

**WORLD 6**

ANOTHER JOLT TO TRUMP AS US COURT REJECTS PENNSYLVANIA LAWSUIT

**MONEY 7**

ANOTHER INCREASE IN PRICES OF PETROL, DIESEL

**SPORT 8**

INDIA AIM TO KEEP SERIES ALIVE

Published From  
DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL  
BHUBANESWAR RANCHI  
RAIPUR CHANDIGARH  
DEHRADUN HYDERABAD  
VIJAYWADA

BHUBANESWAR, SUNDAY NOVEMBER 29, 2020; PAGES 8+4 ₹4



# sunday pioneer

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**USUAL SUSPECTS**  
SWAPAN DASGUPTA

## West Bengal politics is at a crucial stage

Unlike some Western democracies where the attachment to political parties tend to be lifelong, there is considerable fluidity in political affiliations for activists. This is partly because — with the exception of the Congress, the BJP, Communists and a handful of regional parties — the party system in India is still evolving and is disproportionately dependent on individuals. Additionally, since politics is all about the quest for power and influence — and I don't mean this in a pejorative way — individuals see political parties as vehicles for the fulfilment of their goals. Consequently, the political eclipse of any political party invariably sees a movement of people between parties. Today, to take an example, the erstwhile followers of Ram Manohar Lohia are to be found in nearly all the political parties. That is because the Indian socialists have a terrible record of creating and nurturing political parties.

Impending elections are normally the occasion for activists to switch loyalties. Such defections are also regarded as barometers of public opinion, since local leaders with an eye on their own political futures tend to try and move to the side most likely to win. In January 1977, it was the defection of Jagjivan Ram, HN Bahuguna and Nandini Sathpaty from the Congress that triggered a political avalanche which culminated in the political defeat of Indira Gandhi.

It is difficult at this stage to anticipate the likely impact of the resignation of Suwendu Adhikari from the Mamata Banerjee Government in West Bengal. The resignation was preceded by months of strained relationship centred on the role of the Chief Minister's nephew Abhishek Banerjee in the political dispensation. Adhikari, along with other old-time associates of the Trinamool Congress chief, have resented to growing power of Abhishek and his attempts to undermine them. Mukul Roy, once the de-facto number two man in the TMC, left and joined the BJP in 2017. Now Adhikari, who

enjoys considerable influence in the two districts of Midnapur, has joined the ranks. Although he is still nominally in the TMC, it is only a matter of time before he leaves the party along with others. They seem likely to join the BJP before too long.

Over the past 18 months, but mainly in the aftermath of the 2019 general election when it surprised everyone by winning 18 of the State's 42 Lok Sabha seats and winning 40 per cent of the popular vote, the BJP has emerged as the foremost challenger to the TMC in West Bengal. The BJP, once a bit player in the State with no real presence in local politics, has succeeded in eclipsing the Left and the Congress. In the 2019 general election, the Left vote was squeezed considerably, with the lion's share of it going to the BJP.

There are still many problems that the BJP has to overcome if it is to upstage the TMC in next summer's Assembly election. The most important of these is to ensure that the 40 per cent support it received in 2019 is not only intact but supplemented by additional votes. This is a challenging prospect because regional parties such as the TMC tend to perform better in Assembly elections than in elections to the Lok Sabha. The Left, which performed disastrously in 2019 and failed to win any Lok Sabha seats from the State — the first occasion since 1952 — is also hopeful that its alliance with the Congress will add to their kitty in the Assembly poll. In such a situation, the BJP — apart from holding its own — has two options.

First, it needs to chip away at the TMC's existing voter base. In 2019, the BJP failed to make deep inroads in East Midnapur district, the bastion of the Adhikari family. The members of the Adhikari family won their seats in Tamluk and Contai. Additionally, the TMC won the Ghatat seat. If the Adhikaris shift their loyalty to the BJP, the saffron party will be better placed to consolidate its hold all along the perimeter of West Bengal. If Suwendu Adhikari needs the BJP to demonstrate his political relevance in the State, the BJP needs to prevail all over East and West Midnapore to add to its pre-existing strength. Those in the BJP who believe that defectors from other parties should be discouraged because the party is well placed to win on its existing strength are clearly being unrealistic. There are important gaps in support the BJP must fill — the urban cluster around Kolkata being important examples — if it hopes to form a Government in 2021 in Kolkata.

Secondly, for the BJP, the impression that the TMC is crumbling under the weight of its own contradictions is important. In any election there is a bandwagon effect whereby undecided and wavering voters swing to the party that seems to have the clear edge. In West Bengal the Muslim community — whose voter strength is anywhere between 27 and 30 per cent — plays a crucial role. This section has been outside the reach of the BJP and it forms the bulwark of support for the TMC, except in three districts where the Congress has influence. In the event it seems Mamata is crumbling, there will be a temptation on the part of Muslim voters to either swing to the Left-Congress alliance or support those Muslim parties that are campaigning aggressively to give Muslims an independent voice. Alternatively, sensing the BJP threat, the Muslim community may choose to back the TMC as a solid bloc. However, even positing non-TMC options before Muslim voters will become difficult if the perception battle favours the incumbent.

These are the reasons why the next few acts in the Suwendu Adhikari drama need to be closely observed. West Bengal politics is at a very crucial phase.

# Farmers dig in heels, Shah reaches out

Farmers stay put along Delhi borders, HM says Govt ready for talks any time

SHEKHAR SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

A day after inviting the agitating farmers for talks on December 3, the Centre on Saturday held out an olive branch to the farmers, who refused to budge from their stand, with the Union Home Minister Amit Shah saying that the Government is ready for dialogue any time and appealed to them to shift to the Burari ground in the national Capital to stage their protests against the farm laws.

"The Government is ready to deliberate on every problem and demand of the farmers... Some farmers' unions and farmers have demanded that talks be held immediately instead of December 3. So, I assure everyone that the Central Government is ready to hold discussions with you as soon as you shift to the ground (in Burari)...the Government has made proper arrangement for you in Burari in Delhi, where you can stage your demonstrations," he said.

Farmers after holding parleys with their leaders and their speeches at Tikri and Singhu borders, announced that they will stay put and not proceed towards the Nirankari Ground and will sit on dharna at borders.

"It is a plan to imprison us



Farmers gather at the Singhu border as part of their Delhi Chalo protest against Centres new farm laws in New Delhi on Saturday

Ranjana Dimri | Pioneer

in one ground as earlier the Delhi Police has demanded nine grounds to be made as temporary prison in Delhi for the protesting farmers. So we have decided to protest at the border as most of the farmers are still coming from Punjab,

Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh to join the movement," said Sukhbir Panwar, a farmer from Fatehabad district in Haryana.

Thousands of farmers marching from Punjab as part of their "Delhi Chalo" cam-

paign against the farm laws, braved water cannons and tear gas shells in Haryana to reach Delhi on Friday. They were, however, not allowed into the national Capital. As the protests continued, the Centre, which looks after the national Capital's

law and order, relented and fixed a place for their agitation.

Hundreds of the protesters, however, refused to go to the outer Delhi protest venue and have remained camped at several places on the outskirts of the national Capital.

## UP farmers reach Delhi border to lend support to 'Delhi Chalo'

New Delhi: Some groups of farmers from Uttar Pradesh gathered at the Ghazipur border with their vehicles on Saturday afternoon, lending support to the agitation by their counterparts from Punjab against the Centre's new farm laws. A senior Delhi Police officer said 200 farmers arrived at UP Gate (Ghazipur border) as part of "Delhi Chalo" march call given by farmer organisations in Punjab and police officials were talking to them.

Thousands of farmers from Haryana, Punjab and Rajasthan on Saturday stayed put at the Delhi-Haryana Singhu and Tikri border points on the third consecutive day.

The farmers on Saturday also refused to move towards the Nirankari ground to hold demonstration.

Following the rise in number of farmers at Tikri and Singhu border, the Delhi Police re-installed barricades to maintain law & order.

# 550 new +ves; State Covid total 3,17,789

DAY'S HIGHEST 53 CASES IN ANGUL

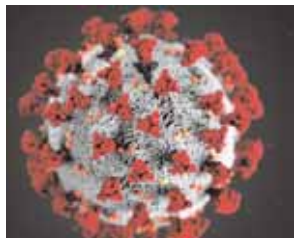
802 RECOVER; TOTAL RECOVERIES 3,10,549

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A total of 550 new Covid-19 positive cases were reported from 28 districts and the State pool on Saturday. With this, the State's positives' tally went up to 3,17,789.

Of the new cases, 317 were from quarantine and 233 were local contact cases.

Angul district recorded the day's highest 53 new cases followed by Khordha 49, Sundargarh 47, Mayurbhanj 40, Sambalpur 37, Cuttack 35, Nuapada 31, Puri 26, Jharsuguda and Bargarh 25 each, Balangir 21, Kalahandi, Jagatsinghpur and Jajpur 19 each, Kendrapada 16, Keonjhar 13, Nabarangpur eight,



Deogarh seven, Bhadrak and Dhenkanal five each, Subarnapur and Malkangiri three each and Nayagarh, Boudh and Koraput two each.

Besides, 10 cases were reported from the State pool. Gajapati and Kandhamal districts reported zero cases.

Meanwhile, the Covid death toll jumped to 1,730 with 12 more deaths reported on the day. Four deaths were reported from Sundargarh district, three from Khordha (Bhubaneswar), two from Angul and one each from Baleswar, Jajpur and Dhenkanal. However, 802 patients recovered on the day, taking the State's total recoveries to 3,10,549.

43 new +ves in BBSR

Total reaches 30,691

3 more die; 46 recover

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Capital city Bhubaneswar on Saturday reported 43 new Covid-19 positive cases, taking its total positives' tally to 30,691, including 471 active cases. The new cases included 34 local contacts and nine quarantine cases. Meanwhile, three more persons succumbed to the virus in the city on the day, pushing the total toll to 218. However, 46 persons recovered on the day, taking the city's total recoveries to 29,975.

## Woman, son attempt immolation near Assembly

Third such incident in 5 days

BHUBANESWAR: In a third such incident in a span of five days, a mother-son duo attempted to set them on fire near the State Assembly on Saturday to draw the Government's attention amid alleged police inaction. Sulochana Das and her son Subrat of Kujang in Jagatsinghpur district attempted self-immolation. Security personnel immediately intervened and prevented them from lighting a matchstick after pouring kerosene on them. Sulochana said she tried to die by suicide after being unable to get justice from the Jagatsinghpur police.

Continued on Page 4



## BEDLAM AT ASSEMBLY

# BJP intensifies Arun Sahoo's dismissal demand

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Opposition BJP disrupted the proceedings of the State Assembly for the fourth consecutive day on Saturday over the kidnapping and murder of five-year-old girl 'Pari' even as the Government issued a notification on constitution of an SIT to probe the incident.

After rejecting Government's Crime Branch and court-monitored Special Investigation Team (SIT) probe, BJP members intensified their stir in the Well of the House. Opposition Chief Whip Mohan Majhi of BJP led the protest and who broke the Speaker's mike besides throwing away the fibre shield fitted on the podium while demanding resignation of Agriculture Minister Arun Kumar Sahoo, who has been accused of protecting Babuli Nayak, the 4 main accused in the minor girl kidnapping and murder case.

While Congress members participated in the proceeding in the post-lunch session after the Ggovernment laid the notification copy on the constitution of a court-monitored SIT, the BJP members intensified their stir demanding a CBI probe into the girl's murder.

"There is no point to further disrupt the House after the government accepted our demand for a court monitored probe into the little girl's kidnapping and murder," Congress Legislature Party Leader Narasingha Mishra said.

Mishra also said there is no point in demanding resignation of the minister following the government announcement of a High Court-monitored SIT probe. "If the investigation is being monitored by the High Court, how can the minister influence investigation," Mishra said in a major relief for the Treasury Benches.

Continued on Page 4

# Modi reviews vaccine progress first-hand

## PM visits facilities of Zydus Cadila, Bharat Biotech, Serum Institute of India in three cities

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

As part of his effort to review the progress of Covid-19 vaccine development, its launch and distribution, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday visited major vaccine

manufacturing institutions — Zydus Biotech Park in Ahmedabad, Bharat Biotech facility in Hyderabad and Serum Institute of India (SII) in Pune — and interacted with the scientists there to get "a first-hand perspective of the prepa-

rations, challenges and roadmap in India's endeavour to vaccinate its citizens."

Modi began his day-long three-city tour in the morning by flying first to Ahmedabad and thereafter heading to Zydus Cadila's Vaccine Technology Centre located at Changodar Park, where he

went around the place and interacted with the team of scientists behind the ongoing vaccine development effort "to know more about the indigenous DNA based vaccine being developed there".

Zydus Cadila is developing its Covid-19 vaccine candidate ZyCoV-D.

## Covid-19 IN INDIA

TOTAL CASES: 93,90,791  
DEATHS: 1,36,705  
RECOVERED: 87,99,249  
ACTIVE: 4,52,688

STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	18,14,515	46,986	16,76,564
Karnataka	8,82,608	11,750	8,46,082
Andhra Pradesh	8,67,063	6,981	8,48,511
Tamil Nadu	7,79,046	11,694	7,56,279
Kerala	5,93,958	2,197	5,26,797
Delhi	5,61,742	8,998	5,16,166
Uttar Pradesh	5,39,899	7,718	5,06,938
West Bengal	4,77,446	8,322	4,44,587
Odisha	3,17,789	1,783	3,10,549
Telangana	2,68,418	1,451	2,56,330
Rajasthan	2,62,805	2,274	2,31,780
Chhattisgarh	2,34,725	2,830	2,10,917
Bihar	2,34,553	1,253	2,27,714
Haryana	2,30,713	2,375	2,08,422
Assam	2,12,483	980	2,08,187
Gujarat	2,06,714	3,953	1,88,069



Prime Minister Narendra Modi visits the Zydus Biotech Park to review the development of Covid-19 vaccine, in Ahmedabad on Saturday

## CAPSULE

### PAWAN BANSAL MADE CONGRESS TREASURER

New Delhi: Congress president Sonia Gandhi has appointed Pawan Kumar Bansal as the party treasurer following the demise of senior leader Ahmed Patel, a statement said on Saturday. Bansal, a former union minister, is the AICC in-charge of administration.



### UP GUV OK's RELIGIOUS CONVERSION ORDINANCE

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel on Saturday gave assent to an ordinance against forcible or fraudulent religious conversions that provides for imprisonment up to 10 years and a maximum fine of Rs 50,000 under different categories.

### AIR QUALITY SLIPS TO 'POOR' LEVEL AGAIN IN NCR

Noida: The air quality remained "moderate" in Faridabad but slipped to "poor" level in Gurgaon, Noida, Greater Noida and Ghaziabad on Saturday.



**HOME THEATRE**

# Only for the kiddies



**THE CHRISTMAS CHRONICLES: PART TWO**  
Netflix  
\*ing: Kurt Russell, Goldie Hawn, Judah Lewis, Darby Camp, Kimberly Williams-Paisley, Julian Dennison, Tyrese Gibson  
Rated: 6/10

If an adult is watching this, it will be difficult to get past the strange language the elves speak or the near bizarreness of the entire storyline. But first, they are Santa's elves; they can speak whatever they want as long as Santa Claus understands the same. Second, it is a Christmas movie. What else is one going to expect but a good Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus. An evil elf who is hell bent on destroying Christmas forever. Imagine the catastrophe in the child's life if there was no Christmas, no gifts, no stocking to hang, no gingerbread house or cookies; it is akin to a Diwali with no crackers.

Having said that, the kids are going to love this movie. The elves are cute and you want to cuddle them even if one of them is evil. The entire Santa's village is a sight to behold – a giant Christmas tree

in the middle of the square with lights twinkling, guns firing snow at regular intervals (it is a secret village in the North Pole that no one is supposed to know about so it has a shield cover), hot chocolate you revive you instantly and most importantly the idea of a Christmas with healthy food – broccoli cake!

Santa's sleigh is another high point. It is like a high-speed sledge with reindeers managing to dodge the evil elf's hyenas or so they look like. Totally something out of a sci-fi film.

Then there is Kurt Russell and Goldie Hawn, one of Hollywood's most enduring duos who have been together for 37 years. Goldie here has a much bigger part to play than the cameo she did in the original one. She maintains the holiday spirit and does magic at the span of her fingers. The film rests on their shoulders and while one can see the familiarity and ease, they have with each other, the plot doesn't really help them steer it to safety.

Over all it is a movie that the children will love; the adults can give this one a miss

— Shalini Saksena

# Feel good family treat

**DOLLY PARTON'S CHRISTMAS ON THE SQUARE**  
Netflix  
\*ing: Dolly Parton, Jenifer Lewis, Josh Segarra, Jeanine Mason, Treat William, Jenna Hathaway  
Rated: 5.5/10

Those who don't know who Dolly Parton is, here is a bit about her. She is one of the most honoured female country performers of all time, achieving 25 RIAA certified Gold, Platinum, and Multi-Platinum awards. She has had 25 songs reach No 1 on the Billboard country music charts — a record for a female artist.

Not only this, she has nine Grammy Awards, two Academy Award nominations, ten Country Music Association Awards, seven Academy of Country Music Awards, three American Music Awards and hit films like Steel Magnolias and 9 to 5 to her credit.

This one, a musical, was bound to create a stir given it is the whole Scrooge thing. This time it is a rich woman who has inherited her father's property and is all set to evict everyone on Christmas Day! But it is a Christmas movie and hence the whole idea of giving rather than receiving. No surprises here how it ends.

The surprise is how beautifully this musical has been curated. The dancers are amazing, the set is beautifully done and how the dialogues have been woven into songs.

While there is nothing much in terms of the story, the fun is in watching the great choreography, a few toe-tapping tunes, creating a fantasy and that miracles happen.

— Shalini Saksena



# Plan Your Day



our '3 + 3' Black Friday special promotion, we expect the sales to grow by multi-folds alongside acquisition of a new customer base."

**Mad Over Donuts:** India's favorite donut brand — is giving all its patrons another reason to Bite Into Happiness with their Black Friday Sale till today. With exciting offers like buy 3 donuts and get 3 free, buy 4 donuts and get 2 free, and buy 6 donuts and get 6 free across all their specialty stores, Mad Over Donuts is sure to satisfy your sweet tooth cravings in the sweetest possible way. Visit your nearby Mad Over Donuts stores to check the offer. So, what are you waiting for! Bite into Happiness with Mad Over Donuts' Black Friday Sale!

**My Protein:** Bringing this sense of festivity to India is Myprotein, the world's leader in nutrition products and fitness goods. Myprotein wants to foster this spirit of celebration in India by encouraging a guilt-free shopping spree through their site-wide promotional offers and unbelievable discounts on the big day. It is sure to be the biggest end-of-year sale, with deals too good to pass up on! Keeping in mind India's distinctive tastes, Myprotein has constantly kept things exciting by innovating new and localised products. This November too is earmarked for some incredible new releases. Their bestselling Impact Whey Protein is now

out in the exciting Masala Chai flavour for our legions of tea lovers. The light and refreshingly juicy Clear Whey Isolate, featuring 20g of protein per serving and low in sugar, is available in exciting flavours and has been a best seller in the UK already.

So make the best use of these offers: 27% off @ ₹6,000 | Use code: BF27 or 30% off exclusive on chocolate proteins + 3 Free gifts @ ₹8,000.

**Mia by Tanishq:** Mia by Tanishq, one of India's most fashionable jewellery brands unveils an exclusive Black Friday sale on the occasion of Thanksgiving and onset of the holiday season. Black Friday is just around the corner and Mia is offering its customers exciting offers. Consumers can now get Upto 25%\* off valid on Mia products till November 29, 2020.

The offer is applicable on different jewellery categories from dainty earrings, bracelets, finger rings to an assortment of neck wears and nose pins. To celebrate the Thanksgiving month with family and friends customers can indulge in gifting Mia's 14 Karat light-weight, fashionable and stylish gold and silver jewellery. Get your hands on the best offers and shine with elegance.

Customers can also sport their favourite pieces from the latest festive collection 'Lyana' and together create heart-warming moments.

For all those shopaholics out there, Black Friday is anything but a normal day. With major offers and discounts pouring in, it is hard to not shop anything. While now the day has gone for sure, but not the offers. Here are a few brands that are offering major discounts and deals till November 30 that will have your Sunday sorted, without you having to risk your life by making some random outing plan during Covid.

**Kiko Milano:** The leading Italian cosmetics brand has unveiled its most tempting offer of the season — Buy 3 and Get 3 free, applicable on the entire range across categories available at Kiko Milano exclusive stores pan India. Pamper yourself and don't miss a chance to avail this exhilarating offer till November 30.

Abhishek Bhattacharya, Country Director, Kiko Milano says, "Every year, customers increasingly anticipate tempting offers & await in excitement for the brands to reveal them for Black Friday sales. This year's beauty deals are set to be more riveting than ever, with



# TELLY TALE

## TUNE IN TO HERO MODE

Get ready for a wonder like never before as Sony SAB's announces its mega-launch of the year *Hero — Gayab Mode On*. With the power of invisibility as a distinctive element in the story, the show promises to be a pure visual delight for the audience blended with a gripping storyline that will leave you asking for more. The show is slated to launch on December 7, every Mon-Fri at 8 pm.

The show is an incredible journey of a common man, Veer (Abhishek Nigam) and his quest to find his father. His life gets fascinatingly exciting as Veer chances upon a miraculous ring, which upon wearing gives him the power of invisibility. The ring can only be worn and owned by someone who has the inherent virtues of kindness, courage, selflessness, nobility and empathy. At the same time, it also has the power to corrupt and degrade the weak hearted making them victims. But Veer decides to



use this superpower for good, making him the Hero. However, Veer's prized possession is also desired by the evil aliens of the outer world and here begins Hero's real challenge to save humanity.

Introducing Abhishek Nigam in the lead role of Veer aka Hero who promises to liven up the screen along with the very talented Manish Wadhwa as Amal Nanda, Ajay Gehi as Shukracharya, the gorgeous Yesha Rughani as Zaara, Nitish Pandey as Mama and the super-cute twins Surabhi and Samridhi as sisters Sweetie & Meethi along with a host of other stars in the show's galaxy.

## WHAT'S IN A PROFESSION?

Presenting a heartfelt romantic drama, Colors is set to launch *Namak Issk Ka*, a journey of a flamboyant Chamcham who is looked down upon for her profession but is married off into a reputable family in Mumbai.

Even though Chamcham is a dancer traditionally known as Nachaniya, she is a levelheaded and morally righteous person

Raised in an orphanage, Chamcham became a dancer in order to make ends meet and to take care of those dependent on her. To essay the character of Chamcham,



actor Shruti Sharma has been roped in Shruti Sharma says: "I am very excited to have landed this role. Chamcham is an incredible character, and playing her gives me a lot of scope for performance as an actor. The concept of the show is very strong and the background story of the character and her journey will definitely change social perceptions. I am also grateful to Colors for giving me this very special opportunity and I look forward to working on the show and giving it my all."

*Kya aap karengi ek nachaniya ko bahu ke roop mein sweekaar?* Watch *Namak Issk Ka* coming soon only on Colors.

## RAGHAV'S ENTRY IN RENUKA'S LIFE

Zee TV recently presented a heart-warming story that captures the essence of the ever-evolving dynamics of the saas-bahu relationship in Indian society. Titled *Hamarwali Good News*, it showcases a unique role reversal between the daughter-in-law Navya (Srishti Jain) and her mother-in-law Renuka (Juhi Parmar) to give their family the much awaited Good News. Versatile actress Juhi Parmar plays the role of Renuka in the show, who is the mother-in-law and the lifeline of the Tiwari family. Shakti Anand, on the other hand, is seen essaying the pivotal character of Mukund, who is Renuka's husband and Navya's father-in-law.

We've seen how Renuka and Mukund have been distant from each other and while we've seen the duo clash and argue like every couple, recently Renuka was trying to make an attempt to get closer to Mukund once again. However, it looks like a new character is all set to take their arguments to a whole new level. Manish Goel is all set to enter as Dr Raghav in *Hamarwali Good News* and it is his past equation with Renuka that will take the Tiwaris by storm.

Apparently, Raghav and Renuka were in love and he was going to ask for her hand in marriage. However, Mukund's *rishta* came in before he could make his move and the rest is history. While her husband was initially unaware, he came to know after seven-eight

years of marriage and since then his relationship with Renuka has never been the same. Mukund felt that he has been betrayed and has been suspicious of her ever since. When Raghav and Renuka bump into one another after so many years, how will Mukund react? And what will Raghav do after meeting Renuka? Well, the audience is in for a treat as a lot of twists and turns are set to play out in the next few episodes.

With Raghav all set to enter *Hamarwali Good News* and create chaos in Renuka and Mukund's life, the audience will surely want to know what will happen next in the Tiwari *parivaar*.

## GET READY TO MEET PHOOL KUMARI

Bhojpuri film icon and bold performer Rani Chatterjee has successfully made a mark in the entertainment industry. The daring actor is all set to make heads turn as she enters & TV's *Gudiya Humari Sabhi Pe Bhari*. Portraying the role of Nanhe's (Sudhir Neema) love interest Phool Kumari, Rani will create a spectacle amongst the men in the family whereas with the women, not so much.

When Gudiya (Sarika Bahroliya) finds out that Nanhe's medical reports show traces of cancer she is disheartened to learn that he has only a few days left to live. To make the most for Nanhe who longs for a companion, Phool Kumari enters the house, adding an extra dose of entertainment and



humour. Everyone in the house is astonished by her breathtaking looks and latke-jhatkes. They can't resist themselves and always seem to have an excuse to be around her and her kaatil adaaeyin.

Expressing her excitement, Rani Chatterjee says: "I am thrilled to portray the role of Phool Kumari. It is the first time I will be exploring this genre, and I believe that this show is the perfect fit for me to make a debut in it. As Phool Kumari now enters the show, viewers will be in for a treat. I am sure they will enjoy this new role of mine and continue to shower me with their love and support."

# 'Replacements come with challenges'

ASHI SINGH, who has recently replaced AVNEET KAUR to play Yasmine in Sony Sab's *Aladdin Naam Toh Suna Hoga*, speaks with MUSBA HASHMI about the challenges that she faced and reveals that she would love to be a part of *Jhalak Dikhhlaa Jaa*

■ **What made you say yes to play Yasmine??**

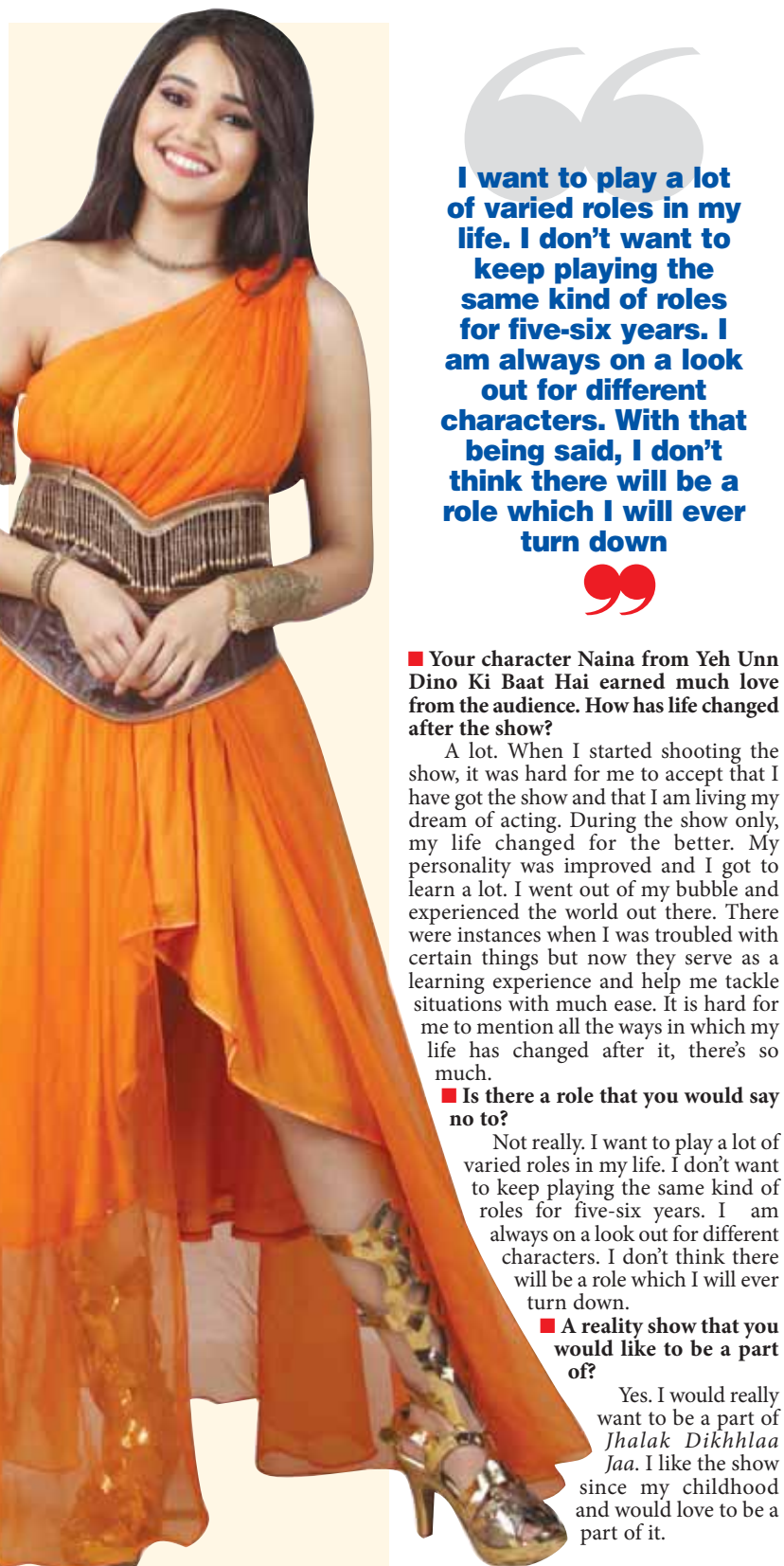
The character of course. Initially, I was apprehensive about taking up the role because it is a replacement, but when I got to know about the storyline and the character brief, I liked it very much. It was something that I wanted to do. It is something that one doesn't get to do in daily life. I am fortunate to have got a chance to play this role.

■ **Was it hard to get into the skin of the character? More so because you have replaced Avneet, and the character was already well-established?**

Yes. It was extremely difficult to get into the skin of the character because if the audience has seen an actor play a character for two years, it becomes hard for them to accept another actor play the same role. Also, I didn't have the scope to play it purely my way, because Avneet portrayed it in her way and comparisons will be drawn. Initially, it took a lot of thoughts to play it differently from the previous actor and still maintain the essence. That was a double pressure. Also, it was out of my comfort zone, it required action that I haven't done earlier. There was so much to do.

■ **Some memories from the sets.**

It's been only a while since I am a part of this show, but having said that I have some great memories already. From eating lunch together with the cast to sharing our life experiences with each other, we already have created that rapport. Sometime, even I wonder *hamare paas itni batein aati kaha se hain*. I share a very good bond with Ginu (played by Raashul Tandon), Sheefan (played by Amit Raghuvanshi), Koyal (played by Shivani Badoni) and Aladdin (played by Siddharth Nigam). We never shy away from pulling each other's leg. There is a very dark location at the sets where we shoot all the haunted scenes, so in our free time all five of us sit there and share ghost stories. It is fun.



**I want to play a lot of varied roles in my life. I don't want to keep playing the same kind of roles for five-six years. I am always on a look out for different characters. With that being said, I don't think there will be a role which I will ever turn down**

■ **Your character Naina from Yeh Unn Dino Ki Baat Hai earned much love from the audience. How has life changed after the show?**

A lot. When I started shooting the show, it was hard for me to accept that I have got the show and that I am living my dream of acting. During the show only, my life changed for the better. My personality was improved and I got to learn a lot. I went out of my bubble and experienced the world out there. There were instances when I was troubled with certain things but now they serve as a learning experience and help me tackle situations with much ease. It is hard for me to mention all the ways in which my life has changed after it, there's so much.

■ **Is there a role that you would say no to?**

Not really. I want to play a lot of varied roles in my life. I don't want to keep playing the same kind of roles for five-six years. I am always on a look out for different characters. I don't think there will be a role which I will ever turn down.

■ **A reality show that you would like to be a part of?**

Yes. I would really want to be a part of *Jhalak Dikhhlaa Jaa*. I like the show since my childhood and would love to be a part of it.



# Pari murder: IG Bothra to lead 5-member SIT

## HC JUDGE TO MONITOR PROBE

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The State Government on Saturday constituted a five-member Special Investigation Team (SIT) as ordered by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to probe into the alleged murder of a five-year-old girl in Nayagarh district.

While Inspector General of Police Arun Bothra would head the SIT, CB CID SP RK Dora, Additional SP RC Thamba and Inspectors Narendra Kuma Behera and

Mamata Rani Panda are the members.

The Home Department wrote a letter to the Registrar General of Orissa High Court informing about the Government's decision on selection of the five senior cops for the SIT.

Notably, the SIT probe into the alleged murder of the girl Amrita Sneha Sahu, nicknamed Pari, of Jadupur village in Nayagarh district would be monitored by the High Court.

Also, the Home Department requested the Orissa HC's Chief Justice to accord permission to a sitting HC Judge to monitor the SIT



probe.

On Friday, the Chief Minister had said the Government was ready for a SIT probe into the matter if needed. Early this week, he had ordered a probe by the Crime Branch into the case.

# Now, pensioners can get digital life certificates

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

In an initiative to help the pensioners to submit their annual life certificate during the Covid-19 pandemic, the State Government has made a new service functional for them to get the Digital Life Certificates (DLCs) at their doorsteps.

"The 'doorstep DLC service' launched by the Indian Post Payment Bank (IPPB) facilitates generation of the DLC by the pensioners/family members from the Jeevan Praman Portal at their doorsteps. The postman having micro ATM can visit the pensioners and obtain the biometric authentication to generate the DLC," said an office

memorandum issued by the Finance Department on Friday.

Earlier, the department had introduced a facility for submission of Aadhaar-based DLCs through the Jeevan Praman portal and, accordingly, the pensioners were allowed to furnish their DLCs through biometric services procured by them or through the cyber cafes, common service centres, GPO, head post office or banks. In view of the pandemic causing inconveniences to the pensioners to physically visit a designated place to furnish biometric impressions for generation of the DLC, the Government has now allowed them to avail the services provided by the IPPB for generation and submission of DLCs.

## At doorsteps The postman having micro ATM can visit pensioners and obtain biometric authentication to generate DLC

To avail the doorstep-DLC service through IPPB, the pensioners can request their nearest post offices or make a request through the PostInfo App or through the website

The IPPB will charge Rs 70 from a pensioner for the service.

## INBRIEF

### BAIJAYANT PANDA TESTS COVID POSITIVE

**Bhubaneswar:** BJP national vice-president Baijayant Panda has tested positive for Covid-19 and is currently under isolation. He informed this on Friday night.



### KANDHMAL BJP LEADER PATRA PASSES AWAY

**Phulbani:** Kandhmal's veteran BJP leader Trinath Patra passes away in a private hospital in Bhubaneswar on Saturday. He was 75. He was a Councillor of the Phulbani Municipality and associated with various social organisations. He was also a stamp vendor. BJP leader Bhagaban Mohanty paid tribute to the departed soul. The Court Chhak market was closed for the day as a mark of respect for Patra.



### POSTER MAKING: DAVIAN SNEHASHREE 2ND BEST

**Bhubaneswar:** In the National Poster Making Competition organised by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Snehashree Sahoo, a Class-IX student of the DAV Public School Chandrasekharpur here has been adjudged as second best. The competition was organised in commemoration of the 26th World Ozone Day on the theme 'Ozone for life: 35 years of Ozone layer protection' among students of Classes-VIII to XII. Snehashree was honoured with a certificate and a cheque for Rs 7,000. Snehashree has won many laurels participating in other dignified competitions. The School authorities congratulated her and mentor Art Teacher Nilamani Muduli for the glorious feat.



### TENSION IN S'PUR AS BOY DIES IN ROAD MISHAP

**Sambalpur:** The death of a seven-year-old boy sparked tension here on Saturday as over a hundred irate locals, including women, gheraoed the Town police station alleging Police inaction in the incident. The boy, identified as Sahil, was walking near the Mahila police station. While crossing the road, he stumbled on the road; and, in the meantime, a car ran over him. Police detained the car driver for interrogation.

### DRIVER DEAD AS ORE-LADEN TRUCK PLUNGES INTO GORGE

**Keonjhar:** A truck driver was killed after the 14-wheel vehicle fell into a 20-feet-deep gorge near the KP Takurani Iron Ore Mines under the Barbil police limits in Keonjhar district on Saturday. The deceased was identified as Prakash Jena (29), a resident of Rekutia village near Anandapur in the district. The truck was completely damaged.

### FLIPKART GOODS TRUCK CATCHES FIRE IN BHADRAK

**Bhadrak:** A container truck carrying a consignment of e-commerce site Flipkart caught fire after hitting an SUV on NH-16 at Dahanigrida night. The truck driver narrowly escaped. Three occupants of the SUV sustained minor injuries. The truck was en route to Kolkata from Mumbai.



# Locals block NH after minor's death

**BRAHAMAPUR:** Tension prevailed at Langaleswar village under the Khalikote PS in Ganjam district on Friday evening as an eight-year-old boy died after being hit by a truck, following which locals blocked the NH-16 near the village. The deceased was identified as Kiran Kumar Palei (8) of the village. He was a student of Class-III. According to reports, the boy was returning home after attending tuition class around 7 pm when a speeding goods-laden truck hit him, as a result of which he died on the spot. Irate locals then staged road blockade on the NH demanding compensation for the family of the deceased.

# Fake notes of nearly ₹1L seized in J'suguda

## 3 YOUTHS HELD

PNS ■ JHARSUGUDA

Busting a fake currency racket, the Banharapali police have arrested three youths and seized counterfeit notes amounting to nearly Rs 1 lakh from Sambalpur district, informed Jharsuguda SP Rahul PR on Saturday.

One Mohammed Ajmal (20) of Khadam village under Lakhanpur block was filling petrol from a filling station at Bandhabahal by giving fake notes. After learning about the fake notes, the filling station owner informed police about it.

Police arrested Ajmal. During interrogation, he told about a printing unit of fake currency notes running in Bamara in Sambalpur district. Later, the Banharapali police conducted a raid on the printing unit on Thursday night and arrested two others, Mohammed Irfan (24) and Ishfaq Ansari (32) of Gibindpur village in Sambalpur district.

"Counterfeit notes of Rs 96,300, including 918 notes of Rs 100 and nine notes of Rs 500 denomination, a printing machine and a motorcycle were seized from their possession," informed the SP, adding that all three accused were produced before court and sent to judicial custody.

# Another Cuttack fake spice unit busted

PNS ■ CUTTACK

Police on Saturday busted a fake spice unit allegedly manufacturing adulterated spices like turmeric and chilli powder.

The duplicate spices processing unit was unearthed at the Bhadimula area under the Chauaiaganj police station.

The Chauaiaganj police had information that an adulterating turmeric and chilli powder processing unit was operating at Bhadimula village. Subsequently a raid was conducted on the unit, said Zone 1 ACP, Amarendra Panda.

Panda said that several



chemicals, raw materials and labels of various reputed companies were seized during the raid.

"The trade licence of the company had expired since March 2019 and the company also lacked necessary permission from the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). One person has been detained in connection with the incident," Panda added.

# Pathak case: SIT to examine concerned persons

**CUTTACK:** The Special Investigation Team (SIT) on Saturday decided to issue notices to persons in relation to facts and circumstances of the disproportionate asset case against IFS officer Abhay Kant Pathak for examination and to record their statements. At its first meeting of the SIT's core team, the decision was taken to serve notices under Section 160 CrPc to these persons for appearance at the Vigilance Cell. Banks officials, forest officials and relatives, employees and associates of the IFS officer would also be examined. A statement issued by the Vigilance police said the firms from which costly vehicles have been purchased would also be examined.

# State's 639 MSMEs get ₹69.99-cr incentives

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The State Government has extended various financial incentives to 278 MSME units during the current fiscal, thereby taking the total incentivised units to 639 since April, 2019. And, the amount of incentive has touched Rs 69.99 crore.

This was known from a State Level Empowered Committee meeting held under chairmanship of Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy on virtual mode on Friday evening wherein Principal Secretary MSME Satyabrata Sahu presented the updates along with new proposals for sanction of subsidy.

Considering the new proposals, Tripathy accorded in-principle approval for Rs 2.94

crore of Capital Investment (CI) subsidy in favour of two small scale enterprises. Tripathy directed to follow a complete transparent and proactive practice in assessment and disbursal of different financial incentives to the MSME units for attracting more and more young entrepreneurs into the sector.

Tripathy further directed to facilitate the process by providing proactive planning, technical and handholding support to the sector. The field level officials were asked to be in constant touch with local entrepreneurs and instill confidence in them.

The meeting considered the proposals of setting up of Kurpalu Solvent rice ban oil at Panikoili in Jajpur district with

## Tripathy directed to facilitate the process by providing proactive planning, technical and handholding support to the sector

an investment of Rs 5.26 crore and Ram Oil rice ban oil in Attabira panchayat of Bargarh district with an investment of around Rs 4.87 crore for sanction of capital investment (CI) subsidy. They were sanctioned CI of around Rs 1.73 crore and Rs 1.21 crore respectively.

Director Industries Reghu G appraised, "With this sanction the total amount of financial incentives sanctioned dur-

ing the current year has crossed Rs 25.47 crore extended to 278 units."

Principal Secretary MSME Satyabrata Sahu said, "Mainly three types of direct financial incentives viz. capital investment subsidy (at two slabs of 25 per cent and 33 per cent), interest subvention of 5 per cent per year for five years and VAT reimbursement for five years are provided to the MSMEs under different policies." Besides, the Government departments and PSUs have been directed to procure at least 20 per cent of their requirement from local MSMEs.

In 2019-20, a total amount of around Rs 34.52 crore were provided as one or other incentive to 361 units. By November-

end of the current fiscal year, Rs 25.47 crore were provided as incentives to 278 units. With this, a total number of 639 were incentivised with a total amount of Rs 69.99 crore from April, 2019 till end of November, 2020.

These units are spread over the sectors like fly ash brick making, paper egg trays, corrugated papers, plastic molded products, milk and milk products, bakery, paper cup and plates, cotton ginning plant, shrimp processing, rice mills, cement products cashew kernels, rice ban oil, spices, pickles, noodles, PVC pipes and other miscellaneous industries.

Chief Secretary Tripathy wanted more and more food processing units in diverse sectors.

# IIFL heist: 2 more held, total arrested now 10

## TOTAL 9.7 KG GOLD RECOVERED

**CUTTACK:** Police on Saturday arrested two more persons in connection with the November 18 IIFL gold heist incident here and recovered some more looted gold. "One Saroj Kumar Prusty of Mangalabag and another Lalit Kumar Soni of Alamchand Bazaar were arrested and forwarded to court," said city DCP Prateek Singh, adding that both are goldsmiths and were associates of Lala Amrit Ray of IIFL, who is already in police custody.

The number of persons

apprehended in the multi-crore rupees gold heist case, has now mounted to ten. Earlier, two IIFL staffs and a manager of Manappuram Finance and six others, including four robbers had been arrested. Police have also recovered around 6.7 kg of more gold ornaments initially mortgaged with IIFL but later remortgaged in two city branch offices of Manappuram Finance. Police had earlier recovered around 3 kg of gold during multiple raids. Police Commissioner Sudhansu Sarangi told reporters at Bhubaneswar that the mastermind behind this heist Lala Amrit Ray and some other employees of IIFL were

engaged in manipulating mortgaged gold ornaments since 2016. "Lala was having a lavish lifestyle by taking huge gold loans from Manappuram branches after remortgaging the already-mortgaged gold with IIFL," he said.

Sarangi further said the number of arrests is likely to increase as investigations so far have revealed involvement of more persons. Police would now keep the seized gold with the district armoury and the IIFL would get it back on the basis of court's direction.

IIFL sources assured that the customers would get back their gold as the ornaments have been insured.

# Will rejoin politics if gets a chance: Dilip

AUROBINDA DAS ■ ROURKELA

Rourkela has been and will always be close to my heart. My relationship with my city and district transcends the narrow boundary of politics," said Dilip Ray on his arrival at Rourkela after a long span.

He further said that all-around development of the place that had given him such love and affection was something that he still attached the highest value, regardless of any elected/official position. He said he would continue to contribute his bit towards the development of the city in every possible way.

Replying to a question "Where is Dilip Ray", he said the same question was raised by his opponents during 2014 election while he participated in direct election process after a gap of 19 years. That time the



love and affection of Rourkela people had given them a befitting reply when he won the election in a wide margin, said Ray.

"Now certain elements with vested interest have started the propaganda once again. But I would continue to remain emotionally attached with Rourkela," asserted Ray.

He further maintained that he always monitored the development of three projects like

the second Brahmani Bridge, the IGH super specialty hospital and the regular flight connectivity to Rourkela, no matter where ever he stayed. Though it is late but certain developments are made in all three projects, he asserted.

He hoped that by 2021 the super specialty hospital would be operational and the bridge would be functional. The works are also undertaken for regular commercial flight to Rourkela, he told.

Regarding the case against him on coal scam he said he had all faith on the judiciary system and more on the divine justice. "I have never cheated anybody in my personal, business and political life. Rather I have always maintained loyalty," Ray averred.

Regarding his rejoining in active politics, Ray said, "If I get a chance, I will consider."

# -IN B'PUR, PHULBANI- Probe sought into high-discount drugs sale

PNS ■ BRAHMAMPUR

The Ganjam and Phulbani Chemists and Druggists Association (GPCDA) submitted a memorandum to district Collector Vijaya Amrut Kulange recently protesting higher rate of rebate given by a medicine store operating a chain of stores in the two districts, which has hit others in the same business.

According to information available, the memorandum alleged that the medicine store has 12 branches functioning in Brahmampur alone while it has several branches in Phulbani. Because of the higher rate of rebate on the MRP, the store manages to lure the customers in large numbers which has led to unfair competition in the business with the fellow businessmen severely affected. The

## GANJAM AND PHULBANI CHEMISTS AND DRUGGISTS ASSOCIATION (GPCDA) SUBMITS MEMO

union alleged that rebate given by the medicine store and its branches is at time as high as 20 per cent making it unviable for the others to compete. As a consequence, hundreds of small medicine stores/retail medicine shops are on the brink of closing down, the memorandum alleged. GPCDA president Bishnu Prasad Panda and secretary Satyanarayana were present while submitting the memorandum. The association demanded an impartial probe into the matter.



Lord Dhableswar near Athagarh adorns Kirat Arjun Bhesha on Saturday Dinesh Das | Pioneer

# B'swar hospital ransacked over girl's death

PNS ■ BALESWAR

A mob ransacked a Community Health Centre (CHC) in Bhograi, alleging that a doctor on duty at the hospital didn't attend a patient properly on Friday night causing her death. As the tension escalated, the local tehsildar along with police force rushed to the spot and tried pacify the aggrieved.

According to reports, a three years old girl, daughter of one Anil Kamila of Maheswarpur village under Jaleswarpur panchayat of Bhograi block, accidentally fell in a pond resulting in her death. Although the family members rushed the girl to the local CHC, yet the doctor declared her dead after examination. But the parents and others alleged that the girl was not provided proper treatment, resulting in her untimely death. The agitators too picketed on the road to the CHC by burning tyres.

Tehsildar Kamlakanta Panda and IIC Bhograi Sujata Khamarri discussed with the CHC in -charge and family members. An ex-gratia amount Rs10,000 was given from the Red Cross fund to the bereaved family. Besides, they were assured of a compensation of Rs 4 lakh.

# Cycle rally in city for organ donation

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A bicycle rally was taken out from Kalpana Square to Rasulgarh Square here to create awareness on organ donation on Saturday by the members of the Rotary Club of Bhubaneswar Utkal.

Chief guest of the event, club president Rotarian Dr Pramod Patra flagged off the rally and encouraged all to donate organs.



Over 50 Rotarians and Rotraracts participated. Aditya Nayak, Ashutosh Rath, Ashish Sahu, Sambit Satpathy, Roji

Rath, Monoj Kumar Tripathy, Dr S Panda, Nikhileswar Sahu and Satyajit Pattanaik joined as honourable guests.

# Deities 'Surya', 'Chandra' stolen

PNS ■ PURI

Three Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) Chief Administrator Krishan Kumar on Saturday said a probe would be launched into the alleged stealing of 'Surya' and 'Chandra' ornaments of the deities.

After the Nagarjuna Bhesha of the lords on Friday, the ornaments were brought to the SJTA custody.

As per a decision taken by the temple administration, the Bhesha ornaments will

be kept at a proposed museum in the premises of Jagannath Ballav Mutt.

However, the stealing of Surya and Chandra of the deities allegedly by a servitor raised questions about the security in the premises of the Jagannath Temple.

Notably, the Nagarjuna Bhesha of the deities had been held after a delay of about three hours which pointed fingers to the temple mismanagement.



