An obsession with physical pleasure, Buddha believed, is the sign of the diseased and its craving for mastery over the weak.

Like Buddha, the true teachers have always emphasised the need for retaining the equilibrium between the material and spiritual scales of life. In an analogy, the Sufi master Rumi likens the world to a

river and the individual to a boat. In order to float the boat needs the support of water, but when the boat develops a hole the same water fills the boat and drowns it. Similarly, an individual needs certain basic necessities for his daily sustenance. But once these material things preoccupy his mind, they ruin him spiritually.

Sufis consider the spirit and body to be one whole. They believe in integration, not dichotomies. What we do in our physical lives affects us spiritually and vice versa. We cannot look at our lives in a vacuum. Spinoza says, "Nature abhors vacuum." He might as well have said that life abhors a vacuum. "Life," says Pavlov "loses its attraction when it no longer has any purpose. Those

who commit suicides make away with themselves because they feel life has lost its meaning."

Thus, the achievement of an ideal and perfect life is not restricted to any particular class of people, nor is it related with the degree of learning, wealth or power. It is a mindset that grows out of a pure heart. The Greek ideal of "the golden mean" and "nothing in excess" contains the true wisdom of life. Overindulgence in worldly pleasures leads to a state of ennui as the body needs to be tempered with the demands of the soul.

Moin Qazi is a well-known banker, author and Islamic researcher. He can be reached at moinqazi123@gmail.com





Endorsement

US President Donald Trump said he did not want to interfere in Britain's election, and that he thinks PM Boris Johnson is capable of doing a good job



They (predecessors) were unable to prevent the spread of Islamic extremism

—Gotabaya Rajapaksa
Sri Lankan President

IN BRIEF

Dutch police arrest rape gang

The Hague: Police have arrested eight men suspected of being part of a sex ring who drugged underage girls before gang raping them at a car workshop in southern Netherlands. The arrests were made in Den Bosch and comes after separate rape charges were filed by three girls aged 15-16. "The girls, who were believed to have been drugged, were then abused in their helpless condition by several men in the group. Sometimes violence was used. The girls met the men via social media," a cop said. An investigation started early this year and forensic detectives combed the workshop for clues in April.

Nijab corruption trial opens

Kuala Lumpur: Former Malaysian prime minister Najib Razak sought to show he was the victim of a cunning fugitive financier as he opened his defense on Tuesday in his first corruption trial linked to the multi-billion-dollar looting of the IMDB state investment fund. Najib is defending himself against seven charges of abuse of power, breach of trust and money laundering relating to 42 million ringgit that allegedly went into his bank accounts from SRC International, a former unit of the IMDB fund. The high court judge said it was clear Najib, who was also finance minister at the time, wielded "overarching authority and power" in SRC and had acted for personal gains.

Typhoon Kammuri hammers Manila

Manila: Typhoon Kammuri lashed the Philippines with fierce winds and heavy rain on Tuesday as hundreds of thousands took refuge in shelters and the capital Manila shut down its international airport over safety concerns. The powerful storm, which blew in windows and sheared off roofs, roared ashore late Monday and was due to pass south of Manila — home to some 13 million people — and thousands of athletes at the regional Southeast Asian Games. Forecasters said Kammuri had weakened but remained strong, with sustained winds of up to 150 kilometres per hour, and maximum gusts of 205 kph as it tracked northwest. "A lot of trees fell. There were a lot of roofs flying during the typhoon too," said Junie Castillo, a disaster officer in one of the areas first hit. "We have yet to quantify the extent of the damage."

LAM: U.S. LAW WILL HURT HONG KONG

Hong Kong, Dec. 3: Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam said US legislation supporting protesters may damage business confidence in the financial hub, as she announced a fourth round of relief measures to boost the city's battered economy.

Lam said the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act signed into US law last week was "wholly unnecessary", as the former British colony grapples with its first recession in a decade.

The act requires the US state department to certify at least annually that Hong Kong retains enough autonomy to justify favourable US trading terms, and threatens sanctions for human rights violations. "The impact currently is on confidence because corporates will be worried about the actions the US may take in the future after they review this legislation," Lam said, but did not specify what additional measures would be taken to boost economic activity.

2019 in top three hottest years on record, UN says

Climate change outpaces humanity's ability to adapt to it Extreme weather unhealthy

Madrid, Dec. 3: This decade is set to be the hottest in history, the United Nations said on Tuesday in an annual assessment outlining the ways in which climate change is outpacing humanity's ability to adapt to it.

The World Meteorological Organisation said global temperatures so far this year were 1.1 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial average, putting 2019 on course to be in the top three warmest years ever recorded. Man-made emissions from burning fossil fuels, building infrastructure, growing crops and transporting goods mean 2019 is set to break the record for atmospheric carbon concentrations, locking in further warming, the WMO said.

Oceans, which absorb 90 per cent of the excess heat produced by greenhouse

Geneva, Dec. 3: Climate change is harming human health as more people suffer from heat stress, extreme weather and mosquito-borne diseases including malaria, the World Health Organisation (Who) said.

The UN agency, in a report issued a day after a climate summit began in Madrid, urged governments to meet ambitious targets to reduce heat-trapping carbon emissions saying it could save a million lives a year

through lower air pollution alone. "Health is paying the price of the climate crisis. Why? Because our lungs, our brains, our cardiovascular system is very much suffering from the causes of climate change which are overlapping very much with the causes of air pollution," Maria Neira, director of Who's department of environment, climate change and health, said.

Yet less than 1% of international financing for cli-

mate action goes to the health sector, she said, calling it "absolutely outrageous".

Global temperatures could rise sharply this century with "wide-ranging and destructive" consequences after greenhouse gas emissions hit record levels last year, international climate experts warned last week. "Who considers that climate change is potentially the greatest health threat of the 21st Century," said a Who expert. — Reuters

— AFP

gases, are now at their highest recorded temperatures. The world's seas are now a quarter more acidic than 150 years ago, threatening vital marine ecosystems upon which billions of people rely for food and

jobs. In October, the global mean sea level reached its highest on record, fuelled by the 329 billion tonnes of ice lost from the Greenland ice sheet in 12 months. Each of the last four decades has been hot-

ter than the last. The report said more than 10 million people were internally displaced in the first half of 2019, due to extreme weather events such as storms, flooding and drought. — AFP

US PROPOSES FACE SCANS FOR TRAVELLERS

Washington, Dec. 3: The Trump administration intends to propose a regulation next year that would require all travellers, including US citizens, to be photographed when entering or leaving the United States, according to the administration's regulatory agenda.

The proposed regulation, slated to be issued in July by the homeland security department, would be part of a broader system to track travellers as they enter and exit the US.

The plan has already drawn opposition from some privacy advocates. Jay Stanley, a senior policy analyst with the American Civil Liberties Union, blasted the idea in a written statement on Monday.

"Travellers, including US citizens, should not have to submit to invasive biometric scans simply as a condition of exercising their constitutional right to travel," he said.

The Trump administration contends in its regulatory agenda that the face scan requirement will combat the fraudulent use of US travel documents and aid the identification of criminals and suspected terrorists.

The public typically has 30 to 60 days to comment on a proposed US regulation. The federal agency then needs to review and respond to comments, a process that can be time-consuming for major regulations. — Reuters

Sikh woman enters Pak sans visa to meet FB pal

Lahore, Dec. 3: In a filmy-style act, an Indian Sikh woman visiting the Gurdwara Darbar Sahib in Pakistan's Kartarpur tried to go to Faisalabad city of Punjab province without a visa to meet a Pakistani man she befriended on Facebook, officials said on Tuesday.

Manjit Kaur, in her early 20s, visited the Gurdwara Darbar Sahib via the Kartarpur corridor, some 125kms from Lahore, in last week of November, sources said.

Kaur, who was in touch with the man through Facebook, met him at the gurdwara and attempted to go along with him to Faisalabad by showing a Pakistani woman's permit.

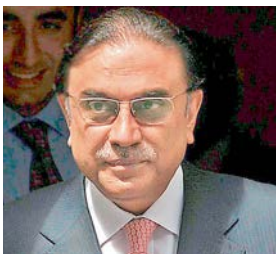
Indian pilgrims can visit the Gurdwara Darbar Sahib through the recently-opened Kartarpur corridor without visa but cannot go to the other parts of Pakistan.

"This is the first incident in which an Indian Sikh woman attempted to leave the restricted area of the Kartarpur corridor since its opening on November 9," a senior official of the Evacuee Trust Property Board said. He said the woman wanted to go along with the Pakistani man but the security officials did not let her cross the restricted area.

While Pakistani officials said she hailed from Amritsar, media reports in India claimed that she is from Rohtak, Haryana. "The security officials

Pak court to hear Zardari bail plea

SHAFQAT ALI | DC ISLAMABAD, DEC. 3



Asif Ali Zardari

Pakistan's Islamabad High Court on Tuesday fixed for hearing former president Asif Ali Zardari and his sister Faryal Talpur's bail petitions for today (Wednesday) in the money laundering through fake bank accounts and Park Lane corruption references.

A two-member bench of the court is scheduled to preside over the hearing of the bail applications filed by Farooq H Naek on behalf of both Pakistan People's Party leaders. The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) and Accountability Court No. 2 have been made respondents in the petitions.

Earlier, Zardari filed a bail plea on medical grounds whereas Talpur sought bail from the same court while pleading with the court that she was a mother of a differently-abled child, and therefore she needed to take care of that child.

Zardari has maintained that he is suffering from a heart ailment and has had three stents placed in his

body. He said that he also suffers from diabetes which means that he has to constantly monitor his blood sugar levels.

The PPP co-chairperson's medical reports were submitted along with the application to the IHC. Zardari, who has been detained on charges of money laundering through fake bank accounts and is presently undergoing treatment at the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences, agreed to file a bail plea on medical grounds at the insistence of his family members.

On November 12, an accountability court in Islamabad had rejected Zardari's application for transferring him to Karachi for treatment.

security officials detained the man along with his two friends, including a woman. —PTI

NAB freezes Sharif assets

DC CORRESPONDENT ISLAMABAD, DEC. 3

Pakistan's National Accountability Bureau (NAB) has tightened the noose around Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) President Shehbaz Sharif, and further froze his family assets on Tuesday.

Shehbaz Sharif will not be able to benefit from his family's assets which are

allegedly based on TT (telegraphic transfer).

The anti-graft body has ordered to freeze 96-H, Model Town — Shehbaz Sharif's residence in Lahore. The PML-N leader's 9-kanal home in Abbottabad has been frozen as well.

Furthermore, it has also been ordered to freeze the assets of Tehmina Durrani — one of the wives of Shehbaz Sharif.

Meanwhile, senior PML-N leader Ahsan Iqbal chaired a meeting of joint opposition to deliberate on the appointment of Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) members. Consultation on the names for hiring of two ECP members and Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) was carried out with participants belonging to other political parties including PPP.

Christmas feast



A diver dressed as Santa Claus feeds a ray at the aquarium of the Multimar Wattforum national park centre in Toenning, northern Germany, during a rehearsal for a visitor event on St Nicholas Day. — AFP

Amnesty: 208 killed in Iran protests, violence

Dubai, Dec. 3: At least 208 people in Iran have been killed amid protests over sharply rising gasoline prices and a subsequent crackdown by security forces, Amnesty International has said, as one government official acknowledged telling police to shoot demonstrators.

Iran has yet to release any nationwide statistics over the unrest that gripped the Islamic Republic beginning November 15 with minimum prices for government-subsidised gasoline rising by 50 per cent. Iran's mission to the United Nations disputed Amnesty's findings early Tuesday, though it offered no evidence to support its claim.

Iran shut down internet access amid the unrest, blocking those inside the country from sharing their videos and information, as well as limiting the outside world from knowing the scale of the protests and violence.

The restoration of the internet in recent days across much of the country has seen other videos surface.

"We've seen over 200 people killed in a very swift time, in under a week," said Mansoureh Mills, an Iran researcher at Amnesty. "It's something pretty unprecedented event in the history of the human rights violations in the Islamic Republic."

While not drawing as many Iranians into the streets as those protesting the disputed 2009 presidential election, the gasoline price demonstrations rapidly turned violent faster than any previous rallies.

That shows the widespread economic discontent gripping the country since May 2018, when President Donald Trump imposed crushing sanctions after unilaterally withdrawing from Tehran's nuclear deal with world powers.

Since the summer, tensions across the Mideast have spiked with attacks the US blames on Tehran. Iran, meanwhile, began to break the deal's centrifuges, enrichment and stockpile limitations with hopes of pressuring Europe to offer it a way to sell crude oil abroad despite Washington's sanctions.

In a statement on Monday, Amnesty said there had been dozens of deaths in the Tehran suburb of Shahriar, likely one of the areas with the highest toll of those killed in the unrest. Shahriar had seen heavy protests. Amnesty offered no breakdown for the deaths elsewhere in the country, though it said "the real figure is likely to be higher." Mills said there was a "general environment of fear inside of Iran at the moment. — AP

■ IRAN'S mission to the United Nations disputed Amnesty's findings, though it offered no evidence to support its claim.

■ Iran shut down internet access amid the unrest, blocking those inside the country from sharing their videos and information with the outside world

'RIOTERS' SHOT AND KILLED, ADMITS IRAN

Dubai, Dec. 3: Iranian state television on Tuesday acknowledged security forces shot and killed what it described as "rioters" in multiple cities amid recent protests over the spike in government-set gasoline prices — the first time that authorities have offered any sort of accounting for the violence they used to put down the demonstrations.

The acknowledgment came in a television package that criticised international Farsi-language channels for their reporting on the crisis, which began on Nov. 15.

The state TV report sought to describe killings in four categories, alleging some of those killed were "rioters who have attacked sensitive or military centres with firearms or knives, or have taken hostages in some areas." The report described others killed as passers-by, security forces and peaceful protesters, without assigning blame for their deaths.

In one case, the report said security forces confronted a separatist group in the city of Mahshahr armed with "semi-heavy weapons." "For hours, armed rioters had waged an armed struggle," the report alleged. "In such circumstances, security forces took action to save the lives of Mahshahr's people." — AP

WORKPLACE | WOES

Strict office dress codes force women to wear high heels, stockings and makeup

Japanese activists urge changes to anti-harassment code

Tokyo, Dec. 3: Yumi Ishikawa's feet bled after a day in the high heels required by her job, a memory that led her and other Japanese activists to demand on Tuesday that forcing women to wear certain items be treated as workplace harassment.

Japanese women took to social media in November to insist on the right to wear spectacles at work after reports employers were imposing bans, the latest outcry against strict



office dress codes that included forcing women to wear high heels, stockings

and makeup, and even stipulating what colour

hair they can have.

The labour ministry drafted guidelines in October against workplace harassment — known as "power harassment" or "power hara", but failed to address the issue of employers dictating how female employees should dress. "You might think this is nothing, but the fact is that some peoples' lives have been changed because of these rules," Ishikawa, an actress and activist, told a Tuesday

news conference.

"People have hurt themselves wearing high heels and all of these people are women. If we're working the same jobs, we have the right to work under the same conditions."

Just hours before, Ishikawa and other activists submitted papers to the labour ministry calling for such dress codes to be seen as power harassment under the new guidelines, expected to be finalised this month.

Ishikawa earlier this year began the #KuToo protest movement, sparked by her own memories of being forced to wear 7-cm (2.8-inch) heels at a job at a funeral parlour as well as numerous similar stories from other women.

The movement swelled into a viral outcry on social media about women being forced to wear high heels. Over 31,000 people have to date signed an online petition against it. At the time, one cabinet minister said

dress code expectations were "necessary and appropriate" at the workplace, though several have since commented that the reports of women being forced to wear contact lenses instead of spectacles at work appeared to violate gender equality rules.

"That's why it was such a shock to not have anything about this in the draft anti-harassment guidelines," she said. — Reuters

Thomas
Cook gets
brand right
for India,
LankaTrump sees
no deadline
for a China
trade deal

Overleaf

quick
BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	40,675.45	-0.31
Nifty 50	11,994.20	-0.45
S&P 500	3,079.49	-1.10
Dollar (₹)	71.83	+0.01
Pound Sterling (₹)	93.32	+0.62
Euro (₹)	79.62	+0.54
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	38,768.816	2.15
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	\$61.06	+0.14
IN 10-Yr bond yield	+6.462	-0.022
US 10-Yr T-bill yield	+1.759	-0.077

* As of 9:30 pm IST

₹2.79 L cr raised
via selloff in
last five years

The government raised Rs 2,79,622 crore from the disinvestment of PSUs during 2014-19 compared to Rs 1,07,833 crore during the 10-year UPA rule from 2004-14, Union minister Anurag Singh Thakur said in the Rajya Sabha. "In five years, we raised double the amount. This was done in an average 21 transactions each year, while it was four between 2004-2014," he said.

19 lakh director
identification
numbers spiked

The Corporate Affairs Ministry has deactivated over 19 lakh director identification numbers (DIN) for non-compliance with KYC norms. Individuals are required to have a DIN issued by the ministry to serve as a board member of a company. As on Nov. 28, 19,40,313 DINs have been de-activated, Minister of State for Corporate Affairs Anurag Singh Thakur said.

MPC starts
deliberations on
monetary policy

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das-headed Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) started its three-day deliberations on the policy review amid high expectations of another round of reduction in the key policy rate to revive the sagging economy. If the RBI cuts the repo rate on Thursday, it would be the sixth reduction in the short-term lending rate in 2019.

Nearly 3% of
Mudra loans
turn bad: Govt

The government on Tuesday said 2.86 per cent, Rs 17,251.52 crore, of Rs 6.04 lakh crore worth of loans sanctioned under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) has turned into bad loans as of March 2019. The scheme was launched on April 8, 2015 for providing collateral-free loans of up to Rs 10 lakh to non-corporate, non-farm small/micro enterprises.

Interim stay follows appeal by Bajaj Finance & private banks
Transfer of stocks to Karvy
clients halted on SAT orderASHWIN J PUNNEN
MUMBAI, DEC. 3

The Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT) has directed the National Securities Depository (NSDL) to stop transfer of the remaining investor securities that Karvy Stock Broking had pledged with lenders.

The decision came after Bajaj Finance challenged Sebi's decision to return to Karvy's clients the securities that the broking house had illegally pledged to raise money for itself.

Issuing an interim stay, a two-member SAT bench comprising MT Joshi and C.K.G. Nair said the final order will be issued Wednesday afternoon.

The tribunal also asked the Securities and Exchange Board of India to hear out the lender's concerns by December 4 and pass an order by December 10.

NSDL has transferred securities worth Rs 2,013.77 crore to the accounts of 83,806 clients who have paid full amount for these securities.

Lenders fear that they would be unable to recover



money from the brokerage once the pledged shares are shifted to clients' accounts.

Karvy has taken loans to the tune of Rs 600 crore by pledging securities worth more than Rs 2,300 crore of 95,000 clients with various lenders, including Bajaj Finance.

Of these, 95,000 clients, nearly 83,000 have got back their securities, which were illegally transferred by KSB to its own account.

Bajaj Finance, which appealed against the Sebi-NSDL decision, has given loans to the tune of Rs 345

crore to Karvy against pledged securities.

Most of the remaining accounts are in dispute with Karvy Stock Broking, so they may get their money/securities only after clearing dues with Karvy.

The latest SAT ruling puts a question mark on the receipt of securities for these investors.

Bajaj Finance had lent Rs 100 crore after Sebi's June circular that mandated segregating client and proprietary accounts. This could indicate that Bajaj Finance does not have a strong

claim in the case.

Separately, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank and IndusInd Bank have also approached the SAT contesting the Sebi decision.

Since most shares were kept as securities for loans made by banks, any "unilateral" transfer of shares will have a chilling effect on this stream of lending, they argued.

HDFC Bank has lent Rs 400 crore to Karvy based on the pledged shares.

The counsel for the banks sought immediate freezing of all securities that have been transferred to client accounts. "Pledged shares cannot be transferred without the consent of the banks," the counsel said.

The counsel further argued that going forward banks will be forced to seek additional collateral from all brokers due to Sebi's December 2 action.

The SAT also asked the National Stock Exchange to take a decision on Karvy's trading licence by December 6. Both NSE and BSE suspended Karvy's trading licence on Monday.

The regulator, through an order passed on November 22, had barred KSB from taking new clients in respect of its stock broking activity and also prevented it from using the power of attorney (PoA) given by clients after the broker was found to have allegedly misused clients' securities.

The order was a result of a preliminary report forwarded by the NSE on the non-compliances observed with respect to pledging/misuse of client securities by Karvy.

The SAT has asked the regulator to hear "the appellant (Bajaj Finance) on the basis of their representation dated November 23, and or any other additional representation which they may like to make."

If the appellant is desirous to make any additional representation it shall be made latest by December 4.

It further directed Sebi to consider the representation(s) of the appellant and, after giving an opportunity for personal hearing, pass an order as per law latest by December 10.

Foreign control of
airlines mulled to
push Air India saleSHRUTI SRIVASTAVA
NEW DELHI, DEC. 3

The government is considering amending a rule to allow overseas control of local airlines, according to a person familiar with the matter, which may help its indebted national carrier lure a foreign suitor after multiple failed attempts for a sale.

At a meeting in early November, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) asked the aviation ministry if it would be feasible to change the so-called "substantial ownership and effective control" clause, the person said, asking not to be identified as the details aren't public yet.

The rule mandates that control of an airline always remain in Indian hands, one of several reasons global firms have been wary of bidding for Air India Ltd.

Doing away with the "substantial ownership" clause will enable an overseas stakeholder weigh in on major decisions of local airlines. That may lure foreign investors to the Air India sale without forcing

the government to go down the politically contentious route of lifting the cap on overseas equity investment.

Currently, foreign airlines are barred from buying more than 49 per cent in a local carrier, and foreign investors, other than airlines, need government approval to buy a stake bigger than 49 per cent.

An email to the DPIIT was unanswered. A representative for the aviation ministry didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her budget speech in July had said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government will look into suggestions of opening up sectors, including aviation, to more foreign investment. It has already eased rules in a number of areas such as retail, manufacturing and coal mining.

—Bloomberg

Sugar production
halves in Oct-NovFC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, DEC. 3

Sugar production fell 54 per cent during October-November owing to a steep fall in output at several Maharashtra sugar mills, which were hit by drought and floods, the Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA) said on Tuesday.

"Sugar production till November 30, 2019 in the current 2019-20 sugar season is 18.85 lakh tonne, which was 40.69 lakh tonne last year on November 30, 2018," ISMA said.

India is the world's largest sugar producer and lower output here could push up sugar prices globally.

Production in Maharashtra fell to 67,000 tonnes during the two-month period compared with 1.9 million tonnes a year ago. Last month, the trade

body had said that sugar output was estimated to fall 21.5 per cent to 26 million tonne in the 2019-20 marketing year. The sugar season or marketing year runs from October to September.

Only 279 sugar mills were operating as on November 30 this year compared with 418 units crushing sugarcane a year ago, ISMA said in its latest statement.

According to the data, sugar production in Uttar Pradesh increased to 10.81 lakh tonne during October-November from 9.14 lakh tonne in the year-ago period. In Karnataka, the output dropped to 5.21 lakh tonne from 8.40 lakh tonne.

Trade and market sources said about 15 lakh tonne of sugar has been contracted for exports, which includes contracts made with port-based refiners.

Stock limits tightened as
onion heads to ₹150 a kg

Kolkata/New Delhi, Dec 3: Onion prices could soon touch a new high of Rs 150 per kg in the Kolkata mandis, traders and analysts said, even as the central government imposed stock limits on onion trade on Tuesday.

In most markets of the eastern metropolis, the vegetable is being sold at Rs 110-130 per kg, which is expected to rise to Rs 150 a kg if wholesale prices are any indication, they said.

"At Nasik, the highest wholesale rate was Rs 5,400/40 kg, which translates to Rs 135 a kg," agri analyst Sibul Malakar said. Onions will be dear at least till January, when the new crop hits markets in Nasik and Bengaluru, a trader said.

In order to curb the rising prices, the Centre on Tuesday reduced the stock holding limit for retailers



and wholesalers to 5 tonnes and 25 tonnes, respectively.

Earlier, retailers were allowed to hold onion stock up to 10 tonnes and wholesalers up to 50 tonnes. Now, they can hold half of it, as per an order issued by the Consumer Affairs Ministry.

The revised stock holding limit would not be applicable for imported onions.

Onion prices have been ruling high for the past few weeks even as various measures have been initiated to increase supply of

the key kitchen staple.

The Centre has already banned onion exports and decided to import 1.2 lakh tonnes.

Sources had on Sunday said that state-owned trading firm MMTC, which is importing onion on behalf of the Centre, has placed an order of 11,000 tonnes of the edible bulb from Turkey.

Many traders in Kolkata claimed that the vegetable is being illegally exported to neighbouring Bangladesh from the border areas of West Bengal.

—Agencies

Govt committed to
more reforms: FMFC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, DEC. 3

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, on Tuesday, said the government is committed to further reforms for making India a more attractive investment destination.

"I only can invite and assure that the Government of India is committed to further reforms in various sectors whether it is banking, mining or insurance and so on," Sitharaman said, addressing the India-Sweden Business Summit here.

Though the minister did not reveal more, she has indicated that the government is addressing challenges faced by industry, not just Indian-owned but all operational industries present in India.

She invited Swedish firms to invest in infrastructure development projects. "Our step of corporate tax reduction shows how much our government believes in reforms. There are many more steps that we have to take," she said, adding that the government has formed a task force, which will come out with a list 10 major infrastructure projects by December 15.

The finance ministry, meanwhile, said public sector banks have disbursed a record Rs 4.91 lakh crore of loans during October-November, as part of the govern-

Tax dept
issues 2.1 cr
tax refunds

New Delhi, Dec. 3: The Income Tax Department processed as many as 2.10 crore tax refund cases, returning back over Rs 1.46 lakh crore in first eight months of 2019-20, up 20 per cent over the last year, officials said. The Centralised Processing Centre processed 4.70 crore tax returns between April 2019 and November 28. —PTI

ment-mandated outreach programme.

Banks disbursed Rs 2.52 lakh crore in October and Rs 2.39 lakh crore in November, taking the total disbursement to Rs 4.91 lakh crore.

To boost consumption and revive the economy, Sitharaman had in September asked banks to reach out to customers and signal their willingness to lend, particularly to MSMEs, shadow banks, corporates, retail and agriculture sector borrowers.

During the two months, banks have given Rs 72,985 crore to the MSME sector while loans to corporates stood at Rs 2.2 lakh crore. For NBFCs, the banks disbursed Rs 45,153 crore.

Gold imports surge 78% in November

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, DEC. 3

Post-festive season, gold imports surged 78 per cent month-on-month in November, touching a five-month high. However, it was still down from the imports in November 2018.

The country imported 71 tonnes of gold in November, compared with 40 tonnes in October, reports quoting government officials said. Even five months ahead of the festive season in October, the monthly imports were lower than that in November. In value terms,

November imports totalled \$2.94 billion, slightly higher than last year's \$2.76 billion.

According to P. R. Somasundaram, Managing Director, India, World Gold Council, the trade had enough stocks in the run up to the festive season. Hence the imports were lower during the previous months as well as in October.

Post-festive season, the bullion dealers and jewellers found an opportunity to replenish their stocks when the prices fell by around Rs 200 per gm from record

high levels in the domestic market. Further, the last quarter of the calendar year usually sees a higher consumption. "Higher import in November makes sense as the prices have stabilised and the market expects the demand to return in the fourth quarter," an industry expert said.

Unrefined dore imports too have bounced back after the discounts went off and gold started becoming available in the bullion market for a premium over the landed rate. This also

is an indicator of a potential demand in the retail market.

The share of dore in India's gold imports in November was 33 tonnes, compared with imports of 8.5 tonnes in October, as per reports. According to industry experts, the government calculates dore in absolute terms and not the gold derived out of the dore. If one has to consider the refined gold, the imports will be slightly lower than 71 tonnes.

However, imports were still down 16 per cent from November 2018 levels, indicating that the market sentiments are not that strong.

Gandhi-giri comes full circle with bots and artificial intelligence

RITWIK MUKHERJEE
KOLKATA, DEC 3

Now, bots and artificial intelligence too will join efforts to preserve the Gandhian legacy. IIT KGP has teamed up with the National Council of Science Museums and IIT Gandhinagar to develop Gandhipedia, a one-stop portal for browsing Gandhian literature, life-events and his social network. Phase-I of the project will involve digitisation and indexing of over 40 books of M. K. Gandhi

which will be released and searchable on the portal. The books will be further used to reconstruct the social network of the Mahatma, including his influencers and people whom he inspired.

"We will initially use his book *My Experiments with Truth* for reconstructing the social network. This work would require AI enabled tools to read the indexed and digitized version. The results will be visualised by the modern powerful network visualisation tools and a dash-

board of network statistics," said Prof Animesh Mukherjee from IIT Kharagpur's department of computer science and engineering who is leading the project.

The first phase will also involve launching of social bots on Twitter that can regularly post text excerpts from Gandhiji's works and observe how these posts spread over the social media.

"There will be two types of bots—(a) event-agnostic and (b) event-specific bots. In the event-specific case,

as a first pilot we shall consider a crisis event and try to check whether the social bots are able to reduce the spread of hatred, fear and trauma among the public by injecting positive and motivating thoughts from the writings of the Mahatma," said Prof. Mukherjee.

"Gandhipedia will reinforce learning from an unbiased and un-opinionated real time insights easily about Gandhian values which are uplifting, motivating, revolutionising

and tailored to the needs of the browser. An interactive conversation assistance will certainly add value and enable youth and people to rethink and take action on Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy, life and thoughts," said Dr. Shobhana Radhakrishna, Chief Functionary at Gandhian Forum for Ethical Corporate Governance.

The phase-I is expected to be completed by March 2020. It will be followed by four more phases continuing year wise till March

2024. These phases would involve increasing the number of digitized publications by processing 100 volumes of collected works of Mahatma Gandhi, each volume containing several letters, speeches, chapters, etc. and further scaling up the social network construct for all of these hundred books.

"We hope to include research work on Gandhiji which are otherwise not referred to in popular Gandhian literature. The aim is to create a system

that can be used by any age-group for understanding the life-events of Mahatma. It might present some very interesting serendipitous relations among different personalities, which are otherwise not yet explored/studied," said Prof Mayank Singh of IIT Gandhinagar.

In the later phases of the project the researchers have plans to include similar digitised works (books, writings, thesis, etc.) of other freedom fighters to mark the 75th year of Independence.

OPENING BELL
PROJECTION FOR TODAY

Market cautious ahead of MPC meet

The market fell in line with weakness in Asian markets as the US slapped tariffs on imports from Brazil and Argentina opening a new front in global trade war. The Sensex closed at 40,675.45, down 0.31 per cent or 126.72 points, while the Nifty settled at 11,994.20, down 0.45 per cent or 54 points.

Banking stocks saw selling pressure as investors took a cautious stance ahead of the RBI monetary policy meet outcome this Friday. Of the 19 sectoral indices, 15 closed in the red and 4 ended in the green.

Technical View

"The market recovered from the lows of 11960 and closed around the levels of 12000. Real estate and consumer durable stocks showed signs of fresh buying from experts. Technically, it seems that the market is going to consolidate ahead of the announcement of credit policy which is due on 5th December. Nifty should remain between the range of 11900 and 12150 and our strategy should be to buy on dips," said Shrikant Chouhan, Senior Vice-President, Equity Technical Research, Kotak Securities.

"Technically, Nifty made a lower high for third consecutive session and formed a red body candle on daily chart. On hourly chart, we witnessed Head & Shoulder pattern breakdown; however, it is hovering around lower end of a Rising Channel. The momentum oscillator RSI indicates a negative divergence on daily chart and till the time, Nifty sustains below 12000 - 12025 zone, we may see a profit booking move towards 11850 - 11800 levels. On the flipside, 12158 levels remains major hurdle for the index," Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Retail Research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Private Ltd.

Market View

Foreign institutional investors sold shares worth Rs 1,731.33 crore in the capital market in the previous session.

"Domestic markets remained muted on account of downbeat global sentiments after US reinstated tariffs on Argentina and Brazil and threatened even harsher penalties on dozens of popular French products" said Paras Bothra, President of Equity Research, Ashika Stock Broking.

— Ashwin J Punnen

Thomas Cook gets brand right for India, Lanka



SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, DEC. 3

Travel service provider Thomas Cook India (TCIL) will be acquiring rights to use the iconic brand in India as well as Sri Lanka and Mauritius for a one-time payment of Rs 13.9 crore.

TCIL has signed an agreement with AlixPartners, Thomas Cook UK's appointed Special Managers in this regard. TCIL has been in talks with the liquidator of its UK namesake as it has the right to use the brand in India only till 2024. Now on, TCIL can use rights in perpetuity on a royalty-free basis. TCIL was previously paying an annual brand licence fee of Rs 2 crore to TCUK, the company informed the stock exchanges.

"In 2012 when TCIL were acquired by Fairfax Financial Holdings of Canada, we had entered into a Brand Licence Agreement with the erstwhile Thomas Cook Group of the UK to give us exclusive use of the brand until 2024 across India, Sri Lanka and Mauritius for an annual licence fee of Rs 2 crore. So when this very attractive investment opportunity of complete ownership of the brand name across these markets, for a one-time payment of Rs 13.9 crore came up, it truly was an opportunity we had to grab!", Madhavan Menon, Chairman & Managing Director, Thomas Cook (India) said.

This move by TCIL also prevents possible new entrants into these markets, using the brand name after 2024. "We had two options. We could either get the brand forever from the liq-

uidator or go for a new brand after the tenure to use the current one ceases," said Rajeev Kale, President and Country Head - Holidays, MICE, Visa, Thomas Cook India. Building a new brand would have been an arduous and expensive task for the company.

In addition to Thomas Cook, the Thomas Cook India Group operates leading B2C and B2B travel brands including SOTC, TCI, SITA, Asian Trails, Allied T Pro (ATP), Australian Tours Management (ATM), Desert Adventures, Luxe Asia, Kuoni Hong Kong, TC Travel, Private Safaris East & South Africa, Sterling Holidays and Digiphoto Entertainment Imaging (DEI), with strategic investments in Ibhaka by Travel Junkie Solutions.

Unlike its UK namesake, which has gone into liquidation, TCIL is financially strong. It has operations in 29 countries and five continents, a team of over 9,700 and had combined revenue in excess of Rs 6718.7 crore for 2018-19.

It has cash and bank deposits balances of Rs. 1088 crore as of September 30, 2019. On a standalone basis Thomas Cook India is debt-free and the group generates an average annual free cash flow of around Rs 200 crore.

US President prefers to wait for 2020 election next Nov. Trump sees no deadline for a China trade deal

DEREK WALLBANK & JORDAN FABIAN DEC. 3

President Donald Trump signalled he would be willing to wait for another year before striking a trade agreement with China, casting doubt on the likelihood of a phase-one accord within weeks between Washington and Beijing.

"I have no deadline," he told reporters Tuesday on London when asked if he wanted an agreement by year end.

Stocks dropped in Europe and US equity futures sold off as Trump's comments indicated no urgency to reach a deal by Dec. 15, which US Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross on Monday called a "logical deadline." The Trump administration has threatened to impose tariffs on more Chinese imports starting that day. Those levies would hit American consumer products such as smartphones, toys and children's clothing just before the Christmas holiday.

"If nothing happens between now and then, the president has made quite clear he'll put the tariffs in — the increased tariffs," Ross said on Fox Business Network.

A flurry of US trade moves in the past 24 hours has eroded investor optimism that Trump would ease up on tariffs that have slowed the global economy. Rather than ratcheting down trade tensions, Trump is indicating confidence that his import taxes are good for America.

"US markets are up as much as 21 per cent since the announcement of

France vows retaliation

WILLIAM HOROBIN, JENNY LEONARD & LAURA DAVISON DEC. 3

France's government said the European Union would retaliate if the US follows through on a threat to hit about \$2.4 billion of French products with tariffs over a dispute concerning how large tech companies are taxed.

The decision by the office of the US Trade Representative marks a setback for efforts to stop a conflict over a digital services tax. The levy, which the USTR says "discriminates against US

companies," would hit the revenues of large tech companies, including Google, Apple Inc., Facebook Inc. and Amazon.com Inc.

The American tariffs in response could target sparkling wine, cheeses, handbags and makeup.

"It's not worthy of an ally, and it's not the behavior we expect from the US toward one of its main allies, France, and more generally, Europe," French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire said on Radio Classique on Tuesday. "If there were new US sanctions, the EU would be ready to retaliate."

—Bloomberg



EU to respond 'as one' to US

Brussels, Dec 3: The European Union will answer tariff threats by the United States against France "as one" and urged Washington to engage in dialogue, an EU spokesman said on Tuesday.

"As in all other trade-related matters the EU will act and react as one and it will remain united," said EU Commission spokesman Daniel Rosario after the US threatened tariffs on French goods on Monday. The threat was in response to a French digital services tax that Washington says is discriminatory, claiming that it singles out US tech giants such as Google and Facebook.

—AFP

Tariffs on 3/1/2018—and the US is taking in massive amounts of money (and giving some to our farmers, who have been targeted by China)!" Trump tweeted on Monday.

Speaking to reporters on a trip to attend a summit for the 70th anniversary of NATO, Trump suggested that in some ways, it might be better to wait until after the US presidential election next November.

"I like the idea of waiting until after the election for the China deal. But they want to make a deal now and we'll see whether or

not the deal is going to be right. It's got to be right," he said. "The China trade deal is dependent on one thing: Do I want to make it? Because we're doing very well with China right now and we could do even better with the flick of a pen."

The dollar reversed early gains versus the yen, and Treasuries advanced.

The U.S. and China have been trying to conclude phase one of a trade deal that White House economic adviser Larry Kudlow said more than two weeks ago was "coming down to the short strokes." Stocks have

jumped to records on optimism for a truce in a 20-month tariff war between the world's two largest economies that has led to tariffs on some \$500 billion in bilateral trade.

Earlier on Tuesday, Chinese state media said the government would soon publish a list of "unreliable entities" that could lead to sanctions against US companies, signaling trade talks between the two nations are increasingly under threat from disputes over human rights in Hong Kong and Xinjiang.

—Bloomberg

'No word on higher deposit cover'

New Delhi, Dec 3: There is "no information" on raising the Rs 1 lakh insurance limit on bank deposits, according to the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC), a wholly owned subsidiary of the Reserve Bank of India.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman last month said the government plans to bring in legislation on raising the insurance cover on bank deposits from the current Rs 1 lakh during the winter session of Parliament.

Her assertion came days after Sahakar Bharati, a non-profit with many of its office bearers close to the RSS, pitched for an increase in deposit insurance limits to Rs 5 lakh for individuals.

"The corporation does not have the requisite information," DICGC said in response to an RTI query on whether there is any proposal under consideration to raise the limit of Rs 1 lakh insured in the bank. The DICGC insures all bank deposits.

—PTI

Syndicate Bank allows MSMEs to recast loans

Bengaluru, Dec. 3: Syndicate Bank said on Tuesday it is providing a breather to all of its Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) customers by extending the facility for restructuring of the loan.

This will provide them a flexible repayment option and prevent their accounts from being classified as non-performing assets (NPAs), it said in a statement.

Restructuring of loan is a facility given to customers to reschedule the repayment structure of their loan accounts, it was noted.

The provision is given to those customers whose units are under stress due to various internal or external reasons, thereby helping them to stabilise their business over time.

The Bank's MD & CEO, Mrutyunjay Mahapatra, said MSMEs contribute significantly to the country's economic growth.

Any MSME with aggregate debt of Rs 25 crore or below as on January 1, 2019 are eligible to apply for this facility, the bank said.

—PTI

White-collar crimes on the rise: Survey

FC BUREAU NEW DELHI, DEC 3

With massive irregularities in financial transactions, white-collar crimes are on the rise. It has been observed that a total of 3,766 incidents of fraud were detected in the last fiscal (FY19), rising by 15 per cent from a year ago, while losses incurred due to frauds have also risen by 80 per cent, according to a survey.

Understanding the risk posed by white-collar crimes, Netrika Consulting, a professional risk and integrity management company, conducted a survey covering respondents from law firms, media houses and corporate houses.

White-collar crimes are committed for financial gains and usually by people in higher positions. Statistics has, however, showed that there is a trading value of Rs 4,000 crore using fake or duplicate PAN cards. "An approximate 3.2 million people have lost card details at banks ATMs pointing to increasing adoption of technology by white-collar criminals," the survey said.

NBCC, Suraksha place Jaypee bids

New Delhi, Dec. 3: State-owned NBCC Ltd and Mumbai-based Suraksha Realty on Tuesday submitted their final bids and offered more land parcels to lenders to acquire bankrupt realtor Jaypee Infratech through insolvency process, sources said.

Lenders had asked both the suitors to sweeten their resolution plans and submit their bids by December 3.

According to sources, NBCC in its final bid has offered 1,526 acres of land to lenders as against its earlier proposal of 1,426 acres.

For homebuyers, it has reduced the timeline to



three-and-a-half years from the earlier four years for the completion of over 20,000 flats.

For lenders, the public sector firm has also proposed to increase concession agreement by 10 years on Yamuna Expressway, which

connects Noida to Agra in Uttar Pradesh.

On the other hand, Suraksha Realty has also improved its resolution plan and is now offering 2,220 acres of land worth Rs 9,800 crore under the land-debt swap deal. Earlier, it had offered 1,934 acres of land worth Rs 7,857 crore.

It has also increased upfront cash payment to lenders to Rs 175 crore from Rs 25 crore earlier.

For homebuyers, Suraksha has set aside Rs 250 crore worth land against land parcels worth Rs 100 crore earmarked earlier.

—PTI

Emkay app for wealth management

FC BUREAU MUMBAI, DEC. 3

The ultra rich will no longer have to rely on their portfolio managers to know their investment detail. They now can scan their investments and gains/losses by themselves, thanks to a new mobile application being introduced by the wealth managers. Emkay Global Financial Services has

introduced a wealth management app for the ultra rich that offers fund analytics wherein user can compare funds, see portfolio overlaps and manage risks.

Key features of Emkay Wealth Management App include search for a security and the weightage of the same in their portfolio, especially given the credit defaults in the fixed income space, one knows whether the fund manager is hold-

ing that security or not and how much of it is in their product portfolio.

Bhavesh Sanghvi, CEO, Emkay Wealth Management, said, "We continue to leverage technology to provide world-class experience to our esteemed clients. Users can analyse their portfolio on real-time basis, view current balance, available funds and ledger balances at an ease of fingertips."

GKN Aerospace to open new facility in Pune

MICHAEL GONSALVES PUNE, DEC. 03

GKN Aerospace, the UK-based and London-stock exchange listed 3.5 billion pound multi-technology tier 1 aerospace supplier, is opening a new factory in Pune on Wednesday to manufacture electrical wiring interconnection systems (EWIS).

The company is investing Rs 154 crore for now. The new facility, aimed at both the local and global markets, would directly employ 800 skilled operators and engineers.

"We are investing Rs 72 crore in the new factory," Michiel Barenose, VP and MD, Aerostructures and Systems Europe and Asia at GKN Aerospace told FC. He said an additional Rs 72 crore would be invested over 10 years.

Mercedes-Benz GLC facelift for ₹52.75 L

MICHAEL GONSALVES PUNE, DEC. 3

Mercedes-Benz, India's largest German luxury car maker, which showcased Mercedes GLC SUV facelift earlier this year at the 2019 Geneva Motor Show, has now launched it in India.

Priced at Rs 52.75 lakh to Rs 57.75 at pan-India showroom, the Mercedes GLC SUV comes in two options - GLC 200 and GLC 220d 4Matic. It will rival the Land Rover Discovery Sport, the Audi Q5, the BMW X3 and the Volvo XC60 in the country.

At present, the Pune-headquartered Mercedes-Benz offers the largest SUV portfolio in the luxury car segment in the country at eight SUVs.

The new SUV receives a mid-life cycle update and it now gets subtle styling



tweaks, BS-6 compliant petrol and diesel engines and the new MBUX interface system, which debuts in India for the first time on the Mercedes-Benz GLC SUV.

The new MBUX gets 'Hey Mercedes' voice command interface and a large central touchpad that is seen for the first time on the GLC range. Additionally, the GLC facelift also gets updated textures to name another change in the cabin.

Motilal starts ETFs on Nifty-50, Next 50

FC BUREAU MUMBAI, DEC.3

Motilal Oswal Asset Management Company owned by Motilal Oswal Group has come out with two large-cap index fund - Motilal Oswal Nifty 50 Index Fund and Motilal Oswal Nifty Next 50 Index Fund, based on the two popular indices—Nifty 50 and Nifty Next 50.

The new fund offer for both the funds opens on December 3 and closes on December 17.

Aashish Somaiyaa, MD & CEO, Motilal Oswal AMC, said, "These launches are in continuation of our recent efforts to make passive investing popular among the retail investors."

The large-cap index funds are expected to mirror benchmark index returns more closely contrary to the active large-cap funds that include some percentage of mid-cap & small-cap companies in their portfolios.

"In the recent past, mid-cap and small-cap companies have underperformed significantly and in any case for investors desirous of managing a pure allocation, mixing of market caps to beat indices is not ideal because it increases their risk," Motilal Oswal Mutual Fund said.

"Large-cap index funds have a purity of allocation to large caps and provide stability as they are large in size, dominant in their sectors and generally have good customer reputation. It provides additional income in the form of dividends as many large-caps generally pay steady dividends," the fund said.

"Large-cap index companies are more transparent in terms of statements and workings leads to ease in decision making for long term investors. The accuracy in evaluation is more due to established knowledge of company history, and wider coverage of current activities and financial statements," it said.

What'll happen to markets on Dec. 15

ERIC LAM & GREG STUART HUNTER DEC. 3

President Donald Trump's latest missives on trade are a wake-up call to markets close to record highs that a major deadline is looming with China.

The Dec. 15 flashpoint on tariffs was thrown into sharp relief on Tuesday when Trump said he sees no urgency to complete a deal. "If tariffs scheduled for Dec. 15 are implemented it would be a huge shock to the market consensus," said Sue Trinh, MD for global macro strategy at Manulife Investment Management in Hong Kong. "Trump would be the Grinch that stole Christmas," she said.

The following are the views of a number of market participants on what happens if the tariffs on China kick in Dec. 15.

It will be "definitely risk-off across the screen," said Tongli Han, Chief

Investment Officer at Deepblue Global Investment. "What happened recently makes this trade deal more costly for Chinese leaders -- so I'm seeing a gloomy future for the short term, one-to-two months."

For Kerry Craig, global market strategist at JPMorgan Asset Management, a key concern is markets have already priced in the prospect of a trade deal that has yet to be signed.

"There had been a lot of optimism built in around a trade deal and it's still the thing that will weigh on markets over the coming months," Craig said on Bloomberg TV. "In the meantime we need to see more of a pick-up in the global economy to really offset some of those uncertainties."

For some, the retreat in equities at the start of the week already presents a buying opportunity. "I'd fade the correction today," Eli Lee, head of investment strategy at Bank of Singapore, told Bloomberg TV.

The renewed tariff pressures on South America

strike a deal of some sort. That will reduce uncertainty and help the global economy do well."

With the clock running down on 2019 and a prospects of a trade deal looking more remote it's time for investors to take a little bit of risk off the table, said Steve Brice, Chief Investment Strategist at Standard Chartered bank.

"It looks like it's going to be pushed to the beginning of next year at the best case," Brice said. The message to investors is "maybe trim a little bit of equity exposure, or certainly not chase the market at this stage. But look to do so in the next few weeks if we see a 5-to-7 per cent pull-back."

Longer term, Brice remains optimistic "the U.S. and China will still

and Europe are likely an effort to bolster Trump's "tariff man" image ahead of a trade deal with China, he said.

"With the economy in a very delicate situation, if this came on, it would seriously ratchet up the risk of a recession—and the White House wouldn't want this situation going into the 2020 presidential election next year," Lee said.

There may be some massive initial market swings in store, said Chris Weston, head of research at Pepperstone Group Ltd. in a note to clients.

"We could face a wild day," he said. The S&P 500 is likely to fall about 2 per cent, with currencies including the yuan, Australian dollar and Korean won also likely to move, he said. A relief rally may be in the offing afterward, particularly if there's agreement to revisit talks in 2020, he said.

—Bloomberg



Indian variants

HP expands its Chromebook portfolio in India with the new Chromebook x360 in 12", 14" variants, catering to diverse computing and entertainment needs

SHORT TAKES



Google DeepMind

GOOGLE TRIES TO GAMIFY ACTIONS WITH AI

Washington, Dec. 3: Google's DeepMind unit is working on a project to recreate how a sense of consequence develops over a period of time. They tried to create a software that acts similar to what people do when they figure out the long-term consequences of their choices.

DeepMind's project is a deep learning program called "Temporal Value Transport." It is a way to send back lessons from the future, to the past, to inform actions. They say that in a way, it is 'gamifying' actions and consequences, showing that there can be a way to make actions in one moment obey the probability of later developments to score points.



CLOUDWALKER LAUNCHES 4K SMART SCREENS

Hyderabad, Dec. 3: CloudWalker Streaming Technologies, the revolutionary tech company creating digital products for smart entertainment on the big screen, has announced the launch of its ground-breaking 4K LED Smart Screens that will be available on Amazon.

It is a one-of-its-kind, multi-tasking screen that offers the latest innovation and smart upgrade for home entertainment. The CloudWalker 4K LED Smart Screens come with an entertainment mode for multimedia playback, personal computer mode, child safe mode, mobile connectivity, content discovery engine and content partners.

GLOBAL MEET ON E-MOBILITY IN BENGALURU

Bengaluru, Dec. 3: The third edition of an international transportation electrification conference-India 2019 on e-mobility solutions will be held here from December 17, organisers said on Tuesday.

"This meet is one of its kind because we are not only targeting the technology companies across the world but also taking into consideration the community," chairman of the organising committee, Girish Ramaswamy, said at a press conference. The conference will see 13 international speakers from across the globe - Europe, US and China - and 19 from India, he said.

Microsoft fixes flaw in Azure login system

If not averted, vulnerability would have affected thousands

Washington, Dec. 3: In a shocking revelation, security researchers said Microsoft fixed a vulnerability in its login system that could have put thousands of users at risk of having their accounts hijacked.

The researchers said there was no scope for users to fix the vulnerability or prevent it from accessing the accounts. The impact could have been 'very powerful,' due to Microsoft's bug, they added.

The bug, which is believed to have been

■ The bug, addressed by Microsoft weeks after it was alerted, would have given hackers access to steal account tokens, which allow users to access their accounts without having to constantly re-enter passwords.

■ Apps like Azure could have been approved within any account.

■ This kind of vulnerability's attack surface is very wide and its impact can be very powerful, researchers said.



addressed by Microsoft weeks after it was alerted, would have allowed hackers to steal account tokens. Account tokens, used by websites and applications, allow users to access their accounts without having to constantly re-enter their passwords. The vulnerability allowed for the creation of tokens, with the victim's permissions, which could let the hacker access and control the account, researchers said.

CyberArk researchers said they have already found applications published by Microsoft that were vulnerable to this type of attack. The apps are automatically approved within any Microsoft account, meaning attackers don't require any user consent to exploit them, researchers said.

In some cases, this could have been done in what researchers call a 'zero-click' way — an attack which doesn't require user interaction. "This vulnerability's attack surface is very wide and its impact can be very powerful. By doing nothing more than clicking or visiting a website, the victim can experience the theft of sensitive data, compromised production servers, lost data, manipulation of data, encryption of all the organisation's data with ransomware and more," researchers said.

— Agencies

Twitter to tweak privacy policy amid concerns

San Francisco, Dec. 3: Twitter Inc. is updating its global privacy policy to give users more information about what data advertisers might receive and is launching a site to provide clarity on its data protection efforts, the company said.

The changes, which will take effect on Jan. 1, 2020, will comply with the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA).

The California law requires large businesses to give consumers more transparency and control over their personal information, such as allowing them to request that their data be deleted and to opt out of having their data sold to third parties. Social media companies including Facebook Inc. and Alphabet Inc.'s Google have come under scrutiny on data privacy issues, fuelled by Facebook's Cambridge Analytica scandal in which personal data were harvested from millions of users without their consent.

Twitter also announced

■ We want to be able to experiment without immediately running afoul of the GDPR provisions. The goal is to learn from those experiments and then provide those same experiences to people all around the world

DAMIEN KIERAN data protection officer, Twitter

that it is moving the accounts of users outside of the US and the European Union, previously contracted by Twitter International Company in Dublin, Ireland, to the San Francisco-based Twitter Inc. The company said this move would allow it the flexibility to test different settings and controls with these users, such as additional opt-in or opt-out privacy preferences, that

would likely be restricted by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Europe's landmark digital privacy law.

"We want to be able to experiment without immediately running afoul of the GDPR provisions," Twitter's data protection officer Damien Kieran said in a phone interview.

"The goal is to learn from those experiments and then provide those same experiences to people all around the world," he said.

The company, which said it has upped its communications about data and security-related disclosures over the last two years, emphasized in a blog post that it was working to upgrade systems and build privacy into new products.

In October, Twitter announced it had found that phone numbers and email addresses used for two-factor authentication may inadvertently have been used for advertising purposes. — Reuters

RUSSIA BRINGS IN 'ANTI-APPLE' LEGISLATION

Moscow, Dec. 3: Russian President, Vladimir Putin, has signed a law requiring all smartphones and computers sold in the country to come pre-installed with Russian software.

The legislation, which will take effect in July 2020, is aimed at promoting Russian-made software. But it has been dubbed the 'anti-Apple' law because it would force the US tech giant to pre-install non-Apple software on its products.

The Russian government will now draw up a list of products affected by the law, published and signed by Putin, as well as a list of applications that would need to be pre-installed.

It comes amid a slew of measures taken by Russian officials to control the tech sector, including a law that took effect on November 1, requiring local internet providers to install devices provided by authorities to enable centralised control of traffic. — AFP

SLEEP TRACKING LEADING TO NEW DISORDER



SLEEP LOSS IS AN EPIDEMIC THAT COULD HAVE DIRE CONSEQUENCES AND IS A NON-NEGOTIABLE BIOLOGICAL NECESSITY, SAYS UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY PSYCHOLOGIST, MATTHEW WALKER, IN HIS BOOK, WHY WE SLEEP. WITH THE OBSESSION OVER ACHIEVING 'SLEEP EFFICIENCY' PERHAPS AT ITS PEAK IN HUMAN HISTORY, SLEEP TRACKERS LIKE FITBIT, WHICH MEASURE THE DURATION AND QUALITY OF SLEEP, THE GLOBAL SLEEP-TRACKING MARKET IS EXPECTED TO RISE IN THE NEAR FUTURE. BUT, SCIENTISTS SUGGEST THAT ALL THE TRACKING AND CALCULATION ON SLEEP TIME ARE ONLY ADDING TO THE WOES IN DEVELOPING SLEEP DISORDERS

18% The global sleep-tracking market topped \$1 billion in 2016 and it is expected to increase by another 18 percent by 2024.

■ Results in research made her anxious about her own bedtime priorities, to the point that she now says she takes sleep very seriously.

■ There exists a range of gadgets offering the illusion of science, with reports full of numbers and charts purporting to show just how well we're performing while sleeping.

■ Fitbit kicked off this trend when it released the first tracker in 2009, which couldn't monitor heart rate but included a sleep tracker that measured the duration of sleep, producing sleep efficiency score.

■ Sleep is now considered as the pinnacle of well-being as a lifestyle trend. Ironically, scientists say, with much by agony over sleep, it is also turning into a source of anxiety, which is in turn keeping people up at night.

■ Fitbits and Apple Watches around wrists, Beddits and Emfits beneath sheets and mattresses and sensors that promise to monitor heart rates and sleep cycles are all leading to what scientists call orthosomnia - a condition where anxiety over proper sleep metrics actually induces insomnia.

■ All this measuring, rating, tracking, and comparing now amounts to a new sleep disorder.



ANDROID IS VULNERABLE TO 'STRANDHOGG' FLAW

Washington, Dec. 3: Security researchers from Promon, a Norwegian firm said they identified a bug in the Android OS that lets malicious apps hijack legitimate app, and perform malicious operations on their behalf.

In a report, Promon's research team said the vulnerability can be used to trick users into granting intrusive permissions to malicious apps when they tap and interact with legitimate ones.

The vulnerability — which Promon named StrandHogg — can also be used to show fake login

(phishing) pages when tapping on a legitimate application. The firm said the flaw has already been exploited in the wild by malware gangs.

"The company said it identified the StrandHogg vulnerability after it was informed by an Eastern European security company for the financial sector (to which Promon supplies app security support) that several banks in the Czech Republic had reported money disappearing from customer accounts."

— Agencies

China aspires to make it big with e-vehicles

Beijing, Dec. 3: China should adopt a plan that will see electric vehicles make up a quarter of all autos sold in the country in six years' time, the country's industry ministry said on Tuesday, as the sector struggles with falling sales.

A draft blueprint for the development of the 'new energy vehicle' sector — which includes hybrids and fully-electric vehicles — comes after the government withdrew subsidies for car-makers earlier this year.

China is the world's largest new energy vehicle market, but sales of electric motors plummeted 34 percent on-year in



September, according to the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers (CAAM).

The ministry of industry and information technology's draft proposal said China should seek to ensure one in four of all vehicles sold in 2025 were

either hybrids or fully-electric vehicles.

The measures are partly to ensure the country meets its air pollution targets, and to reduce Beijing's dependence on imported oil.

China would also continue to develop electric vehicle battery technologies, improve infrastructure for hydrogen fuel cell vehicles and driverless cars, it said. The draft proposal, which includes guidelines for the development of the new energy vehicle sector, from 2021 to 2035, is open for public feedback until December 9.

A previous state target set in 2017 had called for 20 per cent of cars sold to be electric vehicles by 2020, but the draft released on Tuesday gave no indication whether China was on track to meet that goal.

Fuelled by rising incomes and government sales incentives, China is the golden goose upon which the global automobile industry has staked its future.

But, after years of strong growth, car sales fell last year for the first time since the 1990s, hit by a slowing economy, US trade tensions and a Chinese crackdown on shady credit practices that has crimped car-financing channels.

Passenger vehicles sales in China have now fallen for 15 consecutive months, according to the CAAM.

The government had earlier said it was planning to impose quotas requiring car-makers to maintain a certain percentage of new energy vehicles in their Chinese production. — AFP

TWITTER | TROUBLE Tesla boss, facing a defamation trial, is to testify over his intentions behind the comment

Musk faces defamation trial for 'pedo guy' tweet

Los Angeles, Dec. 3: Elon Musk will be tried for his troublesome tweets in a defamation case pitting the billionaire against a British diver he allegedly branded a paedophile.

The Tesla CEO will be called to testify early in the case in the Los Angeles federal court to explain what he meant when he called Vernon Unsworth, who helped rescue youth soccer players trapped underwater in a Thailand cave, 'pedo guy' in a Twitter spat more than year ago.

Musk later apologised for lashing out at Unsworth on Twitter after the diver belittled Musk's efforts to build a tiny submarine to save the trapped boys as a

'PR stunt.' The tweet, widely interpreted as a reference to a pedophile, was removed by Musk, who disputed that's what he meant.

"'Pedo guy' was a common insult used in South Africa when I was growing up," Musk said in a court declaration.

"It is synonymous with 'creepy old man' and is used to insult a person's appearance and demeanour."

Unsworth's lawyers have laughed off that explanation and said his claim was undercut by a subsequent tweet when he said, "Bet ya a signed dollar it's true" in response to a question about whether he had accused Unsworth of

■ After calling Vernon Unsworth, who helped rescue 12 boys trapped in a Thailand cave, a 'pedo guy,' Musk explained that it was a common insult which means 'creepy old man.'

being a paedophile. The lawyers also said he hired private investigators to dig up evidence Unsworth was a child molester, which they never found, according to Unsworth's lawyers.

The lawsuit is not the first time Musk's tweets have landed him in hot water.

Musk and Tesla reached a \$40 million settlement with the Securities and Exchange Commission last year on allegations he misled investors with a tweet declaring he had secured financing to buy out the electric car-maker. He agreed in the settlement to have future tweets about the company screened.

He was forced back into court on accusations that he violated that agreement by tweeting a misleading figure about how many cars Tesla would manufacture this year. The SEC sought to hold him in contempt of court, which led to a new agreement imposing tighter controls on Musk's tweets about the

company. The cave drama played out from more than two weeks in the summer of 2018, when the 12 boys — aged 11-16 — and their soccer coach were trapped in a flooded cave in northern Thailand.

Musk and engineers from his SpaceX rocket company custom built a mini-submarine to help with the rescue. The device was heavily publicised but never used.

Unsworth, a diver and caving expert, whose advice was considered crucial in the rescue operation, said the sub would never have fit in the cave's tight spaces. He told CNN that Musk could "stick his submarine where it hurts." — AP

VIDEO GAME MAKER TO PAY \$10M IN GENDER BIAS CASE

Los Angeles, Dec. 3: The maker of popular video game League of Legends has agreed to pay \$10 million to its female employees to settle a broad gender discrimination case.

Los Angeles-based Riot Games will pay about 1,000 current and former female employees who have worked with the company over the last five years. The case against Riot Games claimed the company paid women less than men, passed them over

for promotions and fostered a 'bro culture' that excluded them.

The lawsuit claims that culture led to sexual harassment and misconduct.

Allegations of misconduct against women have plagued the video game industry for years. The plaintiff's lawyer, Ryan Saba, said the large settlement amount shows that Riot was serious about changing its culture. A spokesman said the company was pleased to have the settlement. — AP



Trial

Former Pakistan cricketer Nasir Jamshed will go on trial in Britain on Tuesday accused of being part of an alleged spot-fixing bribery conspiracy in the Pakistan Super League

Bumrah's back

Pacer works with trainer rejected by CoA panel

New Delhi, Dec. 3: The much-talked about legacy that former India trainer Shankar Basu had supposedly created over the years around the Indian team and the National Cricket Academy (NCA) seems to have fallen flat once again.

Contrary to the general rule of injured Indian players undergoing rehab at the NCA, pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah has been working on his strength and fitness under Delhi Capitals trainer Rajnikanth Sivagnanam.

Interestingly, Rajnikanth is the same person who had been rejected for the position of Strength and Conditioning Coach back in August and the job was handed to Nick Webb under the Committee of Administrators (CoA). The panel for conducting practical exams consisted of the national selectors and Ranadeep Moitra — owner of the Endorphins Gym in Kolkata. And they placed Webb and Luke Woodhouse over Rajnikanth.

Speaking to IANS, a BCCI official not only questioned the turn of events, but also asked if the process followed in the appointment during the CoA regime needs a re-look. "This is not a judgment on Nick in any way, but the process was harder for Rajni than anyone else. I had enquired from a member on the panel who was surprised at the apparent hostility towards



Jasprit Bumrah during a gym session.

— Twitter

Rajni. He was asked to do things by the gym trainer on the panel that no one else was. What was curious was that the person on the panel had not worked at the level that Rajni had worked at. It would be interesting to know who placed him on the panel," he said. Bumrah's importance in the Indian set-up is pretty well known and sources in the know of developments said that even the Indian team management didn't wish to take any chance with his recovery post the stress fracture on his back and that is why he was sent to the UK for consultation. "Can't take a chance

with one of your best bowlers even though his body was on auto heal mode. So, he was sent to the UK for consultation. We have an important tour of New Zealand coming up in the new year and he will be an integral part of the planning there. So, the team management was very clear that they are happy to wait and have him back at his best in time for the New Zealand tour," the source said.

This isn't the first case of India players refusing to head to the NCA for rehab and trainer across the country believe that it is the result of having trainers who are picked on reasons other than

pure merit. "You tell me something, who decided that NCA trainers have to be below 35? The last employment advertisement given by the BCCI for Strength & Conditioning Coach at the academy required the person to be below 35. So, who exactly are we trying to push and who are we trying to keep away? When national interest is at stake, why such a bizarre rule? We have been training domestic teams over the years and when we have reached a level of experience, we are told that the age is an issue," one of the trainers associated with a state team said.

— Agencies

Ponting feels Australia's bowling attack better than India

Adelaide, Dec. 3: Cricketing great Ricky Ponting reckons Australia's bowling attack is better than the current Indian bowling as Australians are better suited in different conditions and

that is why he has to pick them over the Indian bowling line-up. "I am taking ours every day of the week," Ponting was quoted as saying by Cricket.com.au. "India's is fantastic; (Jasprit) Bumrah and (Mohd.) Shami have been

amazing for the last couple of years and then you put Umesh Yadav into the equation with Ishant Sharma, they've got some very good fast bowlers. And when you put R. Ashwin and Jadeja in there, their attack is very good." — Agencies



Ricky Ponting

Dada wants India to play more D/N Tests

Kolkata, Dec. 3: With support from skipper Virat Kohli, BCCI president Sourav Ganguly wants the Indian cricket team to play a pink ball Test in every series.

India took to pink ball Tests after initial resistance on Ganguly's insistence as Kohli and boys took on Bangladesh at the Eden Gardens last month. It was a gala affair as Eden witnessed sellout crowd although the match was as lopsided as it can get with the home team winning by a massive margin.

"I am pretty upbeat about it," Ganguly told The Week.

"I feel this is the way forward. Not every Test, but at least one Test in a series."

Ganguly said he will share his experiences of hosting a pink ball Test at Eden with other associations.

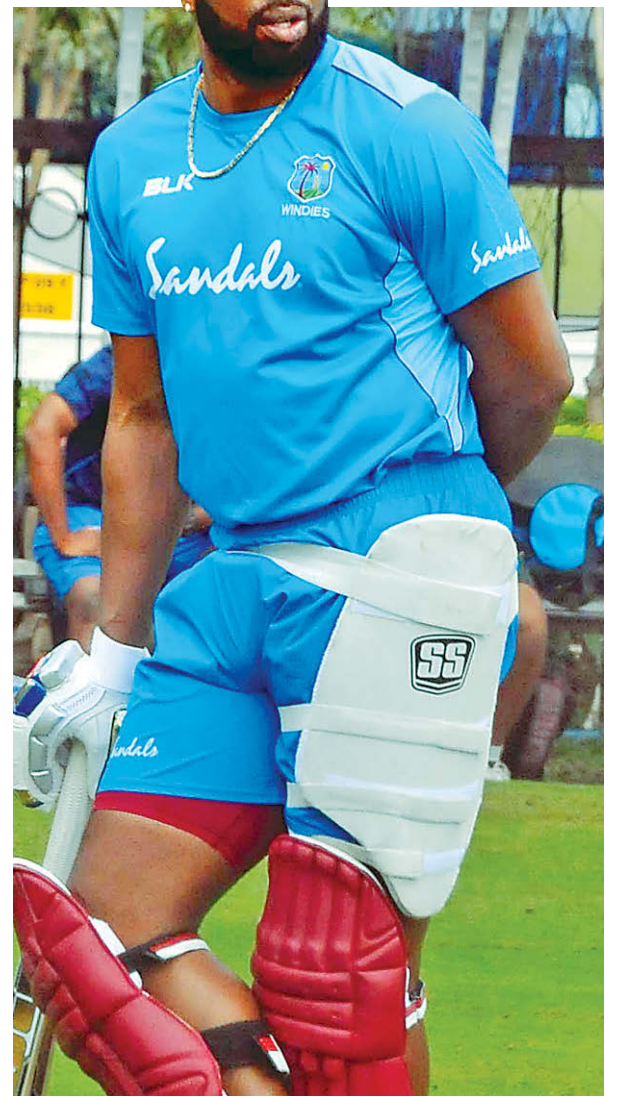
"I will share my experiences with the board and we will try and implement it in other places. After this, everyone is ready. Nobody wants to play Test cricket in front of 5,000 people," the former India captain said.

— Agencies



I will share my experiences with the board and we will try and implement it in other places. After this, everyone is ready. Nobody wants to play Test cricket in front of 5,000 people.

— SOURAV GANGULY



Kieron Pollard during a training session in Hyderabad on Tuesday.

— P. Surendra

Pollard sets the tone in training

GANDHARV KAMALA | DC HYDERABAD, DEC. 3

West Indies skipper Kieron Pollard set the tone with some powerful shots during their first practice session ahead of their first T20 against India at the Rajiv Gandhi Stadium here.

Tall, muscular and flaunting gold chains, the Windies cricketers were a chirpy bunch. Pollard led from the front. After every ball he faced — during his 40-odd minute stint in the nets — the all-rounder had an opinion. He even had friendly banter with the bowlers and his batting partners.

Unlike their previous tour to India, West Indies have been in the country for over a month and are better equipped to tackle the sub-continent condi-

tions this time around. Earlier last month, Windies whitewashed Afghanistan in the ODI series (3-0), won the one-off Test, but lost the T20 series 1-2.

The reigning World T20 champions are without their attacking opener Chris Gayle and leading allrounders Andre Russell and Dwayne Bravo. Gayle decided to take a break from all forms of cricket, while Russell, despite being fit, did not find a place in the team. Bravo, who had earlier hinted at an international comeback was not considered either.

The three-match series kicks off in Hyderabad on December 6, while the second T20 is in Thiruvananthapuram on December 8. The third T20 will be played in Mumbai on December 11.

We lacked a lot in the bowling department, we couldn't build any pressure & dismiss Australian batsmen.

— Misbah-ul-Haq, Pakistan head coach-cum-chief selector

SHORT TAKES



Jofra Archer

Kiwi police to probe racial abuse

Hamilton: New Zealand police were on Tuesday asked to investigate racial abuse directed at England cricketer Jofra Archer during last week's first Test, following information supplied by New Zealand Cricket officials. NZC chief executive David White said they lodged a complaint with police after studying CCTV footage, listening to audio, interviewing spectators and obtaining material on social media. Archer complained of being racially abused during the first Test against

New Zealand in Mount Maunganui last week. In a message on social media he said it was "disturbing hearing racial insults today whilst battling to help save my team, the crowd was being amazing this week except for that one guy." White said the information gathered by NZC did not conclusively identify the person responsible but there was enough evidence to bring the police into the investigation. — AFP

Young Pak bowlers will improve: Waqar

Karachi: Pakistan's young pace attack might have failed to deliver in Australia but bowling coach Waqar Younis has backed the under-fire bowlers, saying with experience they will only get better.

Pakistan had picked three young pacers for the Australia tour but the decision backfired as they allowed the hosts to amass huge runs in both the Test matches. With the young seamers failing to take wickets or stem the flow of runs, Pakistan suffered innings defeats in the two Tests at Brisbane and Adelaide. Their poor show prompted former Australia skipper Ricky Ponting to label the bowling unit as the "worst attack" he has seen in a long time playing on their soil. Waqar admitted it was a disappointing performance. "Yes I admit that we didn't get the sort of performances or results we wanted from them. But for teenagers you tend to be unable to maintain the line and length you need to bowl in test matches," Waqar said in podcast from the Pakistan Cricket Board.

The former Pakistan captain, however, insisted that the teenaged pacers like Naseem Shah, Musa Khan, Muhammad Hasnain and Shaheen Shah Afridi were all the future assets of Pakistan cricket. "I think once they play few matches more over a period of a year they will get better and Shaheen is a example of this." — PTI

GHAVRI NAMED SAURASHTRA RANJI COACH

Rajkot: Former India pacer Karsan Ghavri has been appointed as the coach for the Saurashtra Ranji team. Saurashtra Cricket Association secretary Himanshu Shah confirmed Ghavri's appointment. "Yes, he (Ghavri) has joined (the team) as the head coach," Shah said. The 68-year-old Ghavri, a former left-arm speedster, has played 39 Tests and 19 ODIs, picking up 109 and 15 wickets respectively in the two formats. He was earlier a part of the Cricket Improvement Committee of the Mumbai Cricket Association. Saurashtra finished runners-up in the last Ranji season after losing to Vidarbha in the final. "I take it as a challenge and I am doing it after 10-11 years. It is a new beginning (for me)," Ghavri, who is currently with the team, said. — PTI

Father's sacrifices helped Priyam fulfill his dreams

Lucknow, Dec. 3: Priyam Garg says his journey from a small child without means to buy cricket gear to becoming Indian team captain for Under-19 World Cup would not have been possible without the sacrifice of his father, who resorted to driving a school van to fulfil his son's ambitions.

The 19-year-old Priyam was on Monday named captain of the Indian under-19 team for the World Cup to be played in South Africa from January 17 to February 9. Hailing from village Quila Parikshitgarh, about 25km from Meerut, Priyam picked up the bat and ball at the tender age of six.

"My father Naresh Garg drives a school van. I have one elder brother and three sisters. I am the youngest in the family. My father didn't have enough money to take care of such a big family and support my cricket career," Priyam said. "But seeing my love and dedication for the sport, he borrowed some money from his friend and bought me a cricket kit and arranged for my coaching. I started playing cricket and due to my father's hard work today I'm captain of the under-19 team," he added.

Priyam suffered a personal setback when he lost his mother at the age of 11. His only regret now is that his mother can't see him play for the Indian team, which was her dream.

"My mother died in 2011 and it was her



Priyam Garg with Rahul Dravid.

dream that I play cricket for India and now that I'm the captain of the under-19 team she is not here to see it. I regret that the most." India is the most successful team in the tournament, having won four titles till date, including the last edition in 2018.

Priyam will now carry the same responsibility which was once on the shoulders of Mohammad Kaif (2000), the current India senior team skipper Virat Kohli (2008) and batsman Prithvi Shaw (2018).

Priyam has a first-class double hundred and a List A century to his name. He was a part of the India C team that fin-

ished runner-up in the Deodhar Trophy.

"I used to practice cricket for 7-8 hours a day while continuing my studies. Sanjay Rastogi, my coach in Meerut used to help me and because of that and my father's efforts I was selected in the Ranji team in 2018," Priyam said.

A right handed top-order batsman, he scored 800-plus runs in his debut Ranji Trophy 2018-19 season for Uttar Pradesh, scored a century in his debut game against Goa. Like every other Indian cricketer, Priyam too aspires to meet Sachin Tendulkar to take tips from the legend. — PTI

Kane, Taylor lead NZ to series win

Hamilton, Dec. 3: Centuries from Kane Williamson and Ross Taylor ensured New Zealand drew the rain-hit second Test against England in Hamilton on Tuesday, sealing a 1-0 series win.

New Zealand batted the final day needing a substantial innings to avoid defeat and were helped by sloppy England fielding.

Williamson, who had three lives including a howler of a dropped catch by Joe Denly, described it as a "good effort" to end up with a draw.

"A lot of hard work had to go into saving the match when time didn't allow us an opportunity to win it," he said.

However, England captain Joe Root felt the Test was always heading for a draw, saying even if the weather and fielding had gone England's way "we still couldn't have forced a result."

Heavy rain arrived soon after lunch to end play on the fifth day when New Zealand were 241 for two in their second innings, 140 ahead with Taylor on 105 and Williamson on 104.

It ensured the spoils went to New Zealand after their innings victory in the first Test, and improved their record to eight wins, a draw and one loss to South Africa in their past 10 Test series.

Kiwis win Spirit of Cricket award for sportsmanship in World Cup final

Hamilton, Dec. 3: The New Zealand cricket team has been bestowed with the Christopher Martin-Jenkins Spirit of Cricket award for its exemplary show of sportsmanship during the epic final of the ICC World Cup at Lord's in July, which it lost under controversial circumstances.

Kane Williamson and his men were robbed off the World Cup title following a controversial overthrow that allowed England to take the final to the super over and eventually claim their maiden crown on boundary count.

The team was presented the award, the brainchild of the Marylebone Cricket Club and the British Broadcasting Corporation, during the drawn second Test against England at Seddon Park.

Williamson brought up his 21st Test century with a four off Joe Root in the third over after lunch, while Taylor reached century number 19 with a flourish in Root's next over when he smacked a four and two sixes in consecutive balls.

Two balls after Taylor had raised his bat and poked his tongue out in his signature celebration, the rain arrived to wash out England's faint hopes.

New Zealand resumed the day at 96 for two with England hunting a narrow early

BRIEF SCORES

New Zealand 375 and 241/2 (K. Williamson 104 not out, Taylor 105 not out) drew with England 476 (Root 226, Burns 101, Pope 75, Wagner 5/124).

Williamson gently chipped a slower delivery from Jofra Archer straight to Denly at short midwicket and, as the bowler leapt in celebration and Williamson made an apologetic gesture to Taylor, the ball popped out of Denly's hands. "It was a one-off goober," said Root.

There were comparisons drawn on social media to the widely regarded worst dropped catch in Test history when England's Mike Gatting put down a sitter off the gloves of India batsman Kiran More in 1993.

— AFP



New Zealand captain Kane Williamson dodges a bouncer from England's Jofra Archer.

— AFP



Chinese whisperer

Fabio Cannavaro expects to remain the coach of Chinese football team Guangzhou Evergrande after winning the league

Indians have a field day

Clinch 27 medals on day two of the South Asian Games

Pokhara (Nepal), Dec. 3: Indian men's and women's badminton team expectedly claimed gold medals after beating Sri Lanka in its respective finals at the 13th South Asian Games (SAG) here on Monday.

The men's team, led by Kidambi Srikanth, defeated Sri Lanka 3-1 in the finals, while the women's side blanked the same opponents 3-0 in the summit clash to make it a double bonanza for India.

Srikanth started the proceedings for the men's, struggling past Dinuka Karunaratne 17-21, 21-15, 21-11 in the opening match. Siril Verma then gave India a 2-0 lead after his opponent Sachin Premashan retired with the scoreline reading 21-17, 11-5 in the Indian's favour.

Arun George and Sanyam Shukla, however, suffered a 18-21, 21-14, 11-21 loss to Sachin and B. Tharindu Goonathilake as Sri Lanka grabbed one point to make it 1-2.

Krishna Prasad Garanga and Dhruv Kapila then completed the win with a 21-14, 21-18 win over Karunaratne and Hasitha Chanaka in the second doubles match.

In the women's finals, Ashmita Chaliha, Aakarshi Kashyap and Gayatri Gopichand claimed victories in the three singles to give India a 3-0 win against Sri Lanka.

Earlier in the day, the men's team mauled Pakistan 3-0 with doubles pair of Arun George and Sanyam Shukla, singles players Krishna Prasad Garanga and Siril Varma registering easy wins.

While Arun and Sanyam beat Raja Muhammad Hasnain and Atique Muhammad 21-12, 21-12, Siril thrashed Zahid Awaiz 21-7 21-7 and Krishna Prasad Garanga overcame Ali Murad 21-19, 21-18.

Up against the same opponents, the India women's team also blanked Pakistan 3-0 in the semifinals to enter the summit clash against Sri Lanka.

While Sai Uttejitha Rao Chukka overcame Mahoor Shahzad 21-12, 21-18; Gayatri Gopichand brushed aside Palwasha Bashir 21-14, 21-11 and doubles pairing of Meghna Jakkampudi and N. Sikki Reddy saw off Javeed Huma and Akram Sheera 21-14, 21-12.

PADDLERS CLAIM TEAM GOLD TOO

The Indian men's and women's table tennis teams claimed gold medals after defeating Nepal and Sri Lanka in its respective finals.

India beat hosts Nepal 3-0 in the men's final, while their women's counterparts defeated Sri Lanka by an identical 3-0 margin to win a gold each.

Santoo Shrestha gave some torrid moments to Anthony Amalraj before the Indian rallied to win 12-10, 14-16, 11-5, 11-8 to put his team in the lead.

Soumyajit Ghosh then accounted for Shiva Sunder Gothe 11-3, 11-2, 12-10 and Harmeet Desai finished it off in style with a 11-4, 11-4, 11-8 win over Purushottam Borjajahrya.



I'll be disappointed if they are cheering enthusiastically for Tiger Woods.

— Adam Scott, International team's golfer, asking the fans to not cheer for Woods at the President's Cup

SHORT TAKES

Austin wins it for West Brom

London: Charlie Austin's 90th-minute penalty sent West Brom back to the Championship summit with a 1-0 win at Preston.

Austin converted from the spot to secure the Baggies a fifth successive victory and move them back above Leeds. Slaven Bilic's side looked set to rue a number of missed opportunities in the first half as they struggled to break through a resilient Preston defence.

But Austin's spot-kick moves them two points clear of Leeds, while Preston slipped to a third successive defeat.

"I'm an experienced cool head and I know what I'm doing," Austin told said.

"I had a look at the 'keeper and sent him the wrong way.

"We've got great youngsters, we're top of the league and it's an exciting future for us," he added.

The visitors were much the better side in the first half and Bilic would have been frustrated his side failed to lead at the break. Preston were vastly improved in the second period and created a flurry of chances just after the hour mark while West Brom increasingly struggled to break through a resilient Preston defence.

— AFP

Spanish league president resigns

Madrid: Javier Tebas has announced that he will stand down as head of the Spanish football league (LFP) in a bid to win a third term as president in new elections.

"I have presented my resignation as president of La Liga in order to begin new presidential elections, in which I will be a candidate," Tebas said on Twitter. Tebas, 57, was first named president of the LFP, which runs Spain's two professional divisions, in 2013 before being re-elected three years later after resigning and then standing unopposed.

Elections to decide the new president were initially scheduled for October next year, but Tebas said in a letter to Spanish clubs that he had forced an early poll in order to "give the greatest level of stability" to the LFP. Tebas cites the bidding for TV rights for 2022-25, which will begin "between March and June 2021... Too close to the original election schedule".

"Over the years, we have followed a genuine strategy for our TV rights, it's not simply a case of results on the day of the competition, we are working with this in mind, we are preparing the market," he added. — AFP

TYPHOON AT IT AGAIN, HITS SEA GAMES

Clark, Philippines: Powerful Typhoon Kammuri forced organisers of the Southeast Asian Games in the Philippines to reschedule about half of the events set for Tuesday, but they pledged the competition would finish on time.

The storm, which made landfall late Monday, wrought particular havoc on water-based and outdoor events, causing approximately 16 of them to be postponed.

However, roughly 17 other competitions — primarily indoor ones — were supposed to go ahead as planned, a statement from the organisers said. "It's not safe to play and we apologise," Ramon Suzara, the organising committee's chief operating officer, told a news conference, announcing the rescheduling.

Kammuri brought high winds and heavy rains across the northern Philippines, but did not directly hit the region around the capital Manila, which is home to the three main event hubs. The storm's potent gusts also forced officials to close Manila's international airport as a precaution. — AFP



The Indian women's badminton team pose with their gold medals after beating Sri Lanka 3-0 in their South Asian Games final on Tuesday.

Five-star champs blank Maldives

Pokhara (Nepal), Dec. 3: Bala Devi grabbed a brace as the Indian women's football team mauled Maldives 5-0 in their opening game of the 13th South Asian Games here on Tuesday.

Apart from Bala, Dangmei Grace, Manisha and Jabamani Tudu — all scored a goal apiece to hand India three points at the Pokhara Stadium here.

It only took five minutes for the Maymol Rocky-coached side to take the lead through Grace, who rifled in a shot from the right flank.

Bala, who returned last week from a trial with Scottish club Rangers WFC, scored two goals in quick succession to put India in a commanding position.

In the 25th minute, she latched on to a pass from Jabamani from the left flank to score. Eight minutes later, she was on the end of a cross from substitute Manisha — making no mistake with the finish.

The defending champions then scored two more goals in two minutes in the closing moments of the game. — PTI

● **Bala Devi netted a brace while Dangmei Grace, Manisha and Jabamani Tudu — all scored a goal apiece to hand India three points.**



Bala Devi (in blue) vies for the ball during their match against Maldives at the South Asian Games in Pokhara on Tuesday. India won 5-0.

MEHULI LEADS SHOOTING MEDAL HAUL

Kathmandu, Dec. 3: Indian shooters bagged nine medals, including four golds in the 13th South Asian Games here on Tuesday, with Mehuli Ghosh finishing on top of podium with a score better than the world record.

The 19-year-old Mehuli clinched the gold with a score of 253.3 in the final, which is 0.4 more than the current world record of 252.9 which is in the name of another Indian, Apurv Chandra. Shriyanka Sadangi took

● **Mehuli Ghosh claimed gold with a score of 253.3 while Shriyanka Sadangi (250.8) took silver and Shreya Agrawal (227.2) clinched bronze in women's 10m air rifle.**

the silver with a score of 250.8, while Shreya Agrawal (227.2) clinched the bronze in a 1-2-3 podium finish by the Indians. — PTI

India also won the team gold in the 10m air rifle event.

In the men's 50m 3P event, Chain Singh clinched the gold medal with compatriot Akhil Sheoran winning the silver.

Yogesh Singh and Gurpreet Singh won the gold and silver medal in the 25m center fire pistol event respectively. India also won a silver medal in the 25m center fire pistol team event. — PTI

1,500m Athletes triumph

Kathmandu, Dec. 3: India's athletes continued their fine show at the 13th South Asian Games by adding four medals, including a gold in men's 1500m race at the Dasarath Stadium here on Tuesday.

The Indians bagged the gold and silver in the men's the 1500m besides winning the silver and bronze in the women's 1500m event.

Ajay Kumar Saro won the gold in men's 1500m with a timing of 3:54.18 seconds while Ajeet Kumar clinched the silver by clocking 3:57.18s. The bronze went to Tanka Karki (3:50.20s) of Nepal.

Earlier in the day, India's Chanda (4:34.51s) clinched the silver medal in the women's 1500m event while compatriot Chitra Palakeez (4:35.46s) settled for the bronze. The gold in this event was bagged by Uda Kuburalage.

The Indians have so far accumulated 21 medals, including six gold, 11 silver and four bronze. — PTI

Pressure is on Joshua, says Ruiz

Riyadh, Dec. 3: Heavyweight champion Andy Ruiz Jr. said on Monday that all the pressure will be on dethroned champion Anthony Joshua in their contentious showdown in Saudi Arabia.

Ruiz, who was born in the United States but fights as a Mexican, caused one of boxing's biggest upsets in New York in June when he handed Joshua a first defeat to win the WBA, IBF and WBO crowns in New York.

The pair will fight the rematch on Saturday in Riyadh, close to the Saudi capital Riyadh, in a hotly-anticipated contest dubbed "Clash on the Dunes".

"We've got to see where he's at because all the pressure is on him. The pressure isn't on me because I followed my dream, made my dreams come true," Ruiz said in Riyadh.

"Of course I want more though — I want the legacy of Andy Ruiz Jr.," he added.

Meanwhile, Joshua said he was "comfortable" and "very relaxed" ahead of the rematch.

"I am just going to win. I know I can do it. I was this close last time, so next time I won't mess up," Joshua said.

Saturday's bout is mired in controversy. The Saudis have faced intense diplomatic fallout over last year's murder of dissident journalist Jamal Khashoggi in the conservative kingdom's consulate in Istanbul. — AFP

We've got to see where he's at because all the pressure is on him. The pressure isn't on me because I followed my dream, made my dreams come true.

— **ANDY RUIZ JR.** Heavyweight champion on his bout against Anthony Joshua



Mandeeep wins on comeback

Greater Noida, Dec. 3: Mandeeep Jangra marked his return to the ring with a hard-fought split decision win over Dinesh Dagar to help North East Rhinos hold Bengaluru Brawlers to a 1-1 draw at the Big Bout Indian Boxing League here on Tuesday.

The Brawlers' 91kg Royal Puri left Uzbek boxer Ergashev Timor with a bloodied nose in the second round.

That result did put pressure on the 2013 Asian Championship finalist Mandeeep when he stepped into the ring against the taller and younger Dinesh in the men's 57kg bout. — PTI

Milwaukee rout hapless Knicks

Los Angeles Dec. 3: Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 29 points as the Milwaukee Bucks stretched their winning streak to 12 games on Monday with a 132-88 demolition of the hapless New York Knicks.

The Eastern Conference leaders showed no mercy to the worst side in the division, outscoring the Knicks by 33-15 in the first quarter and showing no let-up through a one-sided encounter.

Antetokounmpo was on court for just 21 minutes, adding 15 rebounds and shooting 10-of-14 while leading the scoring.

The Greek star was backed by Khris Middleton with 16 points

● **Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 29 points as the Milwaukee Bucks stretched their winning streak to 12 games with a 132-88 demolition of New York Knicks.**

and D.J. Wilson, who added 19 off the bench. No fewer than six Milwaukee players finished in double digits, including Antetokounmpo's elder brother Thanasis who chipped in with 10 points from his 12 minutes on the court.

The win saw the Bucks improve to 18-3 at the top of the Eastern Conference, while the Knicks remained rooted to the bottom of the standings with just four wins against 17 defeats.

Antetokounmpo meanwhile said Milwaukee were not thinking about their winning streak but rather looking ahead to their next game.

Knicks coach David Fizdale admitted his team had been bracing for an onslaught from the tip-off.

The Bucks are two games clear of second-placed Toronto, who stand at 15-4, just ahead of the Miami Heat and Boston Celtics (14-5).

The Philadelphia 76ers meanwhile remained in

the hunt on Monday, claiming a 103-94 win over the Utah Jazz.

Tobias Harris led the scoring for the Sixers with 26 points, while Joel Embiid added 16 points and 11 rebounds in what had threatened to become a rout at Philadelphia's Wells Fargo Center.

The Sixers had surged into a 60-42 lead at half-time and looked to be in control until a sustained Utah fightback.

The Jazz had trailed by 19 points after three quarters and managed to claw back the deficit to seven points with one minute remaining before the Sixers steadied the ship for the win. — AFP

Woods gets better of Spieth in Hero Shot

Nassau (Bahamas), Dec. 3: Golf legend Tiger Woods defeated fellow American Jordan Spieth to win the inaugural Hero Shot event, an ideal warm-up ahead of the high-profile Hero World Challenge here.

Woods defeated Spieth in the championship round by a score of 1,800-900 on Monday.

The 43-year-old defeated a star-studded field featuring Spieth, Bryson DeChambeau, Jon Rahm, Henrik Stenson and Gary Woodland.

The players took their best shots at a bulls eye 130 yards away, hitting shots

GOLF CHALLENGE

over reflections pool at Baha Mar.

The first round of the Hero Shot featured three head-to-head match-ups — Rahm vs Stenson, Woodland vs Spieth and DeChambeau vs Woods — with each player taking six shots at the target.

Stenson advanced by a score of 1,200-1100, while Spieth won his match-up by a playoff score of 200-100, Woods earned a 900-700 victory.

In the second round, Stenson, Spieth and Woods

each took another six shots with the highest two second round scores advancing to the championship. Spieth and Woods moved on, posting scores of 900 each while Stenson was eliminated after posting a score of 800.

In the championship round, Spieth took on Woods with each taking final six shots at the target.

Woods won in walk-off fashion as the two were tied going into the final shot. Woods called game, hitting bulls eye and earned 1,000 points in the process.

The Hero World Challenge begins here from Wednesday. — PTI