



BATTLE FOR  
BIHAR REACHES  
DECISIVE PHASE

P5



SC ASKS CENTRE FOR  
STATUS REPORT ON  
MALLYA EXTRADITION

P5



WILLIAM'S COVID  
POSITIVE REPORT  
KEPT SECRET

P10



HOW SAHA HAS  
MADE HIMSELF  
QUITE USEFUL

P12

## WEATHER

Mainly clear sky. Mist/shallow fog in the morning. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 30 and 10 degrees Celsius respectively.

RAINFALL: Nil

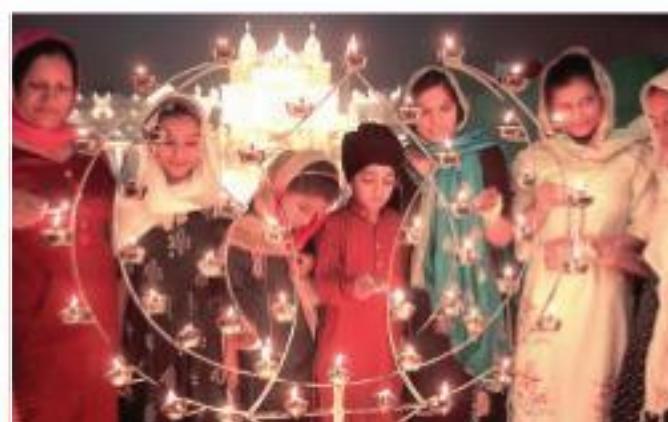
RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 88% Min: 35%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 30.1°C (O) Min: 10.8°C (-4)  
SUN RISES SUN SETS  
06:35 hrs 17:35 hrs  
MOON RISES MOON SETS  
19:29 hrs 09:40 hrs

## THUMBNAILS



Devotees light candles on the occasion of the birth anniversary of the fourth Sikh Guru Ramdas, at the Golden Temple in Amritsar. AFP

**Only hi-tech & services units in Delhi's new industrial areas:** In an ambitious bid to deal with Delhi's persisting pollution crisis and to attract IT and related businesses to the city, chief minister Arvind Kejriwal Monday announced that no manufacturing units will be allowed in the city's new industrial areas which would be available only to services and hi-tech industries. The move is envisaged to boost Delhi's economy besides helping the city become a hub of hi-tech and service industries.

P2

**Rajasthan to make wearing of masks mandatory:** Rajasthan will be the first state in the country to enact a law making it compulsory to wear masks to prevent the spread of Covid-19, CM Ashok Gehlot said. An amendment Bill was introduced in the Assembly on Saturday.

**Bypolls in 10 states:** Bypolls in 28 Assembly seats in Madhya Pradesh will be held on Tuesday, amidst speculation over the prospects of supporters of Congressman-turned-BJP leader Jyoti Raditya Scindia, who are in the poll arena on BJP ticket.

## BSP-BJP alliance not possible, ideologies opposite: Mayawati

SNS & PTI  
LUCKNOW, 2 NOVEMBER

Bahujan Samaj Party president Mayawati asserted on Monday that her party would never enter into an alliance with the BJP in the Assembly or the Lok Sabha elections, highlighting that the ideologies of the two parties were "opposite".

Her clarification came amidst speculation that the Muslim community distances itself from the BSP.

"The alliance of the BJP with the BSP is not possible in any polls in the future. The BSP cannot contest with the communal party," she said in a media briefing. "Our ideology is of 'sarvajan sarva dharma mitat' (benefit of everyone and all religions) and is oppo-

**Clarification comes amidst speculation over Mayawati's statement that BSP would vote for BJP or any other party's candidate to ensure defeat of SP contenders in future polls**

using her recent statement so that the Muslim community distances itself from the BSP.

"The alliance of the BJP with the BSP is not possible in any polls in the future. The BSP cannot contest with the communal party," she said in a media briefing. "Our ideology is of 'sarvajan sarva dharma mitat' (benefit of everyone and all religions) and is oppo-

site to the BJP's ideology," she said. "The BSP cannot enter into an alliance with those having communal, casteist and capitalist ideology."

Mayawati said she would rather take 'sanyas' (retirement) from politics than ally with such parties. "I will fight on all fronts with the communal, casteist and capitalist forces, and not going to bow before anyone," she added.

"Our party will support the candidate of any party, including the BJP, which is strong to defeat the second candidate of the SP," she said.

"I stand by my earlier statement, which is misused by the SP and the Congress for political gains so that the Muslim community distances itself from the party."

As the sun slowly set over the Afghan capital, there were few details though the Taliban issued a statement denying they took part in the assault.

## Gunmen storm Kabul University killing 25

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
KABUL, 2 NOVEMBER

Gunmen stormed Kabul University on Monday as it hosted a book fair attended by the Iranian ambassador to Afghanistan, sparking an hours-long gun battle and leaving at least 25 dead and wounded at the war-torn country's largest school.

The Ministry's spokesman, Tariq Arian, would not break down the casualty numbers for the attack at the campus in the Afghan capital, though local media reports were saying there may be as many as 20 killed.

Arian also said there were three attackers involved in the assault, all of whom were killed in the ensuing firefights.

As the sun slowly set over the Afghan capital, there were few details though the Taliban issued a statement denying they took part in the assault.



Security personnel gesture to onlookers while securing an area near the Kabul University on Monday. AFP

17,000 students.

He said the attack happened at the university's eastern side where its law and journalism faculty teach.

Ahmad Samim, a university student, told journalists he saw militants armed with pistols and Kalashnikov assault rifles firing at the school, the country's oldest with some

While Afghan officials declined to discuss the book fair, Iran's semi-official ISNA news agency reported on Sunday that Iranian Ambassador Bahador Aminian Mojtaba Noroozi were scheduled to inaugurate the fair, which would host some 40 Iranian publishers.

19 Indian passengers test Covid-positive in VBM flight to Wuhan

BEIJING, 2 NOVEMBER

Nineteen Indian passengers tested positive for Covid-19 in a recent flight from New Delhi to the Chinese city of Wuhan under the Vande Bharat Mission (VBM), even as India on Monday announced plans to operate four more such flights to China beginning 13 November.

The 30 October flight, the sixth operated by India to China in recent months and the first to Wuhan, where the virus emerged in December last year, brought 277 Indians from New Delhi and evacuated 157 on its return.

As part of this process, Air India is planning to operate four flights to Delhi on 13, 20, 27 November and 4 December, the Indian Embassy here announced.

won in Wisconsin, Pennsylvania or Michigan. That becomes more likely if the races in those states are not close.

It's a scenario that puts a lot of eyes on Florida. The state allows its election offices to process mail ballots 22 days before the election. It's also the biggest swing state. As long as the race isn't too close a big if in a place famous for tight races there could be a close-to-complete count by midnight.

In general, those early processing states Florida, Georgia, Ohio and North Carolina will report mail ballots first. Those will skew Democratic. But then those states will start tallying Election Day votes. Those should lean Republican. So initial returns may be heavily Democratic, then become more Republican as the night goes on.

## First phase of Quad nations Malabar drill kicks off today

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 2 NOVEMBER

Reflecting their growing strategic convergence against the backdrop of renewed Chinese assertiveness on maritime issues, the four 'Quad' nations - India, Australia, Japan and the US - are all set to launch the first phase of the 24th edition of the Malabar naval exercise off Vishakhapatnam in Bay of Bengal tomorrow.