# PARI MURDER SIT probe ordered on Cong demand: Narasingha

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Congress Legislature Party Leader Narasingha Mishra on Saturday said the Government ordered a probe by the Special Investigation (SIT) into the Nayagarh minor girl Pari's murder case following a strong demand by his party.

Speaking at a Press conference, Mishra said the Congress raised the issue robustly in the Assembly on Friday, following which the Chief Minister was forced to come to the House and announced a SIT probe into the incident.

He said Minister Arun Sahoo should resign if there should be an impartial probe into the incident.

He said his party raised the



closure of schools issue following which the State Government announced that no schools would be closed in the KBK region and the Scheduled Areas.

Besides, the party has raised the Puri and Sundargarh custodial deaths, the Cuttack gold loan company robbery

and the deteriorating law and order situation in the State vociferously.

Mishra urged BJP to stage an walkout during Appropriation Bill which is scheduled to be presented in the Assembly on Sunday to prove that it is not hand-in-glove with the BJD.

# IN BALESWAR 2 held for killing brother over property

PNS ■ BALESWAR

The Soro police cracked a murder case by arresting three persons including two brothers of the deceased. The accused were identified as Gagan Malik, Purnachandra Malik and his wife Jasoda.

The body of Maheswar Malik of village Kesariapur was found in pond on Thursday. Due to injury marks on Maheswar's body, police suspected it to be murder case and started investigation.

Later, police ascertained that a land dispute was the reason for bitter relationship among the brothers.



Maheswar was hit on his head by his younger brother Purnachandra with an iron rod on Wednesday night.

After he succumbed to the injuries the body was disposed in a nearby pond by Gagan and Jasoda.

Soro IIC Madhumita Mohanty after arresting the accused under relevant sections of IPC, forwarded them to court on Saturday.

# KARTIK PURNIMA Section 144 around JSpur temples

PNS ■ JAGATSINGHPUR

In view of possible spread of Covid-19, the district administration has clamped Section 144 CrPC around several temples to prohibit congregation during Kartik Purnima festival.

The shrines where the restrictions have been clamped include Madhuban Jagannath Temple in Paradip, Maa Sarala Temple at Kanakpur, Gada Kujang Jagannath Temple, Grameswar Temple at Panchapalli, Sarabanta Jagannath Temple at Sahadabedi, Shree Brundaban Bihari Jew in Erasama, Garoi Jagannath Temple, Nilakantheswar Temple at Korua, Gothada Matha at Gothada, Chandapura Jagannath Temple, Alana-II Jagannath Temple in Nuagaon, Dhyankund Jagannath Temple in Biridi, Muchkunda Mahadev Temple at Somanath Hat, Gatanath Mahadev Temple at Bionla, Sidhala Jagannath Temple in Jagatsinghpur, Gorekhnath Temple and Bijje Kerekeri in Raghunathpur.

# BJP intensifies Arun Sahoo's...

From page 1

Leader of Opposition Pradipta Naik of BJP, on the other hand, justified his party's demand of a CBI probe. "The investigation into the little girl's kidnap and murder needs specialised approach as her body parts were removed. It is suspected involvement of an organ theft racket in the incident. Therefore, a scientific investigation is required which is not possible on part of police," Naik said. Naik alleged that Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has been shielding Agriculture Minister Arun Sahoo, who on his part protects the main accused Babuli Nayak in the kidnap and murder case. Therefore, he justified that Sahoo should be immediately removed for giving justice to the victim's family.

When the BJP members were busy raising slogans in the Well, Speaker SN Patro allowed Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water Minister Pratap Jena to initiate debate on the supplementary budget for 2020-21 fiscal.

While the House approved the supplementary budget for the department following a brief debate amid protest by BJP members, the expenditure for other departments was approved through Guillotine. The members of ruling BJD and Opposition Congress participated in the debate while the BJP members in the Well kept demanding resignation of the Minister Sahoo.

# Chirag downplays BJP fielding Sushil Modi for seat won by Paswan

PTI ■ PATNA

Cold-shouldered by the BJP in the by-election to a Rajya Sabha seat in Bihar, LJP president Chirag Paswan said on Saturday that it belonged to the saffron party which was free to take a decision about whom to field.

The seat had fallen vacant following the death of Chirag Paswan's father and Lok Janshakti Party founder Ram Vilas Paswan. The BJP has nominated former Bihar deputy chief minister Sushil

Kumar Modi for the seat.

Sushil Modi is likely to win uncontested unless the opposition Grand Alliance fields a candidate to challenge him. In that event, the polling will take place on December 14.

A Union Minister, Ram Vilas Paswan had got elected from the seat last year after it fell vacant following his cabinet colleague Ravi Shankar Prasad's election to the Lok Sabha from Patna Sahib.

"The seat belonged to the BJP and it is for the party to

decide which candidate from which party to field in the by-election," the 37-year-old leader told reporters at a function held to celebrate his party's 20th foundation day.

Chastened by the drubbing in the recent Bihar elections, Chirag Paswan asked the party rank and file to gear up for the next assembly polls which could take place "any time".

He reiterated it in a letter addressed to LJP workers and shared with the media.

Responding to questions,

Paswan maintained that he saw "fresh elections taking place any time in Bihar, given the way the new government is functioning".

In a written message to party workers, Paswan defended his decision to go solo in the assembly polls, saying, "We had to make a choice between accepting the NDA's offer of only 15 seats despite being a party with six members in the Lok Sabha and one in the Rajya Sabha, or engage in a friendly fight to preserve our honour".

The letter contained no reference to the BJP or Prime Minister Narendra Modi to whom Paswan has proclaimed loyalty despite his steadfast support to Nitish Kumar.

The Jamui MP also

deplored the heated exchanges between the chief minister and Leader of the Opposition Tejashwi Yadav on the floor of the assembly on Friday and said both shared the blame for the unsavoury turn of events. "I would not like to take sides in this matter. From both sides many personal attacks were made. I do not think the discourse in Bihar assembly has ever touched such depths," said Paswan.

The LJP chief, under whose stewardship the party

fought more than half of the seats in the 243-strong assembly but won only one, tried to perk up his supporters and asked them to focus on the bright side. "We could win only two seats in the previous assembly elections even though we had contested as part of the NDA. This time, we were alone, without an army of star campaigners to canvass in our favour. But we secured 28 lakh votes and now our party is being talked about across the state," Paswan said in his letter.

Her other son Amrut was killed on July 20, 2019 and police closed the investigation into the matter after registering a case of unnatural death, she alleged. On Friday, three farmers had attempted self-immolation near the Assembly gate alleging that some unknown persons availed loans in their names from the Cuttack District Cooperative Bank, but they have failed to get justice even after lodging police complaints. On Tuesday, a couple from the Nayagarh district had also attempted to immolate them before the Assembly seeking justice for their minor daughter, who was kidnapped and killed on July 14.

# Woman, son ..

From Page 1

Her other son Amrut was killed on July 20, 2019 and police closed the investigation into the matter after registering a case of unnatural death, she alleged. On Friday, three farmers had attempted self-immolation near the Assembly gate alleging that some unknown persons availed loans in their names from the Cuttack District Cooperative Bank, but they have failed to get justice even after lodging police complaints. On Tuesday, a couple from the Nayagarh district had also attempted to immolate them before the Assembly seeking justice for their minor daughter, who was kidnapped and killed on July 14.

# India, Lanka and Maldives agree to bolster maritime security cooperation

Colombo: Top security officials of India, Sri Lanka and the Maldives on Saturday agreed to further strengthen cooperation and ensure peace for common benefit as they took stock of the current maritime security environment in the region during the high-level trilateral dialogue held here after a gap of six years.

National Security Advisor Ajit Doval took part in the dialogue along with Sri Lankan Defence Secretary Major Gen (Retd.) Kamal Gunaratne and Maldivian Defence Minister Mariya Didi.

Sri Lanka hosted the fourth National Security Adviser-level trilateral meeting on maritime security cooperation with India

and the Maldives. It took place after six years. The last meeting was held in New Delhi in 2014.

According to a joint statement issued by Sri Lanka's Ministry of Defence, the three countries - recognising the significance of the forum for promoting meaningful cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region on common issues pertaining to maritime security - took stock of the current maritime security environment in the region.

They discussed mutual cooperation in the areas of Maritime Domain Awareness, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief, Joint Exercises, Capacity Building, Maritime

Security and Threats, Marine Pollution, and Maritime Underwater Heritage, it said.

They agreed to further strengthen cooperation in dealing with these challenges, to ensure peace and security in the region for common benefit, the joint statement said.

The three countries also exchanged views on common security threats and agreed to broad base cooperation by expanding the scope to improve intelligence sharing and include issues like terrorism, radicalisation, extremism, drugs, arms and human trafficking, money laundering, cyber security and effect of climate change on maritime environment, it said.

The meeting took place amidst China's attempts to enhance its influence in the resource-rich Indo-Pacific region and the Indian Ocean. China views the Maldives and Sri Lanka as key to its Maritime Silk Road project in the Indian Ocean. It has already acquired the Hambantota port in Sri Lanka on long lease and established a military base in Djibouti in the Horn of Africa.

The Heads of Delegations agreed to meet regularly to share, discuss and ensure timely implementation of decisions taken at the meeting. They also decided to hold Deputy NSA level working group meetings biannually for cooperation at

operational level, according to the statement.

Mauritius and Seychelles were represented virtually at senior officials' level, it said, adding that in view of the COVID-19 pandemic, the dialogue was conducted adhering to strict health guidelines using the "Air Bubble" concept for the visiting delegations.

Sri Lanka, India and the Maldives launched the Trilateral NSA level Meeting on Maritime Security Cooperation in 2011 and three meetings have been held so far.

The past deliberations and outcomes have helped the three countries in improving close coordination in maritime security of the region. PTI

discharged from various hospitals the number of people discharged from the hospitals on Saturday after full recovery since the second week of March this year went up to 16,76,564. The recovery rate in the state dropped marginally from 92.48 per cent to 92.40 per cent.

The Covid-19 toll in Mumbai climbed to 10,847, while the infected cases went up by 963 to trigger a jump in the total infections from 280,818 to 2,81,881.

Meanwhile, the number of "active cases" total cases in the state went up from 87,969 to 89,905. The fatality rate in the state stood at 2.59 per cent.

Pune district, which continued to be the worst-affected



View of the snow-laden Tandri valley, confluence point of Chandra and Bhaga rivers, during the winter season in Lahaul-Spiti district on Saturday PTI

# Man, absconding after raping sister-in-law with two brothers, arrested: Police

PTI ■ BULANDSHAHR

A man allegedly absconding for the last one and half years after raping his divorced sister-in-law along with his two brothers, has been arrested, police said on Saturday.

Accused Israr, also carrying a reward of Rs 25,000 on his arrest, was arrested on Friday night by a team of Kotwali Nagar police station officials, said Bulandshahr Superintendent of Police Santosh Kumar Singh.

The accused was also found in the possession of an illegal pistol, which was seized, he said.

The gang-rape case against

Israr dates back to June 18 last year, when his brother Salman gave "triple talaq" to his wife following a quarrel with her, said police.

After Salman divorced his wife, his three brothers -- Israr, Gaffar and Abrar -- took turns to rape her and then turned her out of the house, driving her in a car to a school near her maternal home under Gulauthi police station area. The woman reported the matter to the Gulauthi police station, which lodged a case on her complaint and arrested Gaffar and Abrar but Israr managed to give police a slip.

He was finally arrested on Friday night, said Singh.

# Protest over girl's abduction

PTI ■ MUZAFFARNAGAR

There were protests in a town in Uttar Pradesh's Muzaffarnagar district over the alleged abduction of a girl by a youth, police said on Saturday.

The student, who was allegedly abducted when she was on her way to tuition in Khatauli, was found at a railway station, an officer said. Family members and locals had protested on Friday alleging abduction and demanding arrest of the suspect, according to the officer. A case has been registered against Sameer under Indian Penal Code sections 363 (kidnapping) and 366 (abducting or inducing woman to compel her marriage).

# Kerala's community police to watch nomads as child missing cases galore

Thiruvananthapuram: The Kerala police is keeping a special watch on nomads and migrant workers in the wake of an increase in child missing cases in the state, a top official said.

The state police chief, DGP Loknath Behera informed the state Human Rights panel that the Janamaitri wing of the police department had been entrusted with the task of tracing children who had gone missing under various circumstances in the southern state.

Information on nomadic groups and migrant workers were being collected, he said. The 'Janamaitri Suraksha Project' is a prestigious com-

munity policing initiative of the Kerala government.

The rights panel chairman, Antony Dominic, had recently directed the DGP to submit a report on the steps taken to control the disappearance of children. In the report, the top cop said immediate and effective action is taken if a complaint is received about a missing child and to trace them.

The police report also said an investigation was progressing to find out the circumstance in which seven-year-old Devananda, a school going girl who had gone missing while playing in the backyard of her home and later found dead in Kollam district recently. PTI

# Maharashtra logs 75 deaths, 5,965 more test positive

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a minor drop in the fatalities and infections in Maharashtra, 75 people died of Coronavirus, while 5965 others tested positive for the pandemic in various parts of the state on Saturday.

A day after the State logged 85 deaths and 6185 infections, the deaths dropped by ten, while the infections came down by 220.

With 75 fresh deaths, the Covid-19 toll in Maharashtra climbed from 46,898 to 46,986. Similarly, with 5965 new infected cases, the total infections jumped from 18,08,550 to 18,14,515. As 3937 more people were

discharged from various hospitals the number of people discharged from the hospitals on Saturday after full recovery since the second week of March this year went up to 16,76,564. The recovery rate in the state dropped marginally from 92.48 per cent to 92.40 per cent.

The Covid-19 toll in Mumbai climbed to 10,847, while the infected cases went up by 963 to trigger a jump in the total infections from 280,818 to 2,81,881.

Meanwhile, the number of "active cases" total cases in the state went up from 87,969 to 89,905. The fatality rate in the state stood at 2.59 per cent.

Pune district, which continued to be the worst-affected

city-district in Maharashtra, saw the total number of cases increase from 350689 to 3,51,784, while the total number of deaths in Pune increased to 7418.

Thane district remained in the third spot --after Pune and Mumbai -- after the total number of infections rose from 2,38,754 to 2,39,598 while the total deaths climbed to 5303.

Of the 1,07,22,198 samples sent to laboratories, 18,14,515 have tested positive (16.92 per cent) for COVID-19 until Saturday.

Currently, 5,28,462 people are in home quarantine while 7,118 people are in institutional quarantine.

# BJP will not field Muslim candidate for Belagavi LS bypoll: K'ntaka Min

Bengaluru: Karnataka Rural Development Minister K S Eshwarappa on Saturday said the BJP will not give ticket to a Muslim in the by-election to Belagavi Lok Sabha seat.

Noting that Belagavi was one of the centres of Hindutva, he said the ticket will be given to its proponents.

"In BJP there is no question of Kuruba, Lingayat, Vokkaliga or Brahmin community, we will all sit together and discuss, this is the system, a democratic way.

In no party other than BJP there is a democratic system," Eshwarappa pointed out.

Speaking to reporters in Belagavi, the senior BJP leader said state and national leaders

will select a candidate who can win by gaining the trust of the people.

"Whether we give (ticket) to Kurubas or Lingayats or Vokkaligas or Brahmmins, we will not give to a Muslim.

Belagavi is one of the centres of Hindutva, there is no question of us giving tickets to Muslims here," Eshwarappa said in response to a query.

We will give tickets to Hindutva proponents, I don't know whether we will give it to followers of Sangolli Rayanna, Kittur Chennamma (freedom fighters) or Shankaracharya, he added. The Belagavi Lok Sabha seat fell vacant recently following the death of Union Minister of State for Railways

Suresh Angadi, who represented the seat, due to COVID-19.

The bypoll for the seat is yet to be announced by the Election Commission.

This is not the first time Eshwarappa has made such comments. In April last year, Eshwarappa had in Koppal said BJP will not give tickets to Muslims to contest the elections as they do not believe in the party. However, he had subsequently clarified that he was not hater of any community including Muslims and his statement was in response to a question about a specific leader from the community getting a ticket from the BJP. PTI

# Virus spread contained, taking steps to ensure normalcy returns: TN CM

Chennai: The Tamil Nadu government has contained the spread of coronavirus through focused and concerted efforts and is now engaged in efforts to ensure that normalcy returns to the state, Chief Minister K Palaniswami said on Saturday.

Though it would take some time for normalcy to return, much depended on the effective implementation of government norms by district administrations on wearing face masks and maintaining social distancing, besides the cooperation of the public, he said.

"We have observed that whenever there is a large gathering like a wedding or when people step out of their homes, some wear face masks while others ignore the precaution," the chief minister said while chairing a video conference meeting of District Collectors, from the Secretariat here on the COVID-19 situation.

In certain states, the spread of the virus has been alarming, as people there flouted rules on wearing masks.

"So, I urge the people here to compulsori-

ly wear face masks and the district collectors to implement the rules strictly and help the government to bring normalcy soon."

"The infection can be completely controlled if people extend their full cooperation," he said.

The handling of the pandemic situation in Tamil Nadu was far better and it even won the appreciation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Palaniswami said. Modi had congratulated the Tamil Nadu government for fighting the COVID-19 outbreak efficiently and also hailed the state for being a pioneer in this regard, the CM said. "The infection has been controlled in the state due to the government's sincere efforts," he said and pointed out that fever camps were held in every nook and corner of the state to help prevent the spread of the contagion. The government continued to conduct RT-PCR tests despite the infection rate coming down, he said.

Tamil Nadu's total covid positive cases as of Friday stood at 7,77,616 with 11,681 deaths. Since November 13, the state's daily additions remained under 2,000. PTI

# 216 recoveries bring active cases down to 2154 in J'khand

PNS ■ RANCHI

Over 200 Covid-19 patients tested negative for the virus on Saturday, taking the total number of Covid recoveries in Jharkhand close to 1,05,669 figures compiled by the National Health Mission stated. Jharkhand's recovery rate further improved on the day and reached 97.13 per cent after only 209 fresh cases of infection surfaced against 216 recoveries, a daily bulletin released by the NHM highlighted. The national Covid-19 recovery rate, as per government data, was 93.70 per cent

on Saturday. While recoveries outnumbered the number of fresh cases, the Covid toll in the state also increased as one more patient from Ranchi died during treatment in 24 hours. As per government data, as many as 963 people have died of Covid-19 in Jharkhand so far, and at least 194 of them were from Ranchi. The Covid mortality rate in Jharkhand was 0.88 per cent against the national average of 1.50 per cent. The count of active cases reduced in Ranchi, East Singhbhum and Jamtara districts as recoveries outnumbered fresh cases in all the three districts.



# Naidu calls for promoting cycling culture in cities

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu on Saturday called for promoting cycling culture and creating exclusive cycling tracks in cities and for that a mass movement to encourage cycling is required.

He urged the Government to integrate cycling into urban transport system and that the cities must plan city wide bicycle-sharing schemes, implement carbon credit to benefit cyclists and also promote E-Bicycles.

Naidu said cycling benefits include low-cost, zero pollution and improved health.

Virtually delivering the key-note address at an International Webinar on 'Cycling in the post-Covid world', Naidu said there is a need to create a mass movement to encourage cycling through rigorous awareness campaigns and regular promotional events. Terming the webinar theme as timely and important, he called for collective global efforts to make the planet greener and safer.

Observing that the pandemic has changed the way we live, buy, utilise our time and commute, the Vice President pointed out that restrictions in many cities across the world have resulted in a reduction of motorized traffic and an increase in people choosing to walk or ride bicycles.

Pointing out that cycling was one of the best ways to reduce the risk associated with a sedentary lifestyle, he said that cycling provides several benefits in the form of zero dependence on energy sources, zero pollution, and improved health.

"Additionally, bicycles can



**The vice President advised urban planners and policymakers to have a re-look at their plans and policies and earmark exclusive cycling tracks**

provide critical support to the urban and rural poor who do not have access to the basic mobility", Naidu added.

Stating that the pandemic has provided a rare opportunity to promote and integrate cycling into the urban transport system, he advised urban planners and policymakers to have a re-look at their plans and policies and earmark exclusive cycling tracks.

Observing that many urban cycling networks in Europe, China and USA have seen a surge in traffic, Naidu said that there was a huge potential for promoting cycling in India and called for providing the necessary infrastructure.

Stating that traffic surveys revealed cycle trips account for more than 15% of trips in most towns, he said this was the right time to pro-

mote cycling as it reduces noise pollution, improves road safety and also helps in addressing the increasing energy import bill.

Quoting a recent study, he said it was estimated that the use of bicycles in place of two- and four-wheelers for short-distance trips in India could result in an annual benefit of USD 24.3 billion.

"However, the absence of a cycling ecosystem is preventing it from becoming the preferred mobility solution for all sections of society", the Vice President added.

Stressing the need to ensure that the post-COVID world is greener and more resilient, Naidu urged cities to plan city-wide bicycle-sharing schemes, implement Public Bike Sharing systems, create a mechanism for the carbon credit system to benefit cyclists and promote E Bicycles.

Ms. Raluca Fiser, President, World Cycling Alliance, Christophe Najdovski, Deputy Mayor, Paris and President, European Cyclists Federation, Dharmendra, Chairman, NDMC, Kunal Kumar, Mission Director, Smart Cities Mission, Kamal Kishore Yadav, CEO and Commissioner, Chandigarh Smart City and other dignitaries were present on the occasion.

# ED attaches ex-babu's properties worth ₹27.8 cr under PMLA

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate on Saturday attached properties worth ₹27.86 crore of former IAS officer Babulal Agrawal under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act in cases related to criminal misconduct and cheating by a public servant.

The attached assets include plant and machinery, balances in bank accounts and immovable properties of Agrawal and his family members.

The ED initiated investigation under PMLA on the basis of FIR registered by Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB), Chhattisgarh under Prevention of Corruption Act, leading to disclosure of the disproportionate assets amassed by Agrawal and his family members following searches conducted by the Income Tax Department in February 2010.

The IT Department had then conducted searches at the premises of Agrawal, his CA Sunil Agrawal and his family members.

Further, three more FIRs were registered followed by chargesheets filed by the CBI against Agrawal and others. These FIRs were registered under various Sections of the Indian Penal Code and Prevention of Corruption Act.

"Investigation under PMLA revealed that Babu Lal Agrawal in connivance with his CA Sunil Agrawal and his brother Ashok Agrawal and Pawan Agrawal opened more than 400 bank accounts in the name of gullible villagers of Kharora and its nearby villages. Cash was deposited in these

accounts and several other accounts, 13 shell companies owned and operated by CA Sunil Agrawal, 26 Delhi and Kolkata-based other shell companies as well as the sister concerns of Prime Ispat Limited (a company owned and managed by family members of Babu Lal Agrawal) were used in placement and layering of this cash generated from corrupt means which was finally integrated in the form of share capital including share premium in Prime Ispat Limited (PIL)", the ED said in a statement.

Out of the above, the ED had already attached properties of PIL to the tune of ₹35.49 crore in the year 2017, it said.

Now, remaining plant and machinery to the tune of ₹26.16 crore has been attached. Besides this, bank balance of Rs 20.43 lacs lying in 291 bank accounts, a residential plot worth ₹39.52 lacs in the name of Xpress Mining Pvt. Ltd. (an entity owned and operated by family members of Agrawal), Rs 15 lacs recovered during the Income Tax search, balance of ₹4.75 lacs in the bank account of one firm Capstone, a residential plot worth ₹10.25 lacs in the name of another company Shri Ram Vihar (both partnership firms owned and operated by family members of Agrawal), cash of ₹39.81 lacs and two Kg gold recovered by CBI have been attached under PMLA.

Agrawal was arrested by ED on November 9 this year and he is in judicial custody till December 5. Further investigation in the case is under progress, the agency added.

# Few misguided farmers will soon understand rationale behind Centre's farm laws: Goyal



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Minister Piyush Goyal on Saturday expressed confidence that the few "misguided" farmers, who are protesting against the Centre's three farm laws, will understand the well-meaning intentions behind these changes while Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on Saturday said that the Government is awaiting a proposal from the protesting farmers and then will make a decision based on that.

The Minister has been every day asking the farmers to call off the protests. He said that the Government is ready to hold talks with the farmers and

has invited them for another round of talks on December 3.

"I appeal to them to leave agitation in view of COVID-19 and winter. I am hopeful the farmers will agree to task," he said.

Thousands of farmers started entering the national capital on Friday as part of their 'Delhi Chalo' march against the Centre's new farm laws.

"It is little unfortunate that some political vested interests are misguided our farmers. But I am very confident that just like almost across the country, farmers have welcomed our new initiatives on the farm side, the few misguided farmers will also understand the well meaning intentions behind these changes for the benefit of the farmers, and for a better future for our farmers," Goyal said.

He said that if pen or thermos manufacturers do not have any restriction on where and to whom to market their goods, farmers too deserve the same independence.

The Government, he said, is working at strengthening the hands of farmers by unshackling them from the constraints of the past. "We are preparing the country and our farmers to become stronger, to get the ability to market their own products anywhere in the country," the commerce and industry minister added.

# Commander Nishant Singh of crashed MIG-29K traceless even after 24 hours

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Naval pilot Commander Nishant Singh is yet to be traced 48 hours after his MIG-29K fighter jet crashed into the Arabian Sea off Goa on Thursday evening.

However, the rescue teams managed to rescue the other pilot who along with Singh ejected from the jet before it went down.

Scores of warships, helicopters and aircraft of the Navy and other agencies were carrying out an extensive search and rescue mission on the spot where the plane crashed into the sea, officials said here on Saturday.

The twin-seater MIG-29K fighter jet crashed during routine sortie. These aircraft operate from the INS Vikramaditya aircraft carrier.

This is the third mishap involving the MIG-29K in the last one and half years. At least 45 jets manufactured by Russia were inducted into the Navy some years back for flying from the aircraft carrier.

Giving details of the mishap, the navy had said on Friday a board of inquiry was ordered to ascertain the cause of the incident. "A MIG-29K trainer aircraft operating at sea met with an accident at about 1700 hrs on 26 November. One pilot has been recovered and search by air and surface units in progress for the second pilot. An inquiry has been ordered to investigate the incident," the Navy said.

The MIG-29Ks had recently participated in the prestigious Malabar series of maritime exercises with the navies of the US, Australia and Japan. The Indian aircraft carrier along with the US Navy's aircraft carrier Nimitz took part in the second phase of the four nation drill in the North Arabian Sea off Goa earlier this month.

The exercises focused around the Vikramaditya Carrier Battle Group of the Indian Navy and Nimitz Carrier Strike Group of the US Navy. The two carriers, along with other ships, submarine

and aircraft of the participating navies carried out high intensity naval operations over four days from November 17 onwards. These exercises also included cross-deck flying operations and advanced air defence exercises by MIG 29K fighters of INS Vikramaditya and F-18 fighters and E2C Hawkeye from Nimitz.

This is the third mishap of MiG-29K aircraft in the last one year. In February this year, a MiG 29K crashed after being hit by birds over Goa. Both pilots had steered the jet away from habitation before ejecting.

In November last year, a MiG-29K trainer aircraft crashed outside a village in Goa. Both the pilots had then ejected safely. In January 2018, a fighter jet crashed as it veered off the runway at the INS Hansa base in Goa.

The pilot escaped unharmed. The MIG-29Ks of the Navy are based at its base in Goa and operate from the lone aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya.

# After Nivar, another cyclone forming over Bay of Bengal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After Nivar, another cyclone is forming over Bay of Bengal. According to the India Meteorological Department, it is "very likely" to concentrate into a depression in the next 48 hours and intensify further before moving towards the Tamil Nadu coast. Under its influence, various parts in southern States were likely to receive rainfall starting December 1, the IMD said in a series of tweets.

"A Low Pressure Area lies over South Andaman Sea SE (south east) Bay of Bengal and Equatorial Indian Ocean. It is



very likely to concentrate into a depression during next 48 hours and likely to intensify further thereafter," it said.

It is likely to move nearly westwards and reach south Tamil Nadu coast around

December 2, it said.

Under its influence, scattered to widespread rainfall activity was "very likely" over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karaikal, Kerala, Mahe, Lakshadweep, south coastal

**IMD also forecasts isolated heavy to very heavy rainfall with moderate thunderstorm and lightning over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal during this period**

Andhra Pradesh and south Rayalaseema on Tuesday and Wednesday, the IMD said.

IMD has issued 'Orange' alert for Pathanamthitta and Idukki districts on December 1 and for Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam districts on December 2.

IMD also forecasts isolated heavy to very heavy rainfall with moderate thunderstorm and lightning over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal during this period.

Isolated heavy falls with moderate thunderstorm and lightning was also very likely over south coastal Andhra Pradesh during December 1 and 2 and over Rayalaseema and Lakshadweep area on Wednesday, it added.

# CBI raids 45 locations in 4 States in coal theft case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI on Saturday carried out multi-city search operation at 45 locations in four States after registering a case against alleged coal pilferer Anup Manjhi who was suspected to be colluding with two general managers and three security personnel of Eastern Coalfields Ltd (ECL) for the theft.

The searches were spread across West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh, officials said.

The CBI registered the case on Friday against Manjhi, ECL General Managers Amit Kumar Dhar (of then Kunustoria area now Pandaveswar area) and Jayesh Chandra Rai (Kajor area) besides ECL Chief of Security Tanmay Das, Area Security Inspector, Kunustoria, Dhananjay Rai and SSI and security in-charge Kajor area Debashish Mukherjee, they said.

It is alleged that accused Anup Manjhi alias Lala is involved in the illegal mining and theft of coal from leasehold mines of ECL in Kunustoria and Kajora areas, they further said.

The CBI case followed inputs from "reliable sources" indicating illegal excavation and theft of coal in the leasehold area of ECL in "connivance" with the officials of ECL, CISF and Railways, they said.



help of large excavation machines and vehicles for transportation that were seized by the team.

"Several instances of installation of illegal weighbridges in concrete form were also detected which confirms illegal coal mining and transportation from ECL areas in an organised manner at a very large scale," reads the FIR.

It is further revealed by the source that illegal mining is going on at the leasehold area of ECL behind Topsi village under Kunustoria Area and at Lachhipur Village under Kajora Area by the coal mafias in active connivance with officials of ECL and those of CISF, the FIR alleged.

The departmental raids on August 7, 2020 led to the recovery of over nine MT of stolen coal from the Railway siding of ECL in "connivance" with the officials of ECL, CISF and Railways, they said.

"It is learnt that this illegal activity is being run at Railway sidings by the criminals with

the active connivance of unknown Railway officials," the agency alleged in the FIR.

The CBI has alleged that Manjhi is the kingpin of most of the coal pilferage in the area arising out of illegal mining.

It appears that illegal coal mining in the ECL leasehold area is going on along with theft of coal from Railway sidings in an organised manner, the CBI said.

It alleged that the accused officials and security officers of ECL and CISF, in connivance with unidentified Railway officials, allowed Anup Manjhi alias Lala to inappropriately the national property entrusted to them, committing criminal breach of trust.

Dhananjay Roy, the security inspector of the state-run firm in the Kunustoria area in West Bengal's Pashchim Bardhaman district was taken ill when the search operation was underway, they said.

He was rushed to a hospital where he died, they added.

# Panwan Bansal appointed interim treasurer of Cong

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress on Saturday appointed former Rajya Sabha MP Pawan Kumar Bansal as the interim treasurer of the All India Congress Committee (AICC). The post fell vacant after the sudden demise of veteran Congressman and sitting Rajya Sabha MP from Gujarat, Ahmed Patel earlier this month.

Pawan Kumar Bansal's predecessor Ahmed Patel served as the AICC treasurer from August 2018 till his untimely demise earlier this week due to cancer.

A four-time Lok Sabha MP from Chandigarh, Pawan Kumar Bansal also served one term as a Rajya Sabha MP for Punjab. In addition, Pawan Kumar Bansal has also served as a national spokesperson of the AICC and chairman of the party's research & reference cell in the past.

The 72-year old Congress leader handled the Minister of

State (MoS) portfolio in Parliamentary Affairs, Finance and Water resources ministries during Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's tenure. He was made the Railways Minister in UPA-2. Pawan Kumar Bansal resigned from the post in 2013 after his nephew was accused in a bribery case.

Towards the beginning of his political career, Bansal entered the limelight when he was appointed president of the Punjab unit of the Indian Youth Congress (IYC).

His appointment to the top job comes at a time when Congress is looking to challenge not just the BJP but other Opposition parties in the upcoming Assembly elections.

Responding to his appointment as AICC treasurer, Bansal said, "I thank Congress President Sonia Gandhi ji and Rahul ji for posing faith in me and discharging the duty with full responsibility shall be my endeavour."

# Hawala dealer Naresh Jain moves court seeking bail in money laundering case

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Alleged hawala dealer Naresh Jain, arrested in connection with a case of money laundering related to international hawala transactions worth around ₹20,000 crore, has moved a Delhi court seeking bail.

The bail application is likely to be heard on

December 2.

The application claimed that the probe regarding the accused was complete and his further custody was not required. It also said the court may impose any condition on the accused while granting him the relief.

Advocate Naveen Kumar Matta, the special public prosecutor, had appeared for the Enforcement Directorate.

# Members of armed forces deserve special treatment, should not be harassed: Delhi HC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Members of the armed forces, who take the oath of laying down their lives for the country, deserve special treatment and are not to be harassed unnecessarily and "made ping pong of" by being sent from one forum of adjudication to another, the Delhi High Court has said.

The high court observed that the oath required to be taken by the President, Vice President, Governors of the States or by the Judges of the Supreme Court and the High Courts does not require them to lay down their lives in the service of the country.

It is only the members of the armed forces who are required under the Constitution and other laws to take an oath of abiding by the command issued to them by the President or any officer set over them, even to the peril of their lives, a bench of Justices Rajiv Sahai Endlaw and Asha Menon said.

The court's observation came on a batch of 40 petitions challenging an order issued by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) granting the benefit of pro-rata pension only to Commissioned Officers of the Defence Services and not to the Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs)/ Persons Below Officer Rank (PBORs).

The petitioners — NCOs/PBORs who joined the Indian Air Force (IAF) as Airmen/Corporals — said the MoD's order is discriminatory and claimed pro rata pension.

# Plea in SC against 'retrospective' change in tenure of SK Mishra as Enforcement Directorate director

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A petition has been filed before the Supreme Court seeking to quash the Centre's decision to "retrospectively" amend the tenure of Sanjay Kumar Mishra as the director of the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

The petition, filed by advocate Prashant Bhusan for NGO Common Cause, also sought a direction to the central government to appoint a director for the agency "in a transparent manner and strictly in accordance with the law".

It has contended that the order issued by the Centre extending Mishra's tenure for one more year, was in violation of the provisions of the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) Act, 2003.

The petition, which is likely to come up for hearing in the coming days, has alleged that the government employed a circuitous route to ensure Kumar got one more year as director of ED by way of retrospectively modifying the appointment order itself.

Mishra, an IRS officer, was appointed ED director for two years by an order dated November 19, 2018, the plea said.

However, the Central Government on November 13, 2020, issued an office order in which it was stated that the President has modified the 2018 order to the effect that a period of "two years" written in the 2018 order was modified to a period of "three years", it said. "The Centre has done indi-



rectly what could not have been done directly under the statute," the plea said.

The petition contended that the ED handles a large number of cases involving huge corruption, many of which are politically sensitive in nature, and the agency's director has powers akin to that of the director of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

It added that "such illegalities in the appointment of the Director of Enforcement will shake the confidence of citizens in the institution of Enforcement Directorate."

"Such an action will be totally against the laudable principles highlighting the need of impeccable integrity of persons holding high public offices and the consequent need for insulating the said offices from extraneous influences, as enshrined by the Supreme Court..." it said.

ED director's appointment is governed by the CVC Act which provides that no person below the rank of additional secretary to the government of India shall be eligible for appointment for the post and the director so appointed will continue to hold office for a period of not less than two years from the date on which he assumes office, the plea said.



# TRUMP SUFFERS ANOTHER JOLT

## US court rejects Pennsylvania lawsuit

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

In a fresh setback to US President Donald Trump's efforts to reverse the November 3 presidential election result in the battleground state of Pennsylvania, a court has dismissed a lawsuit filed by his team, observing that "voters, not lawyers choose the president."

The judgement came four days after Pennsylvania certified Trump's Democratic rival Joe Biden as the winner in the state which has 20 electoral college votes.

Trump, a Republican, has refused to accept defeat in the November 3 presidential election, and told reporters on Thursday that it would be "hard" to concede to Biden, a Democrat.

The President has said that he would leave the White House if the Electoral College declares Biden as the winner, but made clear he is not prepared to "concede" the election.

He has launched a slew of lawsuits in key states, but has not provided any evidence to back his claims of electoral fraud. Many of the lawsuits have been dismissed by courts.

The three-judge panel of the 3rd US Circuit Court of Appeals on Friday upheld a previous ruling that dismissed the Trump campaign's request for an injunction in the case in Pennsylvania to challenge the election results and slammed the lawsuit.

"Free, fair elections are the lifeblood of our democracy. Charges of unfairness are serious, but calling an election unfair does not make it so. Charges require specific allegations and then proof. We have neither here," Judge Stephanos Bibas said in his order. "The campaign cannot win this lawsuit," said Bibas, who was appointed by Trump.

He authored the order along with two other judges on the bench, Chief Circuit Judge Brooks Smith and Judge Michael Chagares, who were appointed by former Republican president George W Bush.

Trump has refused to concede the November 3 election to Biden and has filed multiple lawsuits challenging the poll results in several states.

Former vice president Biden was declared the winner of the US presidential election

on November 7 after flipping Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin to the Democrats' column.

Biden has 306 electoral votes to Trump's 232 votes. To win the race to the White House, the successful candidate should have at least 270 electoral votes out of the 538-member Electoral College.

Biden's tally is far more than the 270 needed to win the race for the White House, and he also leads the popular vote by more than six million.

In his Thanksgiving Day remarks, Trump, however, said it will be a mistake if the Electoral College were to elect Biden.

The president-elect leads by more than 80,000 votes in the battleground state of Pennsylvania.

Trump's lawyers Rudy Giuliani and Jenna Ellis said they will now appeal to the Supreme Court.

"The activist judicial machinery in Pennsylvania continues to cover up the allegations of massive fraud. We are very thankful to have had the opportunity to present proof and the facts to the PA state legislature. On to SCOTUS!" they said.

According to the local Philadelphia Inquirer, "Bibas pointed out that despite the campaign's speculative claims and fiery rhetoric, it never alleged - let alone offered any evidence to suggest - that any vote had been improperly counted or cast."

"Voters, not lawyers, choose the president. Ballots, not briefs, decide elections," alchemy cannot transmute lead into gold," Bibas wrote in his order.

The New York Times said many courts have used scathing language in tossing out a relentless barrage of lawsuits filed by the Trump campaign and its supporters, but even so, the Third Circuit's ruling was particularly blunt.

The court accused the Trump campaign of engaging in "repetitive litigation" and pointed out that the public interest strongly favoured "counting every lawful voter's vote, and not disenfranchising millions of Pennsylvania voters who voted by mail," the daily said.

Earlier in the day, Trump reiterated that he won the election and unsubstantiated claims of voter fraud.

"Biden can only enter the

White House as President if he can prove that his ridiculous "80,000,000 votes" were not fraudulently or illegally obtained. When you see what happened in Detroit, Atlanta, Philadelphia & Milwaukee, massive voter fraud, he's got a big unsolvable problem!" Trump tweeted.

"Big Tech and the Fake News Media have partnered to Suppress Freedom of the Press is gone, a thing of the past. That's why they refuse to report the real facts and figures of the 2020 Election or even, where's Hunter!" he said in another tweet.

The Electoral College is scheduled to meet on December 14 and is expected to formally declare the 78-year-old Biden as the 46th US President.

Under the US electoral system, voters do not directly choose the president. Instead, they vote for 538 officials, who are allocated to American states based on their population size.

Earlier this week, Trump allowed the official start of Biden's transition to power without conceding defeat. Biden is due to be sworn in as president on January 20.

## Biden to let health experts decide who will get a Covid-19 vaccine first: Gounder

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

US President-elect Joe Biden will let health experts decide who will get a Covid-19 vaccine in the country first, according to Dr Celine Gounder, a member of his coronavirus advisory board.

Since the risk for Covid-19 can vary among different groups of people, prioritisation for a vaccine will be tricky, and Biden will leave those decisions to health experts, the Indian-American infectious disease physician said. It is expected that there will likely be a limited supply of coronavirus vaccine doses available immediately after a vaccine is authorised by the US food and drug administration.

"Other than health care workers, others who will be first in line to get it will be people who do have chronic underlying medical conditions who are older, as well as communities of colour who have been disproportionately impacted by this pandemic," Gounder told CNN on Friday.

The country's death toll since the pandemic's start is now more than 264,000. And nearly another 60,000 people could lose their lives over the next three weeks, according to an ensemble forecast published by the US centers for disease control and prevention (CDC) this week.

"Now among those groups is where it starts to get a little bit more contentious," she added. "How do you prioritise between the 85-year-old woman in a nursing home, versus the 65-year-old African American — especially when that 65-year-old may be as just as high-risk of significant disease?" The CDC's advisory committee for immunization

practices (ACIP) will recommend groups to receive the vaccine first. "That's where it gets a bit more political and frankly, this is where the President-elect is leaving it to the public health experts and scientists to figure out how best to allocate the limited supply first," said Gounder, who was named by Biden earlier this month to his coronavirus advisory board.

The ACIP called an emergency meeting for December 1, where they will vote on the very first group to get a vaccine.

"Because we know that the vaccine will be available in very limited doses, even if they prioritise health care workers and older people in their population, it's going to be really important to be a little more granular," said Rick Bright, another member of Biden's coronavirus advisory board.

"They're going to discuss that granularity in health care workers. If I only have so many doses available, how do I prioritise those health care workers first and make those recommendations to the states?" he said. Typically, the ACIP meets after a vaccine is authorised by the FDA to make recommen-

dations, but they are working proactively in anticipation of a quick decision by the FDA, the report said. "We foresee imminent authorisation if this vaccine is shown to be effective and safe in the near future and we want to be at the point where we are providing appropriate guidance to the states and jurisdictions for the use of these vaccines," ACIP chair Dr Jose Romero told CNN.

US pharmaceutical major Pfizer has applied to the FDA for emergency use authorisation for its vaccine. An independent panel of experts, the FDA's vaccines and related biological products advisory committee, is slated to meet on December 10 to discuss the application, the report said.

FDA officials say a decision should be made within a few weeks of the meeting and possibly much sooner. The US on Friday marked the 25th day in a row with more than 100,000 new cases. Hospitalisations hit a new high on Thursday — for the 17th consecutive day — with more than 90,400 Covid-19 patients nationwide, according to the Covid Tracking Project.

## Biden will be a President who represents the best in us: Kamala

Washington: Joe Biden will be a president who represents the best of America, his deputy and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris has said, asserting that he is a leader the world will respect. Lavishing praise on the 78-year-old US President-elect, Harris on Friday said that Biden will be a president for all Americans.

"Know that" Biden "will be a president who represents the best in us. A leader the world will respect and our children can look up to," Harris said in a tweet. Harris, 56, the daughter of an Indian immigrant from Chennai, has created history by becoming the first Black American woman to be elected as the country's Vice President.

PTI

## Iran's supreme leader vows revenge over slain scientist

AP ■ TEHRAN

Iran's supreme leader on Saturday demanded the "definitive punishment" of those behind the killing of a scientist who led Tehran's disbanded military nuclear program, as the Islamic Republic blamed Israel for a slaying that has raised fears of reignited tensions across the Middle East.

After years of being in the shadows, the image of Mohsen Fakhriyadeh suddenly was to be seen everywhere in Iranian media, as his widow spoke on state television and officials publicly demanded revenge on Israel for the scientist's slaying.

Israel, long suspected of killing Iranian scientists a decade ago amid earlier tensions over Tehran's nuclear program, has yet to comment on Fakhriyadeh's killing Friday. However, the attack bore the hallmarks of a carefully planned, military-style ambush, the likes of which Israel has been accused of conducting before. The attack has renewed fears of Iran striking back against the US, Israel's closest ally in the region, as it did earlier this year when a US drone strike killed a top Iranian general. The US military acknowledged moving an aircraft carrier back into the region, while an Iranian lawmaker suggested throwing out UN nuclear inspectors in response to the killing.

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei called Fakhriyadeh "the country's prominent and distinguished nuclear and defensive scientist." Khamenei, who has the final say on all matters of state, said Iran's first priority after the killing was the "definitive punishment of the perpetrators and those who ordered it." He did not elaborate.

Speaking earlier Saturday, President Hassan Rouhani blamed Israel for the killing. "We will respond to the assass-

ination of Martyr Fakhriyadeh in a proper time," Rouhani said. "The Iranian nation is smarter than falling into the trap of the Zionists. They are thinking to create chaos."

Both Rouhani and Khamenei said that Fakhriyadeh's death would not stop the nuclear program. Iran's civilian atomic program has continued its experiments and now enriches a growing uranium stockpile up to 4.5% purity in response to the collapse of Iran's nuclear deal after the US' 2018 withdrawal from the accord. That's still far below weapons-grade levels of 90%, though experts warn Iran now has enough low-enriched uranium for at least two atomic bombs if it chose to pursue them. Analysts have compared Fakhriyadeh to being on par with Robert Oppenheimer, the scientist who led America's Manhattan Project in World War II that created the atom bomb.

Fakhriyadeh headed Iran's so-called AMAD program that Israel and the West have alleged was a military operation looking at the feasibility of building a nuclear weapon. The International Atomic Energy Agency says that "structured program" ended in 2003. Iran long has maintained its nuclear programme is peaceful.

Fakhriyadeh's widow appeared unnamed on state television in a black chador, saying his death would spark a thousand others to take up his work.

"He wanted to get martyred and his wish came true," she said.

Hard-line Iranian media has begun circulating memorial images showing Fakhriyadeh standing alongside a machine-gun-cradling likeness of Revolutionary Guard Gen. Qassem Soleimani, whom the US killed in the January drone strike.

## UK, EU resume face-to-face trade talks with time running out

AP ■ LONDON

Teams from Britain and the European Union resumed face-to-face talks on a post-Brexit trade deal Saturday, with both sides sounding gloomy about striking an agreement in the little time that remains.

EU chief negotiator Michel Barnier returned to London to meet his U.K. counterpart David Frost. Talks have been held virtually for the past week as Barnier completed a spell of self-isolation after a member of his team tested positive for the coronavirus.

COVID-19 is just one complication in negotiations that remain snagged over key issues including fishing rights and fair-competition rules. Barnier said Friday that the remote talks had made little progress and the "same significant divergences persist."

The U.K. left the EU early this year, but remained part of the bloc's economic embrace during an 11-month transition as the two sides tried to negotiate a new free-trade deal to take effect Jan. 1. Talks have already slipped past the mid-November date long seen as a deadline to secure a deal in time for it to be approved and ratified by lawmakers in Britain and the EU.

If there is no deal, New Year's Day will bring huge disruption, with the overnight imposition of tariffs and other barriers to U.K.-EU trade. That will hurt both sides, but the burden will fall most heavily on Britain, which does almost half its trade with the EU.



A crowd of protesters march in Bangkok, Thailand, on Saturday. Pro-democracy demonstrators are continuing their protests calling for the Government to step down and reforms to the constitution and the monarchy, despite legal charges being filed against them and the possibility of violence from their opponents or a military crackdown

## US imposes sanctions on Russian, Chinese companies for supporting Iranian missile programme

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The US has imposed sanctions on four companies from China and Russia for supporting Iran's missile programme that remains a "significant proliferation concern," Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said.

The announcement was made on Friday as the US continues to take tough measures against Iran for continuing their activities related to nuclear arms.

"The US has sanctioned four entities in China and Russia for their support of Iran's missile programme, which remains a significant proliferation concern. We will continue to use all our sanctions tools to prevent Iran from advancing its missile capabilities," Pompeo said.

The companies are Chengdu Best New Materials Co Ltd and Zibo Elim Trade Co, Ltd. in

## UK appoints vaccines minister to oversee Covid inoculations

AP ■ LONDON

The British Government appointed a vaccines minister on Saturday as it prepares to inoculate millions of people against the coronavirus, potentially starting within days.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said Conservative lawmaker Nadhim Zahawi will oversee the country's biggest vaccine programme in decades.

The UK medicines regulator is currently assessing two vaccines — one developed by Pfizer and BioNTech, the other by Oxford University and AstraZeneca — to see if they are safe and effective.

The Guardian newspaper reported that hospitals have been told they could receive the first doses of the Pfizer shot the week of December 7, if it receives approval.

## Virus keeps Black Friday crowds thin, shoppers shift online

AP ■ NEW YORK

The raging coronavirus pandemic kept crowds thin at malls and stores across the country on Black Friday, but a surge in online shopping offered a beacon of hope for struggling retailers after months of slumping sales and businesses toppling into bankruptcy.

In normal times, Black Friday is the busiest shopping day of the year, drawing millions of people eager to get started on their holiday spending.

But these are not normal times: A spike in coronavirus cases is threatening the economy's fitful recovery from the sudden plunge in the spring. Crowds at stores were dramatically diminished as shoppers

shifted online. Game consoles, cookware, robotic vacuum cleaners, slippers and pajamas were popular among shoppers preparing to spend a lot of time indoors this winter. Many were still eager to get into the holiday spirit and delight their loved ones after a tough year.

Eric Kelly, a boxing gym owner, camped outside a store on Black Friday for the first time in his life, trying to score a PlayStation 5 for his 13-year-old twin sons as a reward for persevering through remote learning during the pandemic.

"They've been away from their friends," said Kelly, who failed to get the console at a GameStop in New York City's Union Square but said he would keep trying online. "They've done everything they

had to do in school and outside of school, so I have to award them for being exceptional kids."

Before Black Friday, GameStop teased that it would have a limited supply of the new \$500 PlayStation 5 game console for sale only at its stores, in contrast to other retailers that sold it only online.

Kelly said "people were on top of each other" in the line. At a Garden State Plaza mall in Paramus, New Jersey, police monitored a crowd outside a GameStop, but few people kept their distance.

GameStop said it was taking several safety precautions, including contactless pickup.

Many retailers beefed up their safety protocols to reassure wary customers about coming in on Black Friday. But

stores also catered to those shopping digitally by moving their doorbuster deals online and ramping up curbside pickup options.

"We have been intentional to try to not create the frenzy, the doorbusters, the long lines and the crowds you typically see on a Black Friday," said Stephen Lebovitz, CEO of CBL, which operates about 100 malls and filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in November.

Several hundred shoppers lined up ahead of opening at Mall of America in Bloomington, Minnesota, which normally attracts several thousand on Black Friday. The mall spread out the Black Friday deals over eight days, and many retail tenants pivoted more to online and curbside pickup, said Jill Renslow, Mall

of America's senior vice president of business development.

"It feels good, and it's the right thing to do to keep everybody safe," Renslow said "Everyone is shopping a little differently but that's OK."

Only a trickle of shoppers showed up at Macy's Herald Square in New York an hour after it opened, offering 50% off handbags and 60% off women's and men's coats. Workers sanitized door knobs and windows.

A Christmas tree towered over the largely empty streets around The Domain, the most popular outdoor mall in Austin, Texas. Store employees counted masked shoppers trickling in to stay within the state's 75% capacity limit.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention has labeled shopping in crowded stores during the holidays a "higher risk" activity and says people should limit any in-person shopping.

The National Retail Federation, the nation's largest retail trade group, predicted that shoppers will be looking for reasons to celebrate. The trade group expects sales for the November and December period to increase between 3.6% and 5.2% over 2019, compared with a 4% increase the year before. Holiday sales have averaged gains of 3.5% over the past five years.

"We think there's going to be a psychological factor that they owe it to themselves and their families to have a better-than-normal holiday," said NRF Chief Economist Jack Kleinhenz.

**OFFICE THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD (R&B) CONST. DIV. NO. II, JAMMU**  
**SHORT NOTICE INVITING TENDER**  
 e-NIT No. 108 of 2020-2021/Div-2 Dated 27-11-2020  
 Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Construction Division No. II, Jammu Department Jammu on behalf of Lt. Governor of Union Territory of J&K, invite tenders by e-tendering mode from approved and eligible contractors registered with J&K Union Territory Govt. upto 1800 Hrs on 03-12-2020 for the following work.  
**S.No. 1 Name of Work :- Construction of road from Kanna Chargal to Dhoon by way of laying of Wet Mix Macadam, 50mm thick BM, 25mm thick SDBC. (Under Languishing Scheme)**  
**Name of Division :- PWD (R&B) Const. Div. No. II Jammu**  
**Estimated Cost (Rs. in lacs):- 102.99, Cost of document (in Rs.) :- 6000**  
**Earnest Money (in Rs.):- 205980/- , Time Allowed for completion :- 01 month, Time & date of opening of tender :- 04-12-2020 1400 hours**  
**Class of Contractor :- Hot Mix Plant Holder/ "A" Class Contractor**  
**NOTE: Contractors who have got Contractors cards issued from Kashmir Province, it is mandatory for them to upload their verification certificate of Crime Branch alongwith other qualifying documents failing which their tenders will be declared non-responsive.**  
 1/ Date of Publishing from :- 27-11-2020  
 2/ The Bidding documents can be downloaded from the website <http://jtenders.gov.in> from on 27-11-2020 to 03-12-2020 (1800 Hrs).  
 Sd/- Executive Engineer  
 No. DIP/J-7887/20 PWD (R&B) Const. Div. No. II Jammu  
 Dated: 28.11.2020

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
 It is notified for the information of all concerned that the 02823/02824 Bhubaneswar-New Delhi - Bhubaneswar (via Tatanagar) Rajdhani Special Express will run four days in a week instead of daily as per the following detail :-

Train No. & Name	Frequency	Days of Run	Date from Originating Stations
02823 Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani	4 days in a week	Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri	01.12.2020
02824 New Delhi - Bhubaneswar Rajdhani	4 days in a week	Tue, Wed, Thu, Sat	02.12.2020

**02823/02824 Bhubaneswar - New Delhi - Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Special (Four Days in a week)**

Train No.	ARR.	DEP.	STATIONS	ARR.	DEP.	Train No.	ARR.	DEP.
02823	--	09:30	Bhubaneswar	17:25	--	02824	--	--
	10:00	10:02	Cuttack Jn.	16:40	16:42		11:38	11:40
	12:25	12:27	Balasore	15:12	15:14		12:25	12:27
	13:40	13:50	Hijli	12:35	12:45		15:50	15:55
	17:58	18:00	Tatanagar Jn.	10:35	10:40		19:15	19:20
	20:33	20:38	Muri Jn.	08:25	08:27		20:33	20:38
	21:36	21:38	Bokaro Steel City	07:35	07:40		21:36	21:38
	23:03	23:06	Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Jn. Gomoh	06:30	06:35		23:03	23:06
	01:15	01:25	Koderma	05:19	05:21		01:15	01:25
	05:17	05:22	Gaya Jn.	04:05	04:08		05:17	05:22
	10:45	--	Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn.	02:05	02:15		10:45	--
	--	--	Kanpur Central	21:50	21:55		--	--
	--	--	New Delhi	--	17:05		--	--

**Accommodation : First AC, AC 2Tier and AC 3Tier.**  
**Train No. 02823/24 Bhubaneswar-New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Special Express will run in the existing timings & stoppages of regular Time Tabled Train No. 22823/24.**

**Note: All norms of the State and Central Government regarding COVID-19 including Social distancing, sanitization etc., may be followed in the trains and at the Railway stations. All other precautions associated with COVID-19 should also be ensured.**

**Beware of Touts** Always Buy Train Tickets from Railway Counters/Authorized Railway Travel Agents only

**Note : For any kind of information passengers are requested to contact Railway Enquiry No. 139 or visit Indian Railways website [www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in](http://www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in)**

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# Q2 GDP surprising resilience: Is it good enough to last?

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The surprise resilience shown by the manufacturing sector that restricted GDP contraction to only 7.5 per cent in September quarter could be a result of massive purge in costs such as employee cost by corporates and businesses, which could turn a potential headwind in future, economists at SBI wrote on Saturday.

India's July-September (Q2 of 2020-21 fiscal) GDP growth showed surprising resilience with contraction of only 7.5 per cent in real terms, while the market consensus was higher, wrote Soumya Kanti Ghosh, Group Chief Economic Adviser, State Bank of India, in Ecowrap.

With improvement in manufacturing, due to lifting of lockdown measures GDP contraction has slowed down significantly. Agriculture sector continued to perform well with growth at 3.4 per cent. Services remained in the negative territory, although the decline was contained as trade, hotels, transport, communication and services related to broadcasting showed recovery.

"The most astonishing number is the positive growth in manufacturing Q2. Despite being the worst affected sector in Q1 (due to lockdown), it is quite puzzling how manufacturing turned itself around," he wrote in the Ecowrap issue.

The IIP manufacturing and manufacturing GVA growth are highly correlated (almost more than 0.90) and this correlation collapsed in Q2 when IIP manufacturing declined by 6.7 per cent (average of July-September) while manufacturing GVA grew by 0.6 per cent. "We believe one possible reason for this could be stellar corporate GVA numbers in Q2 on the back of massive purge in costs. Further, we observed small companies, with turnover of up to Rs 500 crore, are more aggressive in cutting cost, displaying reduction in employee cost by 10-12 per cent," Ecowrap said.

This, it said, could turn a potential headwind in future in terms of a drag on consumption. "Additionally, there is evidence of inventory buildup that could act as a drag on future manufacturing growth." Interestingly, government

consumption expenditure has also nosedived in Q2, that is difficult to explain, as such expenditures are typically pro cyclical, Ecowrap said.

SBI economist said the absolute numbers of services sector in Q2FY21 is Rs 17.19 lakh crore, while in Q3FY20 it was Rs 17.35 lakh crore, only Rs 15,000 crore less. This indicates that the services sector has reached the pre-COVID-19 level.

"Is it because of behavioural changes during pandemic like massive transport of goods once the economy opened up and a massive boost to communication and broadcasting with people mostly working from home?" it asked.

One good thing is that the investment demand has improved with resumption in COVID-19 induced stalled projects. However, the patchy growth across sectors reflects in domestic demand figures, which are showing modest recovery sequentially.

The falling imports and continued contraction in investment suggest a poor domestic absorption and intermediate demand.

# Retail inflation for industrial workers rises to 5.91% in Oct

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Retail inflation for industrial workers rose marginally to 5.91 per cent in October from 5.62 per cent in September this year mainly due to higher prices of certain food items.

"Year-on-year (retail) inflation based on all-items stood at 5.91 per cent for October, 2020 as compared to 5.62 per cent for the previous month and 7.62 per cent during the corresponding month of the previous year," a labour ministry statement said.

Similarly, it stated that food inflation stood at 8.21 per cent in October against 7.51 per cent of the previous month (September 2020) and 8.60 per cent during the corresponding month (October 2019) a year ago.

The all-India Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers (CPI-IW) for October 2020 increased by 1.4 points and stood at 119.5 points.

On one-month percentage change, it increased by (+) 1.19 per cent between September and October, 2020 compared to (+) 0.93 per cent



increase between corresponding months of the previous year. The maximum upward pressure in the current index came from the food & beverages group contributing (+) 1.29 percentage points to the total change.

At item level, arhar dal, poultry (chicken), eggs (hen), goat meat, mustard oil, sunflower oil, brinjal, cabbage, carrot, cauliflower, chillies green, gourd, ladyfinger, onion, peas, potato, electricity domestic, doctor's fee, bus fare, etc. Are responsible for the increase in index. However, it said that this increase was checked by wheat, fish fresh, tomato, apple, etc., putting downward pressure on the index. At centre level, Doom-Dooma Tinsukia,

Patna and Ramgarh recorded the maximum increase of 4 points each. Among others, 3 points increase was observed in 9 centres, 2 points in 24 centres and 1 point in 33 centres. Rest of 19 centres' indices remained stationary. Commenting on the index, Labour Minister Santosh Gangwar said, "The increase in CPI-IW will have a positive effect on wages/salaries of industrial workers engaged in the organized sector besides government employees and pensioners." The CPI-IW is the single-most important price statistics which has financial implications. It is primarily used to regulate the dearness allowance of government employees and workers in industrial sectors.

# Punjab accepts Centre's borrowing option to meet GST shortfall

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Congress-ruled Punjab has accepted the Centre's borrowing proposal and will get Rs 8,359 crore through the special window to meet GST revenue shortfall.

"Government of Punjab has communicated acceptance of option 1 to meet the revenue shortfall arising out of GST implementation. The number of states which have chosen this option has gone up to 26. All the 3 Union Territories with Legislative Assembly (i.e. Delhi, Jammu & Kashmir and Puducherry) have also decided in favour of option 1," a finance ministry statement said.

The Centre has already borrowed Rs 24,000 crore on behalf of the states in four instalments and has passed it on to 23 states and three Union Territories on October 23, November 2, November 9 and November 23. From the next round of borrowings, Punjab, Kerala and West Bengal too would receive funds raised through this window. Earlier

this week, Kerala and West Bengal too had communicated to the Centre about accepting the borrowing option to meet GST revenue shortfall.

Under the terms of option 1, besides getting the facility of a special window for borrowings to meet the shortfall arising out of GST implementation, states are also entitled to get unconditional permission to borrow the final instalment of 0.50 per cent of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) out of the 2 per cent additional borrowings permitted by the Government of India, under 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' mission. This is over and above the special window of Rs 1.1 lakh crore. On receipt of the choice of option 1 from the Government of Punjab, the Government of India has granted additional borrowing permission of Rs 3,033 crore to Punjab (0.5 per cent of Punjab's GSDP), the ministry added. Separately, Punjab will get Rs 8,359 crore through special borrowing window to meet the GST implementation shortfall.

# Sany India celebrates new milestone

New Delhi: Sany India, a leading manufacturer of construction equipment & heavy machinery which has been advocating and practising "Vocal for Local", has rolled out its 15000th machine from the company's India facility. Sany India South Asia managing director Deepak Garg said, "Rolling out the 15000th machine is a remarkable achievement that reaffirms our commitment to the domestic construction equipment market."

# Market's bull run may stay, 'too strong' derivatives data a concern

IANS ■ MUMBAI

The bull run in the equity market is likely to continue in days ahead, but the only concern at this point is the "too strong" derivatives data, which may lead to a rapid sell-off in case of a course reversal, according to a report by Motilal Oswal Retail Research.

The report said that at current juncture, market is in bulls grip and dips are getting bought into quickly. Nifty's derivatives data is also positive

and it indicates continuation in ongoing momentum.

It however said FII's index futures data signifies they are overbought in Indian market and any unwinding of longs or fresh shorting may lead to a correction in the market.

Thus, some cautious approach should be adopted at these levels it said.

"As far as levels are concerned, index is moving in uncharted territory and 13,500 would be a hurdle as per options data. On the flipside, major

support exists at 12,700 then 12,350 zones.

The only concern at current juncture is too strong derivatives data and in case of any reversal, the sell-off can be fast," said the report.

It was a historic month for the market as Nifty posted highest ever series on series gains (in absolute term).

Bulls were aggressive from the start of the November series and kept the ball in their court throughout the series, said the report.

# GST officers arrest one for ₹129 cr tax evasion through illegal manufacture, supply of cigarettes

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Officers of GST investigation arm DGGI have arrested a Haryana resident on charges of manufacturing and supplying cigarettes illegally and thereby evading taxes of over Rs 129 crore, the Finance Ministry has said.

"The Directorate General of GST Intelligence (DGGI) Gurugram Zonal Unit (GZU), Haryana has arrested one Satyender Sharma, resident of Haryana, on charges of manufacturing and supplying illegally manufactured cigarettes without the requisite tax paying documents and without payment of applicable GST and cess," the ministry said in

a late night statement on Friday.

The total tax evasion of more than Rs 129 crore is pegged to have been committed by the accused, it added.

Investigation conducted across Delhi and Haryana revealed that Sharma manufactured and supplied cigarettes under his registered brands 'Nidhi Black' 'Gold queen' and 'E-10'.

"Apart from these, the investigation also revealed that Sharma was illegally manufacturing cigarettes under the brand names of 'Paris', 'Pine', 'Black Djarum' 'Esse Lights' which are international trademarks owned by other companies. All these cigarettes were being cleared clandestinely

without payment of applicable GST/cess," the ministry said.

Sharma transported these illegally manufactured cigarettes to New Delhi for further supply across India, it added.

"Based on documentary evidence and statements recorded of all persons during investigation, it was ascertained that Satyender Sharma is the key person in running this racket of manufacturing cigarettes without payment of applicable GST as well as illegally manufacturing cigarettes under international brand names," the ministry added. Sharma was arrested by DGGI officers on November 27.

# Another increase in prices of petrol, diesel

New Delhi: Petrol and diesel prices were increased by oil marketing companies on Saturday as global oil prices remained firm, reaching its highest levels this fiscal. Petrol prices increased by 24 paise to Rs 82.13 per litre on Saturday from Rs 81.89 per litre the previous day. Diesel prices, on the other hand, increased by a higher margin of 27 paise to Rs 72.13 a litre, up from Rs 71.86 a litre on Friday. Oil companies began increasing pump prices of the two petroleum products from last Friday after a nearly two-month-long hiatus in fuel price revision.

## SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

General Public is hereby informed that one girl namely **Chandni D/o Subodh R/o H.No. Bobby Ka Makan, Alipur, Delhi** has been missing/kidnapped since 11.11.2020 from her house the area of P.S. Alipur, Delhi. In this regard a case vide FIR No. 542/20 U/S 363 dated 13.11.2020 has been registered at P.S. Alipur, Delhi.

The description of missing/kidnapped girl is as under :-

**Name :** Chandni, **Father's Name :** Subodh, **Age :** 17 yrs., **Height :** 5'0", **Built:** Thin, **Face :** Oval, **Complexion :** Wheatish, **Hairs:** Black **Wearing :** Red Colour Suit & Salwar. **ID Mark:** Ball in Nose.

If anyone having any clue/information, kindly inform the undersigned.

SHO  
P.S., Alipur, Delhi  
Ph.: 011-27202290  
27202265, 7065036325  
DP/622/ON/2020

## SEARCH FOR MISSING

The general public is hereby informed that a girl namely **Akhatri Khatoon D/o Mohd. Momirul R/o Village- Bari Lal Ganj, PS Etahar, District - Uttar Dinajpur, West Bengal.** Presently at Vanjiya Bhawan, Man Singh Road, New Delhi has been missing since 12.11.2020 from the present address at about 6:00 p.m. In this regard, DD No. 34A, dated 14.11.2020 has been registered at PS Tilak Marg, New Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the missing girl, but no clue has come to light so far. The description of the missing girl is as under:

**Name:** Akhatri Khatoon, **Gender:** Female, **Age:** about 19 years, **Height:** 5'2", **Face:** Round, **Complexion:** Shallow, **Built:** Medium, **Wearing:** Blue colour with white colour dotted suit, blue colour pajami, yellow colour dupatta and black colour slippers on her feet.

If anyone has any information regarding this missing girl, kindly inform SHO/Tilak Marg, New Delhi.

E-mail : [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)  
Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641  
Fax: 011-24368639

SHO  
P.S. Tilak Marg, New Delhi.  
Ph. No. 011-23382100, 23385571  
DP/165/NDD/2020

## SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

General public is hereby informed that one girl namely **Najma, D/o Mohd. Aabid, R/o H.No. A-1201, J.J. Colony, Bawana, Delhi, Age: 17 years, Height: 5'2", Complexion: Fair, Face: Long, Built: Strong, Hair: Black, wearing Navy Blue Suit & Pink colour Salwar, Blue Dupatta and Hawai Chappal in feet,** has been missing/kidnapped from her house since 09.11.2020 at 12:00 PM. In this regard a FIR No. 604/2020 U/S 363 IPC, dated 13.11.2020 has been registered at P.S. Narela Industrial Area, Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the girl but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about her please inform undersigned.

SHO  
P.S. Narela Industrial Area, Delhi  
Ph. No.: 011-27787592, 27787593  
DP/625/ON/2020

## SEARCH FOR MISSING

General public is hereby informed that a person namely **Ganesh Sahu, S/o: Shambhu Sahu, R/o: H. No. 104, Near DAV School, Gym Wali Gali, Budhpur, Delhi** has been reported missing since 11.11.2020 at 08:50 AM from his house. In this regard DD No. 47A, dated 15.11.2020 has been registered at P.S. Alipur, Delhi.

The description of missing person is as under:

**Name:** Ganesh Sahu, **Age:** 23 Years, **Height:** 5'7", **Face:** Round, **Complexion:** Fair, **Built:** Medium, **Wearing:** Orange Shirt, Blue Jeans and Hawai Chappal in feet.

If anyone having any information about this missing person please inform P.S. Alipur, Delhi

Web: <http://cbi.nic.in>, Email: [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)  
Ph.: 011-24368638/24368641, Fax: 011-24368639

SHO  
Police Station Alipur, Delhi  
Ph: 011-27202265, 7065036325  
DP/627/ON/2020

## APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that one male was found dead on 11.11.2020 at Govt. Toilet, S.N. Marg, Delhi in the area of PS Lahori Gate, Delhi. In this regard a DD No. 84A U/S 174 CrPc, Dated 11.11.2020 has been lodged at P.S. Lahori Gate, Delhi. The dead body has been preserved in mortuary of Subzi Mandi, Delhi for 72 hrs for identification. The description of the dead body is given as under:

**Name:** Unknown, **S/o:** Unknown, **R/o:** Unknown, **Age:** about 60 years, **Height:** 5'6" Feet, **Face:** Long, **Complexion:** Shallow, **Built:** Thin, **Wearing:** Black Colour Jacket, White Colour Kurta and Grey Colour Dhoti.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the information about the dead male but no clue has come to light so far. If any one is having any information about this dead male please inform the undersigned.

S.H.O  
P.S. Lahori Gate, Delhi  
Ph.: 011-23953776, 23958234  
DP/748/N/2020

## APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of male **Namely:** Unknown, **S/o:** Unknown, **R/o:** Unknown, **Age:** approx. 35 years, **Height:** 5' 6", **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Face:** Long, **Built:** Thin, **ID:** Rajesh is written on his right hand, **Wearing:** Blue colour linedar shirt and saleti/cream colour pant, who was found dead at Nepali Park Kashmere Gate, Delhi. In this regard a case DD No. 46-A U/S 174 Cr. P.C. Dated 20.11.2020 has been registered at P.S. Kashmere Gate, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone nos.

Sd/- SHO  
P.S. Kashmere Gate, Delhi  
Tel.: 011-23967889  
DP/751/N/2020(UIDB)

# Manufacturing GVA growth in Q2 'surprising': SBI Report

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

The manufacturing sector played a major role in narrowing down the India's GDP contraction in Q2 of FY21. An SBI Ecwrap report, however, dubbed the growth in manufacturing GVA as "astonishing" as the IIP manufacturing for the same period declined by 6.7 per cent. India's GDP in the July-September period contracted 7.5 per cent, compared with 23.9 per cent more than the preceding quarter. The GVA in Q2 2020-21 from the manufacturing sector grew 0.6%, as compared with a degrowth of 0.6% in the corresponding quarter of the previous fiscal.

The report by Soumya

Kanti Ghosh, Group Chief Economic Adviser, State Bank of India, said. "Though the whole press release is full of surprising numbers, the most astonishing number is the positive growth in manufacturing in Q2." He noted that despite being the worst affected sector in Q1 (due to lockdown), it is quite puzzling how manufacturing turned itself around. The IIP manufacturing and manufacturing GVA growth are highly correlated (almost more than 0.90) and this correlation collapsed in Q2 when IIP manufacturing declined by 6.7% (average of July/August/September) while manufacturing GVA grew by 0.6%.

# Demand for holiday homes gains traction amid pandemic

New Delhi: As the pandemic has significantly impacted operations of businesses and people's working model, housing preferences also have changed and the demand for holiday homes or second homes has increased in the past few months. According to Aditya Kushwaha, CEO & Director Axis Ecorp, the need for a perfect balance between work and personal life has fuelled the concept of a weekend retreat in a holiday home. "Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the concept of a holiday home or a second home has gained widespread acceptance. With most of the corporate professionals working from home, geography is no longer a constraint," he said. He

also noted that from the investment perspective, second homes in non-metro cities are a relatively safe investment option with higher capital appreciation compared to homes in metros, especially during COVID-19, when alternative options such as mutual funds, shares have seen diminishing returns. These properties can be rented out to home-stays and tourism businesses, a booming market promising an assured and stable source of income to investors, Kushwaha said. He noted Axis Ecorp has witnessed a rise in demand from NRIs and has around Rs 50 crore worth of stock at its project 'Axis Blues' in Goa, since lockdown was announced in India.

# Total FDI inflow during Q2 FY21 stands at \$28.1 bn

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

The total foreign direct investment (FDI) during the second quarter of financial year 2020-21 stood at \$28.1 billion, out of which FDI equity inflows were \$23.44 billion.

"This takes the FDI equity inflows during the financial year 2020-21 up to September 2020 to \$30,004 million, which is 15 per cent more than the corresponding period of 2019-20," said an official statement.

In rupee terms, the FDI equity inflows of Rs 2,24,613 crore are 23 per cent more than the last year. August 2020 was a significant month when FDI equity inflow of \$1.74 billion was reported in the country.

According to data from the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Mauritius and Singapore were the biggest sources of FDI in India with 29 per cent and 21 per cent contribution respectively.

# NCPEDP pushes for hike in Union Budget allocation for differently-abled

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP) has said the budgetary allocation for people with disabilities has been too low in the past few years. It has urged the Central government to increase the allocation in the upcoming Union Budget.

In a letter to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, NCPEDP said, "Over the past few years the budgetary allocation for person with disabilities has been 0.04 per cent which is disheartening and inadequate to meet the needs of this particularly vulnerable and marginalised section of society."

It noted that people with disabilities have been the worst-hit by the Covid-19 pandemic this year.

"Loss of access to health-

care, support systems, education, livelihood and even basic food supplies are the new normal for the vast majority of India's differently-abled community. At this time especially and in the near future, access to support has become a survival issue."

Among its recommendations, the rights' body for the disabled people said the Union government should ensure inclusive tax policy measures for the differently-abled.

The NCPEDP said no GST should be levied on aids and appliances for persons with disabilities and no tax should be imposed on the purchase of cars and wheelchairs available in the national and international markets.

It also sought an increase in Standard Deduction under Section 80 U and 80 DD of Income Tax for persons with disabilities.

# JNPT says it is adhering to all green norms for Vadnavan port development

Mumbai: The country's leading container port JNPT on Saturday said it is adhering to the terms of reference issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change for prior environmental clearance for development of Vadnavan port. The Govt had in February approved a proposal to set up a new major port at Vadnavan near Dahanu in Maharashtra at an investment of ₹65,544 crore. The new port will be developed on a landlord model under a special purpose vehicle with Jawaharalal Nehru Port Trust as the lead partner with equity participation equal to or more than 50% to implement the project. Of this, ₹16,140 crores will be implemented by the SPV in constructing basic infrastructure like breakwaters, rail line/yard and road connectivity, power and water line, internal roads and common amenities, as per JNPT.



# Time running out for India

With no Plan B in place, Men in Blue need their 'A' game to save ODI series

Australia vs India  
Live from 9:10am IST  
SONY TEN 1, 3 & SIX NETWORK

PTI ■ SYDNEY

India's battered bowling unit will have little time to regroup and limited resources at its disposal in a desperate bid to perform a redemption act and save the ODI series against a turbo-charged Australia in the second game here on Sunday.

It wasn't just about the margin of defeat — by 66 runs — but the manner in which the home team exposed India's vacant cupboard of all-rounders that will give Virat Kohli and Ravi Shastri numerous points to ponder.

Hardik Pandya's 76-ball-90 was at best a good innings but just like the Champions Trophy final in 2017, the sparkling knock was never going to help India win the contest.

Adding insult to injury the was Pandya's frank admission that he is not bowling anytime soon and even if he rolls his arm over, it is likely to be in 20-over World Cups.

So with no back-up all-rounders or a plan B in place, India will have to execute their plan A perfectly.

That leaves Kohli with bowlers who can't bat and a top-order where none can bowl. Kohli did bowl an over or two but that is history as far as the skipper is concerned.

With Australia's top three — captain Aaron Finch, David



Warner and Steve Smith — hitting the straps right away, Jasprit Bumrah and company will have no option but to pick up the pieces and give a better account of themselves on a strip that promises to be a belter.

It is highly unlikely that India's combination will change unless both Yuzvendra Chahal and Navdeep Saini are declared unfit.

The duo collectively conceded 172 runs in 20 overs between them and the wiry wrist-spinner did leave the field after sustaining an on-field injury just after the completion of his spell.

Saini, on the other hand, has

ODIS AT SYDNEY					
Team	P	W	L	N/R	Success%
Australia	133	88	39	6	68.42
India	21	5	15	1	26.19
Aus v Ind	18	15	2	1	86.11

HIGHEST INNINGS TOTALS		
Australia	376-9 in 50 overs vs Sri Lanka	08-03-2015
India	331-4 in 49.4 overs vs Australia	23-01-2016

**FOR THE RECORD**  
 • Virat Kohli will become the eighth Indian and 43rd player overall to appear in 250 or more ODIs.  
 • David Warner who scored 907 runs in 19 innings of 20 matches, needs 93 runs to become 11th Australian to score over 1000 runs against India in ODIs.

Faisal Features

# India missing 'skill and character' of Dhoni: Holding

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

West Indies fast bowling great Michael Holding feels that despite a star-studded batting line-up, the Indian team is missing the "skill and character" that the peerless Mahendra Singh Dhoni used to display during big run chases.

The Indian team looked completely out of sorts as a unit in the opening ODI against Australia.

After a listless bowling display that helped the home side reach 374 for 6, the Men in Blue crumbled under pressure, slumping to a 66-run defeat.

"It was always going to be difficult for India to chase that down. One thing India will struggle with is the loss of Mahendra Singh Dhoni," Holding said in a YouTube chat show *Nothing Back*.

The 66-year-old further said that India missed the composure and control of Dhoni, who retired from international cricket in August this year.

"Dhoni comes in to this Indian batting order halfway down and he usually takes control while chasing. India have chased so well in the past with MS Dhoni in the team.

"This batting line-up that they have got is still very talented — we saw some talented players and fantastic strokeplay. Hardik played a beautiful knock but they still need a player like Dhoni. Not just his skills but his strength of character," he added.

Holding said the Indian team felt more confident going about run chases with Dhoni in the side.

"They have never been afraid to win the toss and insert



the opposition because they know what MS Dhoni is capable of and their batting is capable of." Dhoni's calmness was a big factor in run-chases.

"We never see Dhoni panicking at any stage while India are chasing. He usually paces that chase so well because he knows his ability and he knows how to go about the chase."

The former pacer added that Dhoni not only assessed the situation well but also provided support and insights to the person batting alongside him.

"Whoever is batting with him, he is always talking with

them and helping them. Fantastic batting line-up, but MS Dhoni was a special man in the run-chase," Holding said.

The former cricketer turned commentator also slammed India's sloppy display on the field.

"India didn't help themselves with their fielding. The SCG is a big ground but the boundary rope was still in from the extremes of the boundary."

Kohli and company dropped at least four catches, missed a run out opportunity apart from several sloppy fielding efforts.

# India cop 20% fine for slow overrate

PTI ■ DUBAI

The Indian cricket team was fined 20 per cent of its match fee for maintaining a slow over-rate against Australia in the series opening first ODI in Sydney.

India took an unprecedented four hours and six minutes to complete their 50 overs during their 66-run loss in the first ODI.

ICC match referee David Boon imposed the sanction after India was ruled to be one over short of the target after time allowances were taken into consideration.

Even Steve Smith after the match conceded that it was the longest 50-over game he had been part of.

"It was the longest 50 overs in the field I've ever had, that's for sure."

"I don't know what to put that down to. Obviously a few people came on the field in the first innings which took a bit of time and I think they (India) went 45 minutes over the scheduled time and we were something similar," Smith said.

# Bairstow takes Eng home

AFP ■ CAPE TOWN

Jonny Bairstow powered England to a five-wicket win over South Africa in the first T20I at Newlands in Cape Town on Friday.

Bairstow smashed 86 not out off 48 balls as England chased down a victory target of 180 with four balls to spare.

England were struggling at 34/3 before Bairstow and Ben Stokes (37) changed the momentum of the match with a fourth wicket stand of 85.

Even so, South Africa still had a realistic chance of winning as England went into the last four overs needing 51 runs.

But left-arm fast bowler Beuran Hendricks conceded 28 runs in the 17th over, including three wides which cost eight runs, as Bairstow and England captain Eoin Morgan went on the attack.

Morgan said the win was "extremely pleasing, given that we were pretty average apart from two or three players."

Morgan said England's bowlers "missed areas", although left-arm Sam Curran claimed a career-best three for 28 in South Africa's innings of 179/6.

And he was disappointed with the batting start, although he praised Bairstow and Stokes.



"Jonny and Ben rebuilding the way they did set up the win nicely," he told *SuperSport* television.

Bairstow batted at number four instead of opening as he often does in white-ball cricket.

"It's something you've got to enjoy," he said. "You learn to craft your innings in different ways."

Bairstow hit nine fours and four sixes, finishing the match in style with his fourth six which sailed into a building sight on the northern end of the ground.

Former captain Faf du Plessis top-scored for South Africa with 58 off 40 balls after his side were sent in on a cool evening.

South Africa's first international match since March was staged without spectators because of Covid restrictions.

South African captain Quinton de Kock refused to blame the Hendricks over.

"I don't think it was just the one over. It was the way Jonny and Ben played. We didn't play badly. They played really well." The teams meet again in a day game in Paarl on Sunday.

# VAR DRAMA AT AMEX

Liverpool saw two goals disallowed by VAR before the Seagulls were awarded a late penalty to clinch 1-1 draw

AFP ■ BRIGHTON

Liverpool were frustrated by VAR as Pascal Gross's controversial late penalty rescued a dramatic 1-1 draw for Brighton at the Amex Stadium on Saturday.

Jürgen Klopp's side took the lead through Diogo Jota's second half strike after Brighton's Neal Maupay had missed a penalty in the first half.

But Liverpool were stunned in stoppage-time when Andrew Robertson's challenge on Danny Welbeck was ruled a penalty after Stuart Attwell overturned his initial decision.

Gross converted from the spot, leaving Klopp sarcastically applauding the officials at the end of a disappointing week for Liverpool after their shock Champions League defeat at home to Atalanta.

Liverpool went back to the top of the table as a result of their draw, but the champions are just one point ahead of previous leaders Tottenham.

Tottenham would regain pole position if they avoid defeat at Chelsea on Sunday, while the Blues will go top if they win.



It was one of those days for Liverpool, who also saw goals correctly disallowed by VAR for offside against Mohamed Salah and Sadio Mane.

There was more bad news for injury-ravaged Liverpool as James Milner was forced off in the second half.

With Virgil van Dijk and Joe Gomez injured and Joel Matip rested, Klopp's makeshift defence were exposed when Maupay's pass sent the unmarked Aaron Connolly racing through on goal.

But with just Liverpool keeper Alisson Becker to beat, Connolly lost his nerve and

timidly guided his shot well wide.

Connolly's runs were causing Liverpool problems and when the Brighton forward made another well-timed incursion in the 20th minute, he was tripped in the penalty area by the panicked Neco Williams after he was caught out of position.

Maupay stepped up to take the spot-kick, but his side-foot effort went wide despite Alisson diving the wrong way.

It was a lucky escape for Liverpool and Maupay's misery was compounded when he limped off injured moments later.

Liverpool thought they had hit back with a sucker punch when Salah sprinted onto Firmino's pass and scuffed his shot past Brighton keeper Mat Ryan.

But VAR curtailed Salah's celebrations as he was ruled off-side by the tightest of margins.

After a spluttering first half, Klopp's men finally found some rhythm following Jordan Henderson's introduction at the break.

flash a shot narrowly wide and in the 60th minute the Portugal forward put Liverpool.

Robertson found Salah and his pass teed up Jota on the edge of the Brighton area.

Skipping past two Brighton defenders, Jota cleverly drilled low shot back into the bottom corner.

Jota has enjoyed a superb start to life with the Premier League champions, scoring nine times in 14 games since signing from Wolves in September.

Salah was substituted just after the goal, but he didn't seem happy with Klopp's move, gesticulating with his hands and ignoring the German when he walked past him to the bench.

Liverpool were seconds away from three points when Robertson went to clear in his own area as Welbeck closed in.

Robertson's foot made contact with Welbeck, but there were few appeals from Brighton before Attwell awarded a contentious penalty after consulting the pitchside monitor.

With Maupay off the pitch, Gross took this one and fired down the middle to salvage an unexpected point.

## KONARK FESTIVAL

OPEN AIR AUDITORIUM, KONARK, INDIA

**1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

**6.00 PM to 8.30 PM**

**1<sup>st</sup> December**  
**ODISSI**  
 Orissa Dance Academy  
 Aruna Mohanty & Group  
 Bhubaneswar

**2<sup>nd</sup> December**  
**MANIPURI**  
 Manipuri Nartanalaya  
 Bimbavati Devi & Group  
 Kolkata

**ODISSI**  
 Sanjali Ensemble  
 Sharmila Mukherjee  
 & Group, Bengaluru

**3<sup>rd</sup> December**  
**ODISSI**  
 Nrityantar  
 Madhulita Mohapatra  
 & Group, Bengaluru

**KUCHIPUDI**  
 Kalasamarpan Foundation  
 Vasanthalakshmi Narasimhachari  
 & Group, Chennai

**4<sup>th</sup> December**  
**KATHAK (Ballet)**  
 Ranan  
 Vikram Iyenger & Group  
 Kolkata

**ODISSI**  
 Rudrakshya Foundation  
 Bichitrnanda Swain & Group  
 Bhubaneswar

**5<sup>th</sup> December**  
**ODISSI**  
 GKCM Odissi Research Centre  
 Bhubaneswar

**KATHAK**  
 Dristikona Dance Foundation  
 Aditi Mangaldas & Group  
 New Delhi

Live telecast in DD Bharati and Live streaming in [www.webcast.gov.in](http://www.webcast.gov.in)

**Also Enjoy!**

## INTERNATIONAL SAND ART FESTIVAL

**1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2020**  
 CHANDRABHAGA BEACH, KONARK, ODISHA

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# the pioneer agenda



FROM THE INSIDE

## Pebbles of a dead sea

Few know that Goa has a past that dates back to the saga of Parshuram in Hindu mythology and India's pre-Islamic era



## Mind balance is the key

It is important to work upon our mind-state before pursuing spiritual process, otherwise it will not offer desired results

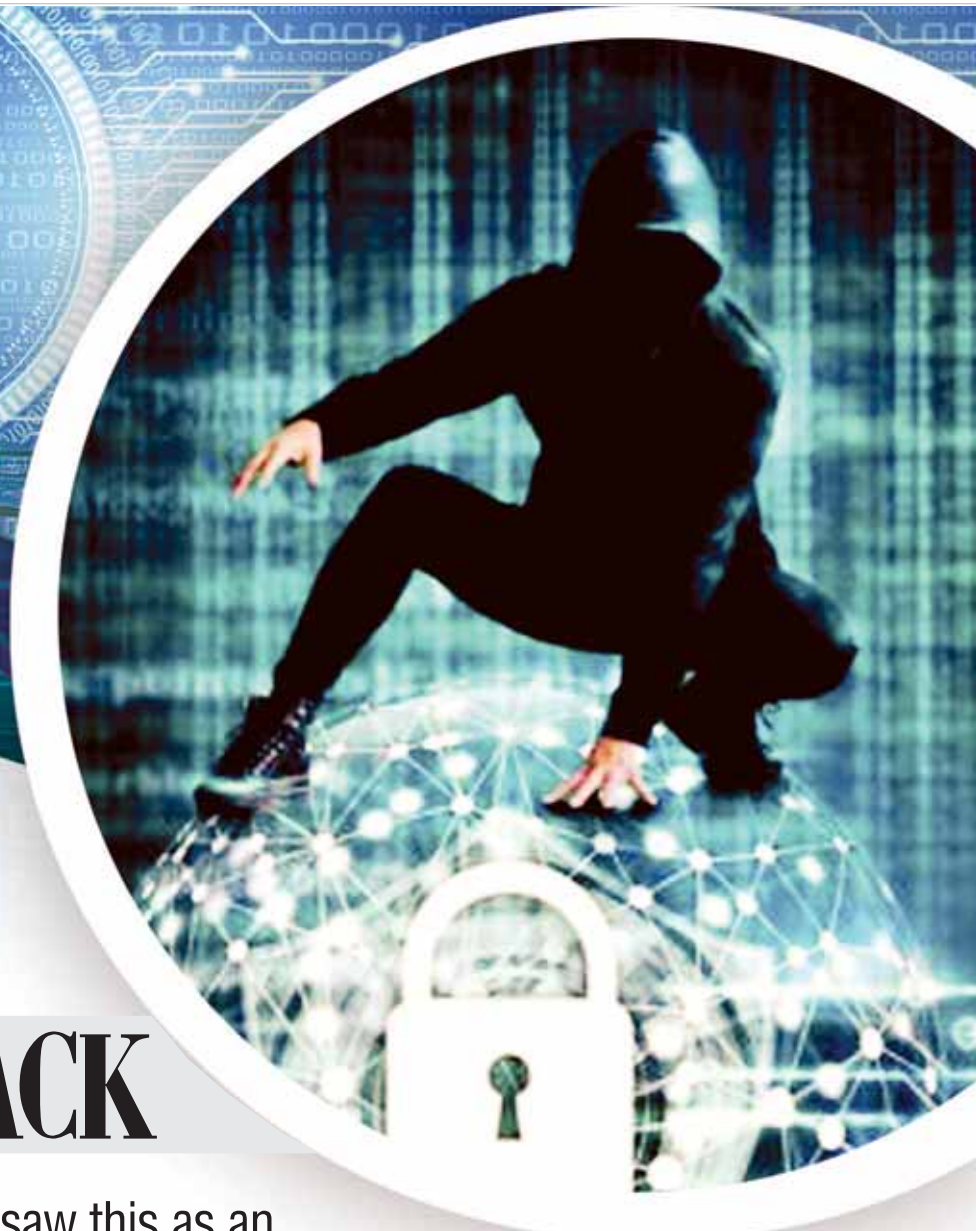
You go through spells where you feel that maybe you're too sensitive for this world. I certainly felt that  
— Winona Ryder



# WORKING FROM HOME



## BEWARE OF THAT CYBER ATTACK



As the world got busy battling the effects and impact of the virus, hackers saw this as an opportunity to exploit new vulnerabilities that emerged from a large numbers working from home, writes AJAY SINGH, as he explains various cyber risks faced by individuals and groups and suggests ways to tackle them

The Covid-19 pandemic has led to lockdowns across the world and made working from home an inevitable necessity. While this allows businesses to remain operational, it has exposed organisations to several new risks, particularly for those who fail to take the proper precautions. Even as the world got busy battling the effects and impact of the virus, hackers saw this as an opportunity to exploit new vulnerabilities that emerged from a large work force working from home.

Various reports around the world indicate a sharp increase in cybercrime even as Covid-19 has caused major disruptions and forced changes in the way we work. During this crisis, there has been a sudden surge in cybercrime in many countries with cybercriminals preying on new factors and vulnerabilities related to information systems that have come into play.

Scams, phishing websites, maps loaded with malware, and spam messages linked to the Coronavirus have been reported the world over. Dominic Raab, the British Foreign Secretary observed in early May that "There will always be some who seek to exploit a crisis for their own criminal and hostile ends. We know that cyber criminals, and other malicious groups are targeting individuals, businesses, and other organisations by deploying Covid-19 related scams and phishing emails." Since then cyber threats and attacks have only increased.

The lockdowns have not only made us work from home, but also shop-from-home, study-from-home, bank-from-home, attend meetings from home and so on. Studies have also shown a dramatic increase in the amount of time people are spending on-line. Fortunately, technologies like video conferencing, BYOD (Bring Your Own Device), VPN (Virtual Private Network), and collaborative platforms exist today that enable working from home. However, the exposure to cyber risk has grown exponentially and rather suddenly and existing security standards have been compromised. Cybercriminals have been quick to discover that employees working from home have weaker cybersecurity than when they operate from their offices. They have exploited new weaknesses in the various technologies used and have incessantly launched attacks.

Given that we are spending (and will continue to spend) a major part of our lives on-line, a comprehensive assessment of the cyber risks that we are exposed to as individuals, families, and businesses, is key to survive and thrive.

A large number of organisations have already announced that some office-based employees will be working from home in some form for the foreseeable future and perhaps even permanently. This shift to a work from home environment which initially was

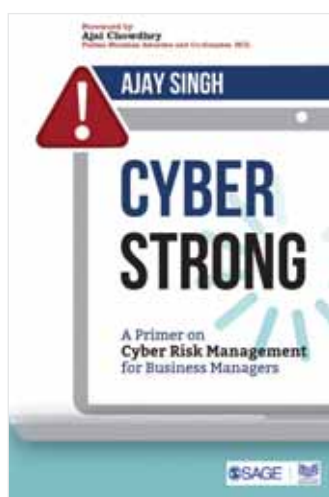
considered as a temporary solution may become a regular practice. This necessitates a complete rethink on cyber risks and involves moving away from traditional cybersecurity approaches. Any policies and protocols related to cybersecurity which were introduced when companies switched to work-from-home may have served them in the short-term, but when it comes to long-term measures, a thorough re-evaluation needs to be conducted. With the easing of lockdown restrictions, when employees will no longer be confined to working from home, the larger questions of dealing with cyber risks of working-from-anywhere will become more relevant. The top of the cybersecurity agenda for individuals, businesses, and governments in the aftermath of coronavirus should therefore be to mitigate cyber risks and build a safer and more resilient cyber environment.

### INDIVIDUALS AND CYBER RISKS

We have all been a target of cyber-attacks in some form or the other, for instance phishing attacks, phone calls or SMSs from cybercriminals, among others. They are after your personal data, passwords, social ids, bank information and social contacts... basically anything that can either fetch them a price for your data or can help them launch bigger attacks. Escaping a cyber-attack means that you have been vigilant, prepared or simply lucky enough to avoid one.

There are fortunately many things we can do as individuals to make our online existence safer while working from home or for that matter working from anywhere. Before looking at what we can do, consider the findings of the latest Norton Cyber Security Insights Report which suggests that:

- 30% of people cannot detect a phishing attack and another 13 percent cannot tell the difference between a real message and a phishing email. This implies that four in 10 are vulnerable.
- Eighty-six percent of people said they may have been a target of a phishing incident.
- 70% of consumers wish that their home Wi-Fi network could be made more secure. However, a mere 27% consider it likely that their home Wi-Fi network could be susceptible to attack.
- This goes to show that cyber threats are greatly enhanced by the fact people are largely unaware of the cyber risks that they have to contend with and the counter measures they must adopt to mitigate the risks. Some of the basic things that contribute to maintain better cyber hygiene while working from home are:
  - Instead of using personal devices, company-provided computers and laptops should be used
  - A VPN software can be utilised to connect the organisation network
  - Using different devices for work and leisure



THE LOCKDOWNS HAVE NOT ONLY MADE US WORK FROM HOME, BUT ALSO SHOP-FROM-HOME, STUDY-FROM-HOME, BANK-FROM-HOME, ATTEND MEETINGS FROM HOME AND SO ON. STUDIES HAVE ALSO SHOWN A DRAMATIC INCREASE IN THE AMOUNT OF TIME PEOPLE ARE SPENDING ON-LINE. FORTUNATELY, TECHNOLOGIES LIKE VIDEO CONFERENCING, BYOD (BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE), VPN (VIRTUAL PRIVATE NETWORK), AND COLLABORATIVE PLATFORMS EXIST TODAY THAT ENABLE WORKING FROM HOME. HOWEVER, THE EXPOSURE TO CYBER RISK HAS GROWN EXPONENTIALLY

- Stopping remote access unless it is a necessity
- Default passwords should be changed
- Devices and online accounts should have strong passwords. For both personal and business accounts multi-factor authentication wherever available, should be utilised
- Meeting links should strictly not be shared publicly or through social media platforms
- Trusted apps or those recommended by one's employer should be used for work involving collaboration
- Regularly updating operating systems, antiviruses and other applications on computers and other devices
- Home Wi-Fi and admin passwords should be changed regularly, while avoiding open/free Wi-Fi networks
- Cyber-hygiene guidelines as laid out by one's employer should be strictly followed

### ORGANISATIONS AND CYBER RISKS

Today, almost all businesses regardless of the industry they are in and their size are vulnerable to cyber-attacks which can happen at any time, without warning. This is true across sectors and geographies. The pandemic has only accelerated the need to implement comprehensive cybersecurity programs after a thorough assessment of existing, new, and emerging cyber risks. The concept of a cyber 'perimeter' which was once confined to the walls of an organisation or a data centre has completely eroded. Security professionals have been forced to abandon the traditional castle-and-moat strategy used so effectively in the past due to the arrival of cloud computing and the use of portable devices by organisations coupled with the integration of personal devices into organisational systems. The cyber perimeter has interminably moved from the walls of the enterprise to what is today a flexible and extended virtual perimeter. This calls for a reassessment of cyber risks and requirements across the following four dimensions:

- **Technology dimension:** securing IT systems, applications, networks, data, and devices
- **People:** employees and others who are users and have access an organisation's system
- **Policies, Procedures and Processes** that are used to run business operations
- **Laws, regulations, and compliance**

In the near future as the pandemic continues, there are a few types of cyber-threats companies must specifically be prepared for and safeguard against:

**Ransomware:** Ransomware is a type of malware that is used to deny access to a computer system or data by encrypting the information and keeping it hostage until the ransom is paid. There has been an alarming rise

in Ransomware attacks in recent months. The deployment methods include socially engineered emails packed with malware, or a weblink that triggers a drive-by download. Some of the ways to protect your systems from Ransomware attacks include changing default passwords at all access points, training employees in identifying suspicious email links, keeping air-gapped up-to-date data back-ups, prohibiting the use of USB drives, and updating all operating systems and software in time.

**Phishing:** This is a type of social engineering attack where hackers attempt to steal login credentials such as passwords or deceive people in multiple ways into installing malware. Employee training to recognise phishing emails and the use of multi-factor authentication can help to prevent or mitigate damage from a cyber-attack which may result from a phishing exploit.

**Business email compromise:** During this pandemic, a large number of cases of business email compromise instances have been reported. Here, cybercriminals spoof emails (usually making them look like they are from legitimate sources) to redirect a payment intended for one of the company's suppliers to their own bank accounts. In a work from home scenario, where employees are not in front of each other to seek clarifications, these kinds of cyber-attacks are on the rise. Preventing such attacks calls for a high degree of vigilance and situational awareness among employees (especially those processing payments). Employees must be advised to be careful and alert to such attempts and double check before they initiate action. Organisations must also implement additional controls to prevent any mistakes in this regard.

**Bring Your Own Device (BYOD):** The use of personal devices like phones, laptops and tablets for office work has become common nowadays. As employees switched to working from home, there are many who also started to use their home devices for day to day work. While companies may have policies for onboarding these devices into the corporate network, there is often laxity and carelessness in observing the protocols. More so, during the pandemic. The absence of specific organisational cybersecurity protocols makes them a cyber risk. If any of these devices are compromised, they can provide hackers with an opening into a corporate's network and data which can be accessed and exploited. If employees continue to work from home and rely on personal devices for the foreseeable future, then a more robust protocol must be established which mandates the installation and updating of security software on personal devices that are used for office work.

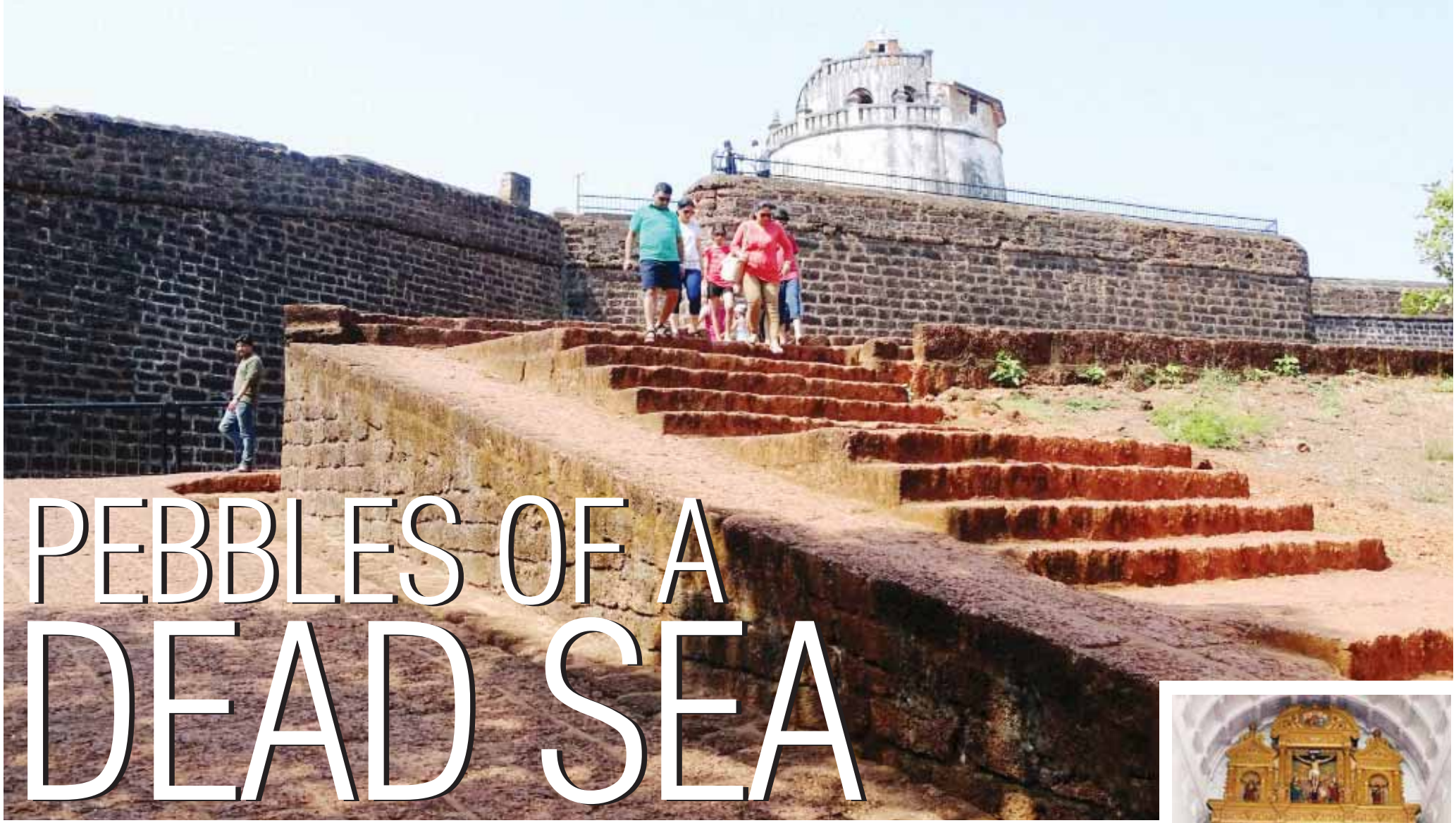




YOU DON'T STUMBLE UPON  
YOUR HERITAGE. IT'S  
THERE, JUST WAITING TO  
BE EXPLORED AND SHARED  
— ROBBIE ROBERTSON

Photos: Worrel Kumar Bain and Reynold Machado

Goa and Portuguese colonisation of India are almost synonymous. Few know that Goa has a past that dates back to the saga of Parshuram in Hindu mythology and India's pre-Islamic era, writes **SOMEN SENGUPTA**. UNESCO World Heritage Week was recently celebrated in India from November 19 to November 25



# PEBBLES OF A DEAD SEA

**N**estled between the Western Ghats and Sahayadri Hills, and watered by two beautiful rivers named Mandovi and Zuari, this land was long isolated from the Indians. It was isolated not because of any physical feature or inaccessibility, but for its distinctive history and heritage that was seemingly "foreign" for British-ruled Indians. Goa, the coastal territory of Konkan heartland, was always a hidden pearl and a prized colonial nest for Portugal, a country that traded and ruled at many parts of the globe for several centuries.

Goa and Portuguese colonisation of India are almost synonymous. Few know Goa has a past that dates back to the saga of Parshuram in Hindu mythology and India's pre-Islamic era.

Hindu mythology says that this land was created from sea by Parashuram the 6th incarnation of Vishnu. Parashuram, according to mythology, excavated this surface from sea with his arrow and gifted it to the Brahmans. In the ancient times, it was known as Govapuri and later Gomantak.

In 3rd century BC, it was a part of Maurya Empire and after that till the end of 750 AD almost all Hindu dynasties of Western India like Satavahanas, Chalukya and Rashtrakuta ruled this land. It fell into the hands of Muslims in 1312 and again in 1370, Hindu king of Vijaynagar conquered it. Hindu rule ended in 1470 when Adil Shah of Bijapur gained Goa.

This was the time when the fragrance of Goa's exotic spices began to attract the Portuguese, who had already arrived in Kerala in 1498, like a magnet. In 1510, 12 years after Vasco Da Gama arrived in Kerala as a trader, another Portuguese named Alfonso De Albuquerque showed his military might and became the ruler of Goa.

Soon after, they took over Diu in 1534 and Daman in 1559. A large part of Bengal was already under the Portuguese and with the new territory, they cemented a foundation of India's Portuguese colonisation. This prevailed till 1961, following which India reclaimed it after a soft military operation.

The conquest of Goa was perhaps the beginning of Portuguese dream to imprint their colonial stamp upon India. As a tyrannical race they soon got into conflict with local Indians, resulting in demolition of temples and forceful religious conversions. This was also the time when they tried to stop the practice of *sati* cult but failed. Soon the need was felt to protect Goa from other European powers, like British and Dutch East India Company, and even from the Maratha warrior, Shivaji, who attacked the Portuguese of Goa.

The need for military competence pushed the Portuguese to go for massive fortification. They got direct

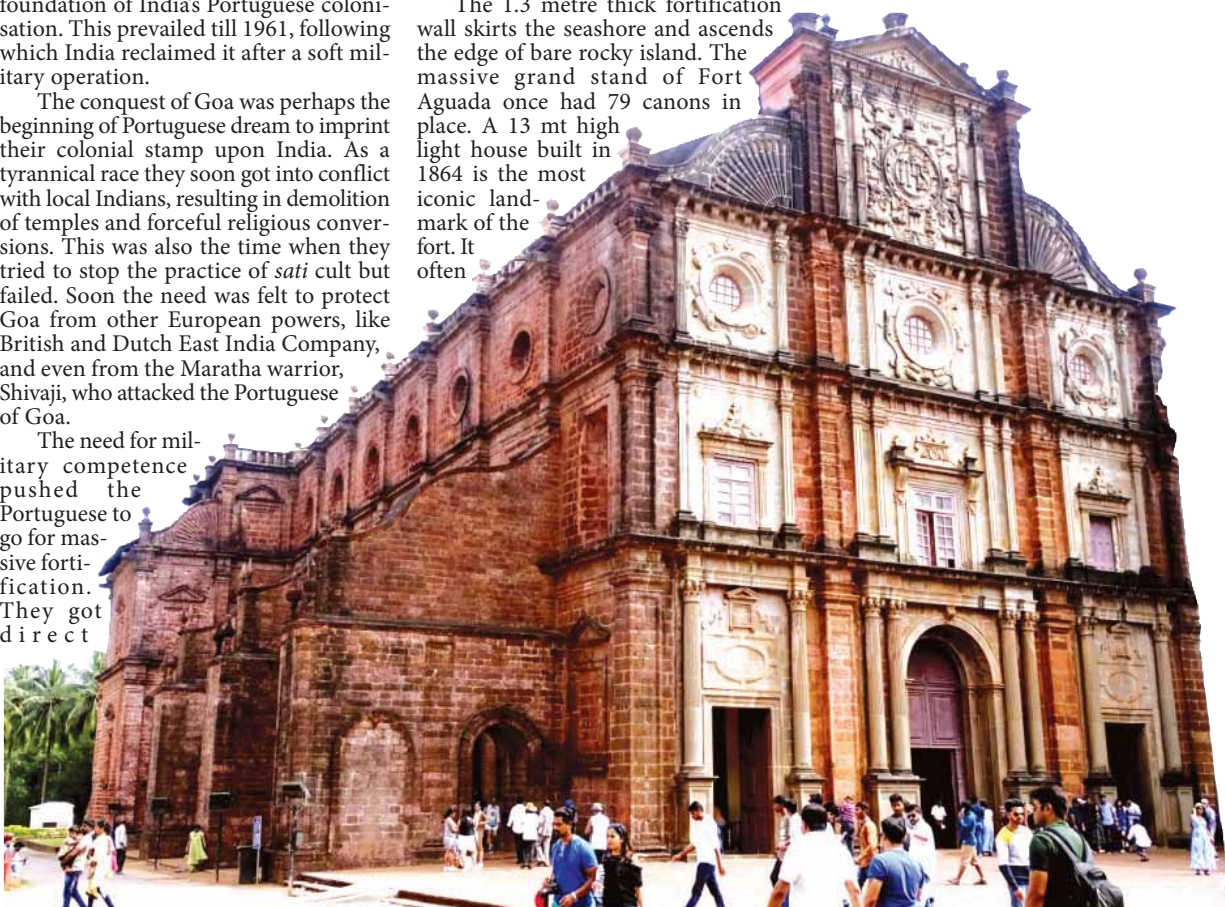
support from Lisbon to expand their activities in India, such as expansion of Christianity, through the missionaries landing from Europe. Soon there was a visible change in the entire demography of Goa and tangible changes in architecture, language, food, dress, music and sports Goa came about. Goa gradually became a unique place within India.

This little Portugal of India gradually boomed in its own style and pace. Majestic churches, forts, printing press and above all a legend named "St Francis Xavier" turned Goa into an unparalleled place to which no other Portuguese colonies of India (be it those in Bengal or Gujarat) came a close match.

Towering among the past relic of that fascinating time is Fort Aguada that was built from 1609 to 1612 and still stands a living testimony at north Goa. This is one of the few forts of India, that was never conquered by enemies.

Built in sturdy brown laterite stone for the sake of combating the British, Dutch and Marathas, this is perhaps the best sample of Portuguese military architecture in India. *Aguada* means water, and this fort once had several sweet water streams flowing inside it, offering a great provision of drinking water both for its inhabitants and sailing ships that used to anchor near it. The fort strategically faces Candolim beach near river Mandovi. The upper part of the fort was used as water station and fort where as the lower part was used to berth Portuguese war ships. The huge water reservoir is assumed to store not less than 23,76,000 gallons of water.

The 1.3 metre thick fortification wall skirts the seashore and ascends the edge of bare rocky island. The massive grand stand of Fort Aguada once had 79 canons in place. A 13 mt high light house built in 1864 is the most iconic landmark of the fort. It often



**THIS LITTLE PORTUGAL OF INDIA GRADUALLY BOOMED IN ITS OWN STYLE AND PACE. MAJESTIC CHURCHES, FORTS, PRINTING PRESS AND ABOVE ALL, A LEGEND NAMED "ST FRANCIS XAVIER" TURNED GOA INTO AN UNPARALLELED PLACE TO WHICH NO OTHER PORTUGUESE COLONIES OF INDIA (BE IT THOSE IN BENGAL OR GUJARAT) CAME A CLOSE MATCH**



appears in many movies. St Lawrence church built in 1630 is situated inside the fort.

Though a large part of the fort is now dilapidated and submerged in water, its remains give enough idea of typical Portuguese style of fortification. Its well planned moats, gunpowder room, bastions, light house and escape passage all are still visible and very clearly mirror mystic timeline of the history.

Goa witnessed a silent revolution when India's first printing press was set up there, though accidentally. It is interesting to note that the first book printed in India was not in Bombay or Bengal Presidency, where historically almost all modern wonders landed from Europe.

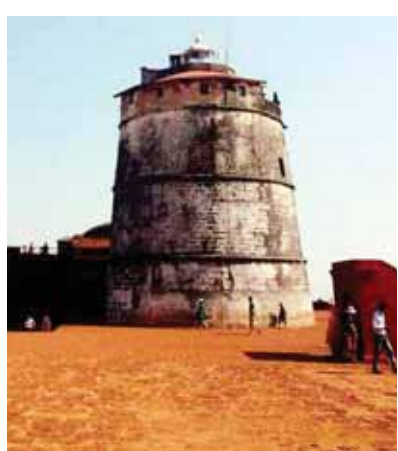
It was in September 1556 when a printing press machine, which was originally meant to be delivered at Abyssinia or Ethiopia, arrived in Goa and placed in St Paul's college. From that machine, for the first time, a Spanish technologist named Juan De Bustamante printed a book of Theology named *Conclusions Philosophic*.

This machine was actually shipped from Portugal to Abyssinia of Africa. When the ship anchored at Goa on its way to Abyssinia, the relations between the two countries had declined as the king of Abyssinia detested the fact that Christian missionary had come to his country. So the machine was abandoned at Goa and it was sheer luck that India, as the first country of Asia, got to see the magic of printing machine. Unfortunately, after 1660, the machine went traceless. Today, a printing museum in Goa tells the story without showing any tangible relics.

Portuguese touch is palpable in every corner of old Goa, especially in its massive churches and cathedrals. Two most significant of those are Se Cathedral de Santa Catarina and Basilica de Bom Jesus. Both are UNESCO world heritage monuments and both are filled with stories of exciting history of Portuguese conquest of Goa and its religious history.

Se Cathedral is perhaps the most celebrated religious building of Goa. This is the largest church of India and even bigger than any in Portugal.

A classical example of Gothic Portuguese Manueline style of architec-



ture, this massive church of 250 ft in length and 187 ft wide was built between 1562 to 1619 during the golden era of Portuguese.

Dedicated to the feast of St Catherine of Alexandria, it was built to commemorate the victory of Portuguese over Muslims in 1510. The church exterior bears a Tuscan touch while the interiors are much of Corinthian. Its extraordinary Iberian facade, colourful mosaic floors, typical European ceiling and exotic wood carvings, all put together, create an outstanding piece of European architecture which is matchless on many counts. The laterite plinth and lime plaster of the church have survived the test of time.

Earlier, the church had two towers. One of which was grounded in 1776. The church has a bell called the Golden bell and a chapel known as Cross of Miracles. It is believed that in 1619, the vision of Christ had fallen there. This legend attracts a huge crowd all across the globe. It is the Cathedral of Arch Bishop of Goa. A convent adjacent to it houses a small yet good archaeological museum.

If Se Cathedral is famous for Cross of Miracle then Basilica de Bom Jesus (a smaller monument) is a bigger crowd puller as it holds the legend of St Francis Xavier, the man who is considered the "greatest figure in Asia after St Thomas the Apostle".

Goa's emergence as one of the holiest place in the Christian world is largely because of its association with a holy relic



of a man who died in 1552 in China.

Born in Spain and sent to India in 1542 by both the King of Portugal and Pope the third, Francis Xavier, spent 10 years in Goa serving leprosy cursed people and spreading the message of Christ. From 1510 to 1540, when Portuguese brutality over Indian masses was at its apex, he landed there as an apostle of peace and first gained confidence of local people by serving them. It was he who attracted a huge mass to Christianity that finally changed Goa to a very different demographic marquee in India.

After his death in China, his body which was still intact after many months of his demise, was brought back to Goa on March 14, 1554 and kept in a casket gifted by Queen of Portugal Maria Sophia in 1560 at Basilica de Bom Jesus. The relic is placed on the right wall of the church and can be seen from a distance.

This attracts thousands of pilgrims across the world. Every 10 years the casket is taken down and people are allowed to get a closer look of the relic.

Over a period of time, however, several distortions have taken place. One finger of its feet was vandalised by a lady in 1554 and the right hand of the body was sent to Vatican in 1914, as demanded by Pope himself. This was a year after Xavier was crowned as Saint.

Basilica De Bom Jesus is a gem of architecture and perhaps, the most famous Portuguese footprint in Goa. Its bare exterior, made of brown laterite, offers an irresistible charm to mingle with history. Built between 1594 and 1605 in late Rene structure, it blends Doric, Ionic, Roman and Corinthian style of architecture. The facade contains Jesuit motif emblem "HIS" an abbreviation of Latin *Iesus Hominum Salvator* meaning "Jesus, Saviour of Men". The monument enshrines statue of St Ignatius Loyala and infant Jesus.

Cathedral, fort, lighthouse and old colonial buildings are now open to public and Government alike. The general panorama of old Goa runs like a motion picture visualising a saga much different from India's general history. Even though Portuguese are long gone the profound footprints are alive in every edifice of Parashuram's land.

FROM PAGE 1

## Working From Home? Beware of that cyber attack

**F**ocusing on the softer aspects of cybersecurity:

Thus far, discussions around cyber security have largely focused on IT infrastructure, and the risks that software and hardware can pose to businesses. However, the pervasiveness of cyber threats like Ransomware, stealing of passwords, social engineering attacks like phishing

and Business Email, Compromise among others are forcing businesses to consider the softer and less tangible aspects of cyber security such as awareness, training and a security first culture. A heightened level of situational awareness in the context of responsible online behaviour, maintaining basic cybersecurity standards and

training is also necessary to ensure both new and existing employees are well versed in cyber risks.

### GOVERNMENT AND CYBER RISKS

Governments around the world have taken note of the alarming rise in cybercrime in recent months which coincide with the spread of the pandemic.

Indian citizens, commercial and legal entities faced nearly seven lakh cyber-attacks till August in the current year according to Government data. Recognising the rapidly increasing cyber risks, the Government of India issued guidelines for Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs) relating to their key roles and responsibilities for securing

applications/infrastructure and compliance. All Ministries/ Departments of the Central Government, State Governments (and their organisations) and all critical sectors are implementing a 'Cyber Crisis Management Plan for countering cyber-attacks and cyber terrorism'. Mumbai suffered a major power outage on October 12 which lasted several hours.

Today, authorities are investigating whether this was a cyber-attack.

Cyber risk is real, and it is potent. For all digital citizens and entities, it is a reality that will outlast the pandemic. The specific cybersecurity security challenges across industry sectors, governmental systems, public utilities are wide ranging. As cybersecurity experts say, you are never done as far as cybersecurity is concerned.

Cyber risks and threats keep evolving and so should cybersecurity measures and systems. This is one game you have to keep winning to survive and thrive in the digital world.

*The writer is a Corporate Advisor and mentor. He has recently authored a book titled CyberStrong: A Primer on Cyber Risk Management for Business Managers, published by SAGE Publications India*



## OTHERVOICE

## Development at the cost of forest: An ethical concern

Decision to give away 243 acres of Shivalik Elephant Reserve forest land for the expansion of Jolly Grant Airport in Dehradun is a matter of grave concern, triggering a debate on development and environment



NIBEDITA PRIYADARSHINI JENA

The Uttarakhand Government's decision to give away 243 acres of Shivalik Elephant Reserve forest land for the expansion of Jolly Grant Airport in Dehradun is a matter of serious concern which once again opens the debate on development and environment.

The State Government, considering the development motives in terms of economic and technological growth, has taken the decision of using the forest land. The encroachment is predicted to harm a cluster of things, yet certain immediate observable damage can be cited like the loss of 10,000 trees which can't be compensated, limiting the free movement of wild animals due to shrinkage of forest area. Moreover, the proposed, expanded airport will be under the 10 kilometres eco-sensitive zone of the Rajaji National Park.

Protesting against this decision, different polemics have been made, such as: Forest and wildlife are sources of revenue generation in the form of tourism and thus employment generation and this infringement will dismay the fragile ecosystem of Doon.

Nonetheless, all these arguments seem to be repetitively ordinary and thus anthropocentric, on the account of human benefit. There is a need for deeper analysis, based on ethical concerns.

Concerning the issue, the fundamental question needs to be raised at two different levels: How essential is to expand the airport and should environmentalists fight against this proposal for the well-being of humans or the well-being of the wilds or trees or for the entire environment itself?

On the first question, the necessity of the expansion of the airport in the name of development seems to be obscure. The Government's developmental plans should encompass the views of native indigenous of the area where the plan is supposed to be executed. However, here this has been flouted.

This leads to a further question on development for whom and at what cost? From a purely human-centric calculation cutting down of 10,000 trees doesn't necessarily enhance the economic status of the local people. Moreover, one can imagine the level of pollution that would harm them in future because of the deforestation and so-called modernity. Often major invisible harm is disguised in minor visible benefit. A developmental plan of the rule of power is imposed following solely technocratic conditions that in turn lead to the agony of humans as well as animals. Thus, morality is brought to fight against the unjust planning. Humans, animals and plants become the victims of the development project and it is essential to ethically examine the means (plans) and ends (consequences) before processing to execute it. In doing so, the Government can get a path to develop a new way of governing through which universal welfare can be achieved.

The second-level question is underpinned on the protection of the environment. Defending the protest of local people let's begin with invoking a stance of social ecologist in terms of "regional turn in environmental thinking" because as social ecologist L Mumford says a strong regional centre of culture can be "the basis of active and securely grounded local life".

The local life is a broader concept that includes humans, animals and plants, all of them create a niche to accommodate each other for their wellbeing. Thus, protesting at an individualistic level grounding on the ethical concern directing towards individuals only would not be beneficial because it precludes either one of them — humans or animals or trees. Further, if we fight against the Government's decision to protect the forest for the wellbeing of humans, then the instrumental value is credited to the forest and thus the day is not far it to be used for a different purpose.

Rejection of anthropocentric option paves a path to ascribe intrinsic value to the forest through which absolute protection of forest can be demanded. However, the ascription of intrinsic value is in question to whom it should be ascribed — to individual animals or species/particular animal species or the entire ecosystem.

Supposed attribution of inherent value to individual animals precluding environment or to forest, excluding animals, leads to unpleasant consequences since both complement each other for their sustainability. Thus, there is a requirement for a holistic approach towards Doon's valley to protect native indigenous and the forest.

Implementation of an unexamined developmental project in the process of deforestation fails to satisfy all types of moral standards. Chopping thousands of trees and leaving innumerable animals homeless shows a lack of sense of "goodwill" and thus serves no adequate duties of humans towards the environment.

It also fails to bring an overall balance of good over evil — human suffering due to pollution and the scary behaviour of wild animals, as well as animals suffering due to the lack of food and dwelling place. Thus, this encroachment leads, in turn, to dire consequences. Furthermore, it prevents to show the virtuous character trait of the human.

The conditions of flourishing human life are not necessarily limited within the intra-human species, it needs the ethical capability as well to consider the entire ecosystem as an end in itself.

Arguing in favour of destroying natural "wild", which is not humanised, based on creating new forests through planting trees ignores the intrinsic value of natural wild which is unacceptable.

Instead of being driven by the instrumental reason to achieve instant non-sacrosanct ends, we humans, including the Government, ought to do actions involving rules, rights, compassion, etc, to protect the environment, including ourselves.

(The writer is an Assistant Professor, Philosophy, Bengaluru Central University)

## India must meet US on equal footing

What does the Joe Biden Administration's occupation of the Oval Office mean for India? This is pertinent especially after Trump's tight embrace of India. Though Trump-Modi friendship might not have translated into a trade pact — in all areas, particularly on the foreign policy and geo-strategic fronts in dealing with China or Pakistan, it supported India in becoming the alternative supply chain supplanting China, strengthening military relations, while refraining to interfere in India's internal matters.

Any change in the US policy towards India is unlikely, save some prodding on the Western understanding of human rights issues in the region, something which New Delhi should be prepared to deal with.

A little uncertainty exists on Biden's approach towards Pakistan, while he is strong on anti-terrorism front, the need of Islamabad for peace negotiations with Taliban will bring in a working relationship between the two nations, though a re-appearance of bonhomie is unlikely.

On the trade front, Arun K Singh, former Indian Ambassador to the US, has summed up the position, "era of post 1990s globalisation effectively ended with Trump's election in 2016". On climate change, New Delhi will be asked to do more from the Biden Administration, an approach he has indicated towards other nations.

Besides, there is strong probability of Republicans holding the Senate should also not be lost on us.

## India's significance for the US

It is insignificant to think if the Democrats or the Republicans will be more supportive to the Indian cause. It's the US national interest which

made Presidents from Clinton to Trump to deepen ties with India. With 17.7 per cent of the world's population, fifth largest economy, India is important for the US economy.

As the world's largest liberal democracy — among the few in the non-Western world even rare so in Asia — a responsible player in global politics, largest troop contributor to the UN peacekeeping missions, a nation which is looked at with trust and respect in comity of nations, all the more so by the developing world, India today stands at a formidable position with which every global player wishes to partner.

So, in the Asian century when the focus of the world has shifted to the Indo-Pacific economically, politically as well as on the geo-strategic front, while the US power wanes and is increasingly challenged by the rising China in all possible domains: trade and economy, technology, intelligence, military modernisation and in international institutions, who does the US look to?

If a decade or two back India could not be ignored, today, the US can simply not do without India; and Washington DC is well aware of that. Nobody knows this better than the 46th President of the US, a seasoned diplomat. In 2006, he argued India-US relationship is the single most important relationship that the US has to get right for its own safety's sake, declaring his dream of having India and the US as two closest nations in the world in 2020.

In 2008, he led the charge in the US Congress on approval of India-US Nuclear Agreement. As the Vice President in the Obama Administration, he further deepened ties with India.

In a policy paper during campaigning, Biden called India and the US as natural partners, while declaring the

strengthening of India-US relationship as high priority for his administration; mentioning that no common global challenge can be resolved without India and the US.

It pledged support to India in fight against terrorism, cross-border or otherwise, confronting "new threats" India faces in its own region and along its own borders, not allowing China to threaten India with impunity, while supporting a larger role for India in international institutions, including pushing India to become a permanent member of the UNSC.

## Chinese threat to the US

In the 2020 US report on China's military, which outlines the fast-paced military modernisation and capacity enhancement of PLA as it moves towards its goal to become a "world class military" by 2049 — understood to mean equal or superior to the US military — it's pointed out that the PLA is not intended to be "merely a showpiece of China's modernity. The report pointed out that China is not only going to keep the PLA focused solely on regional threats" but to have "an active role in advancing" China's foreign policy, particularly with respect to its "increasingly global interests and its aims to revise aspects of the international order".

In the World Economic Output report 2020, the IMF declared China has overtaken the US to become the world's largest economy in PPP terms. In China's recently concluded fifth plenary session, it seemed assured about reaching "high income level" in the next five years and doubling economic output by 2035, which is also the deadline for China to emerge as a global leader in innovation, becoming technological independent of the West by mobilising all of the nation's resources to make

breakthrough in key technologies from AI to quantum computing and semiconductor manufacturing.

To contain China is the top-most priority for the US, and the Biden Administration is going to achieve this by making a multilateral coalition of its allies and partners in Europe and Asia. And of them India is the most important peg in it. Indeed, the US ought to be thankful for the present situation brewing at the Indian border with the dragon, because a scenario where Indian interests with China converge can still be imagined, the same for the US is now impossible.

India might be China's immediate irritant, its real adversary is the US. So, to worry about the US support on China is in vain.

## Human rights, Kashmir and CAA

In his campaign, Biden had mentioned his disappointment with the Assam's NRC, CAA and need for full liberties to be returned in Kashmir. The progressive faction has been all the more critical on the front, Vice President Kamala Harris herself being vocal, so, questions will be raised.

In 1993, US political scientist late Samuel Huntington wrote that there is a widespread anti-western sentiment rising all over the world because of West's universal enforcement of its values.

The East Asian nations had created a united front against this, with the Japanese Prime Minister of the time Hosokawa saying western human rights concepts can't be "blindly applied to Asia".

The West's hypocrisy on the human rights front has also been time and again raised by the developing world. Why the US is not questioned over arrests of Muslims without charge after 9/11, Guantanamo Bay prisoners that are still rot-

ting in prisons of the US allies in West Asia, most horrible abuses of human rights in Abu Ghraib prison, Iraq, or over the police brutalities on the blacks, or how the UK suppressed the Irish and Scottish national movements?

While India embraced the Western liberal democracy and human right regime, it continues to suffer the destabilising and violent after-effects and grave unresolved issues of the externally created borders and gory partition, unlike the peaceful territories of the West.

It is difficult, therefore, to enforce the same level of liberties to the region bearing the scourge of externally funded and supported terrorism for decades, which threatens the security of the whole nation, with even the temple of Indian democracy not been spared. A discouragement towards democratic process is still being made in Kashmir by terrorists targeting political members. Similarly, a resolution of the post-partition refugee situation had to be undertaken.

India is a free and fair democracy with an independent judiciary, and it must confidently, firmly and calmly draw its red lines over non-interference in internal matters, something that rest of the Asia has been doing for long.

Our External Affairs Minister demonstrated it by not meeting a panel, including Congresswomen Pramila Jayapal. Were it done by even a middle level power, nobody would bat an eyelash. It's time India takes its rightful position in the world, with respect, it deserves, and as Huntington puts it: the US well knows when to concede to maintain "good relations" with friendly countries.

(The author is a public policy analyst and lawyer)

Any change in the US policy towards India is unlikely, save some prodding on the Western understanding of human rights issues in the region, something which New Delhi should be prepared to deal with. It's in the US national interest to have good relations with India. It's time India takes its rightful position in the world it deserves, and as Huntington puts it: the US well knows when to concede to maintain 'good relations' with friendly countries



SONAL SHUKLA

## PERSPECTIVE

## A new civil war in Ethiopia

Ethiopia, located in the Horn of Africa, is popularly known as the "Mecca of Coffee". Today it has seen one of the bloodiest conflicts in its northern region of Tigray wherein the federal forces are fighting with the local Tigray regional forces. The fierce fight that broke out in early November is simply a war between Addis Ababa, the central capital city, and the regional capital town of Mekele. It's a show of strength of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali against combative Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) based in the restive region.

Further, it is straight fight between the majority Oromo community (around 34.6 per cent) represented by the PM Abiy and the minority Tigrays, barely 6 per cent of the total population of the country. Initially, the war in the Northern Province was planned for a limited scale, directly to target the TPLF, militia cum political party, but now more than two weeks of military campaign has hinted a severe fight, showing no signs of talk, withdrawal and negotiation between the two warring groups.

The current crisis in Ethiopia has its roots in the recent past of the country. The TPLF was established in February 1975, more than 45 years ago in the Tigray Province. A year before i.e. 1974 witnessed a tumultuous political situation in the country as Emperor Haile Selassie was overthrown by the military.

Afterwards, a new military junta, popularly known as "The Derg", came into power in the country. The subsequent years brought home a devastating conflict, leading to the killing of thousands of young man and woman across the country. However, the Tigrayan region had to largely bear the brunt of the so-called "Red Terror", unleashed by the Leftist Derg junta. Sadly, Derg continued in power in Ethiopia till 1991, when it was finally ousted by the armed rebels. And incidentally, the TPLF was an integral part of a coalition of resistance forces that finally moved out the junta from the power corridors of Ethiopia.

Then TPLF leader Meles Zenawi became the interim President later and

also holds the historic record of being the first elected Prime Minister of the country in 1995. What it demonstrates is the consolidation of power by the minority Tigrays over the majority of the public institutions of Ethiopia.

And the rest is a new history for this emerging African nation. The Tigrays ruled the country for almost three decades from 1991 to 2018 by becoming an alliance partner of the ruling coalition known as the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF).

This coalition was the brainchild of the veteran Meles to bring together like-minded groups to capture power in Addis Ababa. The EPRDF earned both reputation and severe criticism from the Ethiopians in its entire period in power and even after. Many say that during its time, child mortality rate fell, and the famine was prevented. But others argue that the Tigrayan-led EPRDF was no other than an absolute authoritarian regime that ruled the country with an iron hand.

Unfortunately, the other coalition partners had hardly any voice in regard to making critical policy decisions and deciding future course of actions.

A new era has begun with the coming of Abiy to power in 2018 who is the first Oromo leader to come to occupy the seat of the head of the Ethiopian Government. He was a former military intelligence officer of the Government. In fact, years of protest that started after the departure of Tigray's powerful leader and former PM Meles in 2012, forced his successor Hailemariam Desalegn to finally resign after six years of misrule and anarchy across the country. He was the chairman of the Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement. From the very beginning of his tenure, his role was ambivalent as he could hardly keep the powerful alliance partners under his control.

And most importantly, since he did not belong to the powerful Tigray community, it was absolutely difficult for him to exercise administrative control over them. Over the years, the Tigray ethnic group has massively expanded its way

over the army, secret services and the bureaucracy. These circumstances offered an opportune moment for Abiy to get elected as the leader of the EPRDF. For years, the Ormos have been marginalised by the EPRDF, led by the Tigray community and its powerful leaders in Addis Ababa.

From the very beginning, he spoke the language of unity and promised his countrymen peace, development and progress. And this earned him praise even from his arch rivals in the Opposition political parties.

After assuming power, he released thousands of prisoners, unblocked a large number of media channels and privatised many Government owned enterprises. He reached out to Eritrea, Ethiopia's old rival on the northern border, and made peace with that country. And as a result, he was awarded the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize which had brought home a chance of reclaiming Ethiopia's position in the African continent once again.

However, gradually his reform package has altered the long-drawn power relations of the country. And in the last two years, the Tigrays have registered their displeasure with Addis Ababa. They say that they are being targeted for the wrongs committed in the past and the current Government is fast trying to marginalise the community and its leadership. Last year, Abiy dissolved the EPRDF, and formed the Prosperity Party, but the TPLF refused to join the new coalition. Thus, formally, the dominance of the TPLF has come to an end and it was made possible by the shrewd leadership of Prime Minister Abiy.

What has finally triggered the current crisis in Tigray is no other than the regional election that took place in the province in September. Actually, because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Abiy Government postponed the much anticipated general election on August 21 across the country. But the TPLF leadership accused Abiy of unconstitutionally extending the term of his Government. In defiance of the federal Government's order, the TPLF conducted the election in its province. This

incident has raised tension between the Central Government and the regional Government of Tigray.

And on November 4, the forces loyal to the TPLF suddenly attacked the Northern Command of the Ethiopian National Defence Force based in Mekele. After two days, the Abiy Government launched a massive military strike, saying the TPLF has crossed the "Red Line". And since then the war is on the restive region.

Meanwhile, as a precautionary measure, Sudan has closed down the border with Ethiopia to avoid immediate clash and refugee movement. Around the same time, Addis Ababa has declared the regional Government of Tigray as illegal and proposed to form an interim Government out there as per the country's Constitution.

The UN is urging for a peaceful and swift resolution of the conflict in Ethiopia. It seems impossible for now as TPLF leader Debretson Gebremichael has remained defiant. By now more than 25,000 refugees have crossed over to neighbouring Sudan. On November 14, the TPLF forces launched multiple rocket attacks on Asmara, the capital city of neighbouring Eritrea. And interestingly, Gebremichael has stated that Asmara was a "legitimate target" as its airbases are being used by the Ethiopian forces to carry out attacks on the TPLF fighters. This indicates that there is little chance of the warring parties to come down to the negotiation table unless there is a powerful mediating force.

This landlocked East African country is surely careening for a bloody civil war. And this might escalate to a broader regional conflict involving Eritrea and Sudan. The best course of action for Abiy could be an early dialogue and engagement of the regional leadership of Tigray province. Else, the new war could involve much more people, forces and the old militias of the region and across. It's better to avoid a chaos and settle for immediate peace.

(The writer is an expert on international affairs)



MAKHAN SAIKIA





FEELINGS COME AND GO LIKE CLOUDS  
IN A WINDY SKY. CONSCIOUS  
BREATHING IS MY ANCHOR  
— THICH NHAT HANH



**YOUR WEEK AHEAD**

MADHU KOTIYA



**ARIES** March 21-April 19

This week you card foresees healing and rejuvenation. Those suffering from an injury or other physical ailments will find quick recovery. There are times in our lives when we must accept change and allow things to come to a natural end. Every negative note has its positive end too. On the career front, a comeback of your old and trusted employee who was supposed to be the backbone of your profession is indicated. Venues will open for those who wish to expand their business or start a new venture. Time spent on the academic pursuits will pay good results now. On the relationship front, love is difficult and confusing this week. Sticking to old beliefs may spoil your relations. It is advised to avoid the intervention of the third party.

**Lucky number** 19  
**Lucky colour** Sky Blue  
**Lucky day** Friday



**LEO** July 23-Aug 22

Those putting on weight must put their health on priority. You will finally understand the value of money and good health, and work out a plan to be in harmony with nature to maintain good health. Focus on walking, breathing and prayers for mental and physical healing. On the career front, unrelated issues would occupy mind space. You either have little time or are feeling lethargic about work. Hard work and efforts put in the last week are not so rewarding. This is a temporary phase. On the personal front, something special is likely to be celebrated this week. You feel emotionally contented and find a healthy relationship. You have full faith in your partner. This is the time when mutual understanding between the two is great and strengthening of relationship is indicated.

**Lucky number** 13  
**Lucky colour** Blue  
**Lucky day** Thursday



**SAGITTARIUS** Nov 22-Dec 21

You will feel healthy and free and may experience a change of perspective. Negativity replaces optimism. New possibilities are foreseen. You will learn the importance of solving your problems with rational and thorough thinking. This is also a time to utilise your creative energies. Professionally, a promotion is indicated which will make you confident and secure. You are self-disciplined and energetic. Those in business, your ideas and views are being respected and followed. This is the time when your intelligence, wisdom and experience will pay you rich dividends. On the personal front, your relationship will grow. You are romantic and love is in the air. Other relationships too are nurturing, and meaningful in your life.

**Lucky number** 9  
**Lucky colour** Green  
**Lucky day** Friday



**TAURUS** April 20-May 20

This week your inner and outer conflicts may bring upon negative effects to your healthy lifestyle and routine. Challenges are foreseen on the career front. This is a perfect time to clear the fog. This is also a good time to set your goals and targets and work towards them in the system. The win will come after a struggle. Your great insight may work in your favour. A break-through success is on the cards. On the relationship front, you will follow tradition instead of your heart. The conventions and traditions are overpowering you and you will try and seek answers from a guru or a senior person with regard to your emotions. This week you may be more inclined spiritually and worldly pleasures, love and emotions would take a back seat.

**Lucky number** 10  
**Lucky colour** Brown  
**Lucky day** Tuesday



**VIRGO** Aug 23-Sep 22

There is a balance between mind, body and soul this week. You will be energetic, enthusiastic and full of life. Your farsightedness will pay you rich dividends. This is the time to enjoy good food and live a healthy life, both mentally and physically. On the career front, new job offers and opportunities in business will help you broaden your horizon. If expansion in the business is the plan, this is the right time. Go for it! Good finances, income and gains through the ancestral property are indicated. On the relationship front, those contemplating marriage may start browsing the market for a suitable bride or groom. Guard against temptations and addictions. A step towards spirituality may prove to be the saviour.

**Lucky number** 3  
**Lucky colour** Peach  
**Lucky day** Wednesday



**CAPRICORN** Dec 22-Jan 19

This week you may enjoy the nature's bounty and blessings of the Almighty. Cure of a very old or prolonged illness is on the cards. Those in urgent need of motivation and inspiration to lead a healthy and meaningful life will find a mentor. You feel empowered and embark on a new journey which is progressive and makes you feel comfortable. On the work front, this is the time to keep counting the blessings. You may be busy organising an auspicious ceremony at home/office. The career will boom and so will be your interaction with the outside world. On the personal front, confusion, misunderstanding with the partner is likely. You need to guard yourself against selfish motives, aggression and any haste decisions in this period. Patience is the key.

**Lucky number** 4  
**Lucky colour** Red  
**Lucky day** Wednesday



**GEMINI** May 21-June 20

This week you will possess the power and energy to create a fresh lifecycle for yourself. You will have control over your desires and temptations that may harm your health. You realise the importance of the balancing factor in your life and your body is in tune with the five elements of nature. On the career front, you may have experienced setbacks that make you suspicious of the others. The turning point will come when you can leave the past behind you and develop a more open mind about the future. This is the time to think positive and move ahead. On the personal front, confrontation is likely between lovers. Do not let emotion get in the way. Rather, use fact and logic to make your decisions.

**Lucky number** 6  
**Lucky colour** Pink  
**Lucky day** Friday



**LIBRA** Sep 23-Oct 22

This week cards indicate excessive fear, phobia, and worry. Mental tension will remain, and this may reflect on your health. Headache, insomnia, and sleeplessness may cause unrest. Be careful of cold, cough and seasonal ailments too. This is the time to meditate, join yoga and take a break from the hectic schedule. On the career front, a little indiscretion may put your reputation in the firing line so be careful. At the work area, you may go unnoticed and feel neglected. This may cause tension and hamper your growth. Do not run away from responsibilities and commitments. Do not disclose your working plans till you accomplish them. On the personal front, your partner will be filled with an abundance of energy and enthusiasm while you feel demoralised, or hold low self-esteem.

**Lucky number** 12  
**Lucky colour** Golden  
**Lucky day** Sunday



**AQUARIUS** Jan 20-Feb 18

This week your satisfaction and contentment will play an important role for you to be in good health. You will enjoy worldly pleasures and relax. 'All is well' feeling gives you cool mind, contentment, positive aura and a glow on the face. On the work front, there is generosity in your temperament and ability to convince others with your communication. You care for the emotional wellbeing of others and respect your colleagues and juniors. They follow you, admire you, and respect your magnanimity. On the relationship front, there is love, fun and entertainment. You spend time together and present an expensive gift to your beloved and partner. Time is right to bring your romantic relationships out in the open, the family will accept your choice.

**Lucky number** 18  
**Lucky colour** Orange  
**Lucky day** Saturday



**CANCER** June 21-July 22

This week you will adopt a moderate approach to life and be true to your commitments. You have understood that you need a routine and a careful regime if you want to achieve your goals. It is not necessarily a very interesting or exciting period. You are not hesitant to spend money in a gym, meditation, following nutritive diets etc to be in good health and fitness. These efforts will pay you well. On the work front, you will feel stability in your profession. Use experience and skills to achieve your desired goals. Advice from a senior person in job/business will be very helpful. On the personal front, you may get too emotional or possessive in your relationship, and that may become the cause of irritation and separation. You will be compassionate towards those dear to you.

**Lucky number** 21  
**Lucky colour** Magenta  
**Lucky day** Wednesday



**SCORPIO** Oct 23-Nov 21

In keeping with the ongoing festive spirit, you will be active and vibrant. Self-knowledge and mastery are the keys to success. You possess the inner light and consciousness, and sheer faith and experience from the past would help you become self-reliant. Through meditation, you are on the path to attain spiritual fulfilment and share this light with others. On the professional front, your wisdom and leadership will help you establish a niche for yourself. Your plans are now well underway and you are beginning to consider more opportunities to expand your current plans. On the personal front, you will find your relationships growing and developing to a satisfactory level. There is faith, understanding with each other.

**Lucky number** 2  
**Lucky colour** Indigo  
**Lucky day** Tuesday



**PISCES** Feb 19-March 20

Fatigue may take a toll this week. Issues — domestic or professional — will leave you disturbed. Restlessness or problem related to Blood Pressure may bother. Consult a doctor. You may require proper sleep and support of near and dear ones. A positive approach will help put life into you. On the career front, there is nothing new happening. Things are moving as usual. Fear of stagnating career or profession may bother you. This is a temporary phase. As the week progresses, you will find the positive results. With your wisdom and experience, you keep moving ahead and achieve the desired results. On the relationship front, you will enjoy the quiet powers inherent in you. You will be able to influence your partner by diplomatic conversation.

**Lucky number** 11  
**Lucky colour** White  
**Lucky day** Monday

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**ASTROTURF**  
BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO

# Mind balance is the key

Someone concerned about not being able to contain his wavering mind and habit tendencies, despite serious efforts towards that end, connected with me for necessary guidance. "Sir, for almost a decade now, I have been religiously pursuing Yoga-asana and meditation as guided by two acclaimed teachers in the field. So far, I have been able to just identify my fault lines. I have been trying to address them, with no sign of tangible success in immediate future. My monkey like mind keeps randomly flirting with varying thoughts and ideas, and so I fail to do justice to my priority preferences. I don't know how to go about further. Kindly guide."

"Well, the purpose of spirituality is to understand the living realities of life, which when absorbed in the deep realms of mind help in making reasoned choices in life and conduct with ease and comfort. What is the fun in pursuing spiritual process, if it has not helped reform your thought process?" I asked. "Remember, all actions on your part, be it pursuing spiritual process or targeting material desires are conducted by mind. Better, give me an account of how you are pursuing the process so that the

missing link in the process could be figured out," I said. Looking at the account he shared, it appears that he keeps chanting *mantra* with focus on his energy centres. So, he has been mechanically working on energy plane. He, however, has cared the least to work upon his thought process. He has been reading many books written by realised people for necessary guidance, which makes him academically aware. But his mind, intensely engaged in wanton thoughts that don't allow him the mind-space and time necessary to absorb the educative inputs, but for which it will not find reflection in his conduct.

Here I recall the saying of a realised spiritual master: "You may enjoy the grace of the God, the holy men and teachers. But if you lack the grace of mind, you may go to rack and ruins." That makes it incumbent upon us to work upon our mind-state before pursuing spiritual process, otherwise it will not offer desired result. It may not be out of place to mention that there are five states of mind — Darkening, Scattering, Gathering up, One pointed and Concentrated. Ignorant minds are the darkening type. Minds flirting with



random thoughts are the scattering type. Those who realise that only a focused mind can lead to success, try to contain their wavering mind, which comes under gathering up type. As you graduate in the process further, you may become one pointed. They still remain subject to pushes and pulls. But relatively they are able to remain focused to their priority preferences for long. Those who are able to effortlessly remain focused for long is the call of a concentrated mind.

Those who wish to evolve spiritually, and even grow materially, preparatory to that, at least they should try to graduate to the stage of one pointedness, if not concentrated. I then suggested him to follow the three stage meditation process as suggested in my book titled: "God or No God; Awareness enriches life."

The man then asked: "Sir, I will purchase your book and follow the method you have suggested. But tell me, is my present mental predicament reflected in my chart? Do I have the potential to evolve spiritually?"

Look at the astrological pointers. You are born in an airy sign Libra with fiery planet Mars conjunct headless *Ketu* there in the *lagna*. Mars is also adversely

placed with respect to the two luminaries — the Sun and Moon. Moon is ill-disposed to Venus, which makes you too touchy and sensitive. You may get overexercised even on trivial issues and blow it out of proportion as would fiery Mars flaring up the air element mean. Read together with the implications of the ill-disposed luminaries, it speaks of a temperamental, moody, irritable, impulsive, and rash character, having a disoriented mind.

Now coming to spiritual potential, benevolent Jupiter over the head in the birth chart speaks high of your spiritual quotient. Seen at subtle level, *lagna* sub-lord *Rahu*, happens to be the lord of 5th cusp identified with merits accrued from the past. 9th sub-lord identified translation of acquired merits into fruits happens to be Moon, which occupies the sub-lordship of *Rahu*. All put together indicates seed of spiritually deeply ingrained in your mind. Positioning of Moon, however, calls for concerted efforts to organise your mind before expecting the desired results.

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