

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

KARIMNAGAR | SUNDAY | 6 SEPTEMBER 2020

WEATHER

Max: 33.2°C
Min: 24°C
RH: 60%
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Cloudy sky.
Rain likely. Max/Min temp. 33/24 °C

COVID-19 CUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+94,732)	(+1,059)
41,09,476	70,673

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+2,511)	(+11)
TS: 1,38,395	877
(+10,825)	(+76)
AP: 4,87,331	4,347

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

2,69,48,953
DEATHS
8,81,347
COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES
213

worldometers.info/coronavirus

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Dakshinayana

Tithi: Bhadrapada Bahula Chavithi till 7.07 pm

Star: Ashwini till 5.23 am (Monday)

Variyam: 12.52 am to 2.40 am (Monday)

Durmuhurtam: 4.44 pm to 5.33 pm

Rahukalam: 4.30 pm to 6 pm

HJRI CALENDAR

Muharram 17, 1442 AH

PRAYERS

Fajar: 5.02 am

Zohar: 12.24 pm

Asar: 4.35 pm

Maghrib: 6.31 pm

Isha: 7.40 pm

SUNSET TODAY 6.25 PM

SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.03 AM

MOONSET TOMORROW 9.10 PM

MOONRISE TODAY 9.09 AM

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COUNTER POINT

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BRIEF

80 special trains from Sept. 12

New Delhi: Eighty new special trains will be operational from September 12, reservations for which will begin from next Thursday, Railway Board chairman V.K. Yadav said on Saturday. At a media briefing, the railway board chairman said, "Eighty new special trains or 40 pair of trains will start operating from September 12. Reservations will begin from September 10. These will run in addition to the 230 trains already in operation." Yadav said the railways will monitor all the trains that are currently in operation to determine which trains have a long waiting list.

Army jawan dies in Pak LoC firing

Srinagar: An Army jawan was killed and two others were injured in the latest incident of cross-border firing in Jammu and Kashmir's Kupwara district on Saturday. Defence spokesman, Colonel Rajesh Kalia, said here that Pakistani troops "initiated an unprovoked ceasefire violation" along the Line of Control (LoC) in Nowgam sector of Kupwara by firing mortars and other weapons resulting in on-the-spot killing of one Indian soldier and injuring two others. "They were evacuated to the 92-Base Hospital in Badami Bagh Cantonment and their condition is stable," he said.

South India film industry ignored in Unlock 4 talks

MD ILYAS | DC VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 5

South India has again found no place in a meeting that the Centre has called with the film industry to discuss the reopening of cinema theatres as part of Coronavirus Unlock 4.

The Union ministry of home affairs is conducting a meeting on September 8 with representatives of cinemas and multiplexes. No one from the southern states has been invited despite it being the biggest contributors to Indian cinema.

Union home ministry undersecretary Ashish Kr Singh issued a notice on Friday that the Union home secretary will meet representatives of cinema, multiplex associations and hear their views through videoconferencing about reopening of cinema halls and multiplexes in Unlock 4.0.

Those invited were secretary, I&B ministry, PVR Cinemas chairman Ajay Bijli, East India Motion Pictures Association West Bengal chairman Ratan Saha, UP Cinema Exhibitors Federation member Ashotosh Agarwal, Cinema Owners and Exhibitors Association Gujarat secretary Vadan

● **THE HOME** affairs ministry is conducting a meeting on September 8 with representatives of cinemas and multiplexes.

● **NO ONE** from the southern states has been invited despite it being the biggest contributors to Indian cinema.

Shah, Multiplex Association of Gujarat president Manubhai Patel and Central Circuit Cine Association Maharashtra representative Akshaye Rathi.

This has shocked Telugu film industry, aka Tollywood, which is the main contributor to Indian film industry with a 17 to 30 per cent of Indian box-office revenue besides being a major player in Bollywood.

A producer of Telugu film industry on the condition of anonymity said that Sahoo is one of the biggest blockbusters and it collected ₹357 crore of revenue. He said that the Tamil film industry produces blockbusters and mega hits in multiple languages. It was the same with Kannada and Kerala film industries.

■ **Page 2: Discrimination by Centre found baffling**

TELANGANA THIRD IN EASE OF DOING BIZ, AP NUMBER 1

S.A. ISHAQUI | DC HYDERABAD, SEPT. 5

Telangana state has dropped one rank to the third position in the nation-wide Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) rankings for 2019, that were released on Saturday. Andhra Pradesh tops the list, followed by Uttar Pradesh.

According to officials of the industries department, the state lost out due to difference in the feedback percentage for implementing reforms when compared to UP.

They said that EoDB rankings were based on points gained by each state in implementation of 17 categories. While it implemented the reforms, the state could not meet the requirement of filling up 90 per cent vacancies in specialised commercial courts implementing a system that allows publishing of e-cause lists for commercial disputes. The reforms pertaining to digitalisation of the transactions in the state excise could not be implemented.

■ **Page 2: EoDB calculated based on 17 reforms**

TWO MOSQUES, 1 TEMPLE, 1 CHURCH IN NEW SECTT: CM

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, SEPT. 5

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao on Saturday announced that the state government will reconstruct a temple and two mosques and build a church inside the new Secretariat complex and bear the cost.

The mosques are to be reconstructed at the place where they stood earlier.

The temple and mosques were damaged during the recent demolition of old buildings on the Secretariat premises.

"Telangana state will treat all religions equally and will continue to practice religious tolerance. The state is a symbol of Ganga Jamuna tehzeeb. Hence, new places of worship will be constructed in the new secretariat for all religions," Rao said.

He was speaking with a delegation of Muslim community elders led by home minister Mohd Mahmood Ali and MIM president and Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi.

■ **Page 2: CM to lay stone for shrines in Sectt**

LANCET | STUDY

KANIZA GARARI | DC HYDERABAD, SEPT. 5

Are there under-reported, missed and suspected deaths in India due to Covid-19? The official statement of Centre of case fatality rate going down to 1.8 per cent is being doubted by experts who have raised the issue in the journal *Lancet* in its September issue.

With 4.02 million Covid-19 cases, 3.11 million recovered patients and 69,561 deaths as on September 5, mortality data is shrouded with uncertainty. The reason for this doubt is that

there are many cases of suspected Covid-19 patients being brought dead to hospitals and the arrival of test results after the death of a patient. This data has not been included in the toll.

Maharashtra, West Bengal and Telangana state have not included cases of death where co-morbid conditions were high, in their data from from April to June. Tamil Nadu revised its toll by more than 400, which got public health specialists to point out that this could be the case in all other states.

Experts have pointed out

India tells China to disengage

No breakthrough in talks at SCO meeting between defence ministers

PAWAN BALI | DC NEW DELHI, SEPT. 5

In the first high-level political contact between the two countries ever since the border tensions between them flared-up in early May, defence minister Rajnath Singh categorically told his Chinese counterpart General Wei Fenghe that there should be no doubt about India's determination to protect its sovereignty and territorial integrity and China should not make attempts to unilaterally change status quo at the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

Mr Singh also said that the current situation should be handled responsibly and that neither side should take any action that could either complicate the situation or escalate matters.

Mr Singh met General Wei in Moscow on Friday at the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in Moscow for two-and-a-half hours. However, no breakthrough seems to have emerged from the bilateral meeting.

Chinese state media reported that during the meeting Gen. Wei said that India bears full responsibility for current China-India border tensions and that the Chinese military has determination, capability and confidence to safeguard China's territorial integrity. Gen. Wei reportedly also said that "not an inch of China's territory should be lost."

The Chinese statement comes in backdrop of Indian Army's move to preempt PLA and occupy over two dozen strategic peaks on the southern banks of Pangong Tso and Spanggur Gap. This has not gone down well with Beijing.

Indian defence ministry said in a statement that the two ministers had frank and in-depth discussions about developments in the India-China border areas as well as on India-China relations. "Raksha Mantri categorically conveyed India's position on the developments along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), including in the Galwan valley in the Western Sector of the India-China border areas in the last few months," said the defence ministry statement.

Mr Singh told the Chinese delegation that the actions of the Chinese troops were in violation of the bilateral agreements and not in keeping with the understandings reached between the Special Representatives of two sides. He said that Chinese side should work with India for complete disengagement at the earliest from all friction areas, including Pangong Lake as well as de-escalation in border areas in accordance with the bilateral agreements on maintenance of peace at borders.

■ **Page 2: CM to lay stone for shrines in Sectt**



A member of the Tibetan community shouts slogans during a protest against China, outside the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi on Saturday. — PTI

Army gears up for winter after growing tall on PLA

VIKRAM SHARMA | DC HYDERABAD, SEPT. 5

On the hilltops and inhospitable ridgelines at mind-numbing altitudes of more than 15,000 feet, when the temperatures plummet to -25° Celsius and lower, all that one has for "company" constantly are frost-bite, chilblain, blood clots, lung infection and even memory loss amid the heavy snowfall. The wind-chill factor makes it worse. Taking it easy for a while could mean sure death, a painful one at that.

High altitude warfare is nothing new for the Indian Army which has battled the elements at Siachen glacier, Ladakh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand and several points along the Line of Control with Pakistan. Now, with massive deployments on the northern and southern banks of Pangong Tso, after capturing strategic heights from where soldiers are keeping an eye on the People's Liberation Army (PLA), the Indian Army is gearing up to battle the ele-

● **HIGH ALTITUDE** warfare is nothing new for the Indian Army which has fought in Siachen glacier, Ladakh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand and points along the LoC with Pakistan.

● **ARMY HAS** procured a large number of extreme cold weather clothing systems and mountaineering kits for soldiers

ments at strategic heights even as the "road open period" to Ladakh from Rohtang and Srinagar-Kargil route will soon close due to heavy snowfall.

Highly placed sources told *Deccan Chronicle* that the Army has procured a large number of extreme cold weather clothing systems and mountaineering kits for the soldiers who have been deployed in massive numbers along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh. The soldiers have begun to put on the special clothing as night temperatures have begun to drop. These are similar to the ones

used by soldiers deployed in the Siachen glacier, the world's highest battlefield.

With unpredictable weather throwing a major challenge and frequent avalanches, large quantities of K-oil (kerosene), canned food, medical supplies, repair equipment for communication, vehicles among other logistics are being supplied to the strategic locations. This is beside the massive supply of ammunition to ensure that the soldiers easily sustain for months. The supplies are being divided among all Army posts. Supplies are stocked up well before the road closes. Thereafter, supplies are sent by air when needed.

The weather turns harsher towards October and November after which it remains extreme till February and beyond. Unlike at Siachen, the main culprit in the heights of eastern Ladakh is the wind-chill factor, which makes for a deadly combination along with heavy snowfall.

■ **Page 2: Accommodation still biggest challenge**

China abducts 5 Arunachal porters

MANOJ ANAND | DC GUWAHATI, SEPT. 5

Amid escalating border tension with China in Ladakh, a report that five Arunachalee youths serving as porters for the Indian Army were allegedly been abducted by the Peoples' Liberation Army (PLA) of China on Thursday has created tension on the eastern frontier though there is no official confirmation of it yet.

Reports claim that the family members of the porters came to know

about the incident through a wireless message of Indian Army. It said, "Five persons have been abducted by the Chinese Army at the Sera-7 area near McMahon line."

The kin of those missing then took to the social media to raise awareness and ensure their safe return.

The Upper Subansiri district administration said that they have not received any complaint or information in this regard, but have taken note of social media reports and asked police to go to the

frontier areas where the incident is reported to have taken place.

Deputy commissioner of Upper Subansiri, Kento Dangen, told this newspaper, "We have not received any complaint or even information about such an incident so far. Following the hype created on social media we have asked police to rush officers to the areas where these incidents are reported to have taken place. We are also trying to reach out to the Indian Army."

Mr Dangen said that

they are also in the process of reaching out to the villages and villagers who reported this incident in social media posts.

Security sources in the intelligence wing, engaged in global border management, said that Indian Army headquarters have also been establishing contact with the patrolling teams operating in remote areas along the McMahon line to verify the villagers' claim. The incident came to light through WhatsApp messages in Arunachal Pradesh.

health is fine, I request that all those who have come in contact with me in the last few days, please isolate yourself and get Covid test done."

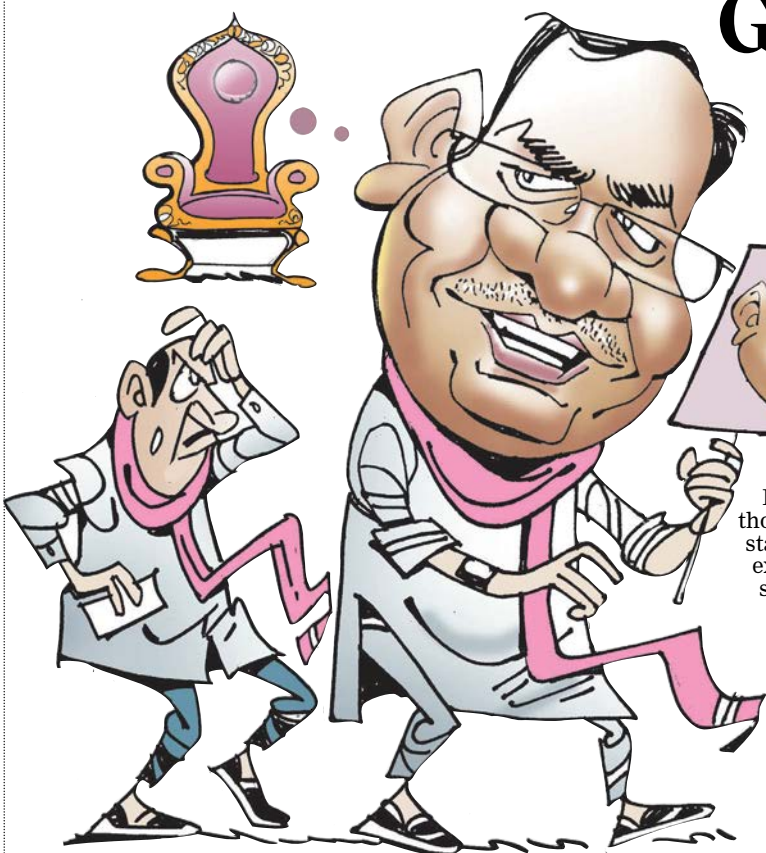
He is the third member of the state Cabinet to test positive for the disease so far.

■ **Page 2: Harish Rao may not be able to attend House**



Lady Luck smiles on Ramesh Hospitals

When it comes to fortunes and misfortunes, nobody can beat Dr P. Ramesh Babu of the infamous Ramesh Hospitals on the first count. Several people died in the fire mishap at Swarna Palace Hotel which at that time was being used as a Covid care centre by Ramesh Hospitals. In any such incident, it's common for the police to book the owners and the Jagan government wasted no time, taking other factors also into consideration. It was highly appreciated that the Andhra Pradesh High Court highlighted that the government too used the Swarna Palace Hotel as a quarantine centre a few months ago though the building did not have the fire no-objection certificate even then, and the officials should have overseen the arrangements before giving the go-ahead to Ramesh Hospitals. It also asked why top district officials should not be booked in the case. Then, Lady Luck smiled on Dr Ramesh. Instead of directing the police to book cases against district officials too for their negligence along with Dr Ramesh, the court granted an interim stay suspending further proceedings against him.