The four-day mega navy drill will witness the participation of Indian Navy units with United States Ship (USS) John McCain (Guided-missile destroyer), Her Majesty's Australian Ship (HMAS) Balrarat (long range frigates) with integral MH-60 helicopter, and Japan Maritime

Self Defence Ship (JMSDF) Onami (Destroyer) with integral SH-60 helicopter, the Defence Ministry announced today. The Indian Navy participation in Phase 1 will be led by Rear Admiral Sanjay Vatsyan, Flag Officer Commanding, Eastern Fleet.

## US election result may be delayed. That's okay

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
WASHINGTON, 2 NOVEMBER

We may not know who won the presidential election on Tuesday night. And if so, it does not necessarily mean anything is broken, fraudulent, corrupted or wrong.

President Donald Trump has repeatedly suggested a slower-than-typical result is a sign of trouble.

I think it's terrible that we can't know the results of an election the night of the election, he said on Sunday. I think it's a terrible thing when states are allowed to tabulate ballots for a long period of time after the election is over.

It's unclear what the president thinks is a long period. But it's standard practice to continue tabulating votes after Election Day. The results are often released quickly.

Here's a closer look at why that count could take longer than usual, and why that might mean you go to bed Tuesday without knowing the winner: WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

The biggest factor that may slow things down this year is clear: Millions of Americans decided to vote by mail rather than risk contracting coronavirus at a polling place. And in general, those mail ballots take longer to count.

Election workers must remove the ballots from their envelopes, check for errors, sort them and flatten them all before they can be run through scanners the moment polls close and be tabulated.

In states with well-established vote-by-mail programs, this processing happens weeks before Election Day. The results are often released quickly.

But several states did not have this system in place before this year and laws on the books prohibited election officials from processing the ballots well in advance of Election Day.

Without a head start, there's virtually no way to process and count all the mail votes on Election Day, while also counting

all the in-person votes.

There are three important battlegrounds with restrictions on when the mail vote can be processed: Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

In those states, Republican-controlled legislatures have resisted pleas from election officials to update the laws to allow for a speedier count.

Instead, they will initially report in-person votes expected to heavily favor Trump and gradually update with the more Democratic-leaning mail ballots later.

But don't news organisations call a winner before all the vote is counted? Yes, there's never been a presidential race in history in which all votes are counted on election night. It's just not physically possible to instantly count that many ballots possibly as many as 150 million on the night of 3 November.

Is there any hope for knowing the winner on election night? Sure. Not all battleground states are slow-counting states. So if several key states release their results promptly, one candidate may have a majority of the electoral vote even without knowing who



*There are agencies like the CAG who are the competent authority and not other agencies. The game plan in doing this is to project the State government in poor light*

PINARAYI VIJAYAN  
KERALA CHIEF MINISTER

## Nurses of Hindu Rao, other North Corporation-run hospitals go on indefinite strike

PTI  
NEW DELHI, 2 NOVEMBER

Hundreds of nurses at the Hindu Rao Hospital and a few other North Corporation-run facilities went on an indefinite strike on Monday over their "pending salaries" for August-October.

The strike led by Nurses Welfare Association (NWA) of the largest municipal hospital comes days after the resident and senior doctors of the facility called off their protest after the North Delhi Municipal Corporation released their due salaries till September.

The NWA on Saturday had shot a letter to North Delhi Mayor Jai Prakash over non-payment of salaries from August-October and had said, it will "begin indefinite strike from November 2".

"We were left with no other option but to go on a strike. We have a family to run too. Does the NDMC think we will continue to work without salaries. We already did for three months

without pay in interest of patients," said Indumati Jamwal, head of the NWA.

Shesaids nurses of Kasurta Hospital, Rajen Babu Tuberculosis Hospital and Mrs Girdhari Lal Maternity Hospital have also joined the stir.

"About 650 nurses are on strike," she claimed.

"We hope this strike won't have to continue for long and our issues will be resolved," Jamwal said, adding that there is a meeting scheduled with North Delhi Mayor Jai Prakash on Monday.

The members of the Resident Doctors' Association (RDA) of the 900-bed hospital had been recently protesting for several days and had gone on an indefinite strike, seeking release of salaries due for three months.

Seniors doctors under the banner of Municipal Corporation Doctors' Association (MCDA) later had also gone on an indefinite strike, and both associations had called off the stir on October 28.

# Delhi to allow only hi-tech units, services in new industrial areas

CM Kejriwal announces that no manufacturing units will be allowed in new industrial areas; the move is aimed at tackling Delhi's pollution and to attract IT & high-tech businesses to the city

SNS & PTI  
NEW DELHI, 2 NOVEMBER

In an ambitious bid to deal with Delhi's persisting pollution crisis and to attract IT and related businesses to the city, chief minister Arvind Kejriwal today announced that

no manufacturing units will be allowed in the city's new industrial areas which would be available only to services and hi-tech industries.

The move is envisaged to boost Delhi's economy besides helping the city become a hub of hi-tech and service industries which include IT-enabled services, call centres, software and hardware sector and media programme production as they will now be provided land at cheaper rates by authorities in industrial areas.

Addressing an online press conference, Kejriwal said the

Centre has approved the Delhi government's proposal by changing the definition of industry in the Delhi Master Plan 2021 and issued a notification to implement it. Hi-tech and services activities will now be recognised as industry.

Even the existing manufacturing units within the boundaries of the city will be given an option to shift to the services sector under the new policy, which, many feel, is aimed at regaining the edge that Delhi has lost to its suburbs like Noida and Gurgaon in the services sector over the past few decades in addition to tackling the national capital's pollution problem.

The CM asserted that the existing manufacturing units, which cause pollution, will be given the option to shift to the services or hi-tech industries sectors.

However, no action will be taken against the existing manufacturing units and they could continue their operations, but they will also be encouraged to make the shift, a government official clarified.

Kejriwal expressed hope that there would be no manufacturing industry in Delhi as their contribution to pollution is significant.

Noting that Delhi's economy is mainly

based on the service industry, he said, hi-tech and service industry will be provided more space at cheaper rates in industrial areas. "The service and hi-tech industry were, so far, covered under office category in Delhi's Master Plan. That was why they were only allowed in commercial areas so far, he said.

The offices of media, software industry and IT service industry, IITES, BPOs, vocational and educational institutions, internet and e-mail service providers, television programme production, research and development, offices of architects and placement services and the likes could now also be set up in new industrial areas of Delhi, Kejriwal said.

industry category, charted accountants and lawyers could also open their offices, which currently fall under the office category in Delhi's Master Plan. That was why they were only allowed in commercial areas so far, he said.

The offices of media, software industry and IT service industry, IITES, BPOs, vocational and educational institutions, internet and e-mail service providers, television programme production, research and development, offices of architects and placement services and the likes could now also be set up in new industrial areas of Delhi, Kejriwal said.

The manufacturing industry has been a major cause of concern for the city's rising air and water pollution.

According to an analysis by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water, a Delhi-based think tank, industries contribute to 2-29 per cent of the city's air pollution. However, transportation contributes the most — 18 to 39 per cent — to Delhi's air pollution. Road dust is the second largest source of air pollution in the city (18-38 per cent), with thermal power plants and construction accounting for 3-11 per cent and 8 per cent of Delhi's air pollution respectively.

The CM hoped that the face of industrial areas in Delhi will change and pollution-causing manufacturing industries like steel and plastic will be gradually replaced by the service and hi-tech industries.

He thanked Union housing and urban affairs minister Hardeep Singh Puri, saying this "historic" move will prove decisive in reducing Delhi's pollution.

"I thank Hardeep S Puri ji for approving our proposal to amend master plan to change definition of industrial activity. Earlier, manufacturing was permitted which led to pollution and filth. Now, only hi-tech and service industry will be permitted. Industrial areas will become neat, clean and green," the CM tweeted.

Brijesh Goyal, Delhi convenor of AAP's trade and industry wing, said there are around 3.5 lakh small and big manufacturing units in the national capital. He said the government's move will also generate employment and increase the government's tax collection.

"This is a good step that the service sector will be recognised as industry. No action will be taken against the existing manufacturing units," Goyal said.

In 2012, several small-scale industrial units from Delhi's Mayapuri had shifted to newly-created Narela and Bawana industrial areas.

## Classified



WALK-IN-INTERVIEW will be held on 12.11.2020 for the contractual posts of Young Professional-I & II, under NAHEP (IG) Project of F/O Dairy Technology at Office of the DREF, Farmers' Hostel, WBWAFC, 37, Belghoria Road, Kolkata-37. For details please visit website: www.wbwafl.ac.in DREF

**CHANGE OF NAME**  
I, JYOTSNA Bhattacharya resident of 50/1/1 Bhattacharjee Para Lane, Howrah-104, hereby declared that my name has been changed to Jyotsna Banerjee pursuant to my marriage dated 15.02.1966 with Sasanka Prasad Bandopadhyay, vide affidavit dated 28.11.2019 sworn before the Notary Public Howrah, for all future purpose.

I, Smt. Durga Debnath, spouse of No. 6262989, Rank-NK, Name- Late Monoranjan Debnath, resident of Vill. Upper Champahati, PO. Samudragarh, PS. Nadanghat, Dist. Purba Bardhaman have changed my name from Durga Sundari to Durga Debnath and date of birth from 01.07.1943 to 01.01.1946 vide affidavit dated 21.10.2020 before the Ld. Addl. Chief Judicial Magistrate at Kalna, Purba Bardhaman.

I, MD. Mosaref Hossain Mondal S/o. Monglai Mondal, Mondal Mosaref Hossain S/o. Monglai & Mosaref Hossain Mondal S/o. Monglai Mondal is same and one identical person, vide affidavit sworn before Lt. Judicial Magistrate 1st Class Barasat, North 24 Parganas, dated: 09.07.2020, No. 5000, Passport No.: J1001577.

**PUBLIC NOTIFICATIONS**

**NOTICE**

My Client intends to purchase all that the Flat No. 4 on the 2nd floor measuring covered area of 2612.11 Sq. ft. more or less including attached servant's room and privy etc. together with Garage No. 6 on the Ground Floor, 5B, Sarat Bose Road "LANSDOWNE COURT", P.S. Bhowanipore, Kolkata - 700020 from its present owner **Yogendranath Shah HUF** and also intends to purchase , all that the Flat No. 6 (consist of 6A & 6B) on the 3rd floor measuring covered area of 2612.11 Sq. ft. more or Less from its present owner **Sevanthi Anopchand Shah HUF and Smt. Parul Shah** at 5B, Sarat Bose Road, Kolkata - 700020, free from all encumbrances, attachments, liens, mortgages etc.

Any person(s), entity, institution, having any claim, demand, lien, mortgage or any other right whatsoever on the aforesaid Property can contact me with valid documents within 10 days failing which no claim & demand shall be entertained in future in respect of the aforesaid flats.

Arimand Misra Advocate F-1168/752 of 2017

H.P. Mittal Advocate 268A, B B Ganguly Street, Kolkata - 700012

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Pollution levels in the national capital dipped on Monday with high wind speed aiding dispersion of pollutants, even as farm fires continued to rage in neighbouring states.



*In a democracy, the electorate is supreme and they are the ones who matter to me. It up to the people of Bihar to decide on the basis of my work for the last 15 years*

NITISH KUMAR  
BIHAR CHIEF MINISTER

NEW DELHI, TUESDAY 03 NOVEMBER 2020

03

# BJP playing with sentiments of farmers: Punjab ministers

The Punjab Cabinet ministers reject the state BJP leadership's bid to accuse CM Capt Amarinder of 'misleading' farmers over the Modi govt's controversial farm laws for political gains

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
CHANDIGARH, 2 NOVEMBER

With Punjab BJP chief Ashwini Sharma accusing Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh of allegedly misleading farmers over the Centre's farm laws for political gains, the Punjab Cabinet ministers on Monday hit out at the BJP over its "atrocious" charges against the CM.

In a joint statement, all the Punjab Cabinet ministers charged that it was the state BJP leadership that was misleading the farmers and "spreading shocking lies to save their skin after being completely cornered" on the issue of the "draconian" farm laws.

Not only was the BJP in Punjab trying desperately to "fool" the farmers with regard to the Narendra Modi-led central government's "anti-farmers" agricultural laws but their leaders and workers were actively indulging in "brazen falsehoods" in a bid to exploit the sensitive and critical issue to promote their political interests, the statement said.

"The fact of the matter is that the BJP is trying to incite farmers against the CM for



their own political gains," the ministers said.

They charged it was evident that the leaders of the party, which was at the centre of the "ill-conceived" farm laws, were either oblivious to the concerns of the farmers or simply did not care.

"The farmers don't need any instigation. They are hurt and shocked at the treat-

ment being meted out to them by the BJP-led central government. They are fighting to save their livelihood and to survive. But clearly, Sharma, like other BJP leaders, has no realisation of this," they said.

The ministers rejected the allegation that the Congress government in Punjab, headed by Captain

Amarinder, was responsible for the continued anti-farm laws protests by farmers and suspension of the goods trains.

"Did we also mislead all those BJP leaders in the state who have quit in protest against the farm laws in recent days?" the ministers asked, trashing Sharma's accusation that the CM was

misleading farmers as "ridiculous to the extreme".

Recalling that the Centre had not suspended movement of trains in Punjab even during the dark days of terrorism, the ministers said the reasons of law and order cited by the Railways in the present instance was inexplicable, especially since the farmers had already announced their

decision to allow transport of supplies by trains.

Pointing out that the security and safety of trains is the responsibility of the Railway Protection Force (RPF), with the state government having no say in the matter, the ministers asked the BJP what the Amarinder government had to do with the safe movement of trains.

In any case, said the ministers, it was "illogical to even contemplate a CM indulging in an act that was causing massive economic losses to this own state, besides causing misery to his own people".

"Punjab's industry is suffering, its agriculture is suffering, and the economy, which is already severely impacted by the Centre's failure to release the state's dues amid Covid, is further crashing day by day as a result of the suspension of the goods trains by the Railways," the ministers said.

In such circumstances, it was "foolhardy" to even think of Captain Amarinder indulging in politics instead of trying hard to resolve the crisis, they said, asking the BJP leader to stop playing with the sentiments of the farmers, who were already going through unprecedented anguish and pain.

## Man hangs self after killing relative in Delhi's Hauz Qazi area

PTI  
NEW DELHI, 2 NOVEMBER

A 30-year-old man hanged himself from an iron rod using a curtain after killing his relative following a heated argument in central Delhi's Hauz Qazi area, police said on Monday.

According to police, Shahal was suffering from depression because of a strained relationship with his wife. He suspected her of having an affair with one of her relatives, Imran.

had killed Imran, a senior police officer said.

Shahal also hit his mother and when his brother Sohail came for help, he attacked him also. Both of them sustained injuries.

They rushed downstairs to seek help but none of their neighbours came out to help them since they were aware about Shahal's violent behaviour, the police officer said.

After some time when they again went upstairs to check on Shahal, they found him hanging from a rod with the help of a curtain, the officer added.

The two men were rushed to a nearby hospital, where they were declared brought dead by doctors, police said, adding that the bodies would be handed over to families after postmortem.

Police suspect that both Shahal and Imran were under the influence of alcohol at the time of the incident because they recovered liquor bottles from the spot.

## Punjab CM orders expansion of Covid patients' contact tracing

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
CHANDIGARH, 2 NOVEMBER

Despite declining coronavirus (Covid-19) cases in Punjab, Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh on Monday ordered expansion of contact tracing of coronavirus positive patients to 15 persons.

He also made it mandatory for hospitals and radiology labs conducting CT scans to report such patients to the state administration in case of suspicion of coronavirus, as part of a slew of measures to strengthen the Covid management systems amid apprehension of second wave in the

state.

Further, to streamline and prioritise the process of Covid vaccination, the CM ordered a state-level 3-tier vaccine supervision mechanism, comprising a steering committee as well as state and district task force, to be put in place.

In sharp contrast to some other states that are depending heavily on the less reliable Rapid Antigen Testing (RAT), Amarinder also directed the health department to make reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) the rule, with RAT to be tested with RT-PCR.

The CM stressed the need to make arrangements for walk-in testing at multiple points, and asked the Health Department to consider branching out to scaling up local initiatives like Mohali's out-door testing.

order another Serro Survey to assess the ground situation.

In other steps, he directed 24x7 testing facility to be made available at district hospitals, all fever cases and other symptomatic coming to health facilities to be tested with RT-PCR and all patients attending the flu corners to be tested with RT-PCR.

After the second meeting of Gau Sewa Aayog, Kanwar said the authorities must complete the construction work of cow shelters and cow sanctuaries by February 2021 to house 10,000 stray cattle.

This would result in streets of the state becoming free from stray cattle, he added.

He directed the authorities to expedite ongoing works to make the roads of the state free from stray cattle by January 2022.

Kanwar also directed to expedite the construction work of seven cow sanctuaries in Kangra district and asked the authorities to complete the process of identification of land for construction of new cow sanctuaries in other districts as well.

He added that Lift Assembly Vehicles would be bought to lift the injured cows.

Additional Chief Secretary Animal Husbandry Nisha Singh, Director Animal Husbandry Dr Ajmer Dogra were present in the meeting among others.

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## HP to provide shelter to 10K stray cattle by March '21

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
SHIMLA, 2 NOVEMBER

Himachal Pradesh Animal Husbandry Minister Virender Kanwar on Monday directed officials for completing the construction of cowshelters and said this would result in 10,000 stray cattle finding shelter in the state by March 2021.

After the second meeting of Gau Sewa Aayog, Kanwar said the authorities must complete the construction work of cow shelters and cow sanctuaries by February 2021 to house 10,000 stray cattle.

This would result in streets of the state becoming free from stray cattle, he added.

He directed the authorities to expedite ongoing works to make the roads of the state free from stray cattle by January 2022.

Kanwar also directed to expedite the construction work of seven cow sanctuaries in Kangra district and asked the authorities to complete the process of identification of land for construction of new cow sanctuaries in other districts as well.

He added that Lift Assembly Vehicles would be bought to lift the injured cows.

Additional Chief Secretary Animal Husbandry Nisha Singh, Director Animal Husbandry Dr Ajmer Dogra were present in the meeting among others.

## HP Cong chief asks party leaders to counter BJP's 'false propaganda'

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
SHIMLA, 2 NOVEMBER

After a meeting with district chiefs and party spokespersons along with media panelists, Rathore said the leaders should follow the directions to strengthen party organization in the state.

mittees by 25 November and said they should maintain close coordination with respective in-charges that were appointed by the State Congress Committee.

Rathore asked party

spokespersons and media panelists to raise issues of public interest and anti-people policies of the state government in an effective manner.

He also directed them to counter the false propaganda of BJP aggressively and said they should put forward the party's stand clearly and prominently on all issues.

State Congress general secretary Rajneesh Kima, secretaries Sushant Kaprare, Deepak Sharma, Ramesh Chauhan, Prem Kaushal, Vijay Dogra, Kiran Danta, media panelists Vinay Sharma, Saurav Chauhan were present in the meeting among others.

## Cong's 'double standards' exposed during Covid crisis: Jai Ram

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
SHIMLA, 2 NOVEMBER

**Thakur said the Corona pandemic had forced us to completely change our lifestyle and the use of face masks and maintaining social distancing was vital to check the spread of the virus.**

Thakur said the Corona pandemic had forced us to completely change our lifestyle and the use of face masks and maintaining social distancing was vital to check the spread of the virus.

He further stated that the public meeting in Bhoranj assembly segment was the first public meeting being held by him after a gap of about seven and a half months due to the Corona pandemic.

The Chief Minister said all possible precautions must be taken to check the spread of the pandemic and even today

use of masks and maintaining proper social distancing was the only remedy to save ourselves from this virus.

He praised the leadership of strong and able leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and said it was due to this that the dream of crores of Indians had been realised, with Bhumi Pujan of Lord Ram Temple at Ayodhya.

A magnificent Lord Ram Temple would be constructed within two-three years and not only this, several other historic decisions such as abrogation of Article 370, Triple Talaq etc had been taken by the Central government.

"Now the whole world is recognising India as a 'World Power' but the opposition leaders are even finding a fault in this. Today the country is producing over 4.50 lakh PPE kits per day and exporting it to several other countries,"

he said.

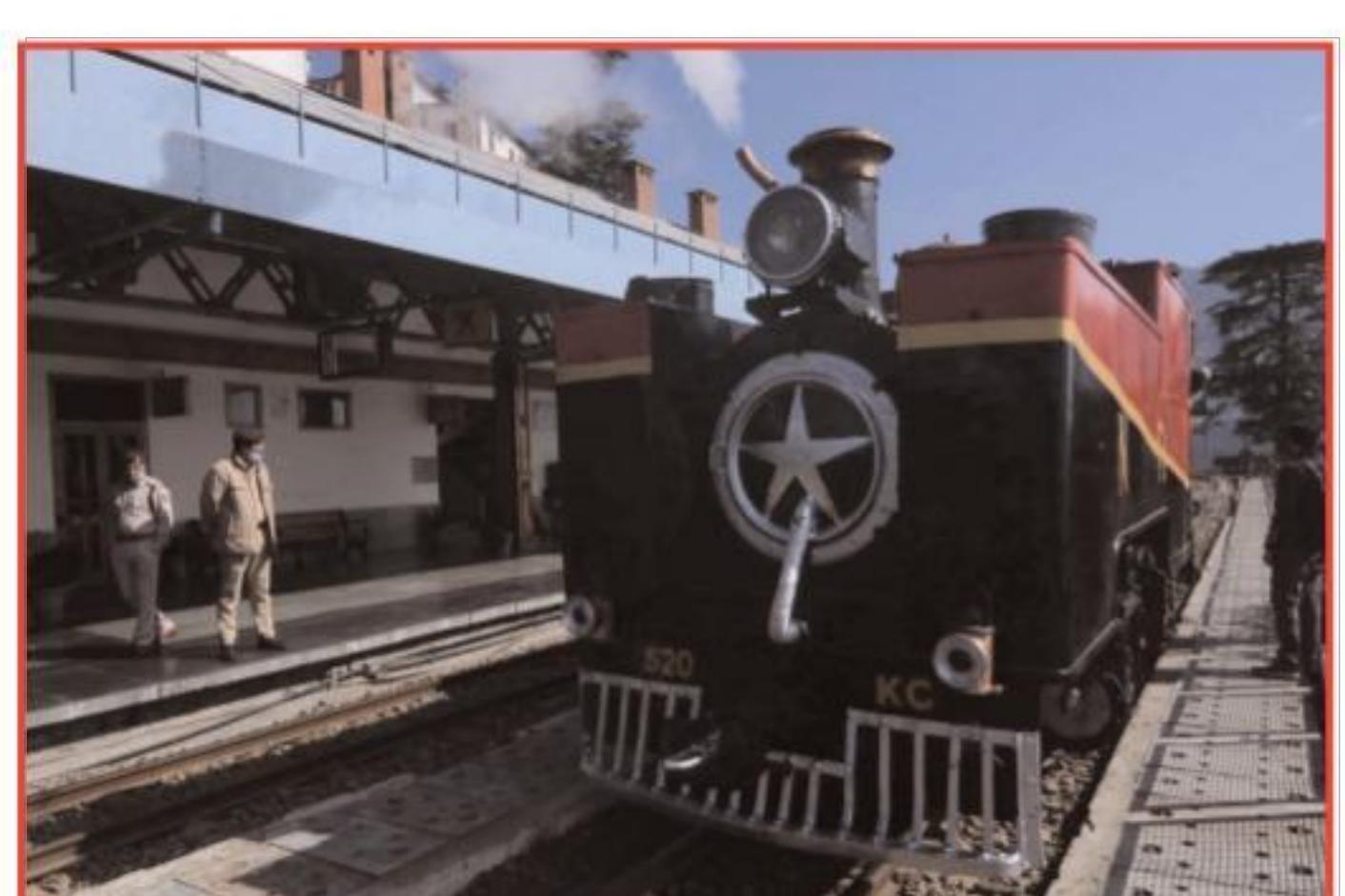
He further stated that Rs 3300 crore Atal Tunnel Rohtang was the biggest gift of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the people of the country in general and people of the state in particular.

"It was the vision and dream of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, which was possible due to the strong will power of the present Prime Minister," he added.

He directed the officers to ensure time bound completion of all the projects foundation stones of which were laid by him today.

State Jal Shakti, Revenue and Horticulture Minister Mahender Singh Thakur, Industries and Transport Minister Bikram Singh, Bhoranj MLA Kamlesh Kumar, Food and Civil Supplies Minister Rajinder Garg were also present on the occasion among others.

## HISTORY ON WHEELS



The 1905 British-built steam engine of the Northern Railways, possibly the only existing narrow-gauge steam engine, runs on trial on the Kalka-Shimla UNESCO World Heritage Railway Track after 7 months of lockdown. In Shimla on Monday.

LALIT KUMAR

## IIT researchers claim to have found cure for insulin resistance in diabetic patients

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
SHIMLA, 2 NOVEMBER

The paper has been authored by Dr Prosenjit Mondal, Associate Professor of IIT Mandi, research scholars Abhinav Choubey, Khati Girdhar along with Dr Debabrata Ghosh, Aditya K Kar, Shaifya Kushwaha of CSIR-IITR, Lucknow and Dr Manoj Kumar Yadav of SRM University, Delhi-NCR.

Dr Prosenjit Mondal said insulin, a hormone produced by the pancreas, is used by cells to absorb glucose from the blood and Type-2 Diabetes results when these cells lose their ability to use insulin due to a variety of reasons.

"Insulin resistance is intricately linked to a condition called hyperinsulinemia in which there is excess insulin tra-



versing the bloodstream.

The relationship between insulin resistance and hyperinsulinemia is cyclic as each increases the occurrence of the other. While it is obvious how insulin resistance leads to hyperinsulinemia, the converse of how hyperinsulinemia increases insulin resistance has hitherto remained unclear," he said.

He further stated that the research found out that one of the causes of insulin resistance is inflammation and the research focused on how hyperinsulinemia invokes inflammation in the body to find out the link between the two conditions.

The researchers identified a critical protein molecule, SIRT1 which is repressed in hyper-

sulinemia and it was discovered that a decrease in SIRT1 activates another protein called NFKB which instigates inflammation.

"The research team also discovered a solution to this problem, low-dose Naltrexone (LDN) which is commonly administered for opiate addiction and it can activate SIRT1, thereby reducing inflammation and increasing insulin sensitivity of cells."

The significance of this discovery is enormous as Naltrexone at low doses could potentially restore some of the diabetes-associated events in cellular and animal models," he added.

Dr Mondal is confident that this can result in Type-2 diabetes management and said Naltrexone is already an FDA-approved drug that can easily be repurposed for inflammation reduction and diabetes control.

The research team intends to study this thread further to understand the mechanistic aspects of LDN's effects on hyperinsulinemia-induced inflammation and resulting insulin resistance.

The study by the IIT Mandi researchers and its collaborators is timely given the urgent need to understand and address the issue of diabetes in India.

"India is the diabetes capital of the world as one of every six diabetics in the world is Indian."



Rajasthan will be the first state to enact a law to make it compulsory to wear masks for protection against corona, because mask is the vaccine to protect against corona and it will protect

RAJASTHAN CHIEF MINISTER ASHOK GEHLOT

ON TACKLING COVID

India

Stage set for bypoll in T'gana's Dubbak Assembly segment

HYDERABAD, 2 NOVEMBER

The stage is set for polling on Tuesday in Telangana's Dubbak Assembly bye-election which has witnessed a shrill campaign marred by war of words between the ruling TRS and opposition BJP over allegations of money being seized from the candidate of the latter.

Polling is scheduled to take place in Dubbak (in Sidhpur district), around 100 kms from Hyderabad.

Though 20 others are also in the fray, the main contest is among the candidates of the TRS, BJP and Congress. The bypoll is necessitated by the death of sitting TRS MLA Solipeta Ramalinga Reddy due to health problems in August this year and the TRS has fielded his widow Solipeta Sujatha as its candidate. PTI

# MP bypolls: Voting today; 33,000 cops on duty

25 of the 28 candidates fielded by the ruling BJP were either Cabinet ministers in the previous Congress govt or Congress MLAs

CAURAV CHANDRA

BHOPAL, 2 NOVEMBER

**V**oting for the crucial by-elections on 28 Assembly seats in Madhya Pradesh will take place on 3 November, and these by-polls will be unprecedented in the sense that for the first time, 12 ministers, who are not MLAs, are contesting from the ruling BJP in an attempt to regain their MLA status and retain their ministerial berths.

These polls are also extraordinary for the reason that 25 of the 28 candidates fielded by the ruling BJP were either Cabinet ministers in the previous Congress state government or Congress MLAs merely about eight months ago.

There were originally 14 non-MLA ministers in the BJP candidates' list but two of them, Tulsiram Silawat and Govind Singh Rajput, are no

longer ministers, as their six-month duration permitted to be a non-MLA minister has recently expired.

Of the 28 seats going to by-polls, 26 had been won by the Congress in the State Assembly elections held in November 2018. At that time, the Congress had overall won 114 seats, the BJP had won 109 seats, the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) scored victory on two seats, one seat was won by the Samajwadi Party (SP) and independent candidates had scored wins on four seats in the 230-member Assembly.

The majority mark in the Assembly was 116, and the Congress had finally succeeded in ousting the BJP from its 15-year rule in the state.

The Congress managed to form the state government with the outside support of the seven BSP, SP and independent MLAs.

Kamal Nath was sworn in

as the 18th CM of MP on 17 December 2018.

However, just after 15 months of ruling the state, the Congress government went into turmoil, as 22 Congress MLAs, including 19 loyalists of Jyotiraditya Scindia, rebelled against Nath in March 2020.

Scindia ~ severely disgruntled with Nath and senior Congress leader Digvijaya Singh over several personal and government matters and administrative and party issues ~ finally resigned from the Congress party and joined the BJP on 11 March this year.

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The Congress managed to form the state government with the outside support of the seven BSP, SP and independent MLAs.

Kamal Nath was sworn in

back to power and Shivraj Singh Chouhan was sworn in as the CM of MP for a record fourth time on 23 March.

Over the past few months, the Congress has suffered more setbacks, as four more of its MLAs have resigned.

The latest to quit the party was Damoh MLA Rahul Lodhi, who resigned on 25 October, just nine days before these by-polls. His resignation means a 29th by-poll would also take place, but its date is not yet fixed.

Earlier, Narayan Patel, the Congress MLA from Mandhata seat had resigned on 23 July and joined the BJP.

On 17 July, Napanagar assembly constituency Congress MLA Sumitra Devi Kasdekar resigned and joined the BJP.

On 12 July, Congress MLA from Bada Mahpara seat, Pradyuman Singh Lodhi resigned from the assembly

and joined BJP.

Congress MLA, Govardhan Dangi from Biaora Assembly seat, died on 15 September due to Covid-19.

BJP MLA Manohar Untwal from Agar seat had died on 30 January 2020. Congress MLA Banwarilal Sharma from Jaura seat had died on 21 December 2019.

As a result of resignations of the 25 Congress MLAs and the deaths of two Congress MLAs and one of the BJP, these 28 by-elections have been necessitated.

In return of bringing the BJP back to power, Jyotiraditya Scindia compelled the saffron party to make as many as 14 ministers from the 25 Congress MLAs who had resigned.

Scindia also forced the BJP to give election tickets to all the 25 ex-Congress MLAs including the 14 non-MLA ministers and make them BJP candidates for these by-polls.

Because of that, the BJP is facing quite a lot of internal unrest amongst its dedicated leaders and cadre who have spent all their lives bitterly opposing these persons, whom they now have to support as their own party candidates.

Many BJP leaders are also severely disgruntled, as they have been denied election tickets due to these ex-Congress MLAs being made party candidates.

Nonetheless,

the ruling saffron party still has a comparatively easy job to accomplish, as it needs victories on only eight seats in the by-polls to ensure the continuance of a majority government on its own.

The Congress, however, has a much tougher task if it wants to turn the tables again in its favour. The party would have to win all the 28 by-elections to return to power with a clear majority of its own and

without any outside support.

At the least, the Congress would have to win 24 seats, if it is to have any chance of being in the reckoning to form a government with outside support.

After the latest resignation of Congress MLA Rahul Lodhi, the number of Congress MLAs in the Assembly has reduced to 87.

The BJP presently has 107 MLAs, the BSP has two, SP has one and there are four independent MLAs.

The full strength of the MP Assembly is 230 but currently the Assembly's number has reduced to 201, as 29 seats are vacant.

The magic majority figure for any party would now be 115 in the State Assembly whose strength after the 28 by-polls would be 229, with Rahul Lodhi's seat still vacant.

Results of these by-elections would be announced on 10 November.

## Poet Munawwar Rana booked over remarks on France killings

LUCKNOW, 2 NOVEMBER

An FIR has been registered against Urdu poet Munawwar Rana for allegedly defending the recent killings in France over a caricature of Prophet Muhammad, police said on Monday.

Rana had made the controversial comments in an interview to a news channel after three people were killed in a knife attack at a church in Nice last week. A few weeks ago, an assailant had decapitated a French middle school teacher who showed caricatures of Prophet Muhammad for a class on free speech.

The case against Rana has been lodged at the Hazratganj police station in Lucknow on Sunday under various Indian Penal Code sections, including 153A (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony), 295A (deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings), an officer said.

The poet has also been booked under IPC Section 505 (statements conducing public mischief) and Section 66 of the Information Technology Act, the officer said.

Police have lodged the FIR taking cognizance of the TV interview and a probe is on, the officer said. In a purported video clip of the interview that went viral on social media, Rana can be heard saying: "If any person makes such a bad cartoon of my father or mother, then I will kill him." Asked if he is supporting the entire incident, he said: "I will kill him..."

PTI

## Mamata will be responsible for President's Rule: Vijayvargiya

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

KOLKATA, 2 NOVEMBER

BJP national secretary and West Bengal observer Kailash Vijayvargiya said worsening law and order situation of West Bengal would bring President's rule here and chief minister Mamata Banerjee will be solely responsible for it.

He said that lawlessness is prevailing in this state and the report of the West Bengal governor Jagdeep Dhankhar is also another matter of concern. "The law and order of the West Bengal is collapsing and under this condition President's Rule is the only way to conduct free and fair poll. Free and fair election is not possible in Bengal without the imposition of President's rule as politicisation of bureaucracy has happened in that state. It is ok up to that, but now criminalisation of bureaucracy has also happened here," he said. He said that huge numbers of the BJP workers are being murdered during this pandemic period only to protest government's anarchy.

"Ahead of Assembly election Trinamul Congress' political vindictive attitude is very harmful towards the opposition parties. Not a single murder of BJP worker has been investigated neither any criminal arrested. The rise of BJP in the state panicked the chief minister Mamata Banerjee and her police to kill our party workers indiscriminately," he said. He also said that TMC government is insensitive and even ignored the order of the High Court unhesitatingly.

"Our party workers despite the



attack and hooliganism on them, will highlight the actual criminal motive of the TMC before people. We are not scared. Even we are ready to sacrifice our lives but we will protect the democracy of the West Bengal at any cost," he said.

He said that the Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar expressed his anxiety over the deteriorating condition of the law and order.

The report submitted by the West Bengal Governor Dhankar to Union Home minister Amit Shah is a grave area of concern. Even Union Home minister also expressed his apprehension over the law and order situation here in an interview recently. I feel personally that administration has collapsed here and a chaos prevails elsewhere and democracy is on the verge of extinction," he said.

## Open to further negotiations with Gurjars: Rajasthan govt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

JAIPUR, 2 NOVEMBER

The government on Monday said they are open to further negotiations with Gurjars who are demanding reservation even as agitating members of the community continued to block a rail track in Bharatpur's Bayana.

The protest called by the Gurjar Aarakshan Sangarsh Samiti entered its second day. Movement of roadways buses was stopped on Dausa, Bharatpur, Karauli, Dholpur and Hindua routes, and road traffic movement entering from Uttar Pradesh was also affected due to the agitation.

A North-Western Railways spokesman said routes of several passenger trains were changed in the wake of the Gurjar agitation. According to police, youths in large numbers blocked a rail track in Bayana and also damaged tracks. The issue was also raised in the Rajasthan Assembly session.

As soon as the session began, Deputy Leader of Opposition Rajendra Rathore sought a reply from the state government on the issue, saying the cabinet sub-committee held talks with Gurjars but members of the community were still blocking railway tracks.

## SOULFUL MOMENT



All Souls' Day being observed in Kolkata on Monday.

BAHKAR MALLICK

## Al Qaeda 'conspirator' arrested

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

KOLKATA, 2 NOVEMBER

The NIA as arrested one Al Qaeda "conspirator" from West Bengal's Murshidabad district in connection with its investigation in a case regarding the terror outfit in the state and Kerala, an Agency

statement said on Monday.

Accused Abdul Momin Mondal (32) has been arrested from Raninagar on Sunday night, the statement said.

"The accused was working as a teacher in a madrasa in Murshidabad district and was found to be involved in a series of conspiratorial

meetings convened by the members of Al Qaeda. He was also trying to recruit new members for the group," it said.

Since September the agency has so far arrested 11 people from West Bengal and Kerala for their alleged connections with the terror group

## TENDER

## BJP threatened Bahubali director: TRS

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

HYDERABAD, 2 NOVEMBER



The ruling TRS has accused BJP's state leadership of threatening director SS Rajmouli of 'Bahubali' fame for his upcoming film RRR only to garner votes in the Dubbak Assembly by-election slated tomorrow.

BJP leaders including the state president Bandi Sanjay Kumar has threatened the director after a recently released teaser had shown Junior NTR who is said to be espousing the role of revered Gond leader Konaram Bheem in the film, sporting a skull cap. Komaram Bheem was a Gond hero who had fought against the feudal lords under Asaf Jahi dynasty.

He had defied the Nizam's rule, fought his army by resorting to guerrilla warfare and raised

the slogan of "Jal Jangal Jameen" for adivasis. A district in Telangana has been named after him.

Ever since the teaser was released on 22 October there has been uproar in the social media over portrayal of the Gond hero in skull cap. But it was while campaigning in Dubbak that the BJP state president threat-

ened to attack Rajmouli and his destroy his properties. "We oppose putting a skull cap on Komaram Bheem. This will hurt the sentiments of the tribals. Do you have the guts to put tilak on the forehead of Nizam or Owaisi or a saffron scarf?" wrote Mr Sanjay Kumar on Twitter later iterating his

threat. While clarifying that there was no ill will against the actors he added "We are not against Junior NTR or Ram Charan Garu who are acting in this movie." The BJP state president said: "I warn everyone we will burn down every theatre and conduct protests if the movie is released in any theatres."

Local BJP MP Soyam Bapu too criticised Rajmouli for the teaser during a tribal gathering in Adilabad in the same vein.

However, TRS has now linked the rhetoric indulged by the BJP leaders to the by-poll at Dubbak.

"We have seen Padmavati issue and we are seeing how SS Rajmouli is being threatened for RRR movie," said TRS social media convenor Manne Krishnank and added it was an

instance of "Classic BJP textbooks politics just for mere votes."

He went on to accuse BJP of resorting to distributing money, threatening police, staging drama as victims, threatening celebrities as well as instigating violence to secure a victory in the bypoll. Dubbak, which was held by TRS before the death of its sitting legislator, has some 3.06 per cent scheduled tribes among its total population.

Although Rajmouli fans have argued that RRR which is scheduled for release in January is a fictional film like Bahubali it has also been pointed out that BJP was appropriating the tribal leader as one of its own even though Gonds do not belong to either majority or minority communities.

## Congress targets govt over farm laws

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 2 NOVEMBER

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday targeted the government over the new farm laws, alleging the farmers who are demanding more markets have been given recession instead.

Gandhi cited a media report to say that the farmers in Bihar want more 'mandis' (markets) in the state to sell their produce, like in Punjab and Haryana. His remarks came on the eve of the second phase of polling in Bihar Assembly elections.

Farmers of the country asked for a market, the PM gave them recession instead," he said in a tweet in Hindi.

Citing the report, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh alleged

that the new farm laws have brought in "farm reform" and not reform. "This is exactly what was pointed out in Parliament.

"The abolition of the APMC Act in Bihar in 2006 has not benefited farmers. And now the Modi Sarkar has replicated it all over the country. This is not farm reform, but really farm deform,"



*Farmers of the country asked for a market, the PM gave them recession.*

**Congress Leader RAHUL GANDHI**  
ON FARMERS' PLIGHT

THUMBNAILS



Members of SRK fan club celebrate the 55th birthday of actor Shah Rukh Khan outside his residence in Mumbai on Monday. ■ AFP

**Acid attack:** A 25-year-old woman had acid thrown on her by four men as she allegedly resisted their attempts to molest her in Uttar Pradesh's Firozabad district, police said. All the accused have been arrested. They threw acid on Ruby (25) when she opposed as they were misbehaving with her. ■ PTI

**Woman set ablaze:** A 58-year-old woman succumbed to burn injuries after being set fire on by her son, daughter-in-law and relatives of her daughter-in-law over a family dispute, police said. SP Aparna Gautam said that the relatives had settled a truce on Sunday between Ratna Devi (58) and her son. ■ PTI

## Phase 2: Battle for Bihar reaches decisive phase

Bihar will be completing polling in around 70 per cent of the total 243 seats

**MANOJ CHAURASIA**  
PATNA, 2 NOVEMBER

The "battle for Bihar" has now reached a decisive phase with as many as 94 seats spread over 17 districts going to polls in the second phase tomorrow. With Tuesday's voting, the state will be completing polling in around 70 per cent of the total 243 seats in Bihar. A total of 71 seats had gone to polls in the first phase.

In the last 2015 assembly polls, the Grand Alliance had bagged 70 out of total 94 seats, leaving only 24 seats for the NDA. But there is a complete change in the poll situation in the state now.

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar who was part of the Grand Alliance then has now returned to the NDA and is now trying to sail through riding on the popularity of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The way the chief minister has been attending every rally of the Prime Minister and heaping lavish praises on him, tells a peculiar story about how Nitish is conceding more space to his arch-rival.

Although the chief minister is fighting elections after joining hands with his arch-rival Modi, the battle looks tough for Nitish given the strong anti-incumbency wave sweeping across the state and issues of joblessness caused by lockdown as well as massive migration becoming the major poll issues this time. Instead of focussing on these issues concerning common men, the NDA leaders have been repeatedly talking about controversial issues such as abrogation of Article 370, Citizenship act, Ram temple and "Jungle Raj", a term used to describe the 15-year-old regime of the RJD headed by Lalu Prasad and his wife Rabri Devi.

If that is not enough, the PM has even described Opposition chief ministerial candidate Tejashwi Yadav as "Jungle Raj ka yuvraj" and his party having the "Copyright for Kidnapping". Tejashwi, on the other hand, has focused his campaign on "Padhai, Kamai, Dawai and Sinchai" (education, employment, health and irrigation) which have got huge support from the masses across the state.

Prominent candidates whose fate will be decided in the second phase include Tejashwi and his elder brother Tej Pratap Yadav, Chandrika Rai, Lalu's Samadhi, and four NDA ministers. Also, quite good of candidates with criminal antecedents are in the fray in the second phase who include Ritul Yadav (RJD), Pappu Pandey (JD), Manoj Kumar Singh (LJP), Amarjeet Kushwaha (CPI-ML) and independent candidate Vikas Kumar.

Yet another very interesting point is that the children of politicians and film stars making poll debut in this phase. They include—Luv Sinha, son of actor-politician Shatrughan Sinha, Subhashini Raj, daughter of veteran socialist leader Sharad Yadav, Kaushal Kishore, son of Haryana governor SN Arya, Pappu Singh, nephew of former governor Nikhil Kumar and Chetan Anand, son of former MP Anand Mohan. As many as 361 or 30 per cent of these candidates have stated their financial assets to be worth crores of rupees, the report said. Out of 1,195 candidates analyzed, 371 or 31 per cent have declared criminal cases against themselves, it said. According to the report, 32 out of 44 candidates analysed from the RJD have declared criminal cases against themselves and 22 of them have declared serious criminal cases against themselves.

## 'ITBP taking measures to keep troops fit amid tough climatic conditions'

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
JAISALMER (RAJ), 2 NOVEMBER

The ITBP undertakes various measures to keep its officers and jawans fit to survive the tough conditions along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China that is hostile from every aspect like freezing temperatures and low levels of oxygen, the chief of the force said on Monday.

Indo-Tibetan Border Police Director General S S Deswal said the Sino-India front, where militaries of India and China are engaged in a stand-off for the last few months in the Ladakh region, is "completely secure and the morale of the troops is high."

It is a hostile border in every aspect, he said. "Hence, we have to ensure that our officers and jawans are healthy and fit to survive these tough conditions." "We keep upgrading the training of our personnel so that they can render their task with efficiency," the ITBP DG said. He was asked about the aim of undertaking the walkathon.

The ITBP chief, who has undertaken a number of such fitness walks at various other locations in the past, said about 100 officials from various Central armed police forces and state police forces took part in the walkathon to spread awareness about fitness. The walkathon moved through sand dunes in areas like Sakhirewala, Bhuttewala, Katoco and culminated after crossing the Indira Gandhi canal here. The ITBP, with about 90,000 personnel, is tasked to guard the 3,488-km Line of Actual Control.

and it is at an altitude of over 10,000 ft."

"Even a blade of grass does not grow there and that border area is marred by low oxygen levels and minus 45 degrees temperature during winters," Deswal said.

It is a hostile border in every aspect, he said. "Hence, we have to ensure that our officers and jawans are healthy and fit to survive these tough conditions."

"We keep upgrading the training of our personnel so that they can render their task with efficiency," the ITBP DG said. He was asked about the aim of undertaking the walkathon.

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Former Assam CM Tarun Gogoi ill, hospitalised

GUWAHATI, 2 NOVEMBER

Veteran Congress leader and former Assam chief minister Tarun Gogoi was once again admitted to Guwahati medical college hospital as he fell seriously ill on Sunday night.

Gogoi was released from the hospital last week where he was undergoing treatments after he tested positive for Covid-19.

The three-time former chief minister Gogoi (86) complained of breathing problems and was rushed to the hospital where he spent two months before discharging on 25 October.

The hospital superintendent informed that Gogoi's condition is serious and was put on non-invasive ventilation.

However Gogoi has not lost consciousness and continues to respond to his treatments.

Meanwhile, Assam recorded 166 new cases for novel coronavirus infections the last 24 hours. Presently, Assam has 8,802 active Covid-19 cases as 19,678 individuals were discharged from hospitals after medical interventions.

It recorded a total of 2,06,517 positive cases with 931 casualties till Monday afternoon. ■ SNS

## Bihar polls: LJP shadow looms over NDA

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
BHAGALPUR, 2 NOVEMBER

Bhagalpur has been known for long as a BJP stronghold, which even RJD supremo Lalu Prasad could not decimate during the peak of his political powers in the 90s, but as the silk city of Bihar goes to polls on Tuesday it has come to symbolise the risk the ruling NDA faces from its former constituent Lok Janshakti Party in these assembly elections.

This is among the few seats where the Chirag Paswan-headed party has fielded a candidate against the BJP while going out all guns blazing against Chief Minister Nitish Kumar-headed JD(U) across the state.

The LJP's clever ploy of backing influential local politicians, mostly uppercastes, with its traditional support base of a section of Dalits to make a space for itself in the state's crowded political arena has



upset the traditional calculations in this constituency, members of different political parties say.

It has given ticket to former BJP politician Rajesh Verma, a young and resourceful leader coming from the Marwari community, and his potential draw among the trading castes, who are in large numbers here, is keeping the saffron alliance on edge.

The BJP had been winning the seats since 1990 till the election of Union minister

Ashwini Kumar Choubey, who was chosen MLA for four times in a row from here, to Lok Sabha in 2014, and the party's separation with the JD(U) gave the opposition an opening.

Ajeet Sharma of the Congress won from here in the 2014 bypoll and then in the 2015 elections, and is now in the fight against BJP's Rohit Pandey.

The pique within the JD(U) that the LJP has pitted candidates against it across the

state while largely sparing the seats where the BJP is in the fray, has also come into play here after a purported audio clip of Bhagalpur MP Ajay Kumar Mandal, who is from the JD(U), asking a party worker not to campaign for the saffron party candidate in an assembly seat in the district went viral.

Mandal, later, claimed that the clip had been manipulated to portray him in a bad light.

A BJP leader told that the party leadership has asked them to work overtime in every constituency, including those being fought by the JD(U), to dispel any misgivings but observed that it will be final results on November 10 that will spell out as to what extent the LJP has succeeded in its campaign to damage Kumar's party. The LJP has fielded its candidates in more than 140 seats, including in 115 where the JD(U) is in contention, of the total 243 assembly constituencies.

### IN MEMORIAM



Catholic Christian devotees pay their respect and decorate the grave of their family members at a cemetery during All Souls Day, in Hyderabad on Monday. ■ AFP

## Gujarat bypolls: Voting in 8 seats today with Covid-19 protocols

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
AHMEDABAD, 2 NOVEMBER

Voting for bypolls to eight Assembly seats in Gujarat will be held from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Tuesday and authorities are taking various steps to check the spread of Covid-19 during polling, officials said on Monday.

A total of 81 candidates are in fray in the eight seats, which collectively have 18.75 lakh voters, Gujarat Chief Electoral Officer S Murali Krishna told. As not more than 1,000 voters are allowed in one booth due to Covid-19 concerns and guidelines of the Election Commission, 3,024 polling booths have been set up, higher than in a

normal scenario, Krishna said. "To stop spread of the infection, we will also provide plastic hand gloves to all the voters as they will be required to sign the register and touch the EVM buttons. Their hands will be sanitised while coming in and going out of the polling booths," he said.

The official said 3,400 thermal guns, 41,000 N-95 masks, 82,000 disposable masks, 41,000 face shields and an equal number of rubber hand gloves have been procured for the staff deployed for polling.

The voting process would be webcast live from 900 polling booths. Bypolls will be held in eight seats—Abdasa (Kutch district), Limbdi (Surendranagar), Morbi (Morbi dis-

trict), Dhari (Amreli), Gadhada (Botad), Karjan (Vadodara), Dang (Dang district) and Kaprada (Valsad). The by-elections to these seats were necessitated after the sitting Congress MLAs resigned ahead of the Rajya Sabha polls held in June this year.

Five of these later joined the ruling BJP and the party has fielded them from the seats which they won in 2017.

These five candidates are ~ Brijesh Mehta (Morbi), Akshay Patel (Karjan), Jitu Chaudhary (Kaprada), Pradyumansinh Jadeja (Abdasa) and J V Kakadiya (Dhari).

The other three BJP candidates are Atmaram Parmar (Gadhada), Vijay Patel (Dang) and Kiritsinh Rana (Limbdi).

A bench of justices U Lalit and Ashok Bhushan asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta

to file status report in the matter in six weeks and posted it for hearing in the first week of January next year. The bench also refused to accept the plea of advocate E C Agarwala, appearing for Mallya in the apex court, seeking discharge from the case.

The Centre had last month said it is not aware of the secret ongoