

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

CHENNAI | MONDAY 9 | DECEMBER 2019

WEATHER

Max: 31°C
Min: 24°C
Rainfall: Nil

ASTROGUIDE

Vikari: Karthigai 23
Tithi: Dvadashti / Thrayodashi
Star: Bharani
Rahukalam:
7.30 am to 9 am
Yamagandam:
10.30 am to 12 noon
PRAYERS
Fajar: 5.03 am
Zohar: 12.05 pm
Asar: 3.16 pm
Magni: 5.42 pm
Isha: 6.57 pm

SUNSET TODAY 5:43 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 5:33 AM
MOONRISE TODAY 3:39 PM
MOONSET TOMORROW 4:25 AM

Fight against terrorism cemented India's position strongest: Rajnath

Jharia (Chandrad): Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday said India never provoked any nation, but, if needed, it would not spare anyone. Addressing a poll meeting here, he asserted that the measures taken by the Narendra Modi-led government to curb terrorism have cemented India's reputation as one of the strongest nations in the world.

PM meets ex-Union minister Arun Shourie at Pune hospital

Pune: Prime Minister Narendra Modi met former Union minister Arun Shourie at a hospital in Pune on Sunday evening and spent nearly 15 minutes with the former BJP leader. According to senior doctors of the Ruby Hall Clinic, located in Bund Garden area of the city, the prime minister arrived at 6 pm. Modi said in a tweet: "In Pune, I met former Union Minister Arun Shourie Ji. Enquired about his health and had a wonderful interaction with him. We pray for his long and healthy life".

Thousands march as protests in Hong Kong near half-year

Hong Kong: Hundreds of thousands of demonstrators crammed into Hong Kong's streets on Sunday, their chants echoing off high-rises, in a mass show of support for a protest movement that shows no signs of flagging as it enters a seventh month. Chanting "Fight for freedom" and "Stand with Hong Kong," a sea of protesters formed a huge human snake winding for blocks on Hong Kong Island, from the Causeway Bay shopping district to the Central business zone.

COUNTER POINT



We should have bought onion stock when the prices were low. We would have been crorepati now!

CAB set to be moved in LS today by Shah

NITIN MAHAJAN | DC
NEW DELHI, DEC. 8

The Narendra Modi government is all set to introduce two major bills in the Lok Sabha Monday, including the controversial Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, that seeks to grant Indian citizenship to non-Muslim refugees from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan fleeing religious persecution there, which will be tabled by home minister Amit Shah.



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Boris vows to back Modi to woo Indian diaspora



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Simmons shines in West Indies win

TABLOID
Entrepreneurs feel Christmassy



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Unnao rape victim laid to rest amid high security

Unnao, Dec. 8: The last rites of the 23-year-old Unnao rape victim, who succumbed to her burn injuries in Delhi's Sadarjung Hospital, were performed at her native village here on Sunday amidst tight security arrangements.

Most of the fatalities were due to suffocation, say fire officials 43 perish in Delhi factory blaze

BHASKAR HARI SHARMA | DC
NEW DELHI, DEC. 8

In the national capital's worst fire accident since the 1997 Uphaar Cinema tragedy, 43 people died when a massive blaze ripped through a four-storey building housing an illegal manufacturing unit in north Delhi's congested Anaj Mandli area on Sunday morning.



Onlookers stand near a factory at Rani Jhansi Road where a major fire broke out, in New Delhi, Sunday morning.

The fire in Delhi's Anaj Mandli on Rani Jhansi Road is extremely horrific. My thoughts are with those who lost their loved ones. Wishing the injured a quick recovery. Authorities are providing all possible assistance at the site of the tragedy

— NARENDRA MODI, Prime Minister

Police and fire officials said most of the fatalities were due to suffocation as many people were sleeping when the fire started at around 5 am on the second floor of the building that did not have fire safety clearance.

Those awakened by the fire, suspected by officials to have been triggered by a short-circuit due to the building's illegal wiring, had to struggle to escape as the exit routes were partially blocked and many windows were found sealed.

Police and fire officials said most of the fatalities were due to suffocation as many people were sleeping when the fire started at around 5 am on the second floor of the building that did not have fire safety clearance.

Onlookers stand near a factory at Rani Jhansi Road where a major fire broke out, in New Delhi, Sunday morning.

As the building lacked proper ventilation, most of the people died due to asphyxia. National Disaster Response Force deputy commander Aditya Pratap Singh said they had detected carbon monoxide (CO) in the building. "The entire third and fourth floors was engulfed with smoke. The content of CO was more," he said when his team started operations. It found some windows sealed. Chaotic scenes were seen at the site, clogged with bystanders and ambulances were operating in convoys. Firemen made their way through narrow lanes to rescue those trapped inside the

blacked building and carried many unconscious labourers on their backs. At the hospitals where the dead and injured were taken, LNJF Hospital and Lady Hardinge Hospital — distraught relatives had a hard time finding their family members. "Thirty-four people were brought dead to LNJF Hospital and smoke inhalation was the primary cause of death. Some bodies were charred," said Dr. Kishore Singh, LNJF's medical superintendent. Out of 15 injured people brought to LNJF, nine are under observation and others have partial injuries, he said.

Harrowing tales emerged from the north Delhi morning where 43 labourers perished in a fire Sunday morning. Manoj, 32, a resident of Begusarai in Bihar, said his brother Naveen, 18, was working in a handbag-making unit operating from the premises. Mohammed Ismail, another worker, said there were almost 20 workers from Bihar's Saharsa district who were to return to their village on Sunday night, for which they had already booked their train tickets.

Heart-wrenching phone calls came from victims

BHASKAR HARI SHARMA | DC
NEW DELHI, DEC. 8

He is survived by his wife, three daughters and a son. He had been working at the State Election Commission issued a fresh notification for elections to rural local bodies in 27 districts of Tamil Nadu on December 27 and 28.



NMM to boycott TN panchayat polls: Kamal

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, DEC. 8

Shaking his friends and foes alike, actor-turned-politician Kamal Haasan on Sunday announced that "Makkal Neethi Maayam (NMM), the political party he leads, will boycott the impending elections to rural local bodies in Tamil Nadu for which the State Election Commission (SEC) had rolled out a fresh schedule on Saturday.

The coming election to the local bodies in Tamil Nadu "is not going to be a wholly representative exercise by the people" and the advances or gains the NMM could make by participating in these elections is not going to make any big difference, Kamal Haasan said in a statement here. Stating that the reasons for his contention was not hard to seek, Kamal Haasan said the local bodies polls will only be "sharing the spoils of office" between the parties which are "corrupt and which have money power and influence", without naming the major Dravidian rivals or their allies. With the NMM's political objective is for a "radical change" in the politics of Tamil Nadu, he said his party does not believe that "this goal can be attained in installments" by fighting from the lower tiers of democracy onwards. — P4

Rajini mandram to keep away from polls

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, DEC. 8

RURAL LOCAL BODY ELECTIONS



expecting anything substantial from these civic polls. Friend Rajinikanth had announced his intent to launch into politics on December 31, 2017 but has not done anything substantial to show he would carry out his promise. He too has said the 2021 Assembly election is his target. Nevertheless, millions of his diehard fans are waiting eagerly for the conversion of the mannam into a political party — they have even designed the party flag. Detractors, including

● The Rajini Makkal Mandram also said legal action would be taken if anyone canvassed votes using its name, flag or the actor's name or photograph

Tamil Nadu. It also said legal action would be taken if anyone canvassed votes using its name, flag or the actor's name or photograph. On December 17, the State Election Commission issued a fresh notification for elections to rural local bodies in 27 districts of Tamil Nadu on December 27 and 28. The SEC left behind nine districts where the Supreme Court, in its verdict on Friday, had directed the completion of the delimitation exercise in four months. The polls, however, appear to be hanging in balance as the DMK, immediately after the new notification, said it had no other option but to again move the court over completion of the delimitation exercise and quota for SC/STs and women in accordance with the apex court's directive.

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ties, who have come from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan till December 31, 2014, facing religious persecution there, will not be treated as illegal immigrants but provided Indian citizenship, according to the proposed law.

● The revised bill has, however, triggered considerable opposition in the northeastern states, with several organisations saying it will nullify the provisions of the 1985 Assam Accord, which fixed March 24, 1971 as the cut-off date for the deportation of all illegal immigrants irrespective of religion

the Rajya Sabha due to the vehement protests in the Northeast. The revised bill has, however, triggered considerable opposition in the northeastern states, with several organisations saying it will nullify the provisions of the 1985 Assam Accord, which fixed March 24, 1971 as the cut-off date for the deportation of all illegal immigrants irrespective of religion.

Constitution's Sixth Schedule. Though the legislation is expected to sail through the Lok Sabha, where the BJP has a clear majority, in anticipation of the possible trouble in the Rajya Sabha — where it is expected to be tabled later this week — the party strategists are trying to shore up numbers. The move came after the recent desertion of the Shiv Sena from the NDA coalition and likely opposition by its ally, the JDU. It is learnt the ruling party is talking to parties like the BJD, TRS and YSR Congress to get this important bill through Parliament.



Kudos to Anuradha

DMK president M K Stalin congratulated Anuradha for winning the gold at the 13th South Asian Games, 2019 in Nepal, in the 87-kg class weightlifting competition for women

Vibrant Victoria has much to delight visitors

Down Under with R.Mohan



First consignment of imported onions will reach TN on Dec 12
— R Kamaraj, AIADMK minister

SHORT TAKE

Thousands displaced in north, east provinces in Lanka due to torrential rain

Colombo, Dec 8: Over 10,000 people have been displaced while several others affected due to the floods caused by torrential rains in the Tamil dominated Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka has been receiving torrential rains for couple of weeks, with the situation being severe in the Northern and Eastern provinces, the Colombo Page reported on Sunday.

In the Eastern province over 79,000 people have been affected by the floods and 2,507 people from 786 families have been displaced, the paper reported, citing the data released by the Disaster Management Centre. "Similarly, in five districts of the Northern province 64,448 people have been affected by the floods while 8,478 people from 2,611 families have been displaced. They are accommodated at 56 shelters," the paper reported.

The government has allocated 1.7 million Sri Lankan Rupees for the provision of cooked meals to the displaced people at shelters and dry rations to the people temporarily staying with friends and relatives.

Northern province's District Secretariat has requested 16.6 million Sri Lankan Rupees from the Disaster Management Centre to provide relief to all those affected by the floods and inclement weather, the report said.

Sri Lanka's Department of Meteorology has said that various parts of the island nation are under a showery condition in the coming days, and has urged the people to take adequate precautions to minimise the damages.

—PTI

It's the southern summer and quite the time to be in Australia. There is a whole new world out there, a modern, inclusive country with a genuinely friendly attitude to visitors. The old joke about the famous writer who was asked by immigration "Have you got a criminal record?" and his reply - "Is it still compulsory?" - in a withering reference to ancient history of young nation is past its sell-by date. Today's Australia is a vibrant place and a great destination in the year to come.

They welcome tourists with an open heart these days, rolling out the red carpet for all nationalities, particularly Indians, who they know are such great fans of cricket that Australia may be their top destination in the year to come.

While the sporting events will be a natural draw for visitors to Melbourne, there is a host of activities and places to see in Victoria that the visitor must arm himself with all the facts to have a wholesome experience. Melbourne's thriving cafe culture is a most inviting feature as the city prides itself on being one of the coffee capitals of the world.

A variety of places to see may be common to many of the great cities of the world. What has driven Melbourne to its present world backed by a thinking and pro-active government. If Melbourne's great coastline to offer, Melbourne has worked harder to keep its flat order - so hard it is to spot anything out of order in the city's thriving CBD and inner city and its leafy



suburbs. Having been a frequent visitor to Australia in the last decades of the 20th century and then observed Victoria in its newest avatar in the new millennium, it might be fair conclusion draw that Melbourne's growth, sometimes defied in its burgeoning real estate in residential towers in the inner city, has been channelled in thoughtful action whereas Sydney's hedonism may have, along with its wannabe America outlook, just held it back from its potential. But, on a less serious note, what is Melbourne best presents is fun, fun, fun.

The piazza culture of Federation Square leads often to the witnessing of fancy events - flash mobs as well as protest music - all in the course of a day. And there is so much more to see and experience in a vibrant city. The Eureka Skydeck 88 is a splendid introduction to the delights of Melbourne.

A story to tell of Melbourne's heritage and the Victoria's history in the gold rush. The touch of rain is a reflection of the blood spilt in the gold rush. The name of the building itself is evocative of the gold rush as the Archimedean "Eureka" was the term the prospector used whenever they found gold.

The Eureka Skydeck is easily accessible as the high speed elevator takes you to level 88 in 40 seconds flat to take in the awesome 360 degree views of the city below.

What sets this place apart is the friendliness of the staff, their dedication to work and their sheer enjoyment at what they are doing. It was a unique experience to be locked up in a room while the whole space was pushed out of the building. They call it "The Edge" experience. All that keeps you safe in the glass cube from the Melbourne streets is the strength of the plate glass floor. Many tall buildings around the world have this feature but none lets you hang three metres out of the building in spectacular fashion when you are nearly 300 metres high.

The affable head of operations and technology explained as to how they are constantly innovating to capture the imagination of visitors. Their virtual reality experience on the top floor is not for the faint-hearted. As you "walk the plank" with the head gear on, the plank seems to be hanging out of the edge of the building. It takes a brave man to venture further and grab the pogo stick, especially since a pigeon appears to fly inches from your face as it rises from the building.

A wondrous journey begins as you "step" out of the building and you fly over Melbourne like a bird, taking in all the sights that are precise in detail as they come from actual aerial video footage of the city. The Eureka Skydeck 88 is a splendid introduction to the delights of Melbourne.

(R. Mohan is the Resident Editor of the Chennai and Tamil Nadu editions of Decan Chronicle. He visited Melbourne, Victoria on invitation from Victoria and Scot Airlines)

Animals headcount begins in MTR

B. RAVICHANDRAN | DC COOYAR, DEC. 8

The week long post-monsoon animal population estimation and habitat evaluation at the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR) is underway now. Official sources at the reserve said that it is an annual exercise in the MTR woods. As per the National tiger conservation authority norms, the tiger reserves have to conduct animal population estimation and habitat evaluation once during the pre-monsoon and once in the post-monsoon period to assess the health of the habitat and the population of animals.

For this purpose the MTR core region has been divided into 27 transect zones. The forest teams assisted by volunteers in different transect zones would study the movement of animals and the wealth of the prey base for the tiger and other carnivores and wealth of flora, fodder availability, water sources in the respective transects.

"This would give a comprehensive data on the population and movement of tigers and also other animals in the MTR core zone in the post-monsoon period wherein the winter sets in," sources explained. The data collected during the weeklong process would help compare it with the figures of the previous such estimation and to find out if there is any notable changes in any transects. The study further and to take necessary remedial measures, if needed, sources maintained.

Mounting garbage attracts wild boars in Coonoor

B. RAVICHANDRAN | DC COONOOR, DEC. 8

In an unfortunate development in the hill town of Coonoor, the mounting garbage in the municipal limits has begun to attract wild boars into the arterial part of the town. This apparently failed garbage management system is paving way for another round of man-animal conflict in the hills.

Through the district administration in Nilgiris has paid enough attention to implement solid-waste management scheme in the hills to keep the hills neat and tidy, the way in which the garbage is being accumulating in the road sides here in Coonoor showed the lax attitude of the municipal administration in Coonoor and the lethargic attitude of the garbage collection vehicles that crisscross the town to collect garbage from sources. But, the residents here have something to blame the officials for this laxity.

The residents said that it so happens sometime that the garbage collection vehicle being operated by the municipality would fail to visit the residential areas for days together, which would result in the public throwing the garbage to the roadsides. "The vegetable wastes generated in the houses, which begin to stink if not disposed in time. So, the residents will have no other option, but to throw the stinking wastes in the road sides."

"The municipal administration should have a monitoring mechanism to ensure that every day the garbage collection vehicles visit each and every street to collect the wastes," a resident in Coonoor said. Meanwhile, animal activists here in the hills warned that wild boars will naturally turn ferocious and begin to attack if it happened to encounter human beings in close quarters.

'East India company organised corporate loot'

PRIYANKA MINU | DC CHENNAI, DEC. 8

"What honour is left to us?" asked a Mughal official, when we have to take orders from a handful of traders who have not yet learned to wash their bottoms." Those handful of traders the subject of the Mughal officials' jibe, worked for the East India Company, the ruthless and most successful start-up in world history. In the words of Edmund Burke, it was a state in the guise of a merchant.

William Dalrymple's *The Anarchy: The relentless rise of the East India Company* is a well-written history giving a detailed account on the factors that led to the relentless rise of the company from 1599-1803. As Dalrymple points out, "India's transition to colonialism took place under a for-profit organisation, which existed entirely for the purpose of enriching its investors."

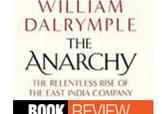
Dalrymple's perspective of the company's rule and inevitable takeover by the British Empire is evident from the first line: "One of the very first Indian words to enter the English language was the Hindustani slang for plunder: loot." The English East India company, he writes, "executed a corporate coup unparalleled in history: the military conquest, subjugation and plunder of vast tracts of southern Asia. It almost certainly remains the supreme act of corporate violence in world history."

operation. "Headquartered in one small office, five windows wide, in London." The life of Shah Alam forms the heart of the narrative, "a man whose fate it was to witness the entire story of the Company's fifty-year-long assault on India."

The arrival of British in 1600's looked very different at that time. European merchants and traders coming to India to trade were a usual sight to behold. In 1614, the Mughal emperor Jahangir's favourite, the ambassador of King James I who landed in the docks of Surat with the sole purpose of promoting trade with the newly chartered East India Company. The celebrated Mughal miniature painter Bichitr Singh's contemporary paintings shows how the Sultan prefers the company of Sufis over the Ottoman sultan. James I on the other hand is placed at the bottom corner of the frame, below Jahangir's feet.

From the lowly place of a merchant, the Indian ambassador of King James I who landed in the docks of Surat with the sole purpose of promoting trade with the newly chartered East India Company. The celebrated Mughal miniature painter Bichitr Singh's contemporary paintings shows how the Sultan prefers the company of Sufis over the Ottoman sultan. James I on the other hand is placed at the bottom corner of the frame, below Jahangir's feet.

From Babur to Aurangzeb, the Mughal Empire flourished in Hindustan. But the internal faction, disorder and corruption and external threat was too big to hide from the eyes of the company. The anarchy which followed was too big to hide from the company which the British comfortably installed them-



WILLIAM DALRYMPLE THE ANARCHY THE RELENTLESS RISE OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY BOOK REVIEW

selves in Indian politics as well as socio-economic and cultural history of India. It is during this time that they realised that the Indian merchants, bankers were their natural friends. Caught between anarchy and the rich Jain Marwari bankers aided the British, their credit line which the British used to their great advantage. And it is this which changed the entire course of the history. The death of Aurangzeb, the invasion of Nader Shah, the Marathas, the Rohillas and Ahmad Shah Durrani caused anarchy in the great Mughal Empire and slowly but steadily it fell apart and tumbled down like the Orwellian elephant.

people. It was anarchy which threw open the gates for the British but it was the biggest firms of the period - the house of - Lalit Kashmiri Mal, Ramchand Gopalchand Shahu and Gopaldas-Manoharadas - many of them based in Patna and Benares. All of them with their effective financial system helped the company mobilise and transfer huge sums of money and also helped them maintain a disciplined and well-trained army. Army which managed to defeat its arch enemies - the nawabs of Bengal and Avadh, Tipu Sultan's Mysore Sultanate and the great Maratha Confederacy.

Caught between anarchy and the world of greed was Emperor Shah Alam, who was tossed back and forth between the Marathas and the British. He was a king only in name and more of a puppet and a prisoner. It was he who came into this world to witness the great fall of the Timurid dynasty from which he belonged. Even then the British were shrewd enough to realise his sovereign suzerainty.

Coins were still minted in his name and trade was conducted on his name. Shah Alam legalised their existence. Hence the company brought him under their fold as their pensioner. The penultimate assault scene in Shah Alam's life is when Ghulam Qadir, who once used to be emperor's favourite eunuch sat on his chest and gouged his eyes out with his knife, raped and humiliated his entire family. As if in a morbid way nature was trying to tell him that you've seen enough beyond this it's too

unbearable to see anything else. The assault on the emperor and his family became symbolic assault of India which by now was the house of - Lalit Kashmiri Mal, Ramchand Gopalchand Shahu and Gopaldas-Manoharadas - many of them based in Patna and Benares. All of them with their effective financial system helped the company mobilise and transfer huge sums of money and also helped them maintain a disciplined and well-trained army. Army which managed to defeat its arch enemies - the nawabs of Bengal and Avadh, Tipu Sultan's Mysore Sultanate and the great Maratha Confederacy.

What makes this book colourful, interesting and disorienting is the entertaining read is that it is a history rendered by its characters more than the historian. He can become each of his characters, especially the Indian and European historians who have much to tell, write and show about their period. Ghulam Hussain Khan was the most famous and perceptive historian of 18th century. He was a man having spent much of his time in Delhi himself gives him a unique and entertaining anecdote of Delhi. East India Company remains one of the most ominous words in our history. It has "the potential to abuse power and the interest of the shareholder can become that of the state. Today it needs to be read because the imperialist nostalgia is taking hold in western countries. In India the Hindu nationalist are distorting history. Today's world is a world of constitutional norms are under threat. And the government is so in debt that it's selling its public sectors to private entity just to raise some money. The defences of the country seem more fragile than ever. This book warns us against corporate excess, if we don't rein it in now, we will be repeating the saga of East India Company."

William Dalrymple was recently invited to an event at Starmark by the book signing.



Prayers for Sonia

Special prayers for the Congress president Sonia Gandhi will be held at Kaligambal temple in North Chennai, Santhome Church and in the Dargah on Anna Salai on Dec 9 to mark her birthday, said TNCC chief K S Azhagiri

Wife of retired HM charred to death

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, DEC. 8

In a ghastly incident, the 56-year-old first wife of a retired head master, was charred to death after being set on fire by unidentified persons in Villupuram on Saturday. The cops have launched a hunt for the murderers.

While Nataraja, 60, of Sudhakar Nagar, Villupuram, who retired as head master in Higher Secondary School at Thirukovilur two years ago, had been married to Indira more than 30 years ago. Since they were not blessed with a child, he had married Leela more than two decades ago and Velayutham, 23, was born to them.

On information, Taluk police rushed to the place and conducted preliminary investigation. The cops reportedly found injuries on her head. Kallakurichi SP Jayachandran visited the crime spot. The police registered case and launched hunt of the murderers.

Police suspect dispute in money lending may be the reason for the murder.

Centre should not hike GST rates — A.M. Vikramaraja, TN Traders Associations Federation chief

BRIEF
Two held for peddling ganja

Chennai: The city police on Saturday night arrested two people and seized 2 kg ganja from them.

According to sources, RK Nagar police personnel were on a patrol when they came upon 2 people behaving suspiciously. They started running as soon as they saw the police but their efforts were in vain as they were caught. On investigation, the accused were identified as Nagaraj (35), a resident of Washermanpet and Arul (21), a resident of Ranganathapuram housing board in Korukkupet. Two kgs ganja was seized from them, while they had smuggled from Andhra Pradesh and selling in small packages to school and college students and daily wage workers. Investigations are on.



Cricket fans flaunt their tickets for the first One Day International between India and West Indies at Chepauk on Sunday. The match is on December 15.

Shops crumble in Washermanpet during metro rail work

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, DEC. 8

There were tense moments when four shops in Washermanpet crumbled after a JCB was used for ongoing metro rail works. Shop owners managed to take out their belongings before their shops came down.

Metro rail work is in progress between Washermanpet and Wimco Nagar in Thiruvotriyur. On Saturday evening, a JCB was used to level the Arumahareshwar Temple Street in New Washermanpet for the NEET exams. While the work was going on, Natarajan's pani puri shop, Ramesh's tyre repair and Parthasarathy's roadside shop, besides another shop, started to develop huge cracks.



One of the crumbled shops. — DC

Neet impersonation: Two more student's involvement suspected

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, DEC. 8

Two more students have been suspected of foul play in the NEET impersonation scam in the state. According to reports, the brokers invited and confessed in connection with the case have revealed the possibility of two more students being involved in the scandal. The NEET fraud came to

light when Udit Surya KV, a first-year student of Theni medical college, was found to have used an impersonator to clear his NEET exams. The accused and his father Dr Venkatesan were arrested by the police and confessed in connection with the crime during the subsequent CB-CID interrogation. The investigation had revealed that Dr Venkatesan sought the

help of two people - a middle man and a broker from Mumbai - to arrange for an impersonator. A total of 10 arrests - five students and their parents - were made in the case. Earlier, CB-CID investigations revealed the possible presence of a larger racket in the state. Police are also on the lookout for the middle man Rasheed who is said to have been involved in a majority of the cases.

Is body heat a criminal's worst enemy?



On a beautiful April day in 2013, Hennesbery decided to check on his boat which was moored at the backyard of his house in Watertown, Massachusetts, USA. He noticed that something was off when he saw his ladder on the side of the boat and climbed it. He noticed blood and a crumpled piece of fabric which looked like a crumpled piece of fabric which was lying on the deck. On seeing this, he freaked out and called 911. Police immediately dispatched a helicopter equipped with state-of-the-art thermal imaging camera called FLIR (forward-looking infrared) device. Hovering over the boat, the helicopter spotted the heat impression of the second Boston Marathon bombing terror suspect 19-year-old Dzhokhar Tsarnaev. Within minutes, police, ATF, SWAT and K9 units had descended on 67 Franklin Street and assumed positions even as the chopper kept fluttering and monitoring the suspect. The boat for more than an hour before police moved in and took the bleeding Dzhokhar Tsarnaev into custody.

Thermal imaging is a night vision technology as are near-infrared illumination, and low-light imaging. Thermal imaging boosts the visibility of objects in a dark setting by detecting the objects infrared radiation and creating an image based on that information. A variety of different energy Many things, including living beings such as human beings, machinery and engine create and emit heat either biologically or mechanically. Other things, like rocks, stones, land, vegetation, water etc absorb the energy of the sun during the day and radiate it during the night.

The thing that we discern when we peek through a thermal camera is the intensity of the infrared energy spewed by objects or living beings. Thermal cameras detect and measure the thermal energy emitted from an object. As thermal and infrared energy is so long, it forms part of the electromagnetic spectrum that cannot be detected by the human eye but are only perceived as heat. All things having a temperature above absolute zero emit heat, which means that even ice emits infrared energy. Thermal cameras work better at night because the thermal imaging is the technique of using the heat given off by an object to produce an image of it or to locate it. Thermal cameras also allow police officers to see through heat through smoke, darkness or heat permeable barriers. Thermal imaging cameras may also help police see through light fog, light rain and snow.

Thermal cameras employed in law enforcement allows police officers and security professionals to search, find and apprehend criminals more efficiently in unfavorable weather conditions, dense vegetation, forests or numerous other circumstances that usually impede the police from approaching or discovering them. For instance, imagine a situation in which a police team is chasing a criminal in the Mettupalayam Coonoor road with the police highway patrol car speeding right behind the criminal car. Abruptly, the criminal pulls his car to a screeching halt, jumps and starts fleeing into the dense forest with a dense herbage on a dark night. The police team in Lincolnshire, UK caught a rapist but didn't know where she was. Lincolnshire police used a drone with a thermal imaging camera to trace and get officers to her within minutes. And a man who had crashed his car in freezing night-time temperatures in Lincolnshire was saved from hypothermia when a police thermal imaging drone found him. The man was discovered in a deep ditch. Most thermal cameras display the pictures in black and white while there are expensive cameras available which reveal the variations in temperatures being exuded by the objects in different colours. The colour element is crucial for the firefighters as it helps them make decisions on safely entering a structure or to deduce the origin of the fire. As police officers mostly use the thermal cameras to track down criminals, they are not a must-have.

Even if the police departments were to procure a single shared handheld thermal imaging device, they without a doubt would find countless unique uses from tracing missing persons to detecting hidden firearms, explosives, fleeing criminals, etc. They would have the ability to see through total darkness, light foliage, smoke or haze with the ability to separate camouflaged, motionless humans from the background clutter; a thermal device makes finding hidden bad guys far easier than night vision devices (NVG). Plus, they work 24 hours a day. Police officers in India are looking for Nothing can serve the police officers better for surveillance than

thermal imaging cameras. In my viewpoint, thermal should go to all crime parties, Disaster Relief teams, Highway Patrols, Special Task Force, Naxalite Special Divisions, etc. Thermal cameras have multiple uses. In Highway Patrol vehicles they can detect contraband in passing trucks and cars. They can unravel the existence of secret compartments as well as the presence of explosives and narcotics as they possess different thermal signatures. Use of a thermal imaging camera can quickly and non-destructively point out areas that need further investigation. Thermal imagers can also be used to determine if any vehicle was recently driven rather than sneaking up to a car to check if it was recently used. A quick drive-by using a thermal imager would be a great way to confirm that the criminal was recently on the move. In many years of my experience, detecting and identifying suspects who are being chased or discarded or tossed items, or weapons while making good their escape. Objects, including firearms wherever they are dropped, including tall grass or shrubs, can be easily discovered using a thermal imager. Or, the criminals run into a dark cave or into tunnels or dense forests thermal imagers can serve as a perfect tool to trace them and nab them. Criminals who lurk in dark alleys and isolated places could get revealed in vivid colour by thermal imaging cameras. Thermal imagers, therefore, could be invaluable also for patrol vehicles, drug units, crime teams etc. Thermal imagers are amazing devices for detecting illegal drug labs, clandestine cultivation of marijuana in either fields or in buildings. They can also help find hidden stacks or discarded equipment for the illegal manufacture of drugs. Handheld thermal imagers on board West Midlands Police's Cannabis Disposal Team helicopters are detecting cannabis factories in Wolverhampton, UK. High quality remarkable thermal imagers on board police copter is bringing illegal cannabis-growing business out of the dark and leading officers straight to the gate of the criminals. Drug farms are being detected due to the white heat given off by the powerful lights needed to cultivate the plants. The amount of heat given off is enormous, occasionally houses operate even up to 50-60 watt lamps at a

Karnataka cops arrest TN youth at gun-point

ZAKEER HUSSAIN | DC SALEM, DEC. 8

Varying stories are doing the rounds in the steel town here on Sunday after Karnataka police team forcibly took away a gun (banned tobacco) case at gunpoint near Sundar lodge bus stop in Salem on Sunday night. Police said on Sunday that two youth were sipping coffee at a coffee shop near the bus stop last night when four 'smartly dressed' persons coming in two cars stopped by and accosted them. The intruders asked one of the youth to 'accompany them' and when they refused to oblige, one of the foursome suddenly pulled out a revolver and warned one of the youth to go with them. As they whisked away the youth at gunpoint into their car, the other three youth on the road alerted

the Salem police control room. Policemen there radioed a message through wireless and Karurpur police managed to intercept the speeding car and made enquiries with the four persons. It was then that the four persons who came in the cars disclosed that they were from 'Karnataka Electricity Police' and were investigating a case of alleged carting of Rs.25 lakh worth 'Gudka' with two persons in Salem. The person picked up by the Karnataka cops at gunpoint was Harris Devadas and Shiva Prasad. Meanwhile, the other guy left on the road, Dholaram, 27, told Asthampatti police that Harris Devadaraj was his relative. Further investigations are on at two different police stations, even as there were unconfirmed reports of the two youth having been 'kidnapped' by some unknown miscreants.



CTV footage of the incident.

Miscreant targeting lord Aiyappa devotees nabbed

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, DEC. 8

Lord Aiyappa has delivered into the police net an impostor who robbed devotees of their 'irumudi' functions in temples and mandapas in the city during this Sasarama season. Dressed like a devotee, seasoned thief Senthilkumar would get into the irumudi events and sneak away after picking up some valuables, police said.

The thief admitted on intense questioning to having robbed a temple hand at Nesappakam, stealing mobile phones in Pondy Bazar and gold jewels at a marriage function at West Mambalam last month. More importantly, Selvakumar has been identified as the accused in the murder of his third wife at Maravoyal some time

back in South Chennai, mostly using the same modus operandi. Police said the 47-year-old criminal was nabbed within hours of the theft at KK Nagar temple following a complaint from the victim family. The CCTV footage from the Aiyappa temple helped catch him from a nearby shop, they said. The thief admitted on intense questioning to having robbed a temple hand at Nesappakam, stealing mobile phones in Pondy Bazar and gold jewels at a marriage function at West Mambalam last month. More importantly, Selvakumar has been identified as the accused in the murder of his third wife at Maravoyal some time

(The writer K. Jayanth Murali, IPS, is ADGP (Law and Order) Tamil Nadu. He can be contacted at www.jayanthmurali.com)



Education policy

Education should be transferred back to the State list to avert Centre eroding into states rights, a meeting of DMK women's wing chaired by Kanimozhi, MP, resolved in Chennai on Sunday



Women should use their nails and teeth as weapons to fight back if attacked

— Dr. Tamiliselvi Sundararajan, Telangana Governor

BRIEF

LB polls: CPI sceptical of AIADMK's intent

Thanjavur: "The AIADMK government in the state is not willing to conduct local bodies' elections and therefore creating confusion in announcing the polls," said R. Mutharasan, CPI state secretary here on Sunday. He told presspersons that even after Supreme court gave its order on the issue, without rectifying anomalies, the poll dates have been announced in a hurried manner on Saturday. "This is not democracy," he regretted. That is why DMK is going to the court again, he said, adding, there was no other go. "The ruling party is trying to put the blame on DMK by forcing it to go to court by its confused decisions," alleged Mutharasan. With respect to soaring price of onions, the state government must import onions and make it available at affordable cost to all sections of the people, he added.

Kamal Haasan: MNM aiming for 2021 assembly elections

FROM PAGE 1

"It is because the seeds of MNM's success are not sown by money power or political cleverness, but on honesty and wholehearted people's support," he emphasised. As the local bodies elections are not for ensuring people's welfare in the sense of the term, Kamal, obliquely referring to the two Dravidian majors without naming them DMK and AIADMK, said "it should be our resolve that MNM will have no role to play in the political drama scripted by the two parties."

"This is my wish and my advice to my cadre," Kamal said, adding that even MNM had grown in stature over the last year or so from being the butt of political sarcasm and ridicule to a party which is converting its adversaries to its admirers. "We will continue to serve the people for the next 50 weeks and our objective is to capture power in Tamil Nadu in 2021 (Assembly polls)," the MNM leader added in setting out the reasons why his party has decided to contest the Panchayat elections now.

A rich anthology of stories from Odisha mirrors many worlds in one text

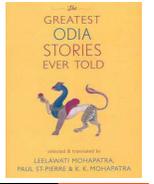
M.R. VENKATESH I DC CHENNAI, DEC. 8

From mythology to women's education as a driver of social change, to an array of belief systems and existential themes, everything speaks through memorable part-real, partial-fictional characters from rich collection of 24 stories by some of the finest short story writers in Odia over the last 100 years and slightly more.

Selected and translated into English by Leelawati Mohapatra, a novelist who has extensively translated from Odia into English, Paul St-Pierre, a former Professor of Translation studies at Montreal University, and K K (Kamalakanta) Mohapatra, a novelist who has collaborated with the former two authors in many works of translation, this amazing non-didactic collection bearing the occasional value judgments we all make in moments of crisis and distress, reads as if a translucent gem, spluttering the many-sidedness of

human existence. In the Indian philosophical tradition, Orissa, now Odisha, is known more for having produced some of the finest, sharpest and greatest Nayya Nayya, goli-goli, while the picture postcards conveys to remnants of Kalinga dynasty. The short story is a genre in Jagannath temple, Konark Sun temple, the Chilika lake and a few other places. On the down side, we bear the endemic hunger in Koraput region, besides the tribals' struggle against mining firms. But what these translations open the non-Odia readers to is an amazing world of narratives from the part of eastern India that reflect change from tradition to modernity.

More than form and substance, the words and turn of phrases in this collection of stories tell us how people are sandwiched between a past whose history is not entirely known and a future whose dangers and uncertainties are yet to be fanned. K K Mohapatra (KKM for short) in his introduction to the text, interestingly lists the three authors who have collaborated in this



The Greatest Odia Stories Ever Told, Selected and Translated by Leelawati Mohapatra, Paul St-Pierre & K K Mohapatra - Aleph Book Company, New Delhi, 2019, (₹699/-). Immensely readable translation project have set out their own individual impressions in the introduction, points out that like "in other Indian languages, the modern period of Odia literature was a product of the colonial encounter." The short story is a genre in Odia, he says "germinated" in 1888 with the publica-

tion of Fakir Mohan Senapati's 'Rebati', "a haunting portrayal of a young girl's burning desire for education which was almost like aspiring for the days when the world is still 'enjoys the honour and distinction of being the first modern Odia story'." The book is included in the volume in the appendix, precisely for the exalted status it continues to enjoy in that literary tradition.

The story is a very moving portrayal of how "providence works in mysterious ways" and brings out the protagonist girl Rebati's resolute ways to literacy and how she brings out the very end of Shyambandhu Mohanty's family. Also included in the appendix is another famous story 'The Sanyasi' by Reba Ray, which is said to be the first modern Odia short story by a woman writer in 1898. "The Sanyasi" revolves around one Nityananda Patnaik, who retired from the Treasury office in Cuttack, his ambitious and ill-matched wife Ushabati, their only child Siva Prasad, "born after

prayers to Lord Siva" and Parasamani, a destitute woman who is given shelter by the family during the day, later becomes the daughter-in-law of the household as a reflection of man's insatiable desire for Siva Prasad. But with Parasamani's death following her illness in 1904, the family's grief only seemed to be in passing. Ushabati has other plans to marry off her son to another rich girl, which the idealist in Siva Prasad firmly rejects.

Distressed and tormented by the family developments, Siva Prasad finally finds peace in "donning the robes of a renouncing son in the renunciation and in complete refuge in God. Reba Ray so gently brings out the pathos of a promising son in the family taking to 'Vanaprastha' by an act of 'vanishing', even before his father could contemplate any such move, as nature's order of precedence would usually demand. The story is still a ringing metaphor in many middle-class homes. "The range of Odia authors in this anthology are of the depth of the human emotions they portray in

diverse life situations, speak of a different order of intellectual discourse in the year 2019 and in 2021, emphasizing continuity with nature and yet aspiring to the heights of the realm of culture as modern sensibility would demand. Apart from Fakir Mohan Senapati, Satish Chandra short story writers featured in this volume include Akhil Mohan Pattnaik (1927-82), Banacharan Mitra (1915-70), Binapani Mohanty (1936), Chandrasekhar Rath (1929-2018) who was also a painter and sculptor, Chaudhury Hemakanta Misra (1935-2005), K K (Kamalakanta) Mohapatra (1951-1991), Gopinath Mohanty (1914-91), who was winner of the inaugural Sahitya Akademi award in 1955, J.P. Das (1936), Kanheiala Das (1947-70), Kishori Charan Das (1924-2004), a Sahitya Akademi award winner who published 16 collections of short stories, Manoj Das (1934), a bilingual novelist and left-wing student leader in his college days, Mohapatra Nilamoni Senapati (1949-2016), Nrusingha Tripathy (1945-), Prabhira Ray (1944) who

has won several literary awards including the Sahitya Akademi in 2004 and Manohar Award in 2011. Reba Ray (1875-1957) who founded the first women's journal in Odia, Surendra Mohanty (1920-90) a writer and journalist elected twice to the Odisha Legislative Council, nanda Rautray (1916-2004) who won both the Sahitya Akademi and Jnanpith Awards, Santanu Kumar Acharya (1933) and Ramachandra Behera (1945-), among others.

Das' 'Mrs Crocodile' brings out an astonishing encounter a western anthropologist has with a woman who resurfaces in her village ten years after she was dragged down to the depths of the river by a crocodile, the 'Mantra' by Jagannath Prasad (J.P.) Das is a sting yet sardonic take on the power of a 'Swamiji (Godman)', he is highly curious, mesmerizing women devotees with his deep captivating looks and his flair for resource mobilization from his devotees, Satish Chandra, who offers them the promise of offering them a unique 'Mantra'. It is a

story so reminiscent of our times. Sexual undercurrents, body language and by first for the spiritual, esthetic seem to go together until his women devotees seem to be in a state of 'Another short story 'A River Called Democracy' by Akhil Mohan Pattnaik is a hilarious, poignant and witty account of how our political system works, while 'News of the Day' by Kanheiala Das and 'The Whore' by Reba Ray by Kamalakanta Mohapatra, are simultaneously self-critical meditations on man's world of guilt and repression and women. Yet, they do not take you into a Freudian world of guilt and repression with an undercurrent of 'Shringara Rasa' seeing emotions differently.

As Mohapatra himself puts it succinctly in his introduction, "modern Odia short stories are not so much preoccupied with articulating nostalgia for a lost order as with giving voice to defining the anxiety of coping with a rapidly changing world." The stories in this anthology, though not exhaustive, reflect that spirit all through.

Politics

Palaniswami speaks to the media in Coimbatore CM says LB polls as per SC order, trashes DMK move

Coimbatore, Dec 8: Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami on Sunday asserted that the State Election Commission has notified rural civic polls ahead only as per the Supreme Court order and rubbished DMK's allegation of non-compliance of court directives. A day after DMK chief M K Stalin said there was no their option but to approach the court, the CM seeking full compliance of its December 6 order, Palaniswami said the top court ruled that the poll to rural civic bodies can be held in 27 districts of Tamil Nadu.



"Only based on the Supreme Court's directive, the State Election Commission has now notified the polls to rural civic bodies," he told reporters here.

As regards local polls in nine other districts, the court verdict said it should be conducted after completion of processes including delimitation in four months, he said. "Since the DMK approached the court over civic polls, elections could not be held for about three years since 2016. Similarly, the main opposition was now leveling some charges with an intention of postponing local elections somehow. Palaniswami alleged, "The DMK is hesitant and afraid to face polls."

He claimed, Hitting out at Stalin for asking if the ruling party had the strength to face polls, he wanted to know why the principal opposition was now afraid to go to the court. When the apex court has given the go-ahead to hold elections to civic bodies in 27 districts, he said. The Chief Minister, who is also the co-ordinator of the AIADMK, said the SC's completed exercises including delimitation by following due process and accepted as the DMK's move in this regard from the general public. —PTI

SWAMY CROWNED



The priests of Meenakshi Amman Temple and Inmayil Nammatharavur temple are seen offering prasadam and temple honours to senior BJP leader Subramanian Swamy on the occasion of his birthday at Madurai on Sunday. —K. Manikandan

Onion the VIP at many functions now

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, DEC. 8

The pricey onion is now getting VIP treatment even at celebrity functions, apart from the Deeg festival and videos on the social media, though the people involved seem interested in drawing some laughs out of the tragedy of their favourite veggie going out of reach. The latest among the long string of onion events was the attempt on Sunday by some Congress members to garland P Chidambaram with onions when he arrived at Trichy on his maiden trip after release from jail, being observed by a PC supporter who offered him an onion garland in Tiruchy.



The picture of Shahul and Sabarin, smartly dressed at their marriage reception in Cuddalore on Sunday, accepting a bouquet made up of onions as the wedding gift from friends has gone viral on the social media. And onion has graduated as the thief's choice in recent days, perhaps even competing with gold and silver.

The latest onion theft happened at a shop in Madurai, when the robber carrying away onions in his bag was caught with the help of CCTV footage from the shop. A worker was caught stealing a sack-load of onions in a couple of days back in Pudukcherry. He was given a good thrashing before being handed over to the cops. With the price of onions, of a reasonably large size, touching ₹100 even at the onion markets, many households are opting for substantial cuts in its use in kitchen.

T'malai gears up for Karthikai Deepam

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, DEC. 8

The administration has made elaborate arrangements to observe the annual Karthikai Deepam festival of lights, on December 10 (Tuesday) in Tiruvannamalai. More than 25 lakh devotees from various States and from Singapore, Malaysia and Sri Lanka are expected to throng the temple on the blessing of Lord Shiva. The Arulmigu Arunachaleswari Temple, where the roads are being spruced up in the temple town. Karthikai Deepam is observed on December 10. The 17-day festival will come to an end on December 14. The district administration is organising the event with assistance of revenue department, HR&CE, Police, Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Service personnel, Health department, Tanggetco, PWD, Municipalities, Forest Department, Agriculture Department, Veterinary Department, Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation and District Education, TNPCB, Food and Consumer Protection Department.



Tiruvannamalai district Collector K.S.Kandiasamy at the temple overseeing arrangements. —K.Senthil Nathan

With 17-day long utsavam Sri Durgaiamma on November 28 and brahmotsavam on December 1 to 10. The Maha Deepam will be performed on December 10. Despani Only 2,600 devotees are allowed to climb Sri Annamalaiyar hill from 6 a.m. on December 10. A round the clock control room will function from Sunday to Wednesday and public can contact 785 880 850 to lodge any complaint through WhatsApp.

Oppose Citizenship bill in Par: MMK

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, DEC. 8

The Manithasena Makkal Kaatchi (MMK) president M H Jawaharullal on Sunday urged all the political parties from Tamil Nadu in particular to oppose the proposed Citizenship Amendment Bill, sought to be enacted by the BJP government, to be tabled in Parliament. In a statement here, he said the amendments proposed in the Bill were not only against the Constitution, but also "selective and discriminatory" regarding granting Indian citizenship to "illegal non-Muslims from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan who came to India before December, 2014". Jawaharullal pointed out that the Bill seeks to draw a wedge among the authorities by excluding Muslims and Tamils from Sri Lanka under the purview of the legislation. He said the amendments would grant citizenship to the Tamil refugees from the island, he said, adding, the parties here should be united in mind and oppose the Bill.

Kamal Haasan: MNM aiming for 2021 assembly elections

FROM PAGE 1

"It is because the seeds of MNM's success are not sown by money power or political cleverness, but on honesty and wholehearted people's support," he emphasised. As the local bodies elections are not for ensuring people's welfare in the sense of the term, Kamal, obliquely referring to the two Dravidian majors without naming them DMK and AIADMK, said "it should be our resolve that MNM will have no role to play in the political drama scripted by the two parties."



Transgender singers

South superstar Rajinikanth's new film 'Darbar' will feature a unique song rendered by three Hyderabad-based Transgenders- Chandramukhi, Rachna and Priya



Encounter killings are unacceptable under law. — K. Balakrishnan, CPM state secretary

SHORT TAKES



C. A. Vasuki being awarded Excellence in Education Award by TNEE. —DC

Excellence award for Dr Vasuki

Coimbatore: Dr C. A. Vasuki, secretary and director of the Kongunadu Arts and Science College, Coimbatore, was honored with Excellence in Education Award by the The Nilgris Epic Eventz (TNEE) at a function organised here on Sunday. On the occasion a talent show 'Winter Queen 2019 South India', a contest to test the beauty and brains of contestants was organised. Mrs. Sonali Pradeep, winner of the title 'Mrs. India Universe Earth' participated as chief guest. About 10 contestants from South India participated in the talent and beauty show. The event provided married and single women a platform to showcase their talents.

Competition for differently-abled to mark IDPD in Coimbatore

Coimbatore: Around 102 college students studying in colleges in Tamil Nadu and Kerala participated in the various state level competitions organised for the visually challenged to commemorate the international Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) which is observed on December 3. The initiative was organised by National Federation of Blind in partnership with Sankara Eye Hospital, Coimbatore City Round Table 31 and Coimbatore City Ladies Circle 16 at the city-based eye hospital on Sathy Road here on Saturday. Braille reading and writing, poetry, music and speech competitions were organised during the day-long event. The first three winners of each contest were awarded with cash rewards and a certificate. "The participants took part with enthusiasm and watching their talent was an eye-opener." One of the organisers from Sankara Eye Hospital said. Winners of the state-level competitions are eligible to participate in national level contests which will be organised by the National Federation of Blind (NFB) next month in Delhi.



MARATHON FOR UNDERPRIVILEGED

Marathon, run to ignite a life organised a fund raiser marathon to benefit the underprivileged youth and women held at Olcott school on Sunday. —DC

'Imported onions to reach TN on Dec 12'

G.SRINIVASAN | DC THANJAVUR, DEC 8

Onions imported by the Central government from Turkey and Egypt are expected to arrive in Tamil Nadu on December 12 and 13 (the state's share) and will be supplied to people accordingly, said R. Kamaraj, State Food minister on Sunday. He told presspersons that already state government started supplying onions through fair price shops from Friday. When imported onions reach state, things will improve, he said. Heavy rains in Maharashtra and Karnataka has affected

the yield of onions and hence the crisis, the minister explained. Imported onions will be supplied through 6000 fair price shops in the state, the minister said. He denied that there was confusion in conducting local bodies elections in the state. "Election dates have been announced and elections will be held. Only DMK is afraid of facing local bodies' elections and is going to court every time to get stay," the minister said. **VAIKO ON ONIONS:** Meanwhile, MDMK chief and Rajya Sabha MP, Mr. Vaiko said here that "onion prices had brought the fall of gov-

ernments in the past and this time also it may bring down governments." He told presspersons that the price rise of onions this year is unprecedented. He also alleged that AIADMK was not interested in conducting local bodies elections. "Normally elections should be conducted after delimitation, reservation process is over. The State government is not willing to do it. The DMK has gone to court only on this issue and elections should be held properly," Vaiko said, in defence of the DMK.

NEW COURT INAUGURATED



Inauguration of Judicial Magistrate Court No.2 at Tambaram in Kancheepuram district on Sunday. Justice Pushpa Sathyanarayana, Justice V. Bhavani Subbarayan and law minister C.V. Shanmugam were present. —DC

7 held for trying to sell infant girl

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, DEC. 8

Seven persons including a woman were arrested on charge of attempt to sell a three-month-old girl baby in Thiruvallur. Police arrested them following tip off from a women's association. According to sources, the cops received a tip off regarding child trafficking in Pattur railway station in Thiruvallur. Based on this, the railway police and cops conducted a raid and found a group was attempting to buy the baby. The cops rounded up seven persons. The police identified Lakshmi of Hyderabad and Fakruddeen as attempting to sell the baby. The cops admitted the baby and her mother in a home and are conducting an investigation. Sources said several child trafficking cases are pending against Lakshmi.

Villagers holds up Vaigai express

R. VALAYAPATHY | DC TIRUCHY, DEC 8

The Madurai-Chennai super fast Vaigai express train was delayed for about an hour following a group of villagers detaining the train at Sannasipatti village near Tiruchy on Sunday, in protest against the railway level crossing located at their village closed for an unpredictably long time. The villagers squatted on the track at the level crossing itself and resorted to rail-roko, forcing the Vaigai express to halt 100-m away from that spot. According to the agitators, the level crossing is closed half-an-hour before the arrival of any train, which resulted in great hardship to office-goers, school and college students. Despite their repeated representations to the railway authorities, the level-crossing did not close and open on time.

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Union Home Minister Amit Shah has asserted the NDA government's resolve to amend the IPC and the CrPC to make them more conducive for the country



India's fight against terrorism cemented its position as one of the strongest nations

— Rajathi Singh, Defence minister

SHORT TAKES

Tree cutting for Thackeray memorial?
Amruta Fadnis dubs Sena hypocrite

Mumbai: Former Maharashtra chief minister Devendra Fadnis' wife Amruta Sunday called the ruling Shiv Sena a 'hypocrite' after media reports stated that a memorial for the party patriarch late Bal Thackeray in Aurangabad would require felling of some trees. The Sena had opposed cutting of trees for the Metro Line 3 car shed in Mumbai's Aarey Colony citing environmental concerns, and Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, in one of his first major decisions after taking over as head of the Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi government, had issued a statement on the news item, Amruta Fadnis tweeted "Hypocrite is a disease! Well soon @ShivSena! Tree cutting — at ur convenience or allowing tree cutting only when you earn money! unpardonable sins!!" However, Aurangabad Mayor Nankur Ghoshale, in a media statement, claimed his administration would not allow trees to be cut for the Thackeray memorial, he said. His message has been issued from Twitter handle, Shivsena Communication @ShivsenaCom, which is the official handle of the Thackeray-led party's communication cell. The memorial will comprise a garden along with a statue of the Bal Thackeray.

Tiger found dead in water-filled mine

Nagpur: A tiger was found dead in an abandoned water-filled mine in Rantek forest range in the district, officials said on Sunday. The carcass was found on Saturday. "Some forest department staffers were on an inspection at Bihad mine in order to prepare a report. During the exercise, they found the carcass of a tiger floating on the water at the abandoned manganese mine," an official said. "The staff members immediately alerted the senior forest officials about it," he said. As per the preliminary probe, the big cat accidentally fell into the water and drowned around three days back, the official said. "The exact cause of the death is not known after the post-mortem," he said. With this, the number of tiger deaths in Vidarbha region of Maharashtra has gone up to 18 this year, the official claimed.

NHRC team continues probe into 'encounter' deaths

Hyderabad, Dec. 8: An investigative committee of the NHRC on Sunday continued its inquiry for the second day into the alleged encounter in which all four accused in the rape and murder of a young veterinarian were shot dead by police.

The family members of the accused were brought to the city from Narayanpet district and the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) team, as part of its inquiry, is likely to record their statements, police sources said. "The NHRC team is continuing its inquiry," a senior police official told PTI.

A day after the pre-dawn 'encounter', which has triggered a raging debate over the police action, the team was deputised by the apex human rights body had said the encounter was a matter of concern and needed to be investigated carefully, following which the seven-member team had been deputised for a fact-

● A day after the pre-dawn 'encounter', which has triggered a raging debate over the police action, the team was deputised by the commission on a 'fact-finding' probe

finding, on-the-spot investigation into the matter". The post-mortem of the four accused had been performed at the Government District Hospital in Mahabubnagar district and videographed. Meanwhile, the Telangana High Court which had on Friday directed the state government to preserve the bodies of four accused till 8 pm on December 9 will take up the matter for hearing on Monday.

The court had issued the directive treating as a petition a representation received in the Office of the Chief Justice alleging that the 'encounter' was extra-judicial killings and requesting judicial intervention. All the four accused

were gunned down by police on Friday morning at Chattanpalli when they were taken to the scene of crime near the culvert beneath of it where the charred remains of the 25-year-old woman veteran were found on November 28, to recover her phone, wrist watch and others pertaining to the case.

The Cyberabad Police had since its personal resort to 'retaliatory' firing after two of the accused opened fire at Chattanpalli and their weapons besides attacking the latter with stones and sticks, resulting in injuries to two policemen.

While the police action has largely come in for praise, it also evoked concerns over extra-judicial executions. The four were arrested on November 29 for allegedly raping and killing the 25-year-old woman by smothering her and later burning the body.

Poster exhibition to celebrate end of WW II

SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI NEW DELHI, DEC. 8

Five months ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Moscow in May next year to commemorate what is perhaps the greatest demonstration of human will and resolve in the face of immeasurable odds, Russia has already begun celebrations in India to mark the forthcoming 75th anniversary of the victory of the erstwhile Soviet Union over Nazi Germany in 1945. A staggering 27 million Soviet citizens died heroically defending their country from the Russian capital Moscow and the city of Stalingrad that began when Hitler invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941 and entered Berlin in May, 1945, heralding the defeat of Hitler's Third Reich.

Russia recently kicked off the celebrations in India at the Russian Centre of Science and Culture (RCSA) in New Delhi with a vintage poster exhibition of the collection from the first to the last day of the war.

● Russia has already begun celebrations in India to mark the forthcoming 75th anniversary of the victory of the erstwhile Soviet Union over Nazi Germany in 1945

causing the posters that boosted the morale of both the Soviet Army and ordinary citizens through the various stages of the war.

The mood of the posters also changes from the desolation of 1941-42 when the Russian capital Moscow and the city of Stalingrad was under grave threat of capture to that of the glimmer of hope and victory when the Germans were on the retreat roughly from 1943 to 45 after the fierce Soviet counter-offensive.

Ludmila Filipova, Chief Coordinator of Culture and Information of the RCSA, said, "The posters serve a unique historical source, a fine record from the first to the last day of the war."



Lata returns home from hospital, thanks well-wishers

Mumbai, Dec. 8: Legendary singer Lata Mangeshkar, who was admitted to hospital three weeks ago after she was diagnosed with pneumonia, returned home on Sunday.

The 86-year-old singer, who was admitted to the Breach Candy Hospital here after she complained difficulty in breathing on November 11, took to Twitter to update her fans about her health and thanked them for their prayers and well wishes.

"For the past 28 days, I was at Breach Candy hospital. I was diagnosed with pneumonia. The doctors preferred that I extend my stay in hospital and go home when I am completely healthy. Today, I am back home with the blessings of Mai and brother. I have my deepest gratitude to all my well wishers all over. Your prayers and good wishes have treated me and I humbly bow down to each one of you."

Mangeshkar wrote on the microblogging site. The veteran singer also expressed gratitude to the team of doctors who treated her. "My doctors at Breach Candy have been my guardian angels and I stand in eternal gratitude to each one of them. The nursing staff has been exceptional. Your endless love and blessings are precious," she added.

Several states want to set up 'hunar hubs': Naqvi

Ahmedabad, Dec. 8: Several states have started working on the Centre's proposal to set up 'hunar hubs', where artisans, craftsmen and culinary experts will be offered training according to modern needs and offered spaces to exhibit and sell their products.

Union Minister for Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi said here on Sunday. Naqvi was in Ahmedabad to inaugurate 'Hunar Haat', which has been organised at Sabarmati Riverside to promote India's indigenous traditional legacy of master artisans and craftsmen.

PM meets Arun Shourie at hospital

Pune, Dec. 8: Prime Minister Narendra Modi met former Union minister Arun Shourie at a hospital in Pune on Sunday evening and spent nearly 15 minutes with the former BJP leader.

According to senior doctors of the Ruby Hall Clinic, located in Bund Garden area of the city, the prime minister arrived at 6 pm. Modi said in a tweet: "In Pune, I met former Union Minister Arun Shourie Ji. Enquired about his health and had a wonderful interaction with him. We pray for his long and healthy life."

A team of chief cardiologists Dr Parvez Grant, neurosurgeon Dr Sachin Gandhi took Modi to the Ruby Hall Clinic. "The PM spent 15 minutes with Shourie. He embraced Shourie during their interaction," the doctors said, adding that the prime minister spoke with the family members of Shourie's wife. It was not a pre-decided visit, according to hospital sources. The PM spent some 45 minutes at the hospital before heading to the airport. Modi was in Pune to attend the conclusion of the three-day conference of IGs and DGPs.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets former union minister Arun Shourie at a hospital, in Pune, on Sunday.

UP gov't plans cow safaris for better upkeep of bovines

Lucknow, Dec. 8: Faced with stray cattle menace, the Uttar Pradesh government plans to set up 'cow safaris' in the state for better safety and upkeep of the animal.

The idea mooted by UP Animal and Husbandry minister Laxmi Narayan Chaudhary is in line with the Yogi government's aim of cow protection. "The Yogi government is vigilant towards cow protection and it is our duty to save and protect them," Chaudhary said. "Wherever we have large farms like in Barabanki and Mahrajganj, we on an experimental basis, want to set up a safari where 15,000 to 25,000 cows can be put up," he said, adding, he wants to make such safaris viable by using up bio gas plants for power generation and units to make things from cow waste. "There are complaints about stray cattle moving in villages and

27 students across 11 IITs ended lives in 5 years: RTI

Indore, Dec. 8: Twenty seven students across 11 Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) in the country have committed suicide in the last five years, reply to a Right to Information (RTI) query has revealed.

As per the data provided by the Department of Higher Education working under the Ministry of Human Resource and Development (MHRD), IIT Madras tops the list with suicides by seven students during this period. In the reply to a query asked by RTI activist Chandrashekhar Gaur on December 2, the MHRD said that between 2014 and 2019, seven students from IIT Madras, five from IIT Kharagpur and three each from IIT Delhi and IIT Hyderabad committed suicide. Two students each from IIT Bombay, IIT Guwahati and IIT Roorkee also ended their lives dur-

ing the period, it said. During this period, one each student from Varanasi IIT (BHU), a Patna-based institute giving coaching to meritorious students from poor families to prepare for the IIT entrance examination, committed suicide. Behind the IIT students' suicides, when asked about the measures taken to prevent student suicides in the country's premier technical institutes, the reply said, "Systems are in place in IITs to ensure and take action in all complaints received from students in IIT campuses, which includes Student Grievance Cell, Disciplinary Action

Committee, Counseling Centre, etc."

Talking to PTI, Kumar said, "In the present situation, the nature of selection process for the IITs needs to be changed. In this process, students with innovative skills who are able to withstand different pressures of life should be given preference."

Tourists take shikara ride on a cold, foggy morning near the banks of Dal Lake, in Srinagar, on Sunday.

● As per the data provided by the department of higher education working under the ministry (MHRD), IIT Madras tops the list with suicides by seven students during this period

Srinagar records coldest night of season

Jammu, Dec. 8: Srinagar recorded the coldest night of the season as severe cold conditions continued unabated in most parts of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh on Sunday, an official of the Meteorological Department said.

At a low of minus 26 degrees Celsius, Drass in Kargil district of Ladakh was the coldest recorded place, while the minimum temperature in Jammu fell two degrees below the season's average to settle at 8 degrees Celsius, the official said.

The night temperature, however, is likely to improve in the coming days under the influence of Western Disturbance which is likely to hit the region on Wednesday bringing another spell of snow and rains. "The residents of Srinagar woke up to a dense fog and chilly conditions on Sunday with further drop in the night temperature, recording a low of minus 4 degrees Celsius — 3.4 notches below

the normal for this part of the season. The fall in the mercury resulted in freezing of fringes of the famous Dal Lake as well as drinking water taps in different residential areas of the city. This year the wintery conditions engulfed the region early following moderate to heavy snowfall — on first of the season — November 7. In fact, while the minimum temperature in Jammu fell two degrees below the season's average to settle at 8 degrees Celsius, the official said.

The night temperature, however, is likely to improve in the coming days under the influence of Western Disturbance which is likely to hit the region on Wednesday bringing another spell of snow and rains. "The residents of Srinagar woke up to a dense fog and chilly conditions on Sunday with further drop in the night temperature, recording a low of minus 4 degrees Celsius — 3.4 notches below

Passing CAB will mark Jinnah's victory over Gandhi: Tharoor

New Delhi, Dec. 8: The passage of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill in Parliament will mark the definitive victory for Mohammed Ali Jinnah's thinking over that of Mahatma Gandhi's, senior Congress leader and Union Minister Tharoor said on Sunday, asserting that the exercise of granting citizenship on the basis of religion will reduce India to a "Hindutva version of Pakistan". The former Union minister also alleged that the BJP government wants to single out "one community" and refuses to grant its members asylum from oppression on the same conditions as other communities. In an interview to PTI, Tharoor said even if the bill is passed by both the Houses of Parliament, he is confident that it will be struck down by the Supreme Court will

allow such a "blatant violation" of the fundamental tenets of India's Constitution to go unchecked. "It is a shameful performance by a government which as recently as last year, refused to entertain any discussion developing a National Asylum policy, which I had proposed in a Private Members Bill and shared personally with the then home minister, Mr. Mohan Singh," he said. "Suddenly, they are going the extra mile in granting citizenship to refugees, whereas in reality, they don't even want to take the basic steps as required under international law to improve the determination of refugee status or ensure decent treatment of refugees," he alleged.

"All of this makes it abundantly clear that this is merely a cynical political exercise to further single out and disenfranchise an entire community in India and in doing so, a betrayal of all that was good and noble about our civilisation. It will reduce us to a Hinduva version of Pakistan," Tharoor asserted. Asked about the Congress' stand on the Bill, he said, "Though I am not an official spokesperson for the party, I believe that all of us in the Congress are clear that the Citizenship Amendment Bill is not just an affront to the basic tenets of equality and religious non-discrimination that have been enshrined in Article 14 and 15 of our Constitution, but an all-out assault on the very idea of India."

India's freedom movement was the idea of free country they created a free country for all people of all religions, regions, castes and languages," Tharoor said. The constitution reflects this basic idea of India which the BJP now seeks to betray, he alleged. Asked about the contention that religion cannot be the basis of citizenship, he said the BJP has paved the way for Pakistan's founder Mohammed Ali Jinnah's idea of a nation where religion is not a factor in nationality and to do so, dis-



member the idea of India that Mahatma Gandhi, Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, Azad, Ambedkar and their contemporaries fought for. "The passage of this Bill will mark the definitive victory of Jinnah's thinking over Gandhi's," he said. How ironic that it should be the stridently chauvinistic BJP that in 1947 had the vindication of Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the 63-year-old MP from Thiruvananthapuram said.

He said the Bill also goes against the historic legacy that Hindus were proud to lay claim to. "Swami Vivekananda had famously told the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893 that he was proud to speak for a land that has always offered refuge to the persecuted of all nations and faiths," he said.

GREATER WISAKHAPATNAM
E-Procurement Tender Notice No.312019-205EWJEE/WB, Dt:07-12-2019

01. Number of Works	5 Nos
02. Value of Works (VOW)	Rs.458.38 Lakhs
03. Down Loading Start/End Date	06-12-2019 to 20-12-2019 @ 2.00 PM
04. Down Loading End/Start Time	06-12-2019 to 20-12-2019 @ 4.00 PM
05. Bid Submission Start/End Date & Time	21-12-2019 to 23-12-2019 @ 1.00 PM
06. Technical Bid Opening Date	24-12-2019 @ 1.00 PM
07. Price Bid opening Date	24-12-2019 @ 1.00 PM

Note: For any other details, bidders in respect of above tender notice, please contact E.O.W at www.eprocurement.gov.in



Several states have started working on our proposal to set up 'Hunar Hub' — Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, Union minister

SHORT TAKES
Woman injured in Guj leopard attack

Amreli: A 45-year-old woman was injured in a leopard attack on late Saturday night in Amreli district of Gujarat, officials said on Sunday. It was the second such incident of leopard-human conflict reported from Amreli district in the last two days. It is, however, not clear whether the same leopard was involved in both the incidents. The woman, identified as Dayaben Malavi, was attacked in Lunghiya village on late December 7 night, two days after a leopard mauled to death a farmer when he was stepping at his farm at Mota Munjiyavari village, also in Amreli district on early Thursday. — PTI

Man out on bail shot at in Punjab

Ludhiana: A man out on bail in a criminal case was shot at here on Sunday, the police said. Gora was sitting at a liquor vend when he was shot at, they said. The incident took place at Daresi Road, which is one of the busiest and thickly populated localities in the city. Deputy Commissioner Police (DCP) Ashwani Kapoor said Shiva fired four times at Gora and fled from the spot. The DCP further said Gora was rushed to a hospital where he was stated to be out of danger. — PTI

43 killed in Delhi factory fire

From page 1
The narrow lanes of Anaj Mandi made rescue operations hard for firefighters, who had to cut window grills to get access to the building. A preliminary probe suggested a short-circuit triggered the blaze. Power discom BYPL said the fire began due to "internal system" trouble. The fire was first reported at 5.22 am, after which 30 fire tenders were rushed to the spot. A Delhi Fire Service official said 150 firefighters worked to put 63 people out of the building. While 43 labourers died, many others were injured, including two fire department personnel. The injured included a minor. However, it was not confirmed whether the injured worked in the units. Most of the labourers were migrants. Narrating the horrific incident, eyewitness Ranaik Khan said people were screaming and pleading for help from the narrow window panes, which were fitted with iron railings, as they were struggling to breathe. Locals threw wet cloths at them through the windows and even gave them hammers in order to break the iron grills, but it all went in vain initially. Later, gas cutters were used to cut the grills, after which some of them were rescued. The police has arrested the building owner, Rohan, and his manager, Furkan, and is continuing to track the other factory owners. The duo has been booked under IPC Sections 304 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder) and 285 (negligent conduct with respect to fire or combustible matter). Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal has also ordered a magisterial inquiry and sought a detailed report within a week. The Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) analysed the building and possible places from where the fire could have started but could not collect any samples due to the rescue work by the fire department and NDRF staff. They said the samples can only be collected after the fire is completely doused. "Scientifically, the articles can only be collected after the fire has completely ended and we can get access to the rooms. The FSL teams may have to visit the spot multiple times as it was a massive fire. An intense political blame game began after the tragedy, with the BJP holding the Arvind Kejriwal government responsible for the incident and the AAP alleging that the saffron party was doing politics over dead bodies.

Unnao rape victim is aid to rest amid tight security

Family members of the victim will be given security, says top officer

Unnao, Dec. 8: The last rites of the 23-year-old Unnao rape victim, who succumbed to her burn injuries in Delhi's Safdarjung Hospital, were performed at her native village here on Sunday amidst tight security arrangements. She was laid to rest in the fields belonging to her family, where the mausoleum (mazar) of her grandparents is situated. A large number of local residents and officials were present. Villagers from all walks of life paid their respects to the departed soul before the body was taken for the last rites. Samajwadi Party leaders, UP Cabinet ministers Swami Prasad Maurya and Kamal Rani Varun were also present. Mr Maurya said, "The government is with the aggrieved family." Kamal Rani Varun, said, "The slogan of Beti Padhao, Beti Bachhao is meaningful. We stand with the aggrieved family in the hour of grief and will ensure that the



Police personnel march as family members and relatives carry the mortal remains of the rape victim for burial at Unnao on Sunday.

family members of the rape victim agreed to perform her last rites following a negotiation with Lucknow Divisional Commissioner Mukesh Meshram and other senior police officials. Mr Meshram told reporters that the family members of the victim too will be given separate security, since she may be a witness in the case. One person of the family (as decided by them) will be given a government job. Apart from this, if any member of the family seeks an Arms Licence from the point of view of self-defence, then it will be given after completing the due procedure of law. "The sister of the deceased had earlier said her family would not perform the last rites unless Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath arrived in her village and assured of strict action against the accused. — PTI

Minor girl gangraped in Gujarat, 2 arrested

Ahmedabad, Dec. 8: Ahmedabad crime branch on Sunday arrested two persons for the gang-rape of a 14-year-old girl in Vadodara, the police said. The mother and sister of the victim demanded that the two men, identified as Kishan and Mathasuriya (28) and Jaso Solanki (21), be hanged to death. The two were held from Tarsali locality of Vadodara where they made rescue operations hard for firefighters, who had to cut window grills to get access to the building. A preliminary probe suggested a short-circuit triggered the blaze. Power discom BYPL said the fire began due to "internal system" trouble. The fire was first reported at 5.22 am, after which 30 fire tenders were rushed to the spot. A Delhi Fire Service official said 150 firefighters worked to put 63 people out of the building. While 43 labourers died, many others were injured, including two fire department personnel. The injured included a minor. However, it was not confirmed whether the injured worked in the units. Most of the labourers were migrants. Narrating the horrific incident, eyewitness Ranaik Khan said people were screaming and pleading for help from the narrow window panes, which were fitted with iron railings, as they were struggling to breathe. Locals threw wet cloths at them through the windows and even gave them hammers in order to break the iron grills, but it all went in vain initially. Later, gas cutters were used to cut the grills, after which some of them were rescued. The police has arrested the building owner, Rohan, and his manager, Furkan, and is continuing to track the other factory owners. The duo has been booked under IPC Sections 304 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder) and 285 (negligent conduct with respect to fire or combustible matter). Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal has also ordered a magisterial inquiry and sought a detailed report within a week. The Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) analysed the building and possible places from where the fire could have started but could not collect any samples due to the rescue work by the fire department and NDRF staff. They said the samples can only be collected after the fire is completely doused. "Scientifically, the articles can only be collected after the fire has completely ended and we can get access to the rooms. The FSL teams may have to visit the spot multiple times as it was a massive fire. An intense political blame game began after the tragedy, with the BJP holding the Arvind Kejriwal government responsible for the incident and the AAP alleging that the saffron party was doing politics over dead bodies.

Tharoor hails US lawmaker, slammed

New Delhi, Dec. 8: Congress leader Shashi Tharoor's comments on Sunday praising American lawmakers' efforts after a resolution was introduced in the US House of Representatives urging India to lift the restrictions on communications in Jammu and Kashmir, the police said. However, the former Union minister hit back saying whenever the saffron party conducts inde-

J&K RESOLUTION

feasible policies, it prefers to shelter behind "national interests". Indian-American Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal has introduced a Congressional resolution urging India to lift the restrictions on communications in Jammu and Kashmir as swiftly as possible and preserve religious freedom for all residents. "Restore Internet, end

detentions in Jammu & Kashmir, says bipartisan resolution in US House. Admirable effort by US representatives, whereas in our Parliament we have been unable even to have a discussion on the subject of Kashmir in the entire winter session. Shame," Tharoor said in a tweet. His remarks came in for sharp criticism from BJP MPs Shobha Karandlaje and Tejaswi Surya who slammed the Congress leader for calling the move "admirable". — PTI



BJP leaders garland Union defence minister Rajnath Singh and BJP candidate from Jharkhand Assembly Rajnath Singh ahead of Jharkhand Assembly elections in Dhanbad on Sunday. — PTI

Rahul must return as Cong chief: Baghel

Cgarh CM confident of winning Jharkhand polls

NITIN MAHAJAN NEW DELHI, DEC. 8



Bhupesh Baghel and Rahul Gandhi

Chhattisgarh chief minister Bhupesh Baghel has called for Rahul Gandhi to be reinstated as the Congress party chief again. He said only Mr Gandhi can lead the Congress going forward. Talking to this newspaper Mr Baghel said that all party workers wholeheartedly support him for the

country support him. He understands the country and people love him. He speaks openly on national issues. Mr Gandhi should take the responsibility of party president at the earliest," Mr Baghel said. "The statement of the Chhattisgarh chief minister assumes significance as a change in congress chief is likely to be made within the next few months.

Pune, Dec. 8: Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu on Sunday said it was sad that no Indian university figured among the top 300 in this year's Time World University Ranking, and stressed on the need to improve quality of education in the country. Addressing students at the 16th convocation ceremony at Symbiosis International University, Mr Naidu said there was need to strategise to



Devotees perform rituals on the occasion of moksha-ekadashi at the banks of Ganga in Varanasi on Sunday. — PTI

Economic crisis hits country 'Pak can support only 250 terrorists in Kashmir Valley'

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, DEC. 8

For many years now, the number of terrorists operating in Kashmir has for the most time remained stuck more or less at around 250-300. Even when the security forces have carried out high profile and intense operations against the terrorists, this number has mostly not changed. "Running terrorist operations cost money. Money, infrastructure, local support and other factors are involved in maintaining a terror network in Kashmir. Pakistan, which has been facing financial problem, has set a budget as to how much terrorists they can afford to support at a given time. This seems to be around 250 terrorists," said sources in the security establishment. He said that local commanders of

the militant groups have to pay money to their terrorist and to over ground workers to carry out their activities. "The local commander has to keep certain number of terrorists, resulting in partial freezing of the Dal Lake. Drass, the second coldest inhabited place in the world, recorded a minimum of minus 26 degrees Celsius against the previous night's 24 degrees Celsius, while the nearby Leh town, also in Ladakh, recorded a low of 16 degrees Celsius. Srinagar recorded its coldest night of the season on Sunday as 15 notches plunged to minus 4 degrees Celsius on Sunday. The cold wave resulted in freezing of some water bodies, including the fringes of the Dal Lake. — PTI

'Project Netra' to protect Indian satellites from debris

New Delhi, Dec. 8: The Centre has proposed ₹33.3 crore for Isro's "Project Netra" for securing Indian satellites from space debris and other dangers, according to documents related to supplementary demand for grants.

Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman had moved a resolution for the grants for which the Lok Sabha granted approval last week. In September, India launched the early warning system Netra (Network for Space Objects, Tracking, and Analysis) to secure its satellites and other assets in space at an estimated cost of ₹400 crore. Scientists say 50 years of human space exploration has led to the creation of junk around Earth's orbit, posing serious traffic risks to man-made satellites. India has 15 communication satellites active in geostationary orbit, 13 remote-sensing satellites active in low-earth orbit (LEO) (600 km radius) and eight navigation satellites in medium-earth orbit. — PTI

Rafale jets to have tail numbers with BS initials

New Delhi, Dec. 8: In recognition of Air Chief Marshal (retd.) B.S. Dhanoo's unrelenting backing for the Rafale deal, the Indian Air Force has decided to put tail numbers in 30 Rafale jets with 'BS' initials. Six Rafale trainer aircraft will carry the initials of Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhatnagar, the current Chief of Air Staff who



B.S. Dhanoo

played a key role as lead negotiator for the mega deal. The political controversy relating to purchase of 36 Rafale jets from French aerospace major Dassault Aviation for the IAF at a cost of ₹59,000 crore peaked during Dhanoo's tenure as chief of the air staff and he had stoutly defended the deal. "All the Rafale fighter jets barring the trainer ones

to get us the jets," a senior IAF official told PTI. Of the 36 Rafale jets, 30 will be fighter jets and six will be trainers. The trainer jets will be twin-seater and they will have almost all the features of the fighter jets. Mr Dhanoo, who retired in September after a tenure of 41 years in the IAF, strongly maintained that the deal was clean and that the force needed the jets to significantly

enhance its combat capabilities. The Rafale jets will have the most advanced weapons package comprising Meteor and Scalp missiles which will provide the IAF deep strike capability and air dominance in the region. Three Rafale jets have already been handed over to India and they are being used to train IAF pilots and technicians in France. — PTI

Naidu laments poor world ranking of Indian varsities

education in Indian universities. It is sad to note no Indian university could find a place among the top 300 universities in this year's Time World University Ranking. We need to think about the factors responsible for this," he said. He said there was urgent need to fill posts of teaching staff lying vacant in Central and state universities, and claimed the Union government had taken proactive steps in this regard recently. He said, in order to create world-class universities, there was a need to attract the best talent as teachers in Indian universities. "To make teaching more attractive, faculty should be encouraged to undertake consultancy projects and must be provided financial support for start-ups. At the same time, we have to ensure accountability and performance of teachers." — PTI

CRPF JAWAN ARRESTED IN ODISHA GANG-RAPE CASE

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO BHUBANESWAR, DEC. 8
A CRPF jawan was arrested for his involvement in the sensational Puri gang-rape case on Sunday. The accused was identified as Balu Barik. A special squad of police apprehended Barik from Rayagada, reports said. One Rama Chandra Pradhan of Aliaipuri village in Brahmagiri area of Puri district was also arrested on December 6 in this connection. This apart, Jeetendra Sethy, a dismissed police constable, and Rajesh Sethy were arrested over their alleged involvement in the offence. A case has been registered against the accused under relevant sections of the IPC and Prevention of Children from Sexual Offence (POCSO) Act.

Cultivation of mind should be the ultimate aim of human existence Over the years I have learned that what is important in a dress is the woman who is wearing it

DECCAN Chronicle 9 DECEMBER 2019 What RBI's revised forecast means for us

A few days back, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had slashed its forecast for India's economic growth for the financial year 2019-20 to five per cent... The lowest since the economic dip seen in the financial year 2013-14 when the Indian economy wobbled due to the US Federal Reserve's plans to shut its liquidity tap.

The government, however, continues to live in denial. Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself remains silent, while letting loose other worthies to either defend his economic policy or to reject the growth numbers themselves. One classic example of this was BJP MP Nishikant Dubey, who questioned the very relevance of GDP growth.

Since the BJP claims that people have voted for Mr Modi, the buck should rightfully stop at him. But Mr Modi too stands at a crossroads — does he want history to remember him as the one who wrecked the economy and set the clock back to socialist days? According to Arvind Subramanian, former chief economic adviser to the Government of India, economic growth is already overestimated by 2.5 per cent.

'Instant justice' is abhorrent

The belief that society should be governed by law is unexceptionable. The Chief Justice of India's affirmation of this basic principle is a reminder that neither leaders nor society can sanction encounters.

Due process was abandoned in Telangana as in every other staged encounter. But that doesn't defeat the argument about the root cause being the tardiness of the justice delivery system. The CJI agrees the system must reconsider its attitude towards time and laxity.

The police, the first point of contact for the victim of any crime, is hamstrung, and not just for numbers. The will to act decisively is often missing, as the forces are more accustomed to play arbitrator than enforcer.

We hang our heads in shame at every rape, but we don't seem to know what to do about it.

ARITA SINHA Editor DECCAN CHRONICLE P. VENKATSWARAI T. & PUBLISHER

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Govt's desperate hurry on CAB seems puzzling



The Union Cabinet's decision on introducing the Citizenship Amendment Bill in Parliament is just now and dread it has spread among very large numbers of people for different reasons pointing to a lack of broad public support.

Neither the beneficiaries of CAB nor those likely to be adversely affected are going anywhere. The Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists and Christians who sought refuge in India from persecution in Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan live with dignity or fortitude in India.

The BJP's obsession with Hinduism and its fervent belief that the continent of India was a game-changer in that it gave rise to a whole set of international institutions that would minimise the chances of future armed conflicts.

tal. But people do not live by spending time on religion alone. The idea of individuals with a single and defining identity is not anywhere close to reality and the issue in Assam and the Northeast is therefore not religion but culture, language and ethnicity as well.

Onions, inflation, unemployment and the decelerating growth rate are also the principal issues that impact more people than illegals hiding themselves in the teeming multitudes of an extraordinarily diverse population.

It is puzzling why the BJP is behaving like a fitness freak on a treadmill with a target, irrespective of their religious identity, impacts the culture and life of the locals, be they Hindus or tribals.

Having been elected with a large and stable single-party majority in Parliament, the BJP has time to deal with everything, prioritising the economy that is tanking and the distress that is spreading from household kitchens to the boardrooms of corporate India, would be a tougher challenge, but

The amendment followed up with NRC will keep the Opposition and the people so focused on identity issues that pangs of hunger and despair over joblessness, will be shelved, many argue

LETTERS DISPENSATION OF JUSTICE

It's sad that the Unnao gang-rape victim, who had the courage to pursue the case all by herself, died of extensive burn injuries. Although the police would now alter the case to 'murder', it won't make any material difference to the accused, because 'murder' is also a bailable offence.

P.G. Menon, Chennai

CASTRATE THE GUILTY

Across your editorial 'Homies, impatient rage hide the sickness within' (Dec. 4). Whatever you write and the public agitate, our 'netas' will express their knee-jerk reactions stating 'rapists should be lynched or shot dead or hang them high' but had not contemplated passing a law that awards ghastly punishment 'surgical castration' as the Madras high court had opined in 2015 itself.

A. Seshagiri Rao, Chennai

WELL DONE INDIA

Kohli's Team India won over the Windies at Hyderabad T20 and it was virtual run riot to say the least! Kohli put the Windies to bat after winning the toss and Lewis started playing to the sky in his whirlwind knock and did not spare any bowler.

S. Venugopalan, Chennai



Some conflicts leave relatively small footprints; others cause ripples in the space-time continuum. Small wars like the ones America launched against Panama and Belize, for instance, have long been forgotten. Fought against poorly armed foes for territorial gains, they count for little in terms of history.

However, the two world wars of the last century that caused around 67 million deaths were on another scale altogether. The slaughter was of an unimaginable magnitude, and in comparison, the death toll in today's wars is a mere blip.

Iran has been shattered by a combination of jihadists backed by Saudi-led financiers who wanted to topple Bashar al-Assad. The fact that the US has been unable to get the support his forces have received from Russia and Iran's Revolutionary Forces, Non Donald Trump has seen that there are few options to a long-drawn-out war, and has decided to pull out. Most would call it a defeat.

As the nature of warfare changes, so does the nature of diplomacy. A Security Council resolution is no longer needed to start a war, as we saw in Iraq. A civil war can be triggered in Syria, again without the Security Council's blessing. Libya's dictator can be toppled and killed with just a 'no-fly-resolution' to inter-

dict Libyan planes attacking rebels. But these new rules — or lack of them — are restricted to the powerful. However, smaller states are learning these lessons: non-state actors are joining the fray when they have a grudge or an edge. Israel is a prime example of how UNSC resolutions can be watered down as long as you have a superpower to veto even a mildly hostile veto against your illegal occupation and your persecution of the Palestinians.

By arrangement with Daan

An entrepreneur who creates and manages a home-based business | A group of people who meet regularly to laugh, often for therapeutic reasons

The Maha drama: 'Responsibility is on the PM'



Kapil Sibal
Q&A
After much deliberation, the Congress and the NCP, along with their new ally, the Shiv Sena, formed a government in Maharashtra. One of the principal architects of their alliance, senior lawyer and Congress MP KAPIL SIBAL, spoke with ASHAR KHAN on the issue:

You were the lawyer for the Shiv Sena in the Supreme Court. What was your stand in court?

Our stand in court was consistent with precedents. The government has discretion as a matter of law to call the leader of the single-largest party after any election. In Maharashtra, any party which had more than 14 MLAs could form a government. Unfortunately, no party had that figure, but the BJP being the single-largest party with 105 seats, was asked first itself and Devendra Fadnis said no — he did not have the numbers. Thereafter the Shiv Sena was asked whether they wanted three days' time, and when it was not granted, Sharad Pawar's NCP was asked. They wanted 24 hours but it was not granted. In this context, we moved the Supreme Court, which very kindly agreed to hear us on a Sunday morning. We impressed upon

the Supreme Court that it's important for Mr Fadnis to prove his majority, and he claims to have a majority, there is no reason that 15 days should have been given by the court. He must prove his majority consistent with past precedents and there are several of natural justice. After the list of Uttarakhnad and Karnataka where within 24 hours through a court order the leader had to prove his majority on the floor of the House. The lawyers representing Mr Fadnis and Ajit Pawar opposed this. What is surprising is that they went to the government claiming that they had the majority. That is why they were sworn in. But in court they were opposing this. All this they were opposing because if they had a majority they would have not hesitated in proving the majority in 24 hours. This was a clear giveaway that they did not have the majority. The Supreme Court with past precedents asked to first give them a bit of time because when the petition was moved they had no notice — so a notice was given. All this is consistent with the principles of natural justice. After the court said that a majority had to be proved in 24 hours. Now when this happened, the BJP realised that there was not enough time for them to do a Karnataka in Maharashtra. Thus, thereafter Mr Fadnis resigned. That's the essence of the shortest tenures as chief minister.

According to you, what was the problem? After all the BJP was the single-largest party. That's why the Shiv Sena invited them a second time.

There is a background to this. All this happened because the pre-poll alliance of the BJP and the Shiv Sena was not able to resolve their differences. The BJP had made some pre-poll promises to the Shiv Sena which they reneged on, so the Shiv Sena started talking to other parties like the NCP and the Congress. Now the ideologies of the Shiv Sena and our pre-poll alliance of the Congress and the NCP were different. In order to form a government there had to be a Common Minimum Program that had to be sorted out and that took a bit of time. But the three parties decided that they were going to form a government and the Shiv Sena was going to stake a claim. This is when the "national emergency" happened. When the Prime Minister realised that the three parties are going to stake a claim and form a government, the next morning there was suddenly a national emergency. The President was woken up at



Congress leader Kapil Sibal

In a constitutional democracy, the President acts on the advice of the council of ministers. Here the advice of the council of ministers was also not taken as the PM waived Rule 22. So the responsibility is on the shoulders of the PM.

would be leading the coalition. The governor, who is the eyes and ears of the home minister and the Prime Minister, would have informed them that this is what is happening. He asked the governor to immediately send a report in favour of the petition was filed. We were later aware that this was done for an ulterior motive and it is unfortunate that the higher ups were involved in the political machinations of this government. It is also unfortunate that the government was formed in a constitutional democracy like ours. The Prime Minister because the governor would have known that on the previous evening at 7 pm a press conference was held in which the NCP said that a claim will be made next morning by the Shiv Sena and that it

the wee hours and made to revoke President's rule. By 8 am Mr Fadnis was sworn in with the alleged support of Mr Ajit Pawar who allegedly claimed that he had the support of all the members of the NCP. Now the question is what was the reason that President's rule was revoked at 8:47 am. In that context, the governor gave 15 days' time to Mr Fadnis which we later came to know when the petition was filed. We were well aware that this was done for an ulterior motive and it is unfortunate that the higher ups were involved in the political machinations of this government. It is also unfortunate that the government was formed in a constitutional democracy like ours. The Prime Minister because the governor would have known that on the previous evening at 7 pm a press conference was held in which the NCP said that a claim will be made next morning by the Shiv Sena and that it

Minister.
As far as the role of the governor is concerned?

The conduct of the governor I think has been consistent with the conduct of all governors appointed by the BJP, which is entirely unexceptional. This is the common feature of all governors, be it of Uttarakhand, Karnataka, Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, etc. Their governors are aligned to the BJP even though they hold a constitutional office and they will do the bidding of the BJP, which is most unfortunate.

Several people have now started saying that the post of the governor should be done away with. Your comments?

That would require a constitutional Amendment. That's not an easy thing to do. The government at the moment is busy with other amendments. Also, it is convenient to have a governor who will do your bidding.

The BJP calls your coalition government in the state as a betrayal of the mandate. Your's and the Shiv Sena's ideologies are poles apart. How do you explain this?

I have a few answers to this question. Number one: Who is the BJP to talk about the betrayal of the mandate? Please ask them how they formed an alliance with the PDP and formed a government in Jammu and Kashmir. What is common between the ideology of Hindutva and the ideology of the PDP apart from lust for power. In a bid to form the government, they were willing

to compromise on their ideology. So it is inappropriate for them to ask us that question. The second answer is that Maharashtra is one of the most important states in the country. It is the financial capital of the country. In the election, crores have been spent by the Election Commission. Political parties have also spent money. The people of the state deserve a government. You are right: The ideology of the Shiv Sena is different from both the ideology of the NCP and the Congress. Therefore, we were convinced that any government that the people of the state are entitled to should be a stable government and therefore it took time to resolve issues and based on a Common Minimum Program committed themselves to give a government. Just because the Shiv Sena and the BJP could not form a government, it doesn't mean that other efforts should not be made. If the Common Minimum Program had not happened, there would not have been a government. So the parties came forward and formed a mutually agreed program.

Weren't you surprised when Mr Ajit Pawar was sworn in with Mr Fadnis?

We all knew that Mr Ajit Pawar did not have the support of the NCP MLAs. Everybody knew this. It was exposed in court because Mr Ajit Pawar had a list which had signatures of the MLAs, but not for supporting the BJP. On his own letterhead, he attached that list. Now we are sure and confident that our government will last the full five years.

Tehran faces 'maximum resistance' as sanctions bite, discontent rises



Talmiz Ahmad
On November 15, Iran's President Hassan Rouhani announced that subsidies on petrol prices would be immediately reduced. This meant there would now be a 50 per cent hike in prices for the first 60 litres purchased in the month and a 200 per cent increase for purchases above this rationed quantity.

The announcement convulsed Iran in week-long riots that brought to the streets 200,000 people from 29 of the country's 31 provinces. Fired with frustration, rage and destructive zeal, they attacked military bases, banks, religious centres and petrol stations, and destroyed a few hundred motor vehicles. In the din, the government's claim that it would use the financial resources so generated to increase cash handouts to the very poor remained unheard.

The government unleashed its security forces upon the demonstrators — Amnesty International has claimed that 206 persons were killed in this orgy of violence, while several thousand were all, private additional financial resources to meet welfare needs amid state expenses. It is expected that the reduced subsidies will annually yield an additional \$2 billion for the treasury, while reduced consumption and smuggling will give another \$5 billion to the state's coffers. What went wrong with the initiative was that the government failed to prepare its people for this measure and also failed to ease the transition that it would use the resources so generated for enhanced handouts to the poor. Hence, the very people who were to benefit from the reduced subsidies rose in anger against the government that they viewed as extortionate.

US sanctions have ensured no major international companies are willing to provide Iran with fresh investments and technologies. Its economy has contracted 8.7 per cent this year.

imposing upon them additional burdens when about half the population lives around the poverty line and the nation is living with high youth unemployment and food prices, low wages and rampant corruption. The American sanctions have played a major role in hurting the Iranian economy. Iran's oil exports have gone from two million barrels per day before the US sanctions out of the nuclear agreement in 2018 to about half a million barrels per day today. Observers note that the recent rise in petrol prices was in fact due to the US sanctions and that, before the embargo on oil sales was imposed, the Iranian economy had been doing well.

Again, the secondary US sanctions have ensured no major international companies are willing to provide it with fresh investments and technologies. Hence, its economy has contracted 8.7 per cent this year over the previous year. As US President Donald Trump

has often gloated, Iran is trying a "difficult country" after the reinstatement of the US sanctions. Iran is witnessing two competing narratives: one blames the theocratic regime for the economic misdeeds. In this view, the nation's economy is in the hands of a privileged conglomerate of religious institutions and their adherents that controls all levers of the economy for personal advantage. Thus, Suzanne Maloney of the Brookings Institution sees these riots as "the latest salvo in the Iranian struggle for accountable government".

Rehman Buzurg goes further and asserts that Iran is experiencing an "organic crisis" where the ruling elite, a political co-economic oligarchy, has lost all popular support. He sees the recent agitations as a continuation of Iran's revolutionary process, with the lower classes ranged against the theocratic order, seeking transparency and freedom.

The other view is that Iran is facing an existential threat from the United States and its allies. IRGC commander Hossein Salami has said that Iran is engaged in a "great war" and was the victim of an "international plot" from which it was emerging victorious. Naming the US, Britain and Saudi Arabia, he said "we will destroy you" if they crossed certain "red lines". The chief of Iran's intelligence also spoke of "psychologi-

cal warfare" and the use of "located countries" by the US to back the protests.

This suspicion has many takers in Iran — that the demonstrations were consistently backed by Mr Pompeo, who promised to sanction Iranian officials "responsible for human rights abuses", and robustly blamed "poor economic management" by the country's leaders for the major grievances. Observers have also noted that many rioters appeared to be "professionals" who were equipped with blighters, bolt cutters and even handguns when they attacked banks and official facilities. This view led Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei to assert that Iran had successfully foiled "a deep, extensive and very dangerous plot".

The central cause for concern is that, beyond regularly imposing fresh sanctions on Iran and its leaders, the US has no clarity about the next stage. Exerting "maximum pressure" on Iran is self-defeating — Iran believes the principal US preoccupation is regime change and, hence, sees no reason to interact with Washington lest this be seen as a sign of weakness.

The writer is a retired diplomat who has served as India's ambassador to London and Asian capitals

UK votes in just 3 days; either Boris or Corbyn



Kishwar Desai
London Diary

Once again a horrible tragedy has filled the last weekend. Terror comes in different forms. But now because the police has clamped down on gun crime, knives are being used with impunity. Not a week goes by without us mourning a political figure. These are usually random, but last Friday was different.

Last week, Jack Merritt and Saskia Jones, Cambridge graduates who were passionate about prison reforms and helping prisoners resume normal lives were killed by Usman Khan. Ironically, Khan was also a prisoner who had been released to speak at a conference on prison reform. He had been already known to police as a Jihadist, a terrorist, when he was previously arrested and sentenced to 17 years imprisonment. Halfway through his sentence, he was released for good conduct. And then he was asked to describe his experience for the conference attendees. But he killed the two young participants and then rushed out on to London Bridge where two years ago a major terrorist incident had happened.

Londoners are made of sterner stuff. When Khan ran out on to the Bridge with a machete, two passers-by attacked him, one with a water spray from a fire extinguisher and the other with a large Narwhal stick (though it's a bit of a mystery how he happened to be carrying the stick of this unusual size). The two aimed to hit him down. Police arrived and shot him as he was threatening to explode his bag. Ever since that mood in London, especially, has been sorrowful because Khan was a young person such as James and Saskia. They

paid a terrible price for trying to do good work. On the other hand, terrorists can strike anyone, anywhere.

The election will happen in three days' time but other stories such as Prince Andrew's scandal and the Brexit vote have been brought out to canvass voters for the Liberal Democratic candidate in Pimlico. Of course, everyone wanted to see him and be seen with him. So Siobhan Benita, Lib Dem mayoral candidate for London turned up and Chuka Umunna, ex-Labour but now Lib Dem (who could easily pass for a film star and is a candidate for the City of London seat) was there and was Jo Swinson. Hugh Grant has never before demonstrated his electoral preference. But now he has come out to canvass voters for the Liberal Democratic candidate in Pimlico. Of course, everyone wanted to see him and be seen with him. So Siobhan Benita, Lib Dem mayoral candidate for London turned up and Chuka Umunna, ex-Labour but now Lib Dem (who could easily pass for a film star and is a candidate for the City of London seat) was there and was Jo Swinson. 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Malaysian leaders renew push for Anwar Ibrahim to lead, as PM Mahathir Mohamad dithers on the timing of the planned power transition he had promised to his former rival-turned-ally



The idea that I'd withdraw military aid from Israel, is bizarre. I would not do that

— Joe Biden Democratic Presidential candidate

Reddit suspects Russian meddling

London: The prospect of Russian interference in Britain's election flared anew after the social media platform Reddit concluded that people from Russia leaked confidential British government documents on Brexit trade talks just days before the general UK vote. Reddit said in a statement that it has named 61 accounts suspected of violating policies against vote manipulation. It said the suspect accounts have the same pattern of activity as a Russian interference operation dubbed "Secondary Infektion" that was uncovered earlier this year.

Suu Kyi set for genocide hearing

Yangon: Myanmar leader and Nobel peace prize laureate Aung San Suu Kyi departed on Sunday for the UN's top court in The Hague to defend the country against charges of genocide of its Rohingya Muslim minority. Suu Kyi was pictured emerging as she walked through the airport in the nation's capital, Naypyitaw, flanked by officials, a day after thousands rallied in the city to support her and a prayer ceremony was held in her name. Demonstrations are planned throughout the coming week, with hearings set for Dec. 10 to 12, and several dozen supporters are also bound for The Hague, in the Netherlands, to cheer Suu Kyi on. Gambella, a mainly Muslim West African country, filed a lawsuit against Myanmar of genocide, against Rohingya Muslims.

Trapped gold miners in SA dead

Johannesburg: Four gold miners trapped underground after a tremor caused a rockfall in northeast South Africa have been found dead, their union said on Sunday. A fifth miner was rescued with serious injuries after the accident at the Tau Loko Mine in the town of Orkney, the National union of mineworkers said. "The four mineworkers were found dead," a union statement said after the rescue team lost contact with the four men deep underground early Saturday. "The last person we talked to said: 'We are suffocating please, bring us some oxygen,'" said NUM president Joseph Montsetse. Deadly accidents involving miners are common in South Africa, which has the world's most mines in the world. Last year 81 people died in the country's mines, according to the department of mineral resources.

SAUDI MAN SAW MASS SHOOTING VIDEOS: REPORT

Pensacola, Dec. 8: The Saudi student who fatally shot three sailors at a US naval base in Florida hosted a dinner party earlier in the week where he and three others watched videos of mass shootings, a US official said. Investigators were exploring terrorism angle, while Trump indicated he would review policies governing foreign military training in the US. The Navy identified the three victims and hailed them as heroes for trying to subdue the shooter and flagging down first responders after being shot. "The Sailors that lost their lives in the line of duty and showed exceptional heroism and bravery in the face of evil. When confronted, they didn't run from danger; they ran towards it and saved lives," Capt. Tim Kinard, the commanding officer of Naval Air Station Pensacola, said. The shooter opened fire in a classroom at the naval base, killing three and wounding two sheriff's deputies. — AP

Homeless for a day



People take part in The World's Big Sleep Out event in Times Square in New York. Hollywood A-listers were among around 60,000 people who took part in a worldwide charity sleep-out aiming to end homelessness. As well as raising funds, the event encourages people to reflect on the plight of the homeless and displaced, and this year it teamed up with Unicef and the Malala Fund. — AFP

Thousands march as protests in Hong Kong near half-year

Mammoth rally across HK as pro-democracy activists out in full force

Hong Kong, Dec. 8: Hundreds of thousands of demonstrators crammed into narrow side streets on Sunday, their chants echoing off high-rises, in a mass show of support for a protest movement that shows no signs of flagging as it enters a seventh month. Chanting "Fight for freedom" and "Stand with Hong Kong," a sea of protesters formed a huge human snake winding for blocks on Hong Kong Island, from the Causeway Bay shopping district to the Central business zone, a distance of more than 2 kilometres. The crowds were so large

and dense that the march ground to a standstill at times. Protesters spilled into Hong Kong's streets, crying "Revolution in our times." One protester crawled part of the route prostrated on her hands and knees, dragging bricks and empty soda cans behind her. It was an apt metaphor for the pro-democracy movement, which has become a long-haul push to preserve Hong Kong's freedoms that make it unique among China's cities. "This is just the beginning. We have a long way to run," said another demonstrator, Louisa Yiu, an engineer.

THE protests have since snowballed into a broad, sustained anti-government movement, presenting the communist leadership in Beijing with a major headache and battering Hong Kong's economy. Many marchers held up five fingers to press the protesters' five demands. They include democratic elections for Hong Kong's leader and legislature and a demand for a probe of police behaviour during the six months of continuous protests. Marchers said they hoped the huge

turnout might help win concessions from the government of Chief Executive Carrie Lam. Protesters spanned generations. "So many people are still supporting this movement. You can see how determined Hong Kong people are," said demonstrator Justin Ng. Marchers said protesting has become part of the fabric of their lives since demonstrations erupted in June against a now-withdrawn government measure that would have allowed criminal suspects to be sent for trial in Communist Party-controlled courts in mainland China. The protests have since

snowballed into a broad, sustained anti-government movement, presenting the communist leadership in Beijing with a major headache and battering Hong Kong's economy. Police in riot gear deployed in numbers on the edges of the march. Earlier in the day, they seized a cache of weapons, including a firearm with more than 100 bullets. Police said the suspects apparently planned to use the weapons during the protest to frame police, who have been accused of using excessive force against them. — AP

N. Korea 'TEST' AT DISMANTLED LAUNCH SITE

Seoul, Dec. 8: North Korea said on Sunday that it carried out a "very important test" at its long-range rocket launch site that it reportedly rebuilt after having partially dismantled it at the start of denuclearisation talks with the US last year. The use of solid-fuel comes amid dimming prospects for a resumption of negotiations. The use of solid-fuel is threatening to seek a new way if it fails to get major US interest in the talks by the end. North Korea has said its resumption of nuclear and long-range missile tests depends on the US terms.

Boris visits temple, vows to back Modi to woo Indian diaspora

London, Dec. 8: British Prime Minister Boris Johnson's hope to pledge to partner with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on his mission to attract a new wave of Indian diaspora votes and his girlfriend Carrie Symonds visited a famous Hindu temple here to woo Indian diaspora votes ahead of Thursday's General Election. Dressed in a bright pink sari, 31-year-old conservationist Symonds made her first official campaign tour with 55-year-old Johnson at one of the UK's most famous temples Swaminarayan Mandir in Nessden, north-west London.

Prime Minister Johnson vowed to partner with his Indian counterpart Prime Minister Narendra Modi on his mission to build a new India. "I know Prime Minister Modi is building a new India. And, we in the UK government will support him fully in his endeavour," said Johnson, whose ruling Conservative Party is currently leading in opinion polls over the Opposition Labour Party. In an indirect reference to Labour's perceived anti-India stance over the issue

of Kashmir, he noted: "There can be no place for racism or anti-India sentiment of any kind in this country." "British Indians have played a vital role in helping the Conservatives win elections in the past. When I told Narendra Modi this, he just laughed and said Indians are always on the winning side," said a tika and garland sporting Johnson. In reference to the temple, he said, "This temple is one of the greatest gifts that the Hindu community has given to our country. It is brought to life by the amazing community spirit that inhabits it. You are giving back to our society through the great charitable work that you do. London and the UK are lucky to have you."

The event, also attended by UK home secretary Priti Patel, would have been the 98th birthday of guru Pranam Swami Maharaj, the founder of the Swaminarayan Sanstha. She reiterated the party's commitment to introduce a new Australian-style points-based immigration procedure for a fairer visa system for migrants from all over the world, including India. "The vote to leave the EU was a vote to take back control of our borders, and that is exactly what a Conservative majority government will do by getting Brexit done and ending freedom of movement. Immigration will finally be subject to democratic control," Patel said. — PTT

The latest test at the Sohae satellite launching ground will have "an important effect on changing the strategic position of North Korea once again in the future," an unidentified spokesman from the North Korean academy said. The first time a solid-fuel engine for an intercontinental ballistic missile was used, solid-fuel increases a weapon's mobility and reduces the amount of launch preparation time. The long-range rockets that North Korea used in either ICBM launches or satellite liftoffs in recent years all used liquid propellants. A new satellite image indicated North Korea may be preparing to resume testing engines used to power satellite launchers and intercontinental ballistic missiles at the site. — AP

Stockholm, Dec. 8: Nobel Literature Prize winner Olga Tokarczuk says she thinks a new sort of fiction may be needed to counteract the modern era's tendency to isolate and divide people. In her Saturday lecture in Stockholm ahead of receiving the prize next week, the Polish author complained of the "exhausting white noise of oceans of information in the internet era." "It has turned out that we are not capable of bearing this enormity of information, which instead of uniting, generalising and freeing, has differentiated, divided and enclosed us in individual little bubbles," she said. Tokarczuk suggested this discourages people from understanding how actions are interconnected, thus contributing to climate crisis and political tension. She said she dreams of a new kind of fourth-person narrator in fiction who could encompass the views of each character in a novel. "We can regard this figure of a mysterious, tender narrator as miraculous and significant. This is a point of view, a perspective, from which everything can be seen. Seeing everything means recognising the ultimate fact that all things that exist are mutually connected into a single whole, even if the connections between them are not yet

known to us," she said. Tokarczuk is the 2018 literature laureate. Her prize was announced only two months ago because the Swedish Academy postponed naming a winner last year due to internal turmoil connected with a sex abuse scandal. The 2019 Nobel Literature winner, Peter Handke, has also brought controversy to the body because of widespread criticism of him as an apologist for Serbian war crimes during the 1990s. One Swedish Academy member said he is boycotting Nobel ceremonies this year in protest of Handke's selection and a member of the literature

nominating committee has announced his resignation. Handke justified his resignation to journalists who were questioning his views at a Friday news conference, saying he preferred receiving a letter to paper to answering their questions. But his lecture on Saturday was contemplative, telling how his writing was first inspired by religious litany he heard from a village church. He concluded by reciting a poem by the late Swedish Nobel laureate Tomas Tranströmer in which an angel whispers "do not be afraid of being human." The Nobel prizes in physics, chemistry, medi-

cine, economic and literature are being presented Tuesday in the Swedish capital. Earlier, several Nobel laureates in science spoke about climate change at their news conferences in Stockholm. Didier Queloz, an astronomer who shares this year's Nobel physics prize for discovering a planet outside the Earth's solar system, said people who shrug off climate change on the grounds that humans will eventually leave for distant planets are wrong. "The stars are so far away, I think we should not have any serious hope to escape the Earth," he said. — AP

Iran budget to resist sanctions

Tehran, Dec. 8: Iran's president said on Sunday his country will depend less on oil revenue next year, in a new budget that is designed to resist crippling US trade embargoes. Iran is in the grips of an economic crisis. The US re-imposed sanctions that block Iran from selling its crude oil abroad, following President Trump's decision to withdraw from Tehran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers. "The budget sends a message to the world that despite the sanctions, we will manage the country," President Hassan Rouhani told the opening session of Parliament. The proposed budget will counter maximum pressure and sanctions by the US, he said.



TRUMP THANKS IRAN AFTER PRISONER SWAP

Washington, Dec. 8: President Donald Trump said on Sunday he was grateful to Iran for thanking the US for a "very fair" negotiation to successfully pull off a prisoner swap that saw an American released from Iranian detention amid soaring tensions. The exchange, which took place in neutral Switzerland, involved a Princeton graduate student jailed in Iran for espionage since 2016 and an Iranian national arrested over a year ago in Chicago. "Thank you to Iran on a very fair negotiation," tweeted Trump, as Xiyue Wang made his way home to his family. The US leader was expected to welcome Wang in person when he arrives in the US after a stop in Germany for medical evaluations. "It was a one-on-one hostage swap," Trump told reporters. — AP

Iranian media, said that the submitted budget would raise taxes, sell some government-owned property and add more government bonds. But it wasn't immediately clear from Rouhani's speech whether these proposed measures would fully compensate for plummeting oil revenues. Rouhani added that Iran will also benefit from a \$5 billion loan from Russia that's being finalised. He said the US and Israel will remain "hopeless" despite their goal of weakening Iran through sanctions. The budget aimed at giving more relief and removing difficulties for poor people by heavily subsidising food and medicines. — AP

MAN EATS \$120K WORTH BANANA, AN ART PIECE

Miami, Dec. 8: The man who ate bananas and maybe the work was just too appealing. A performance artist shooed up the crowd at the Art Basel show in Miami Beach on when he grabbed a banana that had been duct-taped to a gallery wall and ate it.



The Banana art named 'Comedian' created by Maurizio Cattelan on display at the Art Basel exhibition in Miami Beach. — AP

The banana was, in fact, a work of art by Italian artist Maurizio Cattelan titled "Comedian" and sold to a French collector for \$120,000. In a video posted on his Instagram account, David Datuna, who describes himself as a Georgian-born American artist living in New York, walks up to the banana and pulls it off the wall with the duct tape attached. "Art performance," he said, as he peeled the fruit and took a bite. "Thank you, very good." A few bystanders could be heard giggling before a flustered gallery official whisked him to an adjoining space for questioning. But the kerfuffle was resolved without a food fight. "He did not destroy the banana is the idea," Lucien Teras, director of museum relations for Galerie Perrotin, said. "As it turns out, as the value of the work is in the certificate of authenticity in this newspaper reported. The banana is

meant to be replaced. A replacement banana was taped to the wall about 15 minutes after Datuna's stunt. "This has brought a lot of tension and attention to the booth and we're not into spectacles," Teras said. "But the response has been great. It brings a smile to a lot of people's faces." Gallery director Peggy Leboeuf said that no legal action was planned against Datuna. "He was not arrested, but we asked him to leave the booth and to leave the fair," she said. "We have his contact information, so we can go further, but I don't think we will." Cattelan is perhaps best known for his 16-carat, fully functioning gold toilet called "America" that he had once offered on loan to US President Donald Trump. — AP

NOVELTY | WORKS New fiction needed to counteract modern era's tendency to divide people Nobel winner Olga all for new narrative style

Stockholm, Dec. 8: Nobel Literature Prize winner Olga Tokarczuk says she thinks a new sort of fiction may be needed to counteract the modern era's tendency to isolate and divide people. In her Saturday lecture in Stockholm ahead of receiving the prize next week, the Polish author complained of the "exhausting white noise of oceans of information in the internet era." "It has turned out that we are not capable of bearing this enormity of information, which instead of uniting, generalising and freeing, has differentiated, divided and enclosed us in individual little bubbles," she said. Tokarczuk suggested this discourages people from understanding how actions are interconnected, thus contributing to climate crisis and political tension. She said she dreams of a new kind of fourth-person narrator in fiction who could encompass the views of each character in a novel. "We can regard this figure of a mysterious, tender narrator as miraculous and significant. This is a point of view, a perspective, from which everything can be seen. Seeing everything means recognising the ultimate fact that all things that exist are mutually connected into a single whole, even if the connections between them are not yet

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nominating committee has announced his resignation. Handke justified his resignation to journalists who were questioning his views at a Friday news conference, saying he preferred receiving a letter to paper to answering their questions. But his lecture on Saturday was contemplative, telling how his writing was first inspired by religious litany he heard from a village church. He concluded by reciting a poem by the late Swedish Nobel laureate Tomas Tranströmer in which an angel whispers "do not be afraid of being human." The Nobel prizes in physics, chemistry, medi-

cine, economic and literature are being presented Tuesday in the Swedish capital. Earlier, several Nobel laureates in science spoke about climate change at their news conferences in Stockholm. Didier Queloz, an astronomer who shares this year's Nobel physics prize for discovering a planet outside the Earth's solar system, said people who shrug off climate change on the grounds that humans will eventually leave for distant planets are wrong. "The stars are so far away, I think we should not have any serious hope to escape the Earth," he said. — AP

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Business
loss can be
carried
forwardWhat to do
when paying
EMIs becomes
a struggle

Money

quick
BITES

INDICATORS

INDICATORS	%
Sensex	40445.15 -0.82
Nifty 50	11921.50 -0.81
S&P 500	3,145.91 +0.91
Dollar (₹)	71.21 -0.15
Pound Sterling (₹)	93.73 -0.17
Euro (₹)	78.76 -0.08
Gold (10gm) (₹)	37,689+386 -1.00
Brent crude (\$/bbl)	\$64.05 +0.66
IN 10-Yr bond yield	+6.661 +0.052
US 10-Yr T-bill yield	+1.843 +0.030

*As of Saturday

India Inc foreign
borrowings
jump over 2-fold

India Inc's foreign borrowings grew over two-fold to \$3.41 billion in October from \$1.41 bn a year ago. Of the total, \$2.87 bn was borrowed via the automatic route of external commercial borrowing and \$538 million through the approval route of ECB. In the ECB category, the highest borrowing under the automatic route was done by Muthoot Finance (\$400 mn).

Maruti raises
production
by 4% in Nov

Maruti Suzuki India increased production in November by 4.33 per cent, after having reduced output for nine straight months due to lower demand. The company produced a total of 1,41,834 units in November against 1,35,946 units in the year-ago month. Passenger vehicles production last month stood at 1,39,084 units against 1,34,149 units.

FPIs become net
sellers amid
weak macro data

Reversing the buying trend, foreign portfolio investors turned net sellers in December with a net outflow of Rs 244 crore from the capital markets amid subdued economic data. Depositories data shows FPIs pulled out a net Rs 1,668.8 crore from equities, but invested Rs 1,424.6 crore on a net basis in the debt segment, resulting in a net outflow of Rs 244.2 crore.

Not one gold
hallmarking unit
in 6 N-E states

There is not a single gold assaying and hallmarking centre in six northeastern states and five Union Territories. The Centre aims to make hallmarking mandatory for gold and jewellery from 2021. Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Ladakh, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu, and Lakshadweep do not have gold assaying units.

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■ Former RBI governor calls for asset quality review of NBFCs

Country is in the midst of growth recession: Rajan

New Delhi, Dec. 8: Former RBI governor Raghuram Rajan said India is in the midst of a "growth recession" with signs of deep malaise in the economy that is being run through extreme centralisation of power in the Prime Minister's Office and powerless ministers.

Penning down his recommendations to help the ailing Indian economy out of the ongoing slowdown in a magazine, he called for reforms to liberalise capital, land and labour markets, and spur investment as well as growth.

Rajan said the starting point to address the economic slowdown will be to recognise the magnitude of the problem, to not brand every internal or external critic as politically-motivated, and to stop believing that the problem is temporary and that suppressing bad news and inconvenient surveys will make it go away," he said.

India is in the midst of a growth recession, with significant distress in rural areas.

India's economic growth slowed to a six-year low of 4.5 per cent in the July-September quarter. "With inflation rising, interest rate stagflation - a fall in aggregate demand accompanied by rising inflation - has resurfaced."

He said construction, real estate and infrastructure sectors are in "deep trouble" and so are lenders to the sector, like the non-bank finance companies. The crisis among shadow lenders and the build-up of bad loans at banks have curbed lending in the economy. He also sought asset quality review of the non-bank finance companies.

He said corporate and household debt is rising, and there is deep distress in parts of the financial sector.

Unemployment, especially amongst youth, seems to be growing, as is the accompanying risk of youth unrest. "Domestic businesses have not been investing, and the stagnation in investment is the strongest sign that something is deeply wrong," he said.



Raghuram Rajan

Financial sector fragilities could be slightly below the that mark in FY20, as the impact of stimulus measures will take time to filter through to the economy. Despite several measures taken by the government, high bad loan levels of public sector banks will drag down India's growth momentum, according to an IHS Markit release on Sunday.

Financial sector fragilities continue to weigh on India's economic growth momentum, with the high level of non-performing

Fin sector fragilities taming growth

FC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, DEC 8

Though the RBI has pegged GDP growth at 5 per cent for the current fiscal, the actual figure could be slightly below the that mark in FY20, as the impact of stimulus measures will take time to filter through to the economy. Despite several measures taken by the government, high bad loan levels of public sector banks will drag down India's growth momentum, according to an IHS Markit release on Sunday.

Financial sector fragilities continue to weigh on India's economic growth momentum, with the high level of non-performing

loans on the balance sheets of the public sector banks constraining their new lending," IHS said. For the first half of 2019-20 fiscal, GDP growth slowed to a pace of 4.8 per cent compared to the 7.5 per cent a year back. Furthermore, there are also risks from potential contagion effects from troubled non-bank financial companies (NBFCs) to the balance sheets of some commercial banks, which could further weigh on the overall pace of credit expansion, it said.

Following the weak GDP output for the September quarter, Indian real GDP growth in FY 2019-20 is expected to be slightly below 5 per cent, as it is anticipated that the impact of stimulus measures will take time to filter through to the real economy," it said.

He also warned of decentralisation of power by empowering ministers and engaging states, beginning with the acquisition of laws, stable tax and regulatory regime, fast tracking bankruptcy resolution of non-performing assets, and pricing of electricity, preserving competition in telecom sector and giving farmers access to inputs and finance.

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China's trade with US sinks 23% in Nov

Beijing, Dec. 8: China's trade with the United States sank again in November as negotiators worked on the first stage of a possible deal to end a tariff war. Exports to the United States fell 23 per cent from a year earlier to \$26.5 billion, while imports from the US fell 28 per cent to \$11 billion, giving China a surplus with the US of \$24.6 billion.

Market in corrective mode, may turn volatile

ASHWIN J PUNNEN
MUMBAI, DEC 8

The equity market is expected to remain volatile, as macroeconomic data along with global factors are likely to influence the bourses.

Exports to the United States fell 23 per cent from a year earlier to \$26.5 billion, while imports from the US fell 28 per cent to \$11 billion, giving China a surplus with the US of \$24.6 billion.

China's global exports were off 1.1 per cent from a year earlier at \$221.7 bn despite weak demand worldwide. Imports were up 0.3 per cent at \$183 billion, giving China a global surplus of \$38.7 bn.

Hopes for a settlement to the fight over Beijing's technology ambitions and trade surplus rose after President Trump's announcement of a "Phase 1" agreement.

The US Fed meeting outcome and progress in Trump's impeachment process will be major international events while listing of Ujivan Small Finance Bank IPO and fundraising by Yes Bank will be domestic factors that traders would keep an eye on.

The Nifty50 has changed its bias from uptrend to a corrective stance. Double top stands confirmed, which will make markets correct either time or price wise

or both. Generally such corrections take a lot of time. Momentum indicators had already weakened, now it is visible in the price action. Traders are advised to book profits in low volatility trades and initiate short on rallies, keeping weekly highs as stops," said Jimeet Modi, Founder & CEO, Samco Securities.

Association of India, India's mustard output estimated at 8.1 million tonne in 2018-19 (July-June), up from 7.1 mt in 2017-18. However, this is lower than the farm ministry's forecast of 9.3 mt in its fourth advance estimate. As of last Thursday, mustard sowing is 5.4 per cent lagged in 19.54 million hectares, according to farm ministry data. Nearly 80 per cent of mustard sowing across the country has already been completed. Last year, the total sown area was at 6.9 mha. Mustard accounts for a fourth of the country's total oilseed production,

Share of third party cover rising in motor premia

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, DEC 8

The share of third-party insurance in motor premiums is rising. The past three years have seen a steady rise in this share and from this year onwards, the growth momentum could spike higher.

Till a few years back, the own damage share in motor premium used to be 60 per cent and third party, 40 per cent. However, the share of third party (TP) premium has since gone up to 32.7 per cent in 2016-17, 35 per cent in 2017-18 and further up 59 per cent in 2018-19, data from the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai) shows.

Public insurers like United India, Oriental Insurance and New India Assurance have a significantly higher proportion of third party share in their motor premiums.

According to Sanjay Datta, Chief Underwriting, Claims and Reinsurance at ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company, the TP premiums have been rising as a function of natural inflation with the increasing trend in claims and claim amounts.

"The TP losses have seen an increase and the Irdai has accordingly increased premium net increase in some and

decrease in some) in some of the TP segments, which is leading to a net increase in share," said Sajja Praveen Chowdhary, Head-Motor Insurance, Policybazaar.com.

On the other hand, the competition and market situation has driven up the discounts in Own Damage segment, leading to the OD share in total premium going down, he said.

Two-wheelers and private cars have a higher proportion of own damage in the motor premium. "As the vehicle gets heavier, the share of third party goes up in case of commercial vehicles like trucks and buses, the TP share can be 60 to 70 per cent," said Datta.

Budget team short of 2 key officials

New Delhi, Dec. 8: The budget-making team of the Finance Ministry is short of two key officials, including a full-time secretary and a secretary while the preparation for the second budget of Modi 2.0 government has shifted into top gear.

The budget for 2020-21 is to be presented on February 15. It is keenly awaited for the expected second wave of structural reforms for pulling out the economy from its over six-year low growth of 4.5 per cent.

In addition to expenditure secretary, the position of joint secretary (budget), one of the key officials in the entire budget-making process, is also vacant for almost three months.

The post of expenditure secretary fell vacant after the departure of G C Murmu as the first lieutenant governor of the Union Territory of J&K. Murmu relinquished the post on October 29 and subsequently, the additional charge of the Department of Expenditure was given to Atanu Chakrabarty.

Chakrabarty, a 1985-batch IAS officer of the Gujarat cadre, is Secretary Economic Affairs of the Finance Ministry. Chakrabarty was appointed economic affairs secretary in July this year.

The finance ministry kick-started the budget exercise from October 14 with pre-budget/revised estimate meetings. The series of meetings with different departments and ministries concluded last month.

The budget estimates and the provisionally finalised after the expenditure secretary completes discussions with different departments and financial advisers.



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—PTI

Commodity
Compass

boosted the mustard prices, traders pointed out. According to the Mustard Oil Producers

and nearly 80 per cent of the rabi oilseed basket.

A look at the futures market would suggest that the market is volatile in its components, the edible oil basket rose sharply last week. Mustard edged close to a three-year high. The January mustard contract on the NCDEX hit a three-year high of Rs 4,440 per 100 kg due to firm demand from oil millers and positive cues from other edible oils, analysts said. The December contract of mustard at the NCDEX was Rs 4,065 per quintal on October 4 while it was trading at Rs 4,388 per quintal on last Thursday.

Brokers BES

Lower public spend on infra to hit L&T growth

Over the past year, the governments — both at the Centre and the states — have seen a worsening of fiscal stress, which reduced their spending on infrastructural development. As per the September 2019 study by the RBI on state finances, state infra spend in FY20 will fall by 4.5 per cent compared with 16 per cent CAGR over FY16-19 (not assuming further worsening since the presentation of the state budgets). While we have argued in the past that a distributed public capex funding model led by Centre, states, municipalities and multi-lateral agencies alike provides cushion against such expansion in the fiscal deficit, we now believe that a near-term continuation of slowdown in order inflows is inevitable as slowing economy has further added to the pain. Our monthly infra tracker suggests that tenders are still down 41 per cent year-to-date FY20 as of November 2019, indicating that order activity will likely remain low for H2FY20. Thus we foresee a potential for a revised guidance in Q3FY20 to 8-10 per cent growth from the current 10-12% growth in order inflows and maintain Buy rating at revised target price of ₹1,559.

Broking firm: Emkay
Rating: Buy
Closing price: ₹78.15

Unorganised mart to lead Dr Lal PathLabs

Dr. Lal PathLabs Ltd (DPL) is engaged in the business of providing diagnostic and health care related tests. DPL is well established consumer health-care brand having a Pan-India coverage with 200 clinics/labs. It has very strong and continuously improving financials with its Revenue, EBITDA & PAT growth at CAGR of 18 per cent, 18 per cent, 20 per cent respectively over the past five years. It has a very healthy balance sheet and has maintained very high return ratios in an industry which is effectively loss making because of the fragmented nature of the industry. The diagnostics industry remains highly fragmented and largely unorganised. This gives tremendous opportunities for large chains like DPL to grow on the basis of geography given the consistent and impressive performance over the years, favourable industry traits, future growth opportunities and differentiated business model, the broking house believes that the company is well positioned for long-term growth and recommends a buy rating with a target price of ₹1,999 a share.

Broking firm: Anandratni
Rating: Buy
Closing price: ₹23.55

New Vehicles Act a positive for Cholamandalam

Cholamandalam Financial Holdings has reported a steady performance in Q2FY20, with profit before tax (PBT) growing by 14% on year-on-year (YoY) basis. While disbursements growth slowed to seven per cent YoY, AUM continued to grow at a robust pace of 10 per cent YoY. Although the combined ratio remained elevated at 109.2 per cent as against 103.6 per cent in Q2FY19, and profit after tax (PAT) falling 78 per cent YoY. The management's focus on motorable segments within motor, and positive impact of the new Motor Vehicle Act on Motor TP claims ratio is expected to bring down the combined ratio to 100. However, given that Chola MS' exposure of ₹40 crore in stressed regions, the broking house expects provisions to remain elevated in H2FY20, which is likely to suppress the overall profitability. The broking house maintains the buy rating.

Broking firm: SBICap
Rating: Buy
Closing price: ₹1,135.70

What to do when paying EMIs becomes a struggle

Money talk
Adnil Shetty

When we take a loan, we assume that we'll keep generating income that will help pay off the debts as planned. But situations such as a loss of job, loss of income, and health problems can throw a spanner in the works. What happens when paying EMIs becomes a struggle? What are your options as a borrower? What are your lender's options? Let's take a deeper look.

THE LOAN STILL NEEDS TO BE PAID

If you've taken a loan, it needs to be repaid. The consequences of non-payment will negatively impact your long-term finances. Late payments will start wrecking your credit score. Non-payment for more than 90 days will render your loan a Non-Performing Asset (NPA) for the lender; after which the lender will kick in. Apart from the late payment penalties and burdening interest, you may also face legal action if your post-dated cheques given to the lender bounce. In case of securitised loans such as home loans, the lender owns the property till the loan is paid. The property can be auctioned to recover the dues as mandated by the SARFESI Act.

PRE-EMPTIVE STEPS TO AVOID LIQUIDATION

Before you incur debt, especially a large, long-term debt such as a home loan, you need to take two measures to protect your finances. Firstly, take a loan protection policy at the time of your loan. It may cover you or your family in certain situations. For example, in the case of the borrower's death, the policy will settle the loan balance, keep-



ing the borrower's family from financial harm. Such a policy may also provide EMI protection for a fixed number of months in case you lose your job in predefined conditions. Secondly, you must build an emergency fund that can cover your EMI payments for six to 12 months at least, or more if you think it is necessary.

RAISE FUNDS FOR SHORT TERM

Non-payment may harm your credit score, and you may lose the asset for which the loan was taken. So the key is to find a way to keep paying the EMIs. Look for ways to raise funds for the short-term. Liquidate short-term savings such as fixed deposits. Next, look at your long-term investments, PPF, endowment plans, insurance policies, stocks etc. Start with the investments performing the worst and leave your best performers for last. Once these are exhausted, consider liquidating personal assets: jewellery, gadgets, vehicles, or anything that may help raise cash. Lastly, consider asking for friends and family for an interest-free loan to help you out. These are short-term measures until you get back to being able to pay your EMIs normally. If your financial problems persist, consider selling the asset (home or vehicle) for which you've taken the loan.

MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH YOUR LENDER

After your first missed EMI payment, your lender will send you routine reminders for payments as mandated by the RBI and as mentioned in your loan agreement. The reminders will be sent to you through possible channels of communication, including in-person visits from the lender's representatives. At such a point, it would be wise to maintain contact with your lender to appraise him about your financial

difficulties. Not responding to the communication will not make the debt go away. Rather you should communicate with the lender and explore all possible options to make your payments easier. The options may include adjustments in interest rate, loan tenure or EMI size, which may make the payments slightly easier for you. At the same time, you're entitled to receive humane treatment from the lender, and acts of coercion and violence are against the law.

WHAT THE LENDER WILL DO

Having pursued all the above options, the lender will, finally, look at options to close the loan. Thirty days from the first default, the lender will have to create a loan recovery plan which it can then put into action in another 180 days. This gives you a maximum of seven months to sort your finances out. In the plan, a securitised loan can be

recovered through the auction of the asset. You're allowed to be part of the auction and claim surplus proceeds if any. In unsecured loans such as credit card debt or personal loans, you may receive a settlement option from the bank; part of your principal and interest dues and consider the loan settled. However, this is only a partial repayment, and while it will end your problems with this particular loan, the settlement will reflect in your credit report as an inability to pay your dues in full. This will lower your credit score and make future borrowings very difficult. Managing your EMIs during financial difficulties is extremely challenging. However, you must plan for these trying phases and keep looking for ways to repay your dues. Full and timely repayment will ensure you continue to get credit in the future.

The writer is CEO, BankBazaar.com

Tax matters
Kamal Rathi

Biz loss can be carried forward

I am an owner of a house in Greater Kailash-1, New Delhi. The house is built on a free hold plot of 286 square yards. This was purchased for approximately ₹15,000. The ground floor and a room on the first floor were built in 1965 for ₹48,000. Later, some more rooms were added in 1970 at a cost of ₹70,000. Please let me know the current value of the property based on current indexation.

S. GOPAL
Via email

A) In respect of capital assets acquired before April 1, 2001, the Income Tax Act provides an option to the assessee to adopt either the original cost or Fair Market Value (FMV) as on April 1, 2001, as the cost of acquisition for the purpose of computation of capital gains. The assessee has to apply to the sub-registrar to determine the FMV of the property. Generally the value of land is given in terms of rate per square yard and the value of the cost of construction in terms of rate per square feet.

The benefit of indexation can be availed by applying the cost of acquisition as the FMV adopted as the cost of acquisition. This benefit can be availed either from the year of acquisition of the asset or from the base year 2001-02, in your case being 2001-02 (Cost inflation index for FY 2001-02 is 100 and for FY 2019-20 is 289).

Indexed Cost of Acquisition = (Cost of acquisition or FMV as on 01.04.2001 as the case may be) divided by Index Factor for base year 2001-02 multiplied by Index factor for the year of transfer.

The Long Term Capital Gain is calculated as sale consideration less indexed cost of acquisition and taxed at the rate of 20.8 per cent.

I filed my original return within the time allowed under Section 139(1) of the Income-Tax Act. In this return, I claimed that a business loss of ₹4.5 lakh be carried forward to the next year. I wish to revise this return under Section 139(5) due to an error in computation in the original return. This will result in an increase the business loss to be carried forward to ₹5 lakhs. Kindly clarify whether I will be eligible to carry forward the loss of ₹5 lakhs if I revise the return.

NILESH
Via email

A) If a loss is incurred, being a business loss the same can be carried forward only if the return is filed within the due date stipulated under Section 139(1). A loss return furnished is deemed to have filed under Section 138(1).

Therefore, a loss return can also be revised under section 139(5). If the return referred to in the query is for the FY 2018-19, it needs to be revised upto March 31, 2020. The enhanced loss assessed by you through the revised return can be carried forward and set off against the business income within a period of eight assessing years immediately succeeding the assessment year in which the loss is first computed.

The Income Tax Act does not deny the benefit of carry forward of loss to the extent of ₹5 lakhs merely because such enhanced claim has been made through furnishing a revised return.

I want to deposit some of my savings in the name of my wife in the Senior Citizens Savings Scheme. She is not an assessee. So do I have to pay tax on the interest earned in the deposit of my wife?

RAJENDRA
Via email

A) The deposit in your wife's name will not help you in saving taxes as clubbing provisions of the Income Tax Act will be applicable. According to Section 64(1)(iv) of the Income Tax Act, in computing the total income of the individual, income arises directly or indirectly to an individual from assets transferred to or for his spouse — other than for adequate consideration or in connection with agreement to live apart — will be included in the income of the person who transferred such assets. For any investments made in Senior Citizens scheme, deduction upto ₹1.5 lakh is allowed under Section 80C. For senior citizens, any interest earned in the above mentioned savings scheme an aggregate deduction upto ₹50,000 is available under Section 80TTB.

The writer is a chartered accountant. He can be reached at info@rathindmalanis.com

WHAT DOES A TERM INSURANCE PLAN COST?

Insurance Company Name	Premium Costs for Sum Assured of ₹1 Cr	Premium Costs for Sum Assured of ₹50 lakh	Claim Settlement Ratio (FY-2017-18)**
Max Life-Online Term Plan Plus	₹8,378	₹4,720	98.26%
LIC- Tech Term	₹11,007	₹6,254	98.04%
TATA AIA - Maha Raksha Supreme- V2	₹13,000	₹7,500	98.00%
ICICI Prudential Life - iProtect Smart - Life	₹8,279	₹4,728	97.89%
HDFC Life-ClickProtect	₹9,717	₹5,550	97.80%
Bharti AXA Life Flexi Term Plan	₹8,260	₹4,543	96.85%
Exide Life Elite Term Plan	₹9,810	₹5,938	96.81%
SBI Life- eShield	₹11,092	₹6,372	96.76%
DHFL Pramerica- FlexiTerm	₹8,149	₹4,569	96.62%
Aditya Birla Sunlife - i-DigiShield Plan	₹9,523	₹5,452	96.38%
Aegon Life - iTerm	₹7,087	₹4,165	95.67%
Edelweiss Tokio Life - Zindagi Plus	₹8,529	₹5,042	95.24%
CanaraHSCOBFC Life Insurance- Iselect	₹7,379	₹4,203	95.22%
Reliance Nippon Life-Digi Term-Life Secure	₹8,402	₹4,687	95.17%
Aviva i-Life Total- Protect	₹9,262	₹5,751	94.45%
Kotak e-Term Plan	₹7,552	₹4,838	93.72%
Future Generali Life - Flexi Online Term	₹7,682	₹4,229	93.11%
Star Union Dai-ichi- SUD Life Premier	₹18,172	₹10,384	92.26%
Bajaj-eTouchOnline- Shield	₹10,366	₹6,166	92.04%
IDBI Federal - iInsurance Flexi Term Plan	₹9,251	₹5,050	91.99%
PNB MetLife Mera Term Plan	₹8,732	₹5,428	91.12%
IndiaFirst Life Insurance- Life E-Term Plan	₹7,080	₹3,599	89.83%
Shriram Life Online Plan	₹9,763	₹5,177	80.23%

Data pertains to term insurance cover for a 30-year-old, salaried, non-smoker male, residing in Bengaluru, earning ₹5 lakh annually, for a 30-year term. Data as on Dec. 4, 2019.

- Data Compiled By: BankBazaar.com

Privatisation offers investment opportunity in PSUs

Invest talk
R. Balakrishnan

Public Sector Stocks have not been my cup of tea. They have been, at best, trading opportunities. My stance is that I will look at them only after ownership changes. Promoter change is important. PSU ownership has resulted in inefficiencies and linkages that have translated in low ROCE. Commercial expediency is overtaken by political goals. The PSU stock prices follow a pattern of optimism and despair. So far, since the first issuance of PSU stocks to UTI in the nineties, there have been at least four swing cycles in prices of PSU Stocks. I have always looked at them as Balance

can never be precise. Selling will be probably before the top. However, I am fairly confident that this strategy fetches positive returns that should be decent. Remain focused on price. Buying an asset below cost price will fetch returns so long as the underlying business is good. Companies like SAIL, NALCO, BHEL, etc are natural candidates for this play. The government and some companies where the government policies are extremely hard on the business may not behave well. Mining is one such example. Or power. Recall the case of Indraprastha Gas. The government suddenly put a cap on the rates and then after a long wait, the matter was decided in favour of the company by the Supreme Courts. Regulatory risks are high. Looking now at newly elected state governments cancelling the

contracts that the previous government signed, the risk is spreading to the private sector. Companies in infrastructure are the worst sufferers. PSUs have enjoyed a natural monopoly. The private sector, then, was shy of waiting for profits and hence the government was forced in to business. One would think that they would be money spinners, ROCE or ROE. Alas, corruption and poor staffing plus lack of management skills have made them all in to mediocre companies. Maybe one or two have done well, but still most have very poor ROCE or ROE. Privatisation is the new hope that is giving these stocks another lease of life. Some companies have been identified for privatisation — In other words, the government will sell its stake and also hand over the Board Room keys to the buyer. This is a big

game changer, if executed well and the new owners are capable businessmen. They are used to stake sale should be through global tenders. The government can insure itself against underpricing by giving itself some structured paper that gives it a play on the upside up to a period of one to two years from sale. However, in a global tender sale, it will not be needed. Yes, there will be obstacles. The trade unions are going to fight. The challenge of working for the private sector, in a performance-driven milieu, is anathema. They are used to fixed annual increments irrespective of talent and performance, undue perks that could include subsidised housing in prime locations, pensions etc. And of course, staff turnover. No private owner will tolerate this. Maybe there could be a standstill

agreement for a few years, but a good owner will know how to get rid of the unwanted or better labour. The new owner will need to get far higher ROCE. Political challenges will come in the way. If I recall the previous PSU exits, I can think of IPCL (which was acquired by Reliance and then merged in to itself), Hindustan Copper (still a battle for the price of final exit), VSNL & CMC Ltd (acquired by Tatas) are some which come to mind. So it is not impossible. We have to hope that the disposal is done through a transparent and optimal route, where global players have a chance to bid for them. The choice of foreign ownership should not come in the way. After all, the infrastructure is in the country and the power to legislate is with the government. In this environment, the

challenge for the new owners will be to improve the ROE to good levels. The older the PSU, the better are the chances. With privatisation, the other important condition is to let go of price controls and distribution controls. If something is being lost in to the private sector, the government should be open market conditions. It is tough to take a call on investing in anticipation of privatisation. The wait could be long and there could be a lot of ups and downs before the actual event. I would like to see who the new owners are before the PSU is called. The prices may be higher, but I would be on surer grounds. For those who own PSU shares, the advice is to go slow.

The writer is a veteran investment advisor. He can be contacted at balakrishnan@rathindmalanis.com

Noir detective game 'Blacksad' will be out worldwide for the PS4, Xbox One and Nintendo Switch on December 10

SHORT TAKES



ADOBE BUYING FB TOOL TO UP VR STRATEGY

Mumbai, Dec. 8: Adobe has announced that it is buying Oculus Medium, a virtual reality authoring tool born from Facebook's Oculus Rift... Adobe intends to use Medium to build out a portfolio of VR, 3D and immersive design services for creative professionals...

According to Facebook-owned Oculus, the new announcement marks an important milestone for the VR community... Adobe has been a beacon of creativity in the VR space...

Microsoft

44M ACCOUNTS USING BREACHED PASSWORDS: MS

Mumbai, Dec. 8: In a major security lapse, 44 million Microsoft accounts were discovered using breached user names and passwords... Microsoft has now forced a password reset for accounts for which a match was found...

Google Trends

GOOGLE REAL-TIME CONTENT INSIGHTS FOR PUBLISHERS

Mumbai, Dec. 8: Google is rolling out a new tool for news publishers to help improve content with the use of real-time data... The new feature called trending topics sits within the Realtime Content Insights (RCI) tool...

iPhone lineup could get a shakeup in 2020

iOS will offer high-security handsets, highend features

Apple may ditch iPhone SE 2 name in follow up

Mumbai, Dec. 8: Apple is all set to release four new iPhone 12 models in the fall of 2020... DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs MUMBAI, DEC. 8

WORLD'S MOST DANGEROUS STATE-DEVELOPED MALWARE

These are the most dangerous, effective, and most famous malware strains that have been developed by the cyber security units of various countries

Infographic titled 'WORLD'S MOST DANGEROUS STATE-DEVELOPED MALWARE' listing various malware strains like REGIN, FLAME, SHAMOOON, UROBOUROS, ICEFOX, WARRIOR PRIDE, OLYMPIC DESTROYER, VINFILTR, WANNACRY, and NOTPETYA with brief descriptions of each.

BOON OR BANE Data Protection Authority can potentially deal with brokers and the negative externality

Personal Data Protection Bill has its flaws

Indian tech policy is shifting from a reactive to a declaratory one... Rohan Seth... Data brokers sell information to anyone who is willing to pay for it... The draft bill talks on how to deal with breaches and who should be notified...

HOW PEOPLE REACTED TO AR-POWERED POKEMON GO

One of the fascinating things that Niantic's Pokemon Go showed was that a quintessential latest fad in digital world doesn't last long...

Built by Google spin-off Niantic, Pokemon Go forced players to search their neighbourhoods for characters by throwing virtual monsters onto the real world using Augmented Reality... On internet, trends are born and die faster than ever before...



Pokemon Go's fantasy run ended as swiftly as it began... On internet, trends are born and die faster than ever before... Pokemon Go grew into a fantasy over time...



DuckDuckGo security better, endorses Dorsey

New Delhi, Dec. 8: Twitter founder and CEO Jack Dorsey last week revealed that he has been using DuckDuckGo as his default search engine... DuckDuckGo claims that it is different from tech giants like Google...

GOOGLE REAL-TIME CONTENT INSIGHTS FOR PUBLISHERS

Indian government is looking at keeping data brokers accountable... The issue around brokers is also unlikely to be handled in the final version of the bill... Once the DPA is formed...



New role

Former Test captain Graeme Smith is set to become Cricket South Africa's (CSA) director of cricket



It's my hope that he (Ali) does return for Test but now we don't know when and if that might happen.

— Ed Smith, England national team selector on Maseel Ali

SHORT TAKES

Warne awards big pay for stake in RR

Melbourne: Shane Warne was given a minuscule stake in IPL franchise Rajasthan Royals during the league's inaugural edition in 2008, a deal that could potentially find the legendary spinner leading his way to the bank in the coming days. According to the 'Herald Sun', Warne was paid a 65,000 and given an ownership of 0.75 percent for every year he remained in the team. "Part of my deal (was) because I had retired from international cricket and I came out of retirement," Warne asked me to be the captain, coach and run a cricket team the way I wanted to run it. I was the one-stop shop," Warne was quoted as saying by the Australian paper 'Herald Sun'. Warne, who has also been a coach-cum-mentor and then Brand Ambassador of the Royals, led an unheralded bunch of players to their triumph during the inaugural edition of IPL back in 2008. In fact, current India star Ravindra Jadeja was a talented uncapped player back then, whom Warne had backed to the hilt terming him a "rockstar". —PTI

Latif takes a dig at Pakistan Board

Lahore: Former Pakistan skipper and wicketkeeper Rashid Latif has slammed the country's national cricket board over the players' age fudging controversy. In a tweet, Latif said the Pakistan Cricket Board to refrain from making a joke of itself in the recent row against Australia, Naseem Shah, 16, made his debut for the senior team before he was selected into the Pakistan U-19s team for the Youth World Cup last week. Taking to Twitter, the 51-year-old wrote, "Pakistani Cricket Team players are going to U-19s. U-19s are going to U-16s. U-16s to U-15s & U-15s back to their mothers' laundries. For God's sake PCB, correct the ages and don't destroy your reputation" by working with crooked diploma doctors, don't make a joke of yourself." Former opener Mohsin Khan also raised his voice over Shah's selection. —Agencies

Wind power

Simmons wrecks havoc as Windies storm to 8-wicket win

Thiruvananthapuram, Dec. 8: Indian team's frailties while batting first were thoroughly exposed by a disciplined West Indies, which kept the three-match T20 series alive with a comfortable eight-wicket victory in the second game here on Sunday. A below-par score of 170 for 7 with only 38 runs in the final five overs was never going to be enough keeping the dew factor in mind and senior opener Lendl Simmons (67 no off 45 balls along with Evian Lewis (40 off 35 balls) added 73 for the first wicket to seal the issue. West Indies reached the target with as many as nine balls to spare.

West Indies' dominance was evident by the half-dozen sixes that they hit apart from 11 boundaries compared to five maximums by the hosts, four of which were hit by three all-rounder Shivam Dube. Simmons hit four sixes while Lewis hit three and it helped that the spinners didn't vary the length of their deliveries. Unlike first innings, when hitting through the line was difficult, it became easier in the second innings with ball coming onto the bat easily. Nicholas Pooran (38 off 19 balls) coming back after a brief ban on charges of ball tampering, also added insult to injury with a couple of sixes and four boundaries after the Bangladesh T20 in Delhi, this is the second time in last five games

SCORECARD

India: R. Sharma b Holder 15, KL Rahul c Hetmyer b Pierre 11, S. Dube c Hetmyer b Walsh 54, V. Kohli c Simmons b Williams 19, R. Pant (not out) 35, S. Iyer c King b Walsh 10, R. Jadeja b Williams 9, W. Sundar c & b Cottrell 0, D. Chahar (not out) 1. **Extras (nb 1, w 4, nb2, w13) 18. Total (for seven wickets in 20 overs) 170.**
FoW: 1-24, 2-56, 3-97, 4-120, 5-144, 6-164, 7-167.
Bowling: Cottrell 4-0-27-1, Pierre 2-0-11-1, Holder 4-0-42-2, Williams 4-0-30-2, Pollard 2-0-29-0, Walsh 4-0-28-2.
West Indies: L. Simmons (not out) 67, E. Lewis st Pant b Washington Sundar 40, S. Hetmyer c Kohli b Jadeja 23, N. Pooran (not out) 38. **Extras (nb 1, w 4) 5. Total (for two wickets in 18.5 overs) 175.**
FoW: 1-73, 2-112.
Bowling: Chahar 3.3-0-35-0, B. Kumar 4-0-36-0, Sundar 4-0-26-1, Chahal 3-0-36-0, Dube 2-0-18-0, Jadeja 2-0-22-1.

that India have lost trying to post a competitive score. Dube justified his promotion in batting order with a smashing half-century but it was struggle for the other Indian batsmen after being put into bat. Despite Dube's 54 off 30 balls, which had four huge sixes apart from three fours, India didn't get the required momentum during the death overs on a track where Caribbean seamers used a lot of back length slower deliveries along with well disguised short balls. The last five overs India couldn't try his best couldn't connect the big shots. The variation enabled West Indies to compensate for the 13 wides and two no-balls that they bowled during the evening. —PTI



Lendl Simmons en route to his unbeaten fifty against India in the second T20. —AP

Sanju the toast of Kerala crowd

Thiruvananthapuram, Dec. 8: Wicketkeeper Sanju Samson was the toast of the evening ahead of the second T20 between India and West Indies at Thiruvananthapuram's Greenfield International Stadium. A video tweeted by the BCCI showed huge cheers from the crowd at the stadium when Samson made his entry at the ground for practice. Before this, Samson's International Airport and cheering for him at the Indian team arrived. Samson has been knocking on the doors of the Indian limited overs squads with some good performances with the bat in the domestic limited overs tournaments. The chorus for giving him the wicketkeeping spot has only grown louder with Rishabh Pant's recent failures in the position. —Agencies

King Kohli thanks 'big boss' Richards

Thiruvananthapuram, Dec. 8: India skipper Virat Kohli has garnered praise from cricketers and fans for his match-winning unbeaten 94-run knock against West Indies in Hyderabad, which powered the Men in Blue to an emphatic six-wicket win in the first affair of the three-match T20 series. Legendary Windies cricketer Viv Richards had also lauded Kohli's effort and the Indian run-machine has graciously accepted his praise. Richards appreciated Kohli on Twitter, saying "Amazing. Just amazing, Virat Kohli." Kohli too, noted Richards' appreciation and responded: "Thanks big BOSS. Coming from you means a lot." Meanwhile, the India skipper could reach another massive T20 milestone on Sunday as he has amassed 975 runs in the shortest format at home and if he manages to score 25 runs here in Thiruvananthapuram, he would become the first Indian cricketer to complete 1000 runs in the shortest format of the game at his own backyard. Speaking after the game in Hyderabad, Kohli had said, "I don't want to change my game too much because I play all three formats. I just want to contribute in all three formats, that's what I want to do. I don't want to be a format specialist. When you are in a big total, there are a lot of distractions with the scoreboard pressure. But in a few dots, the game puts you in a position where you just have to hold your shape and play a few dots." Also, Kohli now has 12 Man of the Match awards to his name in the T20 format — a joint highest with Afghanistan's Mohammad Nabi. Interestingly, Shahid Afridi holds the second position with 11 awards. —Agencies

BCCI's planning is haphazard

When Virat Kohli continued his super form and guided India to a facile win against the West Indies at Hyderabad, one couldn't help feel if this series was needed to be held, India had just come back from the Caribbean (and United States of America) after a Twenty20 (T20), One Day Internationals (ODI) and a Test series in September this year. To expect a win by the Windies is yet another international series featuring three T20s and ODIs a few months later is a senseless exercise. One is not referring to these six matches being purposeless based on the results, after India won the first T20 in comfort — chasing and winning a target of 207 runs with eight balls to spare — but the waste of time and energy of the team members who will be playing a few matches of the Ranji Trophy, India's national cricket championship. The Ranji Trophy, the alma mater of cricketers in the country, begins on Monday and, sadly will be without key A list players who are on national duty. There has always been a lament from state cricket associations across the country who organise fixtures of this important tournament, that the matches are mostly played in empty stadiums with no spectators. For many years a lot of



Hemant Kenkre Silly Point

senior Indian cricketers have been asking the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to slot a time frame where the current stars of Indian cricket can turn out for their states. This was an ideal time to get Indian top-liners to wear their state colours and play across small and big venues in the country which would certainly revive interest in the tournament which (over the past few years) is being languishing for the sake of holding it. One says this as there has been no serious attempts (so far) by the BCCI to take measures to evoke interest in the championship which, at one point in time, had thousands flocking to watch their state heroes in action. The lack of famous names playing in this tourney, thanks to India's packed international schedule, has kept the fans away from the grounds and consequently downgraded the championship which is the main feeder of talent. Haphazard planning by the BCCI, where India takes on Australia, Zimbabwe (now postponed) and Sri Lanka in pointless home

encounters (all short format) is pure overkill of spectator interest and looks like a way to give the broadcasters (who have anyway overpaid for rights) their pound of flesh. At the last Annual General Meeting of the BCCI, the new regime put issues like changing the guidelines of the Lodha Commission and resolving the conflict of interest issue at the fore while forgetting to streamline domestic cricket which has been languishing from a spectator interest perspective. Reviving interest in the Ranji, Duleep and Irani Trophy matches — all long format games — was probably only on the minds of the new Apex council but certainly not on their 'to do' list. One would like to clarify that the current pointless Ranji West Indies series and the ones to follow have not been decided by the people who currently head the BCCI but have been formalised by the interim lot that ran the organisation during the changeover phase. If the new Apex council of the BCCI believes in rejuvenating Test cricket in India the first step would be to put life back into domestic,

international home series. By doing so, the BCCI would have made a bold statement that they do mean business when it comes to saving long format cricket rather than paying mere lip service. It's now up to the new lot that are running cricket in India to focus on getting premier domestic tournaments like the Ranji Trophy back to the top, the top players deserve it. This was a golden opportunity to let superstars like Kohli, Rohit Sharma and others have received the mentorship of senior international players while they cut their teeth in the Ranji Trophy. The last time Kohli turned out for Delhi in this tournament was seven years ago. This was a golden opportunity to let superstars like Kohli, Rohit Sharma and others have received the mentorship of senior international players while they cut their teeth in the Ranji Trophy. The last time Kohli turned out for Delhi in this tournament was seven years ago. 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Golden skater
American skater Chen produced an incredible performance, hitting two new world record scores, to win a third gold in the elite final



My lads did something extraordinary tonight. We must be ambitious.
— Simone Inzaghi, Lazio coach, after their 3-1 win over Juve

SHORT TAKES
Paddler Manav takes U-21 title

Markham, Canada: Young Indian paddler Manav Thakkar on Sunday scripted history as he became the first Indian since 2017 to clinch U-21 men's singles title with a comfortable 7:5, 11-5, 11-6 win over Argentina's Martin Bentancor in the ITTF Challenge Plus Benemac-Virgo North American Open in Markham, Canada. It was India's first U-21 men's singles title since the ITTF Challenge Series became an entity in January 2017, as opposed to being an integral part of the ITTF World Tour. Manav has now joined Harmet Desai, Sathyan Gnanasekaran and Soumyajit Ghosh in the list of Indians to win ITTF World Tour U-21 men's singles titles. The 19-year-old Manav, who was part of the Indian men's team which won the bronze medal in the 2018 Asian Games in Jakarta, dominated proceedings in the one-sided final match. Second-seeded Manav maintained his dominance throughout the final as he hardily gave Bentancor any chance to score. — Agencies

Unbeaten Charlo retains UFC crown

New York: Unbeaten American jockey Charlo topped challenger Dennis Hogan in the seventh round on Saturday to retain his World Boxing Council middleweight world title. Charlo dropped Hogan with an uppercut in the fourth round, but Hogan beat the referee and withstood a furious follow-up. But Charlo, who improved to 30-0 continued to press and when he sent Hogan down again with a left hook in the seventh it was over, winning by technical knockout 28 seconds into the round. Hogan, who kept one hand on the ropes as he was sent sprawling backwards, was able to rise, but he was still wobbling on his feet and the referee called a halt. Hogan suffered his first knockout loss, falling to 3-28 with one draw. On the undercard at Barclays Center in Barclays, Britain's Chris Eubank Jr. claimed the World Boxing Association interim middleweight title when he defeated Matt Korobov suffering a left shoulder injury. — AFP

SEPAK TAKRAW GOLD FOR THAILAND

Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Philippines: Thailand secured a team gold in sepak takraw — Southeast Asian volleyball — on Sunday, cruising past Myanmar to take top spot in the SEA Games round-robin event. Relatively unknown outside the region, sepak takraw involves players showing incredible acrobatic and footballing skills to keep the ball from touching the ground and launching it into the 152-metre high net into the opponents' court. As the Games enter their final few days in the Philippines, the win for Thailand secured the fourth position in the overall table with 42 golds, behind Vietnam in third (49), Indonesia in second (55) and the host nation, who have been runaway leaders since the start and currently have a golden lead of 92. Seven of the last 11 home medals table at the SEA Games, where the flexible sporting programme is traditionally heavily weighted towards the home team. Thailand won all four of their sepak takraw team regu matches — in which teams are split into sub-groups of three — against Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Sunday's opponents Myanmar. In Sunday's other team regu clash at the Subic Bay Freeport, Malaysia came from behind against Indonesia to secure the silver medal. — AFP



Raúl Neto (left) of Philadelphia 76ers goes past Matthew Dellavedova of Cleveland Cavaliers for a basket during their NBA game in Philadelphia on Saturday. Philadelphia won 141-94. — AP

Cavs caught short

Philadelphia thump Cleveland by 47 points

Los Angeles, Dec. 8: Slovenian sensation Luka Dončić put his name alongside that of NBA icon Michael Jordan Saturday as he scored 26 points in the Dallas Mavericks' 130-84 rout of the New Orleans Pelicans. Dončić also handed out nine assists and grabbed six rebounds in 26 minutes on the floor. It was his 18th straight game with at least 20 points, five rebounds and five assists. That tied him with six-time NBA champion Jordan for the longest such streak since the 1970s. The only other player in NBA history to achieve the feat is Oscar Robertson. The Mavericks' big win — their third this season by a margin of more than 40 points — was just one of the blowouts on a night that saw the Philadelphia 76ers crush the Cleveland

● Ben Simmons scored a career-high 34 points as the Philadelphia 76ers remained undefeated at home with a convincing 141-94 victory over the Cleveland Cavaliers.
● Luka Dončić scored 26 points as the Dallas Mavericks routed the New Orleans Pelicans 130-84.

Cavaliers 141-94 behind 34 points from Ben Simmons. Dončić didn't even play the last 14:20 of the contest. The Mavs' fifth straight victory and their 10th in 11 games. Dallas led 104-66 after three quarters, giving coach Rick Carlisle a chance to rest his starters late in anticipation of a Sunday home game against the Sacramento Kings. Tim Hardaway Jr scored 14 points and Kristaps Porziņģis chipped in 13 before exiting and Bob Marjanovic contributed 15 points and 16 rebounds off the bench. The Mavericks' 46-point margin of victory was their second-largest of the season. They crushed Golden State by 48 in November — and also beat Cleveland by 42. They're second in the Western Conference standings behind LeBron James's Los Angeles Lakers, but Carlisle cautioned against overconfidence. Australian guard Simmons was the star in Philadelphia, where his 34

points included the second three-pointer of his NBA career. Simmons made 12 of 14 from the field and made nine of 12 free throws as the 76ers improved to 11-0 at home. With Joel Embiid sitting out with a left hip contusion, Simmons attacked early. He scored 14 points in the first quarter as the 76ers raced to a 38-18 lead. Simmons finished the first half with 26 points, three rebounds, five assists, two steals and two blocked shots as the 76ers grabbed a 77-36 halftime lead and never looked back. Things were closer in Houston, where James Harden scored 18 of his 34 points in the fourth quarter and the Rockets pulled away late to beat the Phoenix Suns 115-109. The score was knotted at 89-89 with 7:35 left to play. Harden drained a step-

back three-pointer to make it 92-89 launching a run of 13 straight points from Harden that saw the Rockets seize control. **INDIANA PACERS EDGE PAST KNICKS** The New York Knicks suffered a heartbreaking defeat in their first game since firing head coach David Fizdale on Friday. Julius Randle missed a free throw with one-tenth of a second remaining as the Knicks fell 104-103 to the Indiana Pacers at Madison Square Garden. With interim coach Mike Miller at the helm, the Knicks erased an 11-point fourth-quarter deficit. They had a chance to force overtime after Randle was fouled in a scramble under the basket. Randle made the first free throw, but was off target with the second and the Knicks lost their ninth straight. — AFP

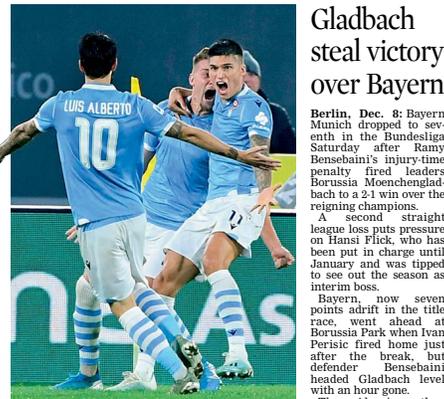
RUSSIA | DOPING

Stage set for WADA's sanctions

Lausanne, Dec. 8: Russia will discover on Monday whether they will be banished from one of the world's most prestigious sporting competitions, including the Olympic Games, for four years 15 matches, when the World Anti-Doping Agency held a crunch meeting in Lausanne. WADA's executive committee is expected to approve a recommendation by its Compliance Review Committee that Russia be handed a four-year suspension after the agency found falsifying laboratory doping data handed over to investigators earlier this year. Such a heavy sanction would see Russia ruled out of next year's Tokyo Olympics and the Winter Games in Beijing in 2022. Russian government officials would be barred from attending any major events. Under the proposed sanctions, Russian athletes would not be allowed to compete at the Olympics next year but into injury time as demonstrated that they were not part of the Russian system. Full disclosure of data from the Moscow laboratory was a key condition of Russia's controversial reinstatement by WADA in September 2018. The Russian Anti-Doping Agency (RUSADA) had been suspended for nearly three years previously over revelations of a vast state-supported doping program. — AFP

Lazio rally to beat Juve

Turin, Dec. 8: Italian champions Juventus suffered their first defeat of the season Saturday with a 3-1 loss against Lazio in Rome blowing open the Serie A title race. Maurizio Sarri's eight-time reigning league champions remain second in the table, two points behind leader Inter Milan after their 1-0 win at Lazio. Turin placed Lazio clawed to within just three points of Juventus after their first win at home against the Turin giants since December 2003. Cristiano Ronaldo put Juventus ahead at the Stadio Olimpico when he picked up a Rodrigo Bentancor cross to tap in after 25 minutes. But Luiz Felipe hit back for the Romans in front of 69,000 fans, nodding in just before the break. Juan Cuadrado's sending off for a foul on Manuel Lazzari after 69 minutes proved to be the turning point. Lazio took control as Sergej Milinkovic-Savic connected with a Luis Alberto assist to fire in a stunning goal. Felipe Caicedo snatched the third goal five minutes into injury time as Lazio earned their seventh straight win, fuelling ambitions of challenging for a first Serie A title since 2000.



Lazio's Sergej Milinkovic-Savic (left) celebrates with his teammates Luis Alberto (center) and Joaquin Correa after scoring his side's second goal during their Italian league match against Juventus at the Olympic stadium in Rome on Saturday. Lazio won 3-1. — AP

NAPOLI'S WINLESS RUN CONTINUES

Carlo Ancelotti ruled out resigning from his position as last year's Serie A runner-up Napoli saw their winless run reach seven games with a 1-1 draw at struggling Udinese. Kevin Lasagna scored for Udinese after 32 minutes to pick up a Sesto Fofana cross after the Ivorian beat defender Kalidou Koulibaly and Alex Meret in the Napoli goal. But Piotr Zieliński pulled the visitors level after 69 minutes as Napoli held on for just their fifth point in their last seven games. — AFP

PARIS, DEC. 8: Neymar scored a sublime free-kick and set up another goal as Paris Saint-Germain rallied to beat 10-man Montpellier 3-1 on Saturday and restore their lead at the top of Ligue 1 to eight points.

Montpellier, unbeaten at home since the opening day of the season, grabbed the lead on 41 minutes at the Stade de la Mosson when Daniel Conger's header was diverted into his own net by the hand of Argentine midfielder Leandro Paredes. PSG had failed to win on any of their last three trips to Montpellier and were forced into a pair of early changes as Presnel Kimpembe and Idrissa

Gladbach steal victory over Bayern

Berlin, Dec. 8: Bayern Munich dropped to seventh in the Bundesliga Saturday after Ramy Bensebaini's injury-time penalty fired leaders Borussia Mönchengladbach to a 2-1 win over the reigning champions. A second straight league loss puts pressure on Hansi Flick, who has been put in charge until January and was tipped to see out the season as interim boss. Bayern, now seven points adrift in the title race, went ahead at Borussia Park when Ivan Perisic fired home just after the break, but defender Bensebaini headed Gladbach level with an hour gone. The Algerian then struck his decisive stoppage-time winner with a page-time penalty after Bayern's Javi Martinez was sent off for a second yellow card. — AFP

PROFESSIONAL | BOXING

Joshua puts on a masterclass

Ad Diriyah (Saudi Arabia), Dec. 8: Britain's Anthony Joshua reclaimed his world heavyweight crown from Andy Ruiz on Saturday, outclassing the Mexican-American to score a unanimous points victory. Joshua, who suffered a stunning knockout defeat to Ruiz in New York in June, produced a masterclass to regain his IBF, WBA and WBO titles in emphatic fashion. Dominating from the outset, Joshua won by margins of 118-110 on two scorecards with the third judge making it 119-109. Billed as the "Clash on the Dune", the eagerly anticipated rematch marked the first time a world heavyweight title fight has been staged in Saudi Arabia. And after entering the purpose-built open-air arena at Diriyah, on the outskirts of the Saudi capital, just after midnight, it was Joshua who rose to the occasion with a stylish victory. The final scores in no way flattered Joshua, who frustrated his heavier opponent with superb movement while picking off Ruiz relentlessly with his jab. Joshua, badly stung by his defeat to Ruiz at Madison Square Garden, was ecstatic after clinching a one-sided win. The 2012 Olympic champion revealed he had adapted his style after June's loss to Ruiz, when he got drawn into a slugfest before being floored four times on his way to the first loss of his career. "I'm used to knocking guys out and last time, I realised that I hurt the man but I got caught coming in. This time was about hitting and not getting hit." — ANTHONY JOSHUA

BENGALURU RACING STARS EMERGE OVERALL CHAMPS

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, DEC. 8 Mumbai Falcons, represented by Kush Maini and Mikkel Jensen (Denmark), won two of the three races while Bangalore Racing Stars (BRS) duo of Arjun Maini and Oliver Webb (England) took the honours in the other outing as the curtains came down on the inaugural franchise-based XI Racing League at the Sunday BRC were, however, crowned champions for finishing on top of the points table. The first race of the day won by Bangalore, took a heavy toll with six cars packing up due to mechanical reasons. It left a six-car grid for the second and third races, but that did not take anything away from Mumbai's double. The Race-1 was interrupted by a Safety Car period after one of the cars blew the engine. Bangalore started fourth on the grid behind Mumbai, Abhimata and Hyderabad, but with some smart tactics managed to pull ahead. The teams were required to make a mandatory driver change between ninth and 14th minutes with Hyderabad, powered by Arjun Maini and England's Oliver Webb got it spot on and then held off a late charging Mumbai (Kush Maini and Mikkel Jensen) to win the race. Hyderabad (Vittantonio Luzzi-Gosia Redant) completed the podium.



SRM, IST, winners of the state volleyball championship. They beat Customs, Chennai in final.

SRM win state volleyball tourney

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, DEC. 8 SRM, IST emerged winners after defeating Customs, Chennai 23-25, 25-15, 16-25, 25-12, 18-16. **RESULTS**
Men: Final: SRM, IST bt Customs, Chennai 23-25, 25-15, 16-25, 25-12, 18-16.
Semi-final: SRM, IST bt Income Tax, Chennai 25-19, 25-16, 25-29-27; Customs, Chennai bt Indian Bank, Chennai 25-15, 25-22, 19-25, 25-23; Income Tax, Chennai bt Indian Bank, Chennai 25-17, 25-19.

Stenson is champ at Bahamas golf

Nassau (Bahamas), Dec. 8: Henrik Stenson of Sweden fired a sensational eagle on the par-five 15th hole en route to a one-shot win at the Hero World Challenge here on Saturday, giving him his first victory since August 2017. Stenson overcame a stiff challenge from defending champion and world number three Jon Rahm who ended one shot behind at the 17-under with a four-round aggregate of 271 at the Albany Golf Club. Both Stenson and Rahm shot a six-under 66 in the fourth round. Stenson's eagle, which could have easily been an albatross, came on the par-five 15th after he hit a mighty 260-yard approach shot which landed six inches of the cup before he tapped it in comfortably to



Paris Saint-Germain's Keylor Navas (centre) receives medical assistance after being hit on the head by a water bottle during their French league match against Montpellier Herault Sport Club on Saturday. — AFP