Gutta relies on KTR to cure his berth pangs

Though Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao made him Chairman of the Legislative Council, Gutta Sukhender Reddy appears to have not given up on his dream of getting a berth in the Cabinet. In a recent chat with the media, Sukhender Reddy seemingly made his pitch and said minister K.T. Rama Rao can handle any post. If KCR makes up his mind, he may make KTR the chief minister, Reddy said. The three-time MP had first tested his luck in the 2004 Assembly elections on a Telugu Desam ticket from Nalgonda but he could not succeed due to the strong wave that dismantled the then ruling party. He shifted to the Congress and was elected to the Lok Sabha in 2009 and 2014. In 2017, he joined the TRS. He did not contest the 2019 Lok Sabha polls though KCR offered him a ticket; Reddy hoped to play an active role in state politics. KCR offered him a Legislative Council seat, though Reddy expected a berth in the Cabinet. With his latest comments, TRS cadre are saying that he may finally succeed if KTR takes over as CM.

TS MLAs' life: From home to House

Telangana state legislators face a tough task set by Assembly Speaker Pocharam Srinivas Reddy. He has requested ministers and members of both Houses to stay away from attending parties and functions till the end of the Assembly session, which begins on Monday, so as not to catch Covid-19. He appealed to them to restrict themselves to moving from their homes to the House and returning straight back. Describing the Coronavirus as an "invisible enemy", the Speaker narrated the story of one of his close associates who had been infected with the Coronavirus after attending a birthday party. The big question is: Will they oblige?

Chalamalasetti Sunil buries hatchet with Jagan, YSRC wary

After Greenco chairman Chalamalasetti Anil Kumar settled matters with the AP government, it's the turn of his brother Sunil to bury the hatchet with Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy and rejoin the YSR Congress. Both Jagan and the Chalamalasetti brothers proved that there are no permanent friends or foes in politics and that the adage applies to corporate houses vis-a-vis the people in power. Before the elections, the YSR Congress made a big issue of Greenco's integrated power project in Kurnool and attracted international attention by threatening to revisit the power purchase agreement with it after being elected. Things finally settled down and the state government retained the Kurnool project with Greenco with the narrative that new clauses were incorporated in the agreement that would fetch the state additional revenues. Sunil, who left the party just before polls and joined the Telugu Desam, came back to the YSRC fold with great fanfare, several ministers and MLAs according him a grand welcome. The superstitious among them are now worried in view of the "iron leg" image of Sunil. After losing twice from Kakinada Lok Sabha, Sunil walked away from the YSRC clearly failing to sense the wave in its favour in 2019 at the eleventh hour, only to lose from the same seat for a third time.



DC REVIEW

No thrills

SASHIDHAR ADIVI | DC

What could happen if a man who is on a killing spree challenges a tough cop to nab him? The much-awaited crime-thriller V dropped on Amazon Prime on Friday evening, the first-ever Telugu film to release on an OTT platform. The plot revolves around DCP Adithya (Sudheer Babu), the most happening police officer in town, who's on a hunt to nab the killer Vishnu (Nani). The killer drops clues for the police officer to decipher. So, will the cop nab him? Unfortunately, for all the hype and expectations the film created (and despite having Indraganti Mohan Krishna, a film-maker known for his strong writing skills as director), V seems to have gotten a lot of things wrong in it. The director may even have lost the plot when while making an action thriller for the first time, he chose to focus on elevating the principal characters' design. With the writing and screenplay found wanting, V seemed like heading nowhere. What may have killed it for V is that it is neither a comprehensive crime thriller nor a full-fledged action entertainer. It just hangs uncertainly in between. However, the film does have its share of interesting elements, including good performances, action sequences and technical finesse. V even starts off on an

V
Cast: Nani, Sudheer Babu, Nivetha Thomas and Aditi Rao Hydari
Director: Indraganti Mohan Krishna
Rating: ★★★

exciting note — elevating DCP Adithya's heroism, Vishnu's approach, etc. Just as the audience begins anticipating an interesting cat-and-mouse chase, the story fails to take off. Indraganti's attempt to branch out into a new genre is surely welcome, but he falls short of packaging a proper thriller. The killer's flashback doesn't create any sympathy for him. The romantic tracks for both Nani and Sudheer Babu weren't exciting and the climax turns out to be just too ordinary. That said, the writing leaves its mark in a few places with quirky and funny conversations. Nani is the soul of the film, effortless as he is even in a grey character. As much as he brings laughter with his witticism and one-liners, his Army background scenes don't seem convincing. Sudheer Babu does well as a flamboyant cop, and even matches Nani's performance. While Nivetha Thomas's character, called Apoorva, lights up the screen, her role as a crime writer who researches psychopaths was left hardly explored. Overall, V falls short of becoming the true-blue thriller we had hoped for.

SHORT TAKES

DATA FROM RURAL AREAS MAY BE GUESS WORK

From Page 1

When systems of data collection have not worked in urban areas and have faced many challenges, experts say using the data from rural areas is completely ruled out as those numbers will be only guess work.

Dr Santosh Kraleti, public health specialist, explained, "No two states in India have the same data matrix."

Every state reports the way it suits them.

There are guidelines from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the World Health Organisation's International Classification of Diseases-10 but those are taken only as advisories."

Dr Kraleti said every state medical bulletin is different and it would require comparing data from different states to understand the truth in the reporting.

"Missed, under-reported and unaccounted numbers are also due to the taboo in society, which is not right," he said.

There have been examples where the death certificate of doctors and paramedical staff stating that they suffered from viral pneumonia and severe respiratory syndrome and had tested Covid-19 positive, but the cause of death is stated as cardiac arrest.

These certificates have made many in the medical fraternity ask why the death certificates do not mention Covid-19.

These examples have led to public health specialists across the country to demand that the reporting of deaths has to be revised and it will require correction. The Centre has to look into this issue as it will help to understand the disease spread, virulence and actual prevalence better.

By under-reporting it is only leading to under-estimating the virulence of the virus and will not help in public health management.

To have better and effective real policies it is important that real-time and right data reporting is carried out which will go a long way in strengthening public health systems and addressing gaps in the policies.

CM to lay stone for shrines in new Sectt

TS govt will construct temple on 1,500 square yards

From Page 1

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao told the delegation that he would lay the foundation stone for the shrines soon after the Assembly session concludes.

The government will construct the temple on 1,500 square yards and hand it over to the endowments department.

Two mosques, each of 750 square yards, including the imam's quarters, will be constructed at their previous location and handed over to the Wakf Board.

Following a request by the Christian community, the Mr Chandrasekhar Rao said that the government had decided to construct a church on the premises.

The government would expedite the construction of Anees-ul-Gurbah, the institution which gives shelter to and educates orphaned Muslim children, Mr Chandrasekhar Rao said that about 80 per cent of the construction works had been completed.

The government would release ₹18 crore for speedy completion of the remaining work. The Chief Minister also said that the construction of the Islamic Centre was delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and said the work would be put on the fast track.

Mr Chandrasekhar Rao also promised to develop graveyards for the Muslim community at different places in the city over a total of 150-200 acres. The collectors of Ranga Reddy and Medchal-Malkajgiri districts had been instructed to identify land for the purpose.

In the wake of damage caused to the ashurkhana at Narayanpet due to road widening, Mr Chandrasekhar Rao instructed the collector to identify land and construct the Ashurkhana.



MIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi, along with members of AIMPLB and other Muslim organisations, addresses a press conference at Darussalam on Saturday.

Muslim leaders hail CM for mosques in Sectt

ATHER MOIN | DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 5

Muslim religious and community leaders thanked Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao for consenting to reconstruct two masjids at their respective locations inside the Secretariat premises.

A delegation of All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) and religious organisations had called on the Chief Minister at his residence and discussed various issues related to the community.

Speaking to the media later, MIM president Asaduddin Owaisi clarified that a masjid was damaged during the regime of Y.S. Rajasekhar Reddy and was rebuilt. The Secretariat is under the control of the government and it is their responsibility to rebuild it.

"The Chief Minister showed us a place in the plan and said if we approve, a big masjid will be built there. However, theologians clarified the Islamic point of view and asked not to change the locations," he said. Owaisi said the Chief Minister asked roads and

buildings minister Vemula Prashanth Reddy to consult with MIM leader Akbaruddin Owaisi for preparing the design.

"We requested the Chief Minister to allocate lands for two graveyards around the Outer Ring Road. We also asked him to expedite works on construction of Anees-ul-Gurba orphanage. We asked him to appoint a person fluent in Urdu as Vice-Chairman of the Official Language Commission and start constructions for Islamic Cultural Centre." The CM agreed to all of this.

On the Congress' plan to raise the issue in the Assembly session, he said, the party should first clarify about the

demolition of Babri Masjid. Congress is mischievous-monger and it had welcomed construction of Ram mandir at Ayodhya, he said.

AIMPLB secretary Maulana Khalid Saifullah Rahmani said, "we acquainted the Chief Minister that the masjid is part of our faith and once built, it will remain forever. Even the person who endows it will not remain the owner. We clarified that the building is not considered as a masjid, but the place where it was constructed. That's why the reconstruction of the masjid at it has existed is obligatory."

Mohammed Ziauddin Naiyar, vice-president, Taamir-e-Millat, said "we raised the issue of Masjid Noor and Masjid Amberpet as well."

Moulana Akbar Nizamuddin, Proctor, Jamia Nizamia, informed "It was clear that the masjids were not hindering the proposed plan. In the proposed plan, a place was earmarked for the masjid that was far away from where the two masjids stood. On our request, he agreed to build the two on places they had existed."

Harish may miss monsoon session

From Page 1

Previously, home minister Mohammad Mehmood Ali and labour minister Ch Malla Reddy had tested positive for Covid-19 and have recovered from the infection.

Soon after Harish Rao announced the news, his cousin and minister K.T. Rama Rao tweeted support saying he was confident that Harish Rao will recover quickly. Former Nizamabad MP K. Kavitha,

and Rama Rao's sister, too, put out a message in support to the finance minister.

Harish Rao is not expected to attend the monsoon session of the Legislature, which convenes on Monday, owing to his current health condition.

The Legislature has already announced a slew of steps to keep MLAs, MLCs, staff, police personnel and media personnel safe from the disease while attending the session.

Accommodation remains biggest issue

From Page 1

The biggest challenge remains accommodating the soldiers. For now, soldiers are being sent to the heights on rotation. Besides the posts where men are squeezed in, trenches have been dug up to fight the enemy.

"In the harsh weather, even urine becomes ice immediately. Exposing the skin for a few seconds can end up in frostbites and other health issues which can be fatal, just like it is in Siachen. Now that we know that this (stand-off with China) is going to be a long haul, we are fully geared up and there are several other plans in place," they said adding that every unit has their

own Regimental Medical Officer (RMO). They said that unlike China, officers in the Indian Army are compulsorily posted at high altitudes for five to six years which gives them all the exposure they need to make them battle-hardened.

They said that unlike China, officers in the Indian Army are compulsorily posted at high altitudes for five to six years which gives them all the exposure they need to make them battle-hardened. This gives them an edge over PLA, which is not used to facing their opponents in such temperatures.

BJP MP alleges maize scam in TS

NARENDER PULLOOR | DC
NIZAMABAD, SEPT. 5

MP D. Arvind has demanded the immediate setting up of maize purchasing centers in Telangana state.

Maize is the third biggest crop in the country and it has great demand in the national and international markets, he said.

Maize price per quintal is ₹2,300 in the open market in the country, but in Telangana the price stands at merely ₹1,250 only, he

said.

Speaking to newsmen on Saturday, Mr Arvind alleged that the TRS-led government has colluded with big traders and committed maize scam. He demanded that maize farmers should be paid ₹1,850 immediately.

Maize is sown in large scale in Balkonda assembly constituency, which is represented by minister V. Prashanth Reddy. The minister has failed to rescue the maize farmers, the MP

EODB CALCULATED BASED ON 17 REFORMS

From Page 1

The 17 reforms cover labour regulation, access to information and transparency, commercial dispute resolution, and administration and transfer of land and property, land availability and allotment, inspection, construction permits, single window system, environmental registration, obtaining electricity connection, paying taxes apart from sector specific issues, and feedback obtained on their implementation.

The rankings were released by Union minister Piyush Goyal in the presence of ministers Nirmala Sitharaman and Hardeep Singh Puri.

BIAS BY CENTRE FOUND BAFFLING

From Page 1

He stated the industry was badly affected during the lockdown and was eagerly waiting for reopening of theatres. The discrimination of the Union government is baffling, he said. He sought the government to take opinions of all stakeholders of Indian cinema, including representatives of southern states. Another producer recalled that earlier also the southern film industry was put aside for an interaction with PM Narendra Modi in 2019.

said. He added that 4 million tonnes of maize worth ₹1,100 crore was exported so far. The Central government has hiked the minimum support price for maize to ₹1,850 per quintal. If the TRS government agrees to its failure, the Central government is ready to purchase maize from TS farmers, he said. The MP also demanded a financial package for private teachers and lecturers who suffered due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

OTHER STORIES

LEOPARD SPOTTED
NEAR TEMPLE AT
JANKAMPETDC CORRESPONDENT
NIZAMABAD, SEPT. 5

A leopard was spotted near the Sri Laxminarasimha Swamy temple at Jankampet in Yedapally mandal on Saturday. The leopard was spotted by passengers travelling in an autorickshaw on their way to Thanakalan when the leopard crossed the road in the vicinity of the temple.

Scared, they returned to Jankampet village and informed the police and forest department officials who rushed to the spot and identified the pugmarks of the animal to trace its movement.

People of Jankampet, Thanakalan, Alisagar areas were alerted over the movement of the animal.

STATUE OF
DR AMBEDKAR
UNVEILEDDC CORRESPONDENT
NIZAMABAD, SEPT. 5

The statue of Dr B.R. Ambedkar was unveiled in Amrad village in Makloor mandal on Saturday.

BJP Amroor Assembly constituency in-charge Podduturi Vinay Kumar Reddy unveiled the statue set up by the Bahujana Samakhya youth.

Mr Vinay Kumar Reddy said that youth walk the path shown by Dr Ambedkar. His life is an inspiration.

Amrad youths took part in the programme observing the Covid-19 protocol.

TEACHERS' DAY
CELEBRATED IN
NIZAMABADDC CORRESPONDENT
NIZAMABAD, SEPT. 5

Teachers' Day was a low-key affair in Nizamabad and Kamareddy districts on Saturday. On the occasion the best teachers were felicitated.

In view of the Coronavirus pandemic, the usual honoring of teachers' programmes were cancelled. Education department and social organisations cancelled the Teachers' Day celebrations. Government teachers attended their duties and took digital classes.

In Nizamabad, Sneha society for rural reconstruction conducted Teachers' Day celebrations on Saturday. Zilla parishad chairman Dadannagari Vittal Rao was the chief guest. He appreciated organisers for rendering services to the differently abled children. Sneha society secretary S. Siddaiah, principal Jyothi and other teachers were honored by zilla parishad chief on the occasion.

● **IN VIEW** of the Coronavirus pandemic, the usual honoring of teachers' programmes were cancelled. ● **THE EDUCATION** department and social organisations also cancelled the Teachers' Day celebrations. ● **GOVERNMENT TEACHERS** attended their duties and took digital classes.

Educators take the knee on Teachers' Day



Guest teachers protest by kneeling at the Telangana Chowk in Karimnagar on Saturday. The teachers are demanding that their four months pending salaries be paid. — YELABAKA RADHAKRISHNA

Pvt school teachers observe
'black day' in Hanamkonda

They were protesting over non-payment of salaries

ANUDEEP CEREMILLA | DC
WARANGAL, SEPT. 5

About 900 teachers of private schools observed 'black day' on occasion of Teachers' Day in front of the District Education Office in Hanamkonda on Saturday.

They were protesting against non-payment of salaries for the past six months.

Telangana All Private Teachers Association (TAPTA) founder president Chanderlal Naik Chouhan said, "If the state government is concerned about welfare of private teachers, who were rendered jobless because of Coronavirus pandemic, it must immediately implement G. O. MS No. 1, 1994.

As per the G. O., teachers are entitled to 12 months of salary including PF and ESI group insurance. The state gov-



Private teachers stage a protest in front of the DEO office in Warangal on Saturday. — DC

ernment must take responsibility for the welfare of private teachers too," Naik underlined.

Telangana All Private Teachers Association president said private school managements have not paid any salaries to their teachers for the past six months. In this regard, he said the

state government too must pay ₹15,000 for three months.

Telangana Lecturers Forum working president Tirunahari Seshu and Telangana All Private Teachers Association state general secretary Pala Kumar were among those present at the protest site.

● **IF THE** state government is concerned about the welfare of private teachers, who were rendered jobless because of Covid-19, it must immediately implement G. O. MS No. 1, 1994.



From Left: PDS rice transported illegally in a vehicle seized at the outskirts of Lambadipally village present under the Malyala police station limits in Jagtial district. Banned gutka packets seized from the mandal headquarters of the Velugutur in Jagtial district. Tractors transporting sand illegally seized at Chinnapur village under the Buggaram police station limits in Jagtial district on Saturday. — DC

Cops seize PDS rice, gutka packets

DC CORRESPONDENT
KARIMNAGAR, SEPT. 5

The Jagtial police on Saturday conducted raids at different places in the district and seized eight quintals of rice meant for Public Distribution System (PDS) and banned gutka packets worth ₹1.52 lakh along with four tractors transporting sand illegally.

On receiving information, that one Kallem Shankar was transporting PDS rice illegally in a Tata Ace vehicle, the sub-inspector of police Nagaraju along with other police personnel nabbed Shankar from the outskirts of Lambadipally village present under the Malyala police station limits. They seized eight quintals of

PDC rice and the vehicle and registered a case against Shankar.

In another incident in the mandal headquarters of the Velugutur, sub-inspector of police Srinivas along with his staff raided a general store run by one Berelli Srinu and seized three bags of gutka packets worth ₹1.52 lakh. A case was registered against

B.Srinu and sent to the police station.

Mr Srinivas said, "Stringent action would be taken as per law against people who indulge in the sale of banned gutka packets or transport them illegally."

Meanwhile, in a separate incident on receiving information of sand being transported illegally, sub-

inspector of police Chiranjeevi along with his staff held raids at Chinnapur village under the Buggaram police station limits and seized four tractors transporting the sand.

The police arrested the persons involved in the illegal transport of sand and registered a case against them.

Tigress leaves Bhupalpally,
ventures into PeddapalliANUDEEP CEREMILLA | DC
WARANGAL, SEPT. 5

The tigress which was wandering in the forests of Jayashankar Bhupalpally district for several days has now ventured into the Peddapalli district.

The tigress was first spotted at Nimmagudem forests of Mahamutharam mandal abutting the shores of River Godavari on August 30. After crossing several villages, it was last spotted in Odedu village by farmers who were proceeding to their lands through a forest path.

The scared farmers ran back to the village and alerted forest officials. District forest officer K. Purushotham said, "We



Pug marks of the tigress spotted near Odedu village.

have been tracking the tiger for days together. It has left our borders and now moved to Peddapalli district."

The last sighting of a tiger in erstwhile Karimnagar district was in 2002 at

Mahadevpur and in the combined Warangal district at Rampur forest area under Pakhal wildlife sanctuary in Kothaguda of Mahbubabad district in 2009.

BODY ARRIVES
FROM GULF
AFTER 145 DAYSDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 5

Due to the lockdown and Covid 19 crisis, the mortal remains of 55-year-old Sunke Rajaiah of Kondapur in Velagatur mandal of Jagtial district arrived in Hyderabad 145 days after his death from Saudi Arabia.

The shipment of the coffin was delayed as there were no flights.

Rajaiah had died on April 14 and the issue of bring his body back was taken up by Legislative Council member T. Jeevan Reddy with the Indian Embassy in Riyadh.

About 2,600 Indians die in Saudi Arabia every year according to data provided in the Lok Sabha and it has been noted that there is delay in sending dead bodies even during normal times.



Telangana DGP M. Mahender Reddy speaks with police officials of the Tiryani police station located in the Maoist affected area in Kumarambheem Asifabad district. The DGP visited the station late on Friday night. — DC

In a 1st, top cop camps
four days in AsifabadDC CORRESPONDENT
KUMARAMBHEEM
ASIFABAD, SEPT. 5

Telangana DGP M. Mahender Reddy, camped for four days in the Asifabad district headquarters. This is the first time in Telangana state that a DGP ranked officer has camped at the district headquarters.

The top cop held meetings with top local police officials from September 2 onwards. He also reviewed the Maoists' activities with the DSPs, CIs and SI working in the Maoists affected areas in Kumarambheem Asifabad district.

Mr Mahender Reddy enquired about the recent information received that a few Adivasis were extending cooperation to Maoists in the old Adilabad district. He asked the police officials to flush out the Maoist from the old Adilabad district.

The police department is serious about flushing out the Maoists particularly from the old Adilabad district and the state in general.

The DGP late on Friday night visited the Tiryani police station located in the interiors in the Maoist affect-

ed area. He interacted with the Tiryani police officials who are actively engaged in tackling the Maoist activities in the area.

The DGP appreciated Tiryani SI Ramarao who has been working in the Maoist area for some time. Ramarao was also appreciated for reaching out and helping the needy Adivasis during the Covid pandemic.

The movements of Maoists were first reported from Tiryani mandal during the Covid-19 lockdown period.

It is suspected that, a team of Maoists led by Mailarapu Adellu alias Bhaskar had entered into Kumarambheem Asifabad district by crossing the river Pranahitha taking advantage of the Covid situation in the month of March.

Meanwhile, North Zone IG Y. Nagireddy inspected a few police stations in Adilabad district. Ramagundam police commissioner V. Satya Narayana, Adilabad SP Vishnu S. Warriar, Mancherla DCP Uday Kumar Reddy, Asifabad DSP Acheswar Rao, CIs of Agency mandals also participated in the review meetings.

Rains damage crop
in KumarambheemDC CORRESPONDENT
KUMARAMBHEEM ASIFABAD,
AUG. 5

Following the recent heavy rains many rivers and streams overflowed damaging cotton crop raised in many places in Kumarambheem and Adilabad districts.

However, it was the farmers of the villages located on the banks of the river Pranahitha in Kumarambheem Asifabad districts that were the worst affected. Farmers from these villages now want the state government to pay compensation for the cotton crop that has been damaged.

Floodwater and backwater from the river Pranahitha inundated hundreds of acres of fields on which cotton crop was raised, damaging the crops. The villages of Jilleda, Muraliguda, Thalai, and Somini located on the banks of river Pranahitha were the worst affected. Besides these villages, cotton crops raised in the villages of Kautala,

Chainthalamaneppalli, Bejjur, Penchikalpet and Dahegam mandals located along the river Pranahitha and sharing borders with Maharashtra in the Sirpur (T) assembly constituency were also affected.

Congress Sirpur (T) constituency assembly in charge Palvai Harish Babu visited the villages. He appealed to the state government to conduct a survey to assess the crop damage and pay compensation of ₹25,000 per acre. Mr Palvai said, "Farmers suffered huge losses as the crops were damaged just before harvest time."

The Dinda village in Chinthalamaneppalli mandal was inundated by floodwater as water from projects upstream in Maharashtra were released into the river Pranahitha. Cotton crop raised over 1,000 acres was inundated in the bordering villages of Tekamguda, Bhurepalli, Korshini, Dinda, Chitham, Gudem and Koyapalli and Shivapalli.

HOPES | RISE

Air services between Basant Nagar and Hyderabad operated from 1975 to 1982

Peddapalli airport feasibility report presented to Centre

PULI SHARATH
KUMAR | DC
PEDDAPALLI, SEPT. 5

With submission of a techno-economic feasibility report to the Central government by technical expert Srinivas Murthy, hopes have risen among the people about the establishment of an airport at Basant Nagar on the outskirts of Peddapalli.

The Central government has through the Civil Aviation Ministry launched UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) to promote regional connectivity and make air travel affordable to masses.

Six mini-airports have been proposed in Telangana under UDAN. Last month, Airport Authority of India (AAI) had asked the state government to send details of the high flood level at Basant Nagar near Peddapalli town, where an airstrip already exists.

Basant Nagar is about nine kilometres away from Peddapalli district headquarters and within 40 kilometres range from neighbouring Karimnagar, Jagtial and



The control room which still exists at the Basant Nagar Airstrip in Peddapalli district. — DC

Mancherla districts. There used to be air services between Basant Nagar and Hyderabad from 1975 to 1982. They were later stopped due to the high costs involved in its maintenance.

At present, the airport, along with the airstrip, is located over 40 acres of land. To further develop the airport, district administration has conducted a survey of surrounding areas in Basant Nagar and identified 778 acres of land in survey numbers 363, 301 and 413, spread

between Palakurthi, Kurmapelli, Basantnagar and Raginedu village panchayats. The survey report has been handed over to the state government.

Last year, officials of AAI paid a visit to Peddapalli district, studied the weather conditions, and analysed the benefits that can be derived with establishment of the airport.

Ramagundam MLA Korakanti Chander Patel says Peddapalli district has many big industries like



officials conduct a survey for the establishment of an airport at Basant Nagar in Peddapalli district.

National Thermal Power Corporation Limited (NTPC), Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCL), Kesoram Cement, Ramagundam Fertiliser Company Limited (RFCL), Jaipur Power Plant, ZENCO-B Thermal Plant and Food Corporation of India (FCI), apart from the prestigious Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Scheme (KLIS) project. Many employees of other states are

working in these industries and factories.

Thus, the Basant Nagar airport in Peddapalli would be the best choice for the central government to upgrade an existing airstrip into a regional airport.

This would not only cut down travel time drastically to important cities like Hyderabad, Nagpur, Mumbai, Chennai, Calcutta and Delhi but also boost industri-

alisation, tourism and business in the four districts of Peddapalli, Karimnagar, Jagtial and Mancherla, says the Ramagundam MLA.

IT minister K. T. Rama Rao and vice-chairman of state planning commission B. Vinod Kumar have met civil aviation minister Hardeep Singh Puri and requested him to speed up the proposals for establish six mini-airports in Telangana.

VIJAYAWADA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION (VMC)		
'E' Procurement Notice No.22/VMC/AE/2020-21, Dt.05-09-2020		
Sl. No.	Name of work	Estimate Amount Rs. in Lakhs
1	Construction of 0.5 MLD STPs in Governorpeta & Punnami Ghat, O & M of 150 TPD Capacity Municipal solid waste Processing facility based on Windrow composting Technology machines, Providing end to end shoulders with paver blocks, Foot paths Nirmala Convent Road, Development of Landscape (Softscape & Hard Scape) works in New H.B. Colony, Providing BT Roads and CC Roads, CC Drains, UGD Lines in Circle-1,2 & 3 areas in VMC (16 Works)	1810.18
Contact: Superintending Engineer (Works & Projects), VMC, Vijayawada-520 001		
Further details can be seen @ 'e' procurement market place @ www.tender.aeprocurement.gov.in		
Download of bid documents starts from - 08-09-2020 @ 4.00 P.M.		
Last date / time for receipt of tenders from - 22-09-2020 up to 4.30 P.M.		
Sd/- For COMMISSIONER		

SHORT TAKES

NAIDU SAFE AFTER ACCIDENT TO CONVOY VEHICLES

BALU PULIPAKA | DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 5

Andhra Pradesh former chief minister N. Chandrababu Naidu had a close shave when a car in his convoy met with a minor accident. Naidu was in the car following the one that met with the accident.

Naidu was on his way to Hyderabad from Amaravati. The accident occurred near Dandumalkauram village in Choutuppal mandal of Yadadri-Bhongir district.

The incident happened when the vehicle leading the convoy slowed suddenly to avoid hitting a cow on the road. This led to the second vehicle running into the lead vehicle. The occupants of the two vehicles did not receive any major injuries, and moved into the other vehicles in the convoy, police said.

CONGRESS SAYS TRS DIDN'T FULFIL ITS PROMISES

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 5

TPCC working presidents A Revanth Reddy, Ponnamp Prabhakar and J. Kusuma Kumar said the Congress will expose the failures of the TRS during the election campaign for the Greater Hyderabad, Khammam and Warangal municipal corporations.

They said that the TRS government had failed in fulfilling its promises made to the people of the three cities during the last elections.

Revanth Reddy said that he will launch padayatra in his Lok Sabha segment from October 3 to enlighten the people about the false promises of the TRS government including the issue of double bedroom houses.

Ponnamp Prabhakar said the Chief Minister had made huge promises to the people of Warangal but failed to fulfil them. Kusuma Kumar said that the TRS corporators had revolted against the corruption of their own mayor in Khammam city.

EDN SOCIETY ASKS FOR ORDER ON PAYING FEES

ATHER MOIN | DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 5

M.S. Farooq, general secretary, All India Muslim Educational Society, said that the memo issued by the Special Chief Secretary regarding the commencement of the academic year from September 1 was silent on parents making the fee payments immediately.

He said the government did not verify whether the internet facility is available with all students.

There are network issues even in Hyderabad, Farooq said. Besides, children from poor families are not able to login for online classes because of non-availability of equipment such as smartphones and laptops.

He said the state government had adopted a stepmotherly attitude towards private educational institutions, particularly budget private schools. The government had earlier issued orders stating that no fee other than monthly fee was to be collected,

but failed to issue an order asking parents to make the fee payments.

TSWRS, CHEVELLA TO ATTEND GLOBAL MEET

HARLEEN MINOCHA | DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 5

The TS Social Welfare Residential School (TSWRS), Chevella, has been selected by T4 Global Network to make a presentation on the topic 'Democratic Education System - Functioning of Freedom Schools' at its conference to be held online in October.

T4 Global Network that works in the fields of education, international development and technology, has selected 100 schools from across the world to showcase their innovative ideas and programmes aimed at shaping the leaders of tomorrow and transforming the lives of students, said an official communication. Dr R.S. Praveen Kumar, secretary, TS Social and Tribal Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Societies, said it was a matter of great pride that TSWRS-Chevella students would share their experiences on a global platform.

Pragathi Bhavan security tightened



Barbed wire fencing is being installed along the compound of Pragathi Bhavan, the Chief Minister's camp office at Begumpet, on Saturday to prevent protesters from scaling the walls. — S. SURENDER REDDY

Teachers too learn with online classes

Teachers relieved classes started despite lockdown

HARLEEN MINOCHA | DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 5

With restrictions across the country in view of the pandemic, the education system has been hit severely, pushing the imparting of lessons to the digital domain. This has been difficult not only for the students, especially those living in remote areas, but also for teachers who switched to the online mode of teaching overnight.

On a day when the country celebrated and thanked the teaching community on Saturday on the occasion of Teachers' Day, teachers from all sections of the system, from private to public, and colleges to universities, evaluated and assessed the digital journey in the last six months.

The biggest challenge that teachers from all se-

ctions felt was the switch from the regular to online classes, that lacked the aspect of clear and efficient interaction.

Prof. Sheela Prasad from the Centre for Regional Studies, University of Hyderabad, said, "Nothing can replace the experience of a physical classroom. Online classes are only a stop gap arrangement at the moment, because we have no choice. It is difficult to connect with each student virtually, and providing adequate resources as per each student's needs and calibre has become a Herculean task."

Similar is the case with intermediate and degree college teachers who teach students from all sections of society and are concerned that several students are losing out. However, teachers at colleges and universities say that they

are much better placed because of the flexibility that the structure of the collegiate education system provides, than the structured system in case of school education.

Teachers at public or government schools are only relieved that classes in some form have begun for their students, even as issues of accessibility in rural areas persist. Bharathi, a government school teacher from Khammam, said that the need to supervise children in taking classes being broadcast over TV or T-SAT has added to the struggles of teachers in rural areas. She said that teachers go to each student's house to check whether classes are being taken effectively.

Teachers at private schools pointed out that the lack of proper interaction and assessment of each student has become

a task. Some even said that this has deflated the morale of the teaching community, however support of the managements of schools and parents have kept them going. Teachers from Glendale Academy and Meridian School praised the management for helping teachers sail through these difficult times with proper guidance and training. Aparna Tivary from Glendale Academy said, "Our management was ready well in advance, foreseeing a possible lockdown situation. This helped the teachers get accustomed to the change."

One common takeaway that all teachers recognised is that the shift to online teaching has been a learning curve in their careers and that it has opened a vast sea of resources for them to experiment with.

BANDI DEMANDS SPECIAL PACKAGE TO TEACHERS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 5

BJP state president Bandi Sanjay Kumar on Saturday demanded that the state government announce a special package for teachers, who have been suffering since the lockdown came into force. He also sought implementation of the promises made to them during the Assembly elections.

In a statement, he criticised the state government for failing to protect the interests of the teachers. He said that both government and private teachers have suffered equally during the prolonged lockdown while the government has not announced a package for their welfare.

Sanjay said that certain private academic institutions had stopped paying salaries to teaching staff while other institutions had slashed salaries in the last four months.

Pointing out that the situation of private teachers and lecturers was deplorable, he charged the government of failing to pay the remaining part of salaries to government teachers and pensions to retired teachers.

He said "the Telangana state government, which considers itself as a rich state, is not in a position to pay full salaries to its teachers and lecturers at least on the occasion of Teachers' Day."

He alleged that the government was forcing teachers to take online classes without providing them with necessary technical support. Further alleging that the government has failed to fill vacancies from primary school teachers to university professors and was burdening the existing staff, he demanded filling up of all vacant posts immediately.

● **POINTING OUT** that the situation of private teachers and lecturers was deplorable, Bandi Sanjay charged the government with failing to pay the remaining part of salaries to government teachers as well as pensions.

SHABBIR DOUBTS CM, OWAISI ON SHRINES AT SECT

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 5

Former minister Mohammed Ali Shabbir alleged that Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao and MIM president Asaduddin Owaisi were misleading the people by making another false promise of re-constructing two mosques and a temple at the same site in the Secretariat premises.

Reacting to the meeting that the Chief Minister had with Muslim leaders at Pragathi Bhavan on Saturday, Shabbir Ali said that it was an eyewash and an attempt to dilute the ongoing protest against the demolition of the shrines.

Shabbir Ali demanded that the Chief Minister place the design of the new Secretariat in the public domain and clearly identify the location where the two mosques and temple would be reconstructed.

He said "There is no reason to wait for a month for the foundation stone laying ceremony for reconstruction. The reconstruction should begin immediately. The state government should specify what happened to the copies of the Holy Quran, prayer mats and other material of Masjid-e-Moatamadi and Masjid Hashmi, which were demolished.

COPS BUST FUEL SCAM; 11 TS, 19 AP BUNKS INVOLVED

SANJAY SAMUEL PAUL | DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 5

The Cyberabad police, along with the legal metrology departments of Telangana state and Andhra Pradesh, cracked open a sophisticated racket in which some petrol and diesel bunk owners in the two states were siphoning off fuel without the knowledge of their customers from last year.

Eleven fuel stations in Telangana state and 19 in

2,511 new Covid cases, 11 more deaths in TS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 5

With 2,511 new Covid-19 cases, the total Coronavirus infections in the state rose to 1,38,395 while the number of fatalities climbed to 877 with the health authorities reporting 11 more deaths.

As per the Covid-19 bulletin on Saturday, the 24-hour period between 8 pm on Thursday and 8 pm on Friday also saw 2,579 Covid-19 patients being declared as recovered, taking the total recovered cases to 1,04,603. The health department said that during this period, 62,132 Covid-19 determination tests were conducted and 3,145 reports were pending as on Friday evening.

The GHMC area registered the highest number of cases with 305 followed by 184 in Ranga Reddy district, 170 in Nalgonda, 150 in Karimnagar, 142 in Khammam, 134 in Medchal-Malkajgiri and 96 each in Warangal Urban and Suryapet districts.

The health department urged people to wear masks covering their mouth and nose when out of their homes and not spend time in crowded areas. It also urged everyone to maintain physical distance of six feet from other people.

Anyone with symptoms has been advised to visit the nearest government health care facility for tests and possible treatment.

Metro coaches temp fixed at 24-30°C: HMRL

BALU PULIPAKA | DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 5

Strict Covid-19 control measures will be in place at every Metro Rail station as well in the trains with Hyderabad Metro Rail Limited set to restart operations from Monday, HMRL managing director N.V.S. Reddy said on Saturday.

Speaking to reporters here, Reddy said the services will start in a staggered manner from September 7 and, for the first two days, be limited to 7 am to noon and from 4 pm to 9 pm. From September 9, full services in all three corridors will be available, he said.

It was decided to run trains every five minutes but the frequency can either be increased or decreased depending on the passenger traffic and based on the need to avoid overcrowding, he said.

Reddy said air intake into

KEEP SURROUNDINGS CLEAN TO CHECK DENGUE: ETALA

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 5

Health minister Etala Rajendar on Saturday appealed to the citizens to maintain personal hygiene and keep their surroundings neat and clean.

The minister was speaking with visitors who came to meet him at the camp office in Hyderabad about precautions to be adopted to contain dengue, malaria, chikungunya and other vector-borne diseases.

The minister said that to contain the mosquito menace, citizens should ensure that there should not be any water stagnation points.

He said the cases of dengue, malaria and chikungunya were less when compared to last year.

The GHMC entomology wing demonstrated the use of gambusia fish, which eats mosquito larvae. The chief entomologist briefed the minister on the different varieties of mosquitoes and the diseases they spread.

Rajendar later released a poster and pamphlet on the 10-minute Sunday 10 am programme launched by minister K.T. Rama Rao.

the coaches will be increased to 75 per cent and the inside temperatures will be maintained between 24° and 30° Celsius depending on the weather. Everyone will be expected to follow physical distancing measures and the required markings have been put in place in the stations and in the trains. "We will also be monitoring the movement of people through our CCTV cameras," he said.

Reddy assured that every station and train will be sanitised every day and passengers should get their tickets either online or use smart cards for travel. Masks will be mandatory and anyone who does not have one, can purchase one at the stations, he said.

Thermal screening will also be mandatory and anyone found to be a suspect in terms of health, will be referred to the nearest Covid-19 testing centre for check ups and follow ups, he said.

₹75L extra aid for kin of Srisailam fire victims'

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 5

D. Prabhakar Rao, Transco and Genco CMD, on Saturday announced additional ex gratia of ₹75 lakh each to the nine persons killed in the fire mishap that occurred at the Srisaillam Left Bank hydroelectric power house last month. He said that a decision in this regard was taken at the Genco board meeting at Vidut Soudha.

He said with the additional ex gratia the family of deputy engineer Srinivas Goud who died in the fire will get a total quantum of financial assistance of ₹1.25 crore, and the family members of the other victims ₹1 crore each.

He said one person from each bereaved family will be provided with a job in addition to all department wise benefits.

Prabhakar Rao said that the board held a detailed review of the accident and offered condolences to the bereaved families. Principal

● **PRABHAKAR RAO** said that the board held a detailed review of the accident and offered condolences to the bereaved families. Principal secretaries Ramakrishna of finance and Sandeep Sultania of energy participated in the meeting.

secretaries Ramakrishna of finance and Sandeep Sultania of energy participated in the meeting. The board unanimously decided to consider the incident as a very special case and offer compensation accordingly.

Prabhakar Rao said, "It was an unfortunate incident that took the lives of our colleagues in a very cruel way. No matter what we say about their courage in the last few seconds of their life, we can't bring them back. But we can try to alleviate the pain endured by the families. This is the reason the Genco has decided to add our share of assistance to what the government has already declared."

NEP speaks of nutrition too: Gov.

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 5

The National Education Policy 2020 has the potential to transform the country's education system and turn India into a global knowledge superpower, Governor Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan has said.

She said that the early childhood education plans that are a part of the new policy also ensure that nutritional needs of the children are met along with education and this will lead to a

healthy nation.

The Governor was addressing a webinar, 'National Education Policy-2020 with reference to school education' on the occasion of Teachers' Day from Raj Bhavan on Saturday. Among the participants were Kendriya Vidyalaya principal Krishna Murthy, JNV principal Daniel Ratna Kumar, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan director Rama Devi, Maharshi Vidya Mandir principal Vasanthi Parushuram, HPS principal S. Narasimha Reddy, and Na-

tional Institute of Open School regional director Anil Kumar Reddy.

"Teachers," the Governor said, "are the designers of the nation's destiny and they create the leaders for different fields to take the country forward." The destiny of the nation and that of its people is created in classrooms, and teachers with their commitment and selfless service make students realise their full potential.

"Whatever I am today is because of my teachers. My father was busy

in the political sphere. He could not give enough time to take care of my studies. But my teachers from nursery to medical college took care of me and gave me the confidence to become whatever I am today. I salute all the teachers on the occasion of Teachers' Day," Dr Soundararajan said.

Earlier, the Governor offered floral tributes to the portrait of former President Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, whose birth anniversary is celebrated as Teachers' Day.



SHORT TAKES

7 GUEST WORKERS KILLED IN ROAD MISHAP

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC BHOPAL, SEPT. 5

At least seven guest workers were on Saturday killed and a dozen others injured when a bus in which they were travelling had a head-on collision with a truck on the outskirts of Raipur. The mishap took place at around 3.30 am.

The ill-fated bus was carrying around 75 guest workers from Ganjam to Surat.

The passengers who had returned to their villages in Ganjam district following nationwide lockdown enforced in March due in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak were migrating to Surat to resume their work.

“Seven people were killed and seven others injured in the incident. All the injured have been admitted to local government hospital”, Raipur senior superintendent of police Ajey Yadav said.

The tragedy took place when the speeding truck coming from the opposite side rammed into the speeding bus near Indira Gandhi Agriculture University in Raipur.

The accident was so severe that the front portion of the bus mangled trapping many passengers. Police with the help of locals removed the bodies of the deceased as well as the injured from the bus.

MOSQUE WILL BE OF SAME SIZE AS BABRI MASJID

Lucknow, Sept. 5: A mosque that will come up in Ayodhya pursuant to the Supreme Court verdict in the Ram Jannabhoomi case will be of the same size as Babri Masjid, said an office-bearer of the trust formed for its construction.

The five-acre complex in Ayodhya’s Dhamnipur village will also house a hospital, a library and a museum among others, the office-bearer said, adding that retired professor and noted food critic Pushpesh Pant will be consultant curator of the museum.

“The complex of the mosque, which will be built in Dhamnipur, will also have facilities like a hospital, a museum at the Indo-Islamic Research Centre. The mosque will be on 15,000 square feet, while the rest of the land will have these facilities,” Athar Hussain, the secretary and spokesperson of Indo-Islamic Cultural Foundation said on Saturday. “Noted food critic Pushpesh Pant gave his consent to curate the museum on Friday,” Hussain said.

The Uttar Pradesh Sunni Central Waqf Board has formed the Indo-Islamic Cultural Foundation (IICF), a trust, for the construction of the mosque on the five-acre plot.

ACTRESS WIFE SLAPS DV CASE AGAINST BJD MP

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC BHUBANESWAR, SEPT. 5

Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Lok Sabha member from Kendrapara, Anubhav Mohanty, on Saturday landed in trouble as his wife and noted Odia film actress Barsha Priyadarshini filed a case of domestic violence against him.

The case was filed under Section 12 of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act against the MP for allegedly assaulting and harassing Barsha.

In her petition filed before the Sub-Divisional Judicial Magistrate Court, Cuttack, Barsha appealed to the court seeking monthly maintenance from Anubhav, besides an indemnity of ₹15 crore.

Barsha in her petition said that Anubhav is a habitual drunkard and he often drinks with his friends at home. The MP also assaulted and harassed her mentally, she alleged.

“He invites his friends to our bedroom and drinks with them. If I resist, he would beat me up severely. He often asked me to leave his home,” the actress said.

The actress further alleged that whenever she tried to prevent Anubhav from drinking, he would become violent and physically assault her and tried to throw her out of the house.

Levelling another serious allegation, she said Anubhav has extramarital affair with multiple women from the Hollywood or Odia film industry.

Take nation into confidence, says Cong

Congress says people want to know about the outcomes of the repeated conversations with China

New Delhi, Sept. 5: The Congress on Saturday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to take the nation into confidence on talks with China on the border row in Ladakh, saying people want to know about the outcomes of the repeated conversations with the Chinese side.

The Opposition party’s demand comes a day after Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his Chinese counterpart Gen. Wei Fenghe held an over two-hour-long meeting in Moscow with a focus on easing escalating border tension in eastern Ladakh.

Congress’ chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said it was “Rajdharm” of the prime minister and the defence minister to take the nation into confidence on the important issue.

Listing the various levels of talks held with the Chinese from the foreign ministers level and corps commanders level to the defence ministers’ discussions, Surjewala asked what is the outcome of these talks.

“What is the conversation about, what is happening. Will Prime Minister Modi and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh take the country into confidence?” he asked.

Surjewala also referred to Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla’s remarks that it was an “unprecedented” situation at the India-China border and “we’ve never had this sort of a situation since 1962”, to underline the seriousness of the issue.

“The important part is what is the outcome of the repeated conversations with the Chinese counterparts by our government.... How will we ensure that Chinese transgressions are defeated,” Surjewala said in a

● **CONGRESS’ CHIEF** spokesperson Surjewala also referred to Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla’s remarks that it was an “unprecedented” situation at the India-China border and “we’ve never had this sort of a situation since 1962”, to underline the seriousness of the issue.

● **CONGRESS LEADER** Rajeev Shukla said they hoped that the issue can be resolved through talks, but he added conflicting statements coming from the government on the border stand-off are a matter of worry.

video posted on his Twitter account.

He said people want answers to questions such as how the Chinese will be repulsed to “reclaim our motherland”.

“We hope Prime Minister Modi and the defence minister will come forward and take the nation into confidence. That is the true Rajdharm. We will await an answer,” he said.

Later, at an online briefing, Congress leader Rajeev Shukla said, “We hope that the issue can be resolved through talks.”

He, however, demanded that the government should give a clear picture of the situation.

“Conflicting statements coming from the government is a matter of worry for us,” he added.

The tension between the two sides had escalated manifold after the violent clashes in Galwan Valley in eastern Ladakh on June 15 in which 20 Indian Army personnel were killed. The Chinese side also suffered casualties but it is yet to give out the details. According to an American intelligence report, the number of casualties on the Chinese side was 35.

- PTI



China’s Minister of National Defence Wei Fenghe, left, Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu, center, and Defence Minister, Rajnath Singh, right, pose for a photo with their colleagues at a Joint Meeting of Defence Ministers of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, Commonwealth of Independent States and Collective Security Treaty Organization Member States in Moscow.

- PTI

Army helps out stranded Chinese citizens

New Delhi, Sept. 5: At a time it is engaged in a fierce standoff with China’s PLA in eastern Ladakh, the Indian Army on Wednesday provided food, warm clothes and medical assistance to three Chinese citizens who had lost their way in sub-zero temperatures at an altitude of 17,500 feet in a border area in North Sikkim, officials said.

The Army personnel deployed in the area also guided the Chinese citizens, including a woman, to return to the Chinese side and reach their destination.

The humanitarian ges-

● **THE HUMANITARIAN** gesture by the Army came when it is dealing with an aggressive behaviour by the Chinese troops in eastern Ladakh.

● **THE ARMY** said the three Chinese citizens lost their way in the Plateau area of North Sikkim.

ture by the Army came when it is dealing with an aggressive behaviour by the Chinese troops in eastern Ladakh.

The Army, in a statement, said the three Chinese citizens lost their way in the Plateau area of

North Sikkim.

“Realising danger to the lives of the Chinese citizens in sub-zero temperatures, the soldiers of Indian Army immediately reached out and provided medical assistance including oxygen, food and warm clothes to protect them from the vagaries of extreme altitude and harsh climactic conditions,” the Army said.

It said the Indian troops also gave them appropriate guidance to reach their destination after which they returned.

“The Chinese citizens expressed their gratitude to India and the Indian

Army for their prompt assistance,” the Army said. The Indian and Chinese troops are locked in a bitter border row in eastern Ladakh for the last four months. The tensions had escalated manifold after 20 Indian Army personnel were killed in a fierce clash between the two sides in Galwan Valley on June 15. The Chinese military is yet to reveal the casualties it suffered in the clash.

Tensions flared up again in the region after China unsuccessfully attempted to occupy Indian territory on the southern bank of Pangong lake around a

week back.

Following the attempts, India occupied a number of strategic heights on the southern bank of Pangong lake and strengthened its presence in Finger 2 and Finger 3 areas in the region to thwart any Chinese actions. China has strongly objected to India’s move.

India has also rushed in additional troops and weapons to the sensitive region following China’s transgression attempts.

Defence ministers of the two countries met on the sidelines of a multilateral meet in Moscow on Friday.

- PTI

COVID DEATHS INCH CLOSER TO 70,000-MARK

New Delhi, Sept. 5: Covid-19 infection tally sprinted past 40 lakh officially, just 13 days after it crossed 30 lakh, with a record 86,432 cases being reported in a day, while recoveries have surged to 1,07,223 on Saturday pushing the recovery rate to 77.23 per cent, according to the Union Health Ministry.

The total coronavirus cases mounted to 40,23,179, while the death toll climbed to 69,561 with 1,089 people succumbing to the disease in a span of 24 hours, data updated at 8 am showed.

India’s Covid-19 cases jumped from 10 lakh to 20 lakh in 21 days. It took 16 more days to race past 30 lakh and 13 days more to cross the 40-lakh mark.

It took 110 days for the Covid-19 cases in the country to reach one lakh while it had taken 59 days more to go past the 10-lakh post.

The case fatality rate due has further declined to 1.73 per cent.

- PTI

Seat sharing is a thorny issue for RJD-led alliance

NAYEAR AZAD | DC PATNA, SEPT. 5

Seat sharing among Grand Alliance partners has turned into a thorny affair as most of the political parties including smaller partners have been demanding sizable seat share for the ensuing Assembly elections.

Political analysts believe that Tejashwi Yadav, the political heir of RJD Chief Lalu Yadav will have to leave his rigidity to end brewing resentment among Grand Alliance partners over the issue of seat adjustments in Bihar.

RLSP leaders in Patna recently met RJD state president Jagdanand Singh and submitted a list of seats it wanted to contest.

Sources in the grand alliance said that the negotiations among partners were in the final stages and likely to get sorted out by mid-September.

RLSP insiders told this newspaper that the party has staked claims on 48

● **THE GRAND** alliance in Bihar comprises RJD, Congress, Upendra Kushwaha’s RLSP, Mukesh Sahani’s VIP and three Left parties (CPI, CPM and CPI-ML).

seats which include 23 seats it contested in 2015 besides 25 other constituencies where the party claims to have a vote base.

Besides, three Left parties the CPI, the CPM and the CPI-ML have also submitted their lists and have urged the RJD to finalize the seat-sharing deal without delay.

Another smaller partner Mukesh Sahani of the Vikasheel Insaan Party (VIP) has also sent a list of its candidates demanding “sizeable seat share” for the party.

With Jitan Ram Manjhi in NDA fold and no clarity yet on Sharad Yadav’s Loktantrik Janata Dal (LJD), the grand alliance in Bihar comprises RJD, Congress, Upendra Kushwaha’s RLSP,

Mukesh Sahani’s VIP and three Left parties (CPI, CPM and CPI-ML).

Upendra Kushwaha with around 10 per cent voter base of his Koeri community is considered a strong player in the grand alliance. Mukesh Sahani’s Nishad community accounts for 14 per cent of the state population and the RJD’s M-Y combination forms about 30 per cent vote share (Muslims 16 and Yadav 14 per cent).

Sources said both RJD and Congress will take a call on the number of seats that would be distributed to alliance partners RLSP, VIP and left parties. The date of their meeting is yet to be finalized but “things these things will be sorted out soon. There is no trouble regarding seat-sharing among the grand alliance partners”, a senior RJD leader said.

He further said that the formula will need final approval from RJD chief Lalu Yadav who is serving a jail term in fodder scam case.

HC SAYS NO FOR CBI PROBE INTO HONEY-TRAP SCANDAL IN MP

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC BHOPAL, SEPT. 5

The Indore bench of Madhya Pradesh high court on Saturday rejected a petition seeking a probe by Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) into the honey-trapping and blackmailing scandal that surfaced in the state last year.

The scandal came to the fore when the MP police busted a racket involved in honey trapping and then blackmailing several bureaucrats and politicians in the state, in November last year, leading the previous Kamal Nath government to constitute a special investigation team (SIT) to probe the matter.

However, several petitions were filed in the Indore bench seeking a CBI probe into the issue arguing that SIT would not be able to unearth the truth considering the high profile nature of the scandal.

A division bench of the high court dismissed the petitions saying that it was satisfied with the progress of the probe by SIT into the matter and there was no need for a CBI probe into it. The SIT has earlier submitted a report detailing the progress in its probe.

The court, however, ordered the SIT to submit the forensic reports of the electronic evidence gathered in connection with the scandal before it as soon as they were available.

The SIT has recovered 4,000 smut videos, sex chat screenshots, photographs in which the accused were seen in compromising positions with their victims, from the laptops, cell phones and other electronic surveillance gadgets seized from the honey-trapping ring that allegedly hooked quite a significant number of movers and shakers in the state.

SSR | SUICIDE

The NCB on Saturday has also arrested Sushant’s house help Dipesh Sawant

NCB summons Rhea, to be grilled with Showik

DC CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI, SEPT. 5

A day after the arrest of actress Rhea Chakraborty’s brother Showik and late actor Sushant Singh Rajput’s former house manager Samuel Miranda, the NCB arrested house help Dipesh Sawant on Saturday.

Showik and Miranda have been remanded to the NCB custody till September 11 in connection with the narcotics angle pertaining to the actor’s suicide probe.

The central agency sent summons to Rhea for questioning next week after Showik claimed to be acting at her behest and

procuring drugs. The officials are also probing the mode of payment used for obtaining the narcotics substances.

The investigators said that the probe in the case has revealed debit and credit card transactions. The details of the debit and credit cards are being investigated to ascertain whom did they belong to and how many such transactions were done in the past. The officials said that they would grill Showik and he would be confronted with Rhea in a joint questioning session of the NCB.

The revelation has also hinted towards the possibility of her passing on the contraband to others,

including celebrities, identities of whom are yet to be established.

“NCB is a national probe agency and we wouldn’t shirk the responsibility. We are discussing evidence with the public prosecutor and all those found involved will be picked,” said Mutha Ashok Jain, deputy DG of NCB.

On Friday, the NCB raided Rhea Chakraborty’s and house manager Samuel Miranda’s residences in connection with the ongoing case. They seized their laptops, mobile phones and several documents. The agency also took custody of Abdul Basit Parihar, who was allegedly in direct contact with Rhea’s brother

SANJAY RAUT SOFTENS STAND ON KANGANA’S PoK JIBE

SONU SHRIVASTAVA | DC MUMBAI, SEPT. 5

The Shiv Sena on Saturday appeared to have softened its stand on the controversy involving Kangana Ranaut, who had likened Mumbai to PoK (Pakistan occupied Kashmir).

Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut said he does not have any personal issue with the actress and added that he raised his voice because

she spoke against Maharashtra. Meanwhile, RPI chief and Union minister for state Ramdas Athawale said his party would take care of Ranaut’s security in Mumbai.

Mr Raut said that those who are insulting Maharashtra, should remember that Maharashtra is because of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and Shiv Sena founder Balasaheb

Showik and has claimed that he would peddle drugs as per Showik’s requirement.

The searches began at

Thackeray.

“I don’t have any personal issue with Kangana Ranaut. But insulting Mumbai and Maharashtra will not be tolerated,” the Shiv Sena leader said, adding that linking Mumbai with PoK is a very serious offence.

The Shiv Sena and Congress have been alleging that BJP IT cell is behind Kangana Ranaut’s tweets.

angles surrounding Rajput’s death are being probed by the CBI, Enforcement Directorate and NCB.

DECCAN Chronicle

6 SEPTEMBER 2020



Krishna Shastri
Devulapalli

Off the beaten track

Blame it all on those vile Mughals

Apparently, our glorious land was ruled at various times by, among others, the Mauryas for 550 years, the Chalukyas for 600 years, the Satavahanas for 500 years, the Cholas for 1,000 years, the Pandyas for 600 years and the Kapoors for 100 years (okay, the last one I made up). But all we hear about, Facebook and WhatsApp tell me of late, is the wretched Mughals who ruled for a measly 300 years. And that this injustice should be corrected at once on a war footing as we scream *Jai Hind*.

As a baby step, I don't know, perhaps we could ban biryani, a diabolical Mughal invention that has enslaved us for several centuries. And make Chole Bhature, an all-time favourite of Raja Raja Chola's, the most ordered dish on Swiggy for the next one year and show those arrogant, if dead, Mughals a thing or two. And be declared the most patriotic nation in the universe by Nasa. And have that underwritten by Unesco.

Jokes apart, why is it important that we read up on these kings? With immediate effect? As opposed to those other terrible kings about whom far too much has been written?

Well, could it be because, unlike those dastardly Mughal invaders, these were all good, benevolent, tolerant kings, who didn't bump off their own family members to ascend the throne, had no blood on their hands, whose armies didn't rape, pillage or plunder, didn't hanker after power, were uniformly kind to their subjects, didn't ever impose taxes, planted shady trees, built wide roads and never ate biryani? And that Kangana Ranaut and Arnab Goswami have in their possession UHD videos from centuries ago as incontrovertible proof of their munificence?

Indulge me as I relate a tiny tale with a happy ending.

A man was travelling with his family along a long and winding road. It had been quite a journey. There was no denying the path had been bumpy and unpredictable, and his car rattled and wheezed a bit from the strain. But there was also no denying he had made progress. Mainly because he had kept his eyes open. And on the road ahead.

Suddenly a man waving a bright red flag jumped in his path and stopped the car.

"You know what a horrible, dangerous, pot-hole filled road you have been driving on so far?" he said. "Don't you see the injustice of it? Shouldn't you be taking all those responsible for building such an evil, un navigable road to task, make them pay? And keep looking out for how dangerous and harmful the road behind you is?"

"Yes, you are absolutely right, sir," the driver said gratefully. "From now on, I won't take my eyes off the rear-view mirror when I drive. I'll keep a keen eye on how bad the road behind me is. Thanks for the invaluable tip."

The driver restarted his car, and proceeded, his eyes firmly on the rear-view mirror. And promptly drove off a cliff at the next bend, family and all. And they all lived happily ever after.

Not a believable story? Why then are so many of us obsessed with the road that we have already negotiated? Good, bad and ugly, though it might have been. Like any long road. At the expense of looking at the road ahead?

Understanding history and its older sibling, mythology, is okay. Good even, up to a point. But isn't it obvious that we have gone way past that? Obsessively looking at the past — real and mythical — is merely not wanting to look at the present; an inability to deal with reality. And an unwillingness to take responsibility.

How about we put history aside for a bit, and mythology, too, and brush up on reason, scientific thinking and logic instead. Even get ourselves a (slim) book on compassion, perhaps. Maybe it's time to forget yesterday for a minute and figure out what we need to do today so that we actually have a tomorrow. Not be diverted by people who don't want us to see the here and now.

See what we've allowed to happen because we've been told to stare at the rear-view mirror.

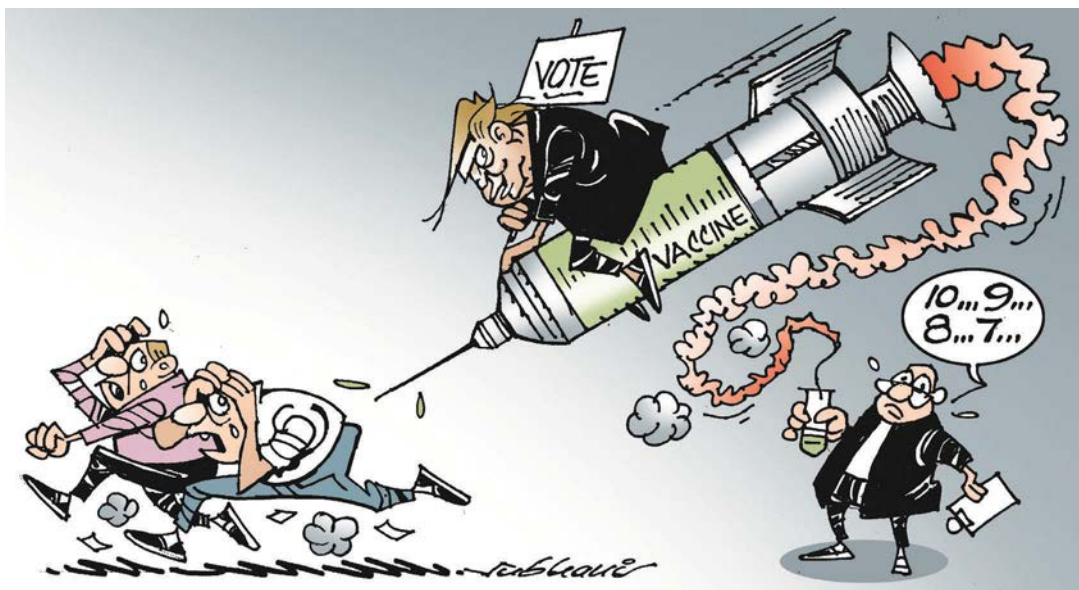
And, yes, let's thank god for biryani.

Krishna Shastri Devulapalli is a humour writer, novelist, columnist and screenwriter



As a baby step, I don't know, perhaps we could ban biryani, a diabolical Mughal invention that has enslaved us for several centuries. And make Chole Bhature, an all-time favourite of Raja Raja Chola's, the most ordered dish on Swiggy for the next one year and show those arrogant, if dead, Mughals a thing or two.

Subhani



For democracy's sake, don't scrap Q-Hour



Pavan K. Varna

Chanakya's View

Frankly, to have a Parliament session without question hour is like visiting a forest without trees. The BJP's decision to scrap Question Hour in the forthcoming parliamentary session is both worrisome and opportunistic. The BJP was in power right now, but surely it must remember its days in the Opposition, and not lose sight of the fact that it could be there again. In democracy — and in life — nothing ever remains unchanged. Ghalib's immortal line comes to mind: *Har bulundi ke naseebon mein hai pasti ek din*: it is the in the destiny of every pinnacle to hit the dust sometime.

If the BJP would have been in the Opposition today, would it welcome a parliamentary session without the opportunity to put the government on the mat? Especially if there were burning issues to discuss like there are today: the economic crisis, the handling of the Corona pandemic, and Chinese aggression on the border. The reasons being touted against holding the question hour are hardly convincing. Democratic governments function on the basis of accountability. Within the hallowed precincts of Parliament, the nation's highest democratic forum, question hour is the one institution where government ministers can be directly questioned. Nothing else substitutes for this interrogatory interaction, and compels the government to explain and defend its

actions and policies. Let us examine the arguments against Question Hour being put by the ruling dispensation. Firstly, it is said that even in the absence of Question Hour, written answers can be provided to questions provided in advance. My experience of being in Parliament compels me to unhesitatingly throw this argument out of the window. There are two categories of questions that can be asked in Parliament, unstarred and starred. The first merit only written replies. This incorporates the art of drafting a reply, that mostly says as little as possible, while fulfilling the perfunctory requirement of answering the question. As a diplomat-bureaucrat before joining politics, I have been on the other side of the fence of drafting replies to unstarred questions. The achievement lay in hiding the full truth, and revealing only what is unavoidably necessary, playing on words, and using the loopholes in the question itself — many of which are badly drafted — to get off the hook. The answers are circulated in Parliament, and mostly forgotten, except as a written record of what little the government had to say when asked a straightforward question.

Starred questions, on the other hand, come up in Question Hour. The concerned minister, and sometimes the Prime Minister himself, has to physically answer the question. Moreover, each question allows for a minimum of three sup-

The argument that Question Hour can be substituted by Zero Hour or by special leave mentions, is fallacious. Both are usually about urgent but localised issues, and do not allow for the range of interrogation that a question hour does.

plementary questions related to the original question. This requires the minister to prepare himself fully, and gives the Opposition a much needed opportunity to hold the government accountable in a much more direct way than the anonymity of a written reply. If the minister prevaricates, or seeks to evade the questions asked, the Chair of the House can pull him up, and if she does not have the answers it becomes an embarrassment for the government. In other words, if Parliament's principal purpose is to provide a democratic forum for holding the government accountable, this is the hour when it happens best.

The argument that starred questions require the minister to be accompanied by a number of officials from the ministry concerned since, depending on the question asked, they can quickly send across from the officials' gallery briefing notes or facts to the minister, is fallacious. If even MPs will now be able to enter Parliament only with a negative certificate on Corona, why can't each ministry identify a few selected officials required to be present on question day, to do the same?

The argument that Question Hour can be substituted by Zero Hour or by special leave mentions, is fallacious too. Both are usually about

urgent but localised issues, and do not allow for the range of interrogation that a question hour does. Short duration discussions on specific subjects, or call attention motions, are difficult to schedule, and do not allow the exercise of accountability to be exercised on a daily basis as happens during question hour. The fact that some state Assemblies have dispensed with Question Hour, should be no reason why Parliament, the apex legislature where national issues need to be discussed, has to do the same. Similarly, for the BJP to argue that because Question Hour has frequently been disrupted by the Opposition, Question Hour itself can be dispensed with, is hardly tenable. Unfortunately, disruptions do take place in Parliament. But, the BJP when in Opposition perfected the art of such disruptions. Would it have then agreed that as a result of its behaviour Question Hour should be scrapped?

It is true that these are not normal times. The Corona pandemic has led to modifications in the working of institutions. It is for this reason that the session of Parliament is taking place after a prolonged hiatus, and for a truncated period. Parliament cannot only be a mechanical institution for a ruling party with a brute majority in the Lok Sabha, and a usually managed majority in the Rajya Sabha, to pass legislation. A government has to be held accountable. It is hoped that the BJP's own professed commitment to democracy will prompt it to rescind its decision to do away with Question Hour.

The writer, an author and former diplomat, is in politics

LETTERS

TEACHERS' DAY

As we celebrate Teachers' Day every year on September 5, we must remember that teachers working in private schools are facing many problems. Even though salaries are poor, work is being extracted from them. Government teachers are getting three times more than private teachers with pension, etc. I request the government to announce sops to private teachers.

P. Samuel Suresh
Hyderabad

ONLINE CLASSES

The so-called online classes by almost all private schools are nothing but a big fraud to collect term fees. It's an open dacoity and loot.

A. Venkatachary
Hyderabad

FOCUS ON ECONOMY

Economy should be the foremost concern of the government and financial stability of the RBI. They have to work together to ensure that the economy keeps booming while not compromising on financial stability. If economy is pushed to back-burner and focus is kept on Hindutva and citizenship, it shows misplaced priorities.

Vikas Panchareddy
Hyderabad

REVENUE LAW

Revenue law is an ancient land-reforms law (*KCR is firm on new revenue law, DC, Sept. 5*). In ancient India, the Maurya king Chandragupta and his political guru Chanakya introduced land reforms that were subsequently removed by foreign invaders. Governments are coming and going but there is still no reforms for "Annadata". That is because of their illiteracy.

K.N. Vikram Raj
Hyderabad

ADVICE TO IPS

Though we welcome the PM's advice to IPS probationers, it is an open secret that governments are misusing them and undermining their dignity (*PM gives success tips to 131 IPS probationers, DC, Sept. 5*). The fact is that IPS officers are forced to work under immense pressure and unable serve people due to bad political scenario.

G.S. Dwivedi
Hyderabad

Ailing MP to princes' rescue

NEW DELHI, SEPT. 5 But for the lone vote of an ailing Jana Sangh member, the Constitution (24th Amendment) Bill to abolish privy purses and privileges of former rulers, would perhaps have gone through the Rajya Sabha today. Mr. Sri Kant Mishra, who had been under treatment for lung cancer at the Wellington Nursing Home here, was brought by his party colleagues to vote against the Bill.

He was driven to Parliament in an ambulance, about half an hour before the division took place, and carried to the chamber on a stretcher. Dr. R.K. Caroli, Physician of the nursing home, told UNI that the member had been taken away by party workers against medical advice.

Post Shah illness, now stars don't seem aligned for BJP rejigs

Scindia kept waiting

The expansion of both the BJP national executive and the Union Cabinet is unlikely before the Parliament session. It has been nine months since J.P. Nadda took over as party president but there is no sign of a new team. The BJP office bearers were supposed to be appointed in August but home minister Amit Shah's illness is said to have delayed it. Now the stars have turned hostile. BJP insiders now claim that an "inauspicious" Shraadh fortnight has come in the way of a BJP executive and Cabinet expansion. Jyotiraditya Scindia will be disappointed if he fails to join Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Cabinet before the Madhya Pradesh Assembly bypolls. Mr Scindia thinks he can influence voters in 27 constituencies if he is given a Cabinet rank.

Mukul must pay

The Congress's Mukul Wasnik is finding himself on a sticky wicket following his move to align with the 23 dissenters. Mukul is AICC general secretary in charge of Madhya Pradesh where crucial Assembly

by-elections are to be held. But Mr Wasnik is unable to visit on account of his 'rebel' stance.

There are four AICC secretaries under him who in private are giving him an earful for allegedly "compromising" their integrity and loyalty to the party. In principle, AICC secretaries are supposed to take direction and guidance from the general secretary but in Mr Wasnik's case, neither side is speaking to one another. Former Madhya Pradesh chief minister Kamal Nath fears this deadlock would cost the party dearly.

Thirty minutes only

Criticised for cancelling 'Question Hour', the Narendra Modi government will allow a 30-minute question hour in the upcoming Parliament session scheduled to be held from September 14 to October 1. So far, India and Russia had been two democracies dithering on convening their Parliaments in the wake of Covid-19. On the other hand, as many as 105 parliaments worldwide have been meeting and discussing issues amid the pandemic. In the British Parliament, Prime Minister Boris



By WAQYANAWIS

Johnson has been fielding questions after spending a considerable time in the hospital

ICU after getting infected by the Coronavirus.

A piece of Mukherjee

With former President Pranab Mukherjee gone, attempts to usurp his legacy are underway by non-Congress parties, particularly by the BJP and the Trinamul. PM Modi had a picture of him touching Pranab's feet while Rahul Gandhi's rather 'perfunctory' tweet was subject to social media criticism.

Pranab's diaries

Pranab Mukherjee's daughter Sharmishta, currently the Congress spokesperson and the Delhi Mahila Congress unit head, is said to be in possession of her father's diaries. These entries, written at the end of each day as his habit, are more than a goldmine. Sharmishta's brother Abhijit is also in the Congress, having served two terms in the Lok Sabha. Pranab's diaries are being eyed by the Congress, BJP, the Trinamul and several publishing houses.

Sonia calls Sharmishta

When Pranab Mukherjee was battling for his life at the Army's Research and Referral hospital in Delhi, Sonia Gandhi reportedly called up Sharmishta enquiring not just about Pranab but her as well. When she learnt that Sharmishta was alone, Sonia got restless and worried over the young Mukherjee, who had to calm and assure her that she was fine.

Priyanka's new abode

Priyanka Gandhi has a new address in New Delhi. She has a duplex in Sujan Singh Park, facing the Ambassador Hotel and in the vicinity of Khan Market. It is one of the most sought-after addresses in the capital. Built by Khushwant Singh's father, Sujan Singh Park is one of the first residential apartments of Delhi, where stories of the residents are as interesting as its architecture. Sujan Singh was Khushwant's grandfather. Priyanka, reliably learnt, is staying there as a tenant.

The writer is a keen observer of the goings-on in backrooms of power

SHORT TAKES

AFGHAN FORCES
KILL 46 TALIBAN
TERRORISTS

Kabul, Sept. 5: The Afghan forces have killed 46 Taliban terrorists and injured 37 others during an operation in the northern Faryab province.

Several Taliban units attacked the Qaisar district of the Faryab province but were pushed back by the military, Mohammad Hanif Reza, a spokesman for the 209th corps of the Afghan National Army, also known as the Shaheen Corps, told Sputnik on Saturday.

The spokesman added that the district was under the control of the Afghan forces.

At the same time, Reza said the military operation was still underway, while the Afghan armed forces were clearing the area from the Taliban terrorists.

Meanwhile, the provincial government said several high-ranking members of the Taliban were injured during the operation.

The movement has not yet commented on the incident.

16 KILLED IN
BANGLA MOSQUE
GAS EXPLOSION

Dhaka, Sept. 5: A suspected gas explosion tore through a Bangladesh mosque killing at least 16 people while dozens suffered life-threatening burns, police said on Saturday.

Worshippers were at Friday evening prayers when the blast sent a ball of flames through the mosque in the central district of Narayanganj, emergency services said.

Investigators suspected a spark from an air conditioner — which came on after a power cut — set off the gas.

“Leaked gas entered the mosque,” Narayanganj fire chief Abdullah Al Arefin said.

“When they shut the windows and doors and switched on the air conditioners there was an electricity spark that led to the explosion inside the mosque.” The 16 who died were among 37 taken to a specialist burns hospital in Dhaka, said hospital spokesman Samanta Lal Sen.

He added that the condition of the remaining 21 patients was “very critical” and all had suffered 70 to 80 percent burns.

Police said at least 45 were injured by the blast and that people had spoken of smelling a gas leak.

TALIBAN SAY TEAM
IN QATAR FOR
PEACE TALKS

Kabul, Sept. 5: The Taliban’s negotiating team has arrived in Qatar, a spokesman said on Saturday, in a sign that long-delayed peace talks with the Afghan government are inching closer to starting.

A date for the talks, to be hosted in Doha, has not been set but the warring sides have this week made signals that negotiations could launch soon, including efforts to wrap up a drawn out prisoner exchange.

“All members of our negotiating team have arrived in Doha. The talks will begin once some small technical issues are resolved,” Taliban spokesman Suhail Shaheen said.

The Taliban team had recently been in Pakistan discussing the peace process with the government in Islamabad.

Qatar authorities have been imposing a seven day quarantine period on all arrivals to the country, but have made exemptions for some delegations who undergo regular testing.

The Afghan government’s negotiating team remained in Kabul on Saturday, but a logistics team landed in Doha earlier this week.

Postal voting marks start
of US Presidential election

North Carolina was to begin mailing out more than 6 lakh ballots

Washington, Sept. 5: The US election is officially open: North Carolina on Friday launched vote-by-mail operations for the November 3 contest between President Donald Trump and Democrat Joe Biden, which is getting uglier by the hour.

With two months until Election Day, Trump is seizing on fears over violent protests in US cities and questioning the integrity of voting by mail, while challenger Biden intensified his criticism of a “deplorable” leader who he said is not fit for office.

Worries about the unabated spread of Coronavirus are expected to prompt a surge in the number of ballots cast by mail, as millions seek to avoid polling stations.

In a country on edge over the health crisis and a national reckoning about race, the next 60 days will test the ability of the world’s largest economy to organise its election while

profoundly changed by a pandemic that has killed 1,87,000 Americans.

North Carolina was to begin mailing out more than 6,00,000 ballots, in response to a major spike in demand. Other key battleground states such as Wisconsin — which both candidates visited in recent days — will follow in the coming weeks. How Americans vote has become another flashpoint in an increasingly divisive political landscape.

A recent poll by USA Today and Suffolk University showed that 56 percent of Republican voters surveyed said they would go in person to vote, while only 26 percent of Democrats plan to do the same.

One out of every four Biden voters said that if the Democratic former vice president loses on November 3, they would not be ready to accept a Trump victory as “fairly won.” About one in five Trump voters said a simi-

lar thing. As he seeks a second four-year term, Trump has for months sowed doubt among his base about the legitimacy of an election with a significant number of mail-in votes.

Trump — who himself voted by mail in his adopted home state of Florida — has repeatedly, and without evidence, said mail-in voting could lead to widespread fraud.

He even has suggested to his supporters that they try to vote twice to test the system — earning him scorn on social media and from Democrats.

The tense campaign battle heated on Thursday when *The Atlantic magazine* reported — citing four anonymous sources who said they had firsthand knowledge of the discussions — that Trump had referred to US Marines buried in a World War I cemetery in France as “losers” and “suckers” for getting killed in action. — *AFP*

Don team pushes SM
limits as polls loom

Washington, Sept. 5: A message saying you “won’t be safe” in Joe Biden’s America. The former vice president shown “sleeping” during a television interview. Biden “hiding” — alone — in his basement. All three videos featured in social media of President Donald Trump and his team as recently as the past week as he sought to close the gap on his Democratic rival. And each was labeled as false or manipulated content by social media giants and fact checkers.

While negative campaigning has long been a fixture of American politics, the open use of digitally-altered images by Trump and other candidates in 2020 has tech giants worried.

Twitter has cracked down by removing or labeling several of the president’s tweets. Facebook, citing the risk of civil unrest, announced on Thursday that it would not allow new political ads on its platform in the last week of the November 3 race.

There remain questions whether such messages — almost impossible to stop once they become viral — are working on voters but a line has already been crossed.

“There’s a long tradition in politics of competing politicians presenting their opponents’ words or beliefs in edited ways, right? That’s part of politics,” Ethan Porter, assistant professor of media and public affairs at George Washington University, said. — *AFP*

FB FORBIDS
LIVESTREAMED
DEATH

Dijon, Sept. 5: Facebook said on Saturday it would block the livestream of a Frenchman suffering from an incurable condition who wanted to broadcast his death on the social media platform.

Earlier, Alain Cocq announced that he was now refusing all food, drink and medicine after President Emmanuel Macron turned down his request for euthanasia.

Cocq, 57, who suffers from a rare condition which causes the walls of his arteries to stick together, said he believed he had less than a week to live and would broadcast his death from Saturday morning.

“Although we respect (Cocq’s) decision to want to draw attention to this complex question, following expert advice we have taken measures to prevent the live broadcast on Alain’s account,” a Facebook spokesman said. — *AFP*

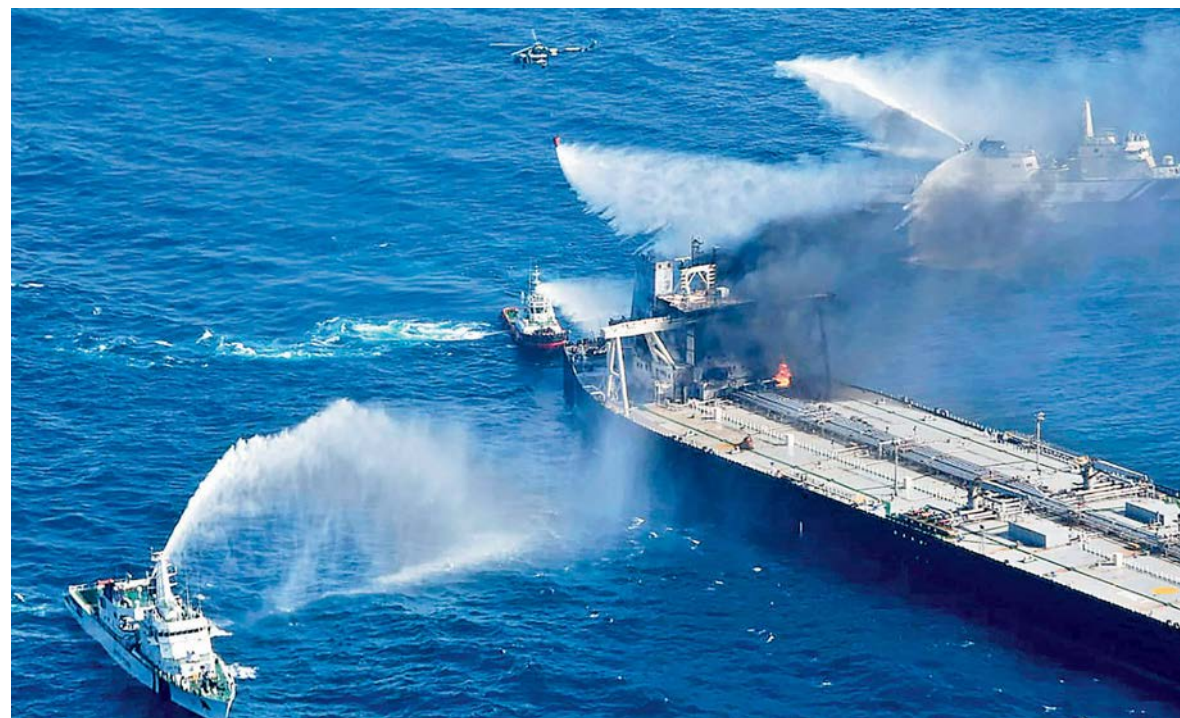
UK CLIMATE
ACTIVISTS TARGET
NEWSPAPERS

London, Sept. 5: Climate change protesters in Britain blockaded two printing presses on Saturday, disrupting the distribution of numerous national newspapers as they step up 10 days of protests demanding action on environmental issues.

Activist group Extinction Rebellion (XR) targeted both the plants, just north of London and near Liverpool in north-west England, causing delays to deliveries of papers including *The Times*, the *Daily Telegraph* and *The Sun*.

Dozens of activists blocked roads outside the sites using vehicles and by attaching themselves to other obstacles, “to expose the failure of these corporations to accurately report on the climate and ecological emergency.” — *AP*

Tanker fire under control



Tug boats and ships battle the fire on MT New Diamond in the Indian Ocean, on Saturday. The fire on the large oil tanker off Sri Lankas coast has been brought under control but is still not extinguished, the navy said on Saturday. The tanker, carrying nearly 2 million barrels of crude oil, was drifting about 20 nautical miles (37 kilometers) from Sri Lankas eastern coast and on Friday evening a tug boat towed it to the deep sea away from land, said navy spokesman Capt. Indika de Silva.

— *AP*

Biden confirms Covid-19 test,
says he’ll be tested regularly

Wilmington, Sept. 5 : Joe Biden has said that he’s been tested at least once for the Covid-19 virus and promised he will be tested regularly during his general election campaign against US President Donald Trump.

The Democratic presidential nominee on Friday told reporters of his testing protocol during a wide-ranging news conference in which he blasted Trump for downplaying the Coronavirus and thus ensuring that it will continue to kill Americans and ravage the economy.

For much of the summer, Biden’s advisers deflected questions about whether the former vice president was being tested himself as he anchored his campaign almost exclusively from his Delaware home, travelling sparingly as a precaution.

“They’re going to do it on a regular basis,” Biden said of the testing. He noted that the Secret Service agents assigned to protect him and “everyone” else who comes into his home is tested already. Biden said he didn’t know specifically when his next test would be. “I just, ‘yes, sir,’ show up and put my head back,” Biden said.

“I imagine it’ll be sometime this week, but it will be a regular basis,” Biden and Trump offer voters a sharp contrast on the pandemic and its economic fallout.

In the Oval Office on Friday, Trump hailed a new jobs report and repeated his optimism that a Covid-19 vaccine could be available even before the November 3 election.

Hours later, during a fundraiser, Biden said, “I

hope like hell they have a vaccine,” but questioned Trump’s timeline and ability to distribute it. “We’ve got to make sure they’re not just hyping... that they actually finish all the testing,” Biden said, adding that Trump’s public questioning of scientists and medical experts will reduce confidence in a vaccine whenever it comes online.

“People don’t trust a damn thing he says,” Biden quipped. Further, the former vice president questioned how well the administration is planning for distribution, given the White House’s rocky distribution of Covid-19 tests and protective equipment.

“Discovery of a safe vaccine isn’t enough,” Biden said. “The road from approval to injection is a long road.” — *AP*

BIDEN SLAMS DON
FOR MOCKING
U.S. MARINES

Washington, Sept. 5: Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden declared President Donald Trump “unfit” for the presidency on Friday, delivering an impassioned reaction to a report that Trump — who never served in uniform — allegedly mocked American war dead.

The allegations, sourced anonymously, describe multiple offensive comments by the president toward fallen and captured US service members, including calling World War I dead at an American military cemetery in France “losers” and “suckers” in 2018. — *AP*

Russia defiant
over Navalny

Moscow, Sept. 5: Russia defied threats of new sanctions over the poisoning of Alexei Navalny, as US President Donald Trump said on Friday he had not yet seen proof that the Kremlin critic was a victim of Moscow’s Novichok programme.

A new crisis in ties between Russia and the West broke out after Germany said this week there was “unequivocal evidence” that President Vladimir Putin’s top foe had been poisoned using the Soviet-era nerve agent.

Western leaders and many Russians have expressed horror at what Navalny’s allies say is the first known use of chemical weapons against a high-profile opposition leader on Russian soil.

The 44-year-old lawyer fell ill on a Siberian flight last month and was evacuated to Germany for treatment. He has been in an artificially induced coma for the past two weeks.

The Kremlin again denied responsibility for the attack on Friday.

● **WESTERN LEADERS** and many Russians have expressed horror at what Navalny’s allies say is the first known use of chemical weapons against a high-profile opposition leader on Russian soil.

“A whole number of theories including poisoning were considered from the very first days,” Putin’s spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters. “According to our doctors, this theory has not been proved.”

Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Germany’s justice ministry had so far failed to share any findings with Moscow’s prosecutors, adding that Russian authorities had “nothing to hide”.

Trump said on Friday he had yet to see proof from Berlin that Navalny had been poisoned.

“I don’t know exactly what happened. I think it’s tragic, it’s terrible, it shouldn’t happen,” the president told a press conference. — *AFP*

Violent typhoon
heads for Japan

Kagoshima, Sept. 5: An extremely powerful typhoon was barreling towards southwestern Japan on Saturday as authorities issued evacuation advisories to thousands of residents, warning of unprecedented violent winds, heavy rain and high waves.

Haishen churned near Okinawa in southern Japan on Saturday afternoon and was expected to approach Kyushu late Sunday or early Monday, the meteorological agency said.

The storm is expected to affect Japan from late Saturday, with winds of up to 290 kilometres per hour (180 miles per hour), making it a “violent” storm — the top level on the country’s classification scale.

“There is a danger of record winds, heavy rain, high waves and storm surge,” Yoshihisa Nak-

amoto, an agency officer, told a news conference, calling for an early evacuation and “maximum caution.” Yuhei Takamura, a government official, said, “A disaster will occur. There is almost no doubt about it.” About 4,600 people in Tatumizu, Kagoshima, were urged to evacuate swiftly, while authorities in other areas of Kyushu were warning their residents to prepare.

Satoshi Sugimoto, another agency official, said the latest typhoon could generate high waves as powerful as a tsunami.

“It’s going to be the last chance to flee” when the agency formally issues the nation’s highest storm warning, Sugimoto told reporters.

Authorities on Minami-daitojima instructed about 1,300 residents to evacuate as the storm was expected to hit the remote island, east of Okinawa. — *AFP*

NEW | LIFE

Pak court had approved the relocation of an elephant to Cambodia after a campaign

‘World’s loneliest elephant’ okayed to quit zoo

Islamabad, Sept. 5: An elephant who has become a cause celebre for animal rights activists around the world will be allowed to leave his Pakistani zoo and transferred to better conditions, the animal welfare group helping with the case said on Saturday.

Dubbed the ‘world’s loneliest elephant’ by his supporters, Kaavan has languished at a zoo in the Pakistani capital of Islamabad for more than 35 years.

Martin Bauer, a spokesman for Four Paws, said the elephant has been finally given medical approval to travel, most likely to Cambodia, where he will find companionship and better conditions.

The overweight elephant Kaavan underwent a full medical examination at the zoo on Friday, said Bauer.

In May, Pakistan’s High Court ordered the Marghazar Zoo closed because of its abysmal conditions

blamed on systemic negligence.

Rescuing Kaavan from the zoo’s dire conditions attracted the attention of animal activists around the world, and celebrities including US singer Cher, who lobbied for his relocation.

“Unfortunately, the rescue comes too late for two lions that died during an attempted transfer at the end of July after local animal handlers set a fire in their enclosure to

force them into their transport crates,” Bauer said in a statement released on Saturday.

He said Four Paws was invited by the Islamabad Wildlife Management Board to safely transfer the remaining animals in the zoo.

Kaavan has until now been forced to live a solitary life in a small enclosure.

Friday’s medical examination showed the elephant was over-

weight, even as he showed signs of malnutrition. His nails were cracked and overgrown apparently from years of living in an improper enclosure with flooring that damaged his feet.

“Following the checks, which confirmed Kaavan is strong enough, steps will now be taken to finalize his relocation to an animal sanctuary potentially in Cambodia,” Bauer said. — *AP*



A team of veterinarians from the international animal welfare organization Four Paws briefs media prior to examining an elephant Kaavan at Maragzar Zoo in Islamabad, Pakistan.

— *AP*

SU◆DO◆KU

	2		6		9	1		
				5				4
4		3			2	5		
6		7		3				5
	1		7		6		8	
2				8		7		6
		9	5			6		7
8				7				
		2	9		1		5	

WHAT TO DO
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Every puzzle has only one correct solution.

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

4	6	7	9	3	5	1	2	8
9	2	1	7	8	6	5	4	3
8	3	5	2	1	4	7	9	6
1	4	9	5	6	3	8	7	2
3	5	6	8	2	7	4	1	9
2	7	8	4	9	1	6	3	5
6	8	2	1	7	9	3	5	4
7	9	4	3	5	8	2	6	1
5	1	3	6	4	2	9	8	7

SU◆DO◆KU 2

9			7		4			2
	5			6			1	
	8						4	
5			8		3			1
6		8				3		5
3			6		7			8
	9						5	
	6			1			9	
1			2		6			4

Did you think the SU◆DO◆KU on the left was easy? Try this. Check the solution tomorrow. Tips available at www.sudoku-xts.com
DC-AGE SU DO KU FORUM: Discuss the SU DO KU puzzles printed and contribute mind teasers of your own at www.sudex-el.com/forum

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

3	9	5	2	8	7	6	1	4
1	4	7	6	9	3	8	5	2
8	2	6	4	5	1	3	9	7
6	3	4	8	7	9	1	2	5
2	1	8	3	4	5	9	7	6
7	5	9	1	2	6	4	3	8
4	8	3	5	1	2	7	6	9
9	6	2	7	3	8	5	4	1
5	7	1	9	6	4	2	8	3

SHORT TAKES

Hami takes pole with record lap

Monza, Italy: Lewis Hamilton claimed pole position with a new lap record at Monza for Sunday's Italian Grand Prix with Valtteri Bottas taking second in Saturday qualifying for another Mercedes front row lock-out. McLaren's Carlos Sainz posted the third fastest time and is joined on the second row by Sergio Perez for Racing Point. The session proved another humbling experience for out-of-sorts Ferrari with Sebastian Vettel going out in Q1 and Charles Leclerc, who won at the circuit last year, in Q2. This means no Ferrari inside the top 10 at Monza for the first time since 1984. The championship leader and six-time champion clocked a fastest lap in one minute and 18.887 seconds to beat the Finn by 0.069 seconds. In pure speed, Hamilton's track lap record performance produced an unconfirmed fastest lap in F1 history. — *AFP*

Messi misses Barca training

Barcelona: Lionel Messi was a no-show at training with Barcelona on Saturday morning despite his decision to stay at the club under sufferance, AFP reporters at the training ground said.

The Argentine superstar announced on Friday he had been forced to remain at Barcelona, claiming after club president Josep Maria Bartomeu broke his word to let him leave. It came after 10 days of tension since his bombshell fax telling Barcelona he wanted out. But while other players including Jordi Alba and Philippe Coutinho arrived for the session, Messi failed to appear at the Joan Gamper training complex for the session which began at 0730 GMT. — *AFP*

Dutch go past Poland; Italy held

London: Steven Bergwijn ensured the Netherlands did not feel the absence of recently departed coach Ronald Koeman to beat Poland 1-0 in the Nations League, while Italy were held 1-1 by Bosnia and Herzegovina on Friday. Koeman left to take charge of Barcelona last month, less than a year before he was due to lead his country to a major international tournament for the first time. A rejuvenated Netherlands reached the final of the inaugural Nations League under Koeman last year after missing out on the 2018 World Cup. Also in Group 1, Italy extended their two-year unbeaten run but had to settle for a point against Bosnia in Florence. — *AFP*

Heat push Bucks to brink with win

Miami: Jimmy Butler powered the Miami Heat to a 115-100 victory over Milwaukee on Friday that pushed the top-seeded Bucks to the brink of elimination in the NBA playoffs. Butler scored 17 of his 30 points in the Heat's scorching fourth quarter, Miami out-scoring the Bucks 40-13 in the final period to seize a 3-0 lead in the best-of-seven Eastern Conference semi-final series. It was the most lopsided final period in a playoff game since the NBA introduced the shot clock in 1954. — *AFP*

Live on TV

CRICKET

England vs Australia 2nd T20 from 6.30 pm on Sony Six, HD

FORMULA ONE

Italian Grand Prix
Main Race from 6.35 pm on Star Sports Select 2, HD

CARIBBEAN PREMIER LEAGUE

St Kitts & Nevis Patriots vs Trinbago Knight Riders from 7.30 pm; St Lucia Zouks vs Jamaica Tallawahs from 11.30 pm on Star Sports 1, 2, HD

US OPEN TENNIS

Matches from 8.30 pm on Star Sports Select 1, 2, HD

UEFA NATIONS LEAGUE

Wales vs Bulgaria from 6.30 pm; Ireland vs Finland from 9.30 pm; Spain vs Ukraine from 12.15 am (Monday) on Sony Ten 2, HD; Switzerland vs Germany from 12.15 am (Monday) on Sony Ten 1, HD

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No.1 cruises into 16

Top seed Djokovic makes US Open pre-quarters

New York, Sept. 5: Novak Djokovic sailed into the last 16 of the US Open on Friday as off-court intrigue forced the delay of a men's singles match over issues linked to coronavirus.

Djokovic outclassed Germany's Jan-Lennard Struff 6-3, 6-3, 6-1 in a routine victory for the world number one, who is chasing an 18th Grand Slam singles title.

Far from routine was a last-minute attempt by New York health officials to prevent France's Adrian Mannarino from playing his last-32 encounter against German fifth seed Alexander Zverev.

The intervention led to a back and forth between tournament organisers and the state government and resulted in the match, which Zverev won in four sets, starting over three hours late.

"It was a weird situation for me," said Mannarino, one of 11 players put under enhanced safety protocols earlier this week after compatriot Benoit Paire was withdrawn from the tournament after testing positive for coronavirus.

"I was just laying on the sofa still trying to be focused just in case I would go on court," he said, following

Zverev's 6-7 (4/7), 6-4, 6-2, 6-2 victory. Zverev will now play unseeded Spaniard Alejandro Davidovich Fokina in the last 16 while Djokovic will play Spain's Pablo Carreno Busta for a place in the quarter-finals.

TSITSIPAS STUNNED

In the men's draw, Croatia's 27th seed Borna Coric staged a remarkable Houdini act to stun fourth seed Stefanos Tsitsipas in a 4hr 36min late-night thriller.

Coric appeared to be heading for certain defeat after Tsitsipas, leading by two sets to one, opened up a 5-1 lead in the fourth.

But Coric rallied superbly, saving six match points and fighting back to take the set 7-5 to force a decider.

Tsitsipas went a break up once more in the fifth but couldn't press home the advantage as Coric forced a tie break before clinching a 6-7 (2/7), 6-4, 4-6, 7-5, 7-6 (7/4) win.

Twelfth seed Denis Shapovalov recovered from 5-2 down in the fourth set to pip American number 19 seed Taylor Fritz 3-6, 6-3, 4-6, 7-6 (7/5), 6-2.

Fritz, 22 was within two points of victory before the 21-year-old Shapovalov completed a remarkable comeback. — *AFP*

THE RESULTS

Men's singles third round (number in brackets denotes seeding): Novak Djokovic (SRB x1) bt Jan-Lennard Struff (GER x28) 6-3, 6-3, 6-1; Denis Shapovalov (CAN x12) bt Taylor Fritz (USA x19) 3-6, 6-3, 4-6, 7-6 (7/5), 6-2; Pablo Carreno-Busta (ESP x20) bt Ricardas Berankis (LTU) 6-4, 6-3, 6-2; David Goffin (BEL x7) bt Filip Krajinovic (SRB x26) 6-1, 7-6 (7/5), 6-4; Jordan Thompson (AUS) bt Mikhail Kukushkin (KAZ) 7-5, 6-4, 6-1; Alejandro Davidovich (ESP) bt Cameron Norrie (GBR) 7-6 (7/2), 4-6, 6-2, 6-1; Alexander Zverev (GER x5) bt Adrian Mannarino (FRA x32) 6-7 (4/7), 6-4, 6-2, 6-2; Borna Coric (CRO x27) bt Stefanos Tsitsipas (GRE x4) 6-7 (2/7), 6-4, 4-6, 7-5, 7-6

(7/4); Corentin Moutet (FRA) bt Daniel Evans (GBR x23) 4-6, 6-3, 7-6 (7/5), 7-6 (7/1)

Women's singles third round: Jennifer Brady (USA x28) bt Caroline Garcia (FRA) 6-3, 6-3; Angelique Kerber (GER x17) bt Ann Li (USA) 6-3, 6-4; Yulia Putintseva (KAZ x23) bt Aliaksandra Sasnovich (BLR) 3-6, 6-2, 6-1; Petra Martic (CRO x8) bt Varvara Gracheva (RUS) 6-3, 6-3; Naomi Osaka (JPN x4) bt Marta Kostyuk (UKR) 6-3, 6-7 (4/7), 6-2; Anett Kontaveit (EST x14) bt Magda Linette (POL x24) 6-3, 6-2; Shelby Rogers (USA) bt Madison Brengle (USA) 6-2, 6-4; Petra Kvitova (CZE x6) bt Jessica Pegula (USA) 6-4, 6-3.



Germany's Alexander Zverev returns to Adrian Mannarino of France in their US Open third round match in New York on Friday. Zverev won 6-7 (4/7), 6-4, 6-2, 6-2. — *AP*

Osaka battles into Last 16

New York, Sept. 5: Two-time Grand Slam winner Naomi Osaka battled into the last 16 of the US Open on Friday, requiring three sets to defeat 18-year-old Ukrainian Marta Kostyuk.

Osaka, the 2018 US Open champion, needed 2hr 33min to beat the unseeded world number 137 6-3, 6-7 (4/7), 6-2 inside an empty Arthur Ashe Stadium.

"She was very good. I'm kind of scared of how she is going to be in the future," Osaka said of her vanquished opponent.

Frustration got the better of the Japanese fourth seed in the second set. After recovering from 5-3 to force a tie-break she threw her racquet when Kostyuk tied the match 1-



Japan's Naomi Osaka wears a protective facemask with the name Ahmaud Arbery stenciled on it after winning her third round match against Marta Kostyuk of the Ukraine on Friday. — *AFP*

1. "I just felt like I had so many points that I didn't capitalise on. I think when I went up, I became

a bit passive and then she came in because she has no fear," Osaka said. But Osaka's experience

came through in the deciding set as she held her serve and broke Kostyuk twice for a place in the quarter-finals.

Osaka walked onto the court wearing a facemask emblazoned with the name of Ahmaud Arbery, an unarmed black man who was shot dead in broad daylight while jogging in the town of Brunswick, in southern Georgia, in February.

Elsewhere, sixth seed Petra Kvitova breezed past American Jessica Pegula 6-4, 6-3 to set up a last-16 encounter with Shelby Rogers, also of the United States.

Eighth seed Petra Martic of Croatia swept aside unseeded Russian Varvara Gracheva 6-3, 6-3. — *AFP*

BOPANNA IS IN MEN'S DOUBLES SECOND ROUND

New York, Sept. 5: Experienced Indian Rohan Bopanna and his Canadian partner Denis Shapovalov advanced to the second round of the US Open men's doubles event here. Bopanna and Shapovalov hardly broke a sweat to get past their American rivals Ernesto Escobedo and Noah Rubin 6-2, 6-4 in their tournament opener that lasted one hour and 22 minutes on Friday.

The Indo-Canadian pair will next play sixth seeds Kevin Krawietz and Andreas Mies.

Bopanna is the lone surviving Indian in the tournament after the exits of Sumit Nagal and Divij Sharan. — *PTI*

INDIAN PREMIER LEAGUE

Watson relieved after 1st session

Dubai, Sept. 5: Former Australian all-rounder Shane Watson on Saturday said it won't take long to regain touch despite a bit of rustiness as he hit the nets with his Chennai Super Kings teammates ahead of the 13th IPL beginning on September 19.

Rocked by a series of Covid-19 cases, Chennai Super Kings led by Mahendra Singh Dhoni could finally start training on Friday after clearing a third round of testing for the virus.

"How exciting it was to be back with all of my @ChennaiIPLmates for our first training session!!! It was so much fun. There was a little rust that will not take long to go," Watson wrote on his twitter handle.

The 39-year-old, who was bought by CSK ahead of the 2018 IPL, has scored 953 runs in 32 matches for the franchise in the last two years, besides capturing six wickets.

His highest score was 117 not out in the finals of the 2018 edition against SunRisers Hyderabad.

Watson is an important member of the CSK team which has been left depleted after the pull out of senior players Suresh Raina



Shane Watson

● **The 39-year-old, who was bought by CSK ahead of the 2018 IPL, has scored 953 runs in 32 matches for the franchise in the last two years, besides capturing six wickets.**

and Harbhajan Singh. CSK was forced to delay its training plan after completing the six-day quarantine after Deepak Chahar and Ruturaj Gaikwad tested positive last week along with 11 members of the the contingent.

The 13th IPL is scheduled to be held from September 19 to November 10 across three venues — Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and Sharjah. — *PTI*

EMPTY STADIUMS CAN BE CHALLENGING: RCB COACH

Dubai, Sept. 5: Royal Challengers Bangalore head coach Simon Katich feels that while younger guys will feel lesser pressure in empty stadiums but it could well be a challenge for the senior cricketers as they gear up for Indian Premier League.

The 13th edition of the IPL, which begins on September 19, will be held in a bio-secure environment behind closed doors — at least the first phase — in wake of the raging Covid-19 pandemic.

"Personally, I think some of the younger players actually enjoy the fact that there will be a little less pressure with less people at the ground, creating all that noise and distraction," Katich said during RCB's YouTube show 'Bold Diaries'.

"I think it will be more of a challenge for some of the older guys that are used to the buzz of the crowd and getting their adrenaline going. But I think there will still be a lot of motivation within our squad to go out and perform well," he added.

Experienced mental conditioning coach Paddy Upton had earlier said that cricketers like Virat Kohli who depend on external stimulation and are used to 'pressure' are "really going to struggle" in front of empty stadium but self-motivated players will "do a hell lot better" in this year's IPL.

RCB completed their mandatory quarantine upon their arrival in Dubai and had started their training camps last week. — *PTI*

England pip Aussies in final-ball thriller

Southampton, Sept. 5: Tom Curran held his nerve as England beat Australia by two runs in a final-ball thriller to win the first Twenty20 international at Southampton on Friday and go 1-0 up in a three-match series.

Australia, in their first competitive match for nearly six months because of the coronavirus, were making light work of a target of 163 while captain Aaron Finch (46) and David Warner (58) were putting on 98 for the first wicket.

But star batsman Steve Smith's exit for just 18 sparked a collapse that saw

FIRST | TWENTY20

Australia lose four wickets for nine runs in 14 balls.

A target of 15 off six balls became five off one.

But Marcus Stoinis, having hit a six off Curran earlier in the over, couldn't hit another six needed for a win or the four that would have tied the scores and taken the match into a Super Over. — *AFP*

Brief scores: England 162/7 in 20 overs (D. Malan 66,J. Buttler 44; Richardson 2/13, Maxwell 2/14) bt Australia 160/6 in 20 overs (D. Warner 58, A. Finch 46; Archer 2/33, Rashid 2/29).

Are sudden IPL pullouts signs of an emergency?



Ayaz Memon Over The Top

The past few days haven't been kind to Chennai Super Kings. Two players (from 13 in all, including support staff and management) tested positive for Covid with barely a fortnight for the IPL to start, raising doubts whether the franchise would be ready to play in the opening tie on September as scheduled.

While the two players, Deepak Chahar and Rituraj Gaekwad, have tested negative since, CSK suffered other serious setbacks. Within days of each

other, senior pros Suresh Raina and Harbhajan Singh have pulled out of the tournament for 'personal reasons'.

This leaves the three-times champions beleaguered, however CSK is not the only team to feel distress. Mumbai Indians veteran Lasith Malinga, the highest wicket-taker in IPL history, and still a force to reckon with despite his advancing years, has also pulled out for personal reasons.

Malinga's decision has not invited as much media scrutiny as Raina's and

Harbhajan's because he is not an Indian star. But overall, the timing of these pull-outs as well as lack of clarity in why they have done so has left diehard IPL followers flummoxed.

The timing of the pull-outs by these players, as well as lack of clarity in why they have done so has fueled speculation and set tongues wagging about whether there is more than meets the eye about their belated withdrawal.

There is nothing that can, or should, prevent a player to withdraw from an event or tournament. As free agents, players have the absolute right to ply their skills — or not — within contractual limits.

'Personal reasons' is ordinarily a valid enough ground for a player's absence, but extremely

● **There is nothing that can, or should, prevent a player to withdraw from an event or tournament. As free agents, players have the absolute right to ply their skills - or not - within contractual limits.**

wide in its ambit to find complete acceptance in these trying times where the usual yardsticks don't apply and it is incumbent on players, teams, federations to be upfront on such matters to prevent misapprehensions.

The issue with Raina, Harbhajan and Malinga is not of the kind that Leo Messi, who wants to leave Barcelona Football Club

after spending a lifetime with them because of a tussle with the team's management. But it could be argued Messi also wants to leave Barca for 'personal reasons'.

That Messi has since backtracked because of a complex contract that could cost him dear is another story altogether. Seen in a wider perspective, how much better that the real issue in the Messi story was in the public domain. This prevented misplaced conjecture and needless conspiracy theories.

Transparency is all the more important in these extraordinary times, when the fear of Covid is all pervasive. It redounds to the credit of Rafael Nadal that he took a decision early and candidly on not participating in this year's US

Open because of the coronavirus factor.

In the case of the three cricketers under discussion, their sudden pull-out from the IPL bespoke of an emergency. But in the present circumstances, it is imperative to know what this urgency was about? Is it family related, Covid-linked or some other?

I don't know much about Malinga's recent situation, but Raina has had a terror assault on his family which may have brought him back. (Though why he went to UAE then remains unanswered). Harbhajan's mother has been ailing for a while, and he may have stretched the waiting period to take a final call.

These are strong reasons for not playing a tournament. And if so, why can't these be publicly disclosed? In Raina's case, the

flip-flop statements by the owner of CSK N. Srinivasan and the player himself added more grist to the rumour mill.

Within the IPL fraternity itself, lack of clarity leads to rise in conjecture and paranoia. I've received class from people associated with different franchises, wanting to know what's happening.

The issue goes beyond salacious gossip about dissonance within teams. Given the present environment, these people may be more worried about Covid infection, and whether they are being told the truth about the scale of problem, and how safe it is to be playing the tournament.

That's a dangerous route, which is why full disclosure in such matters is imperative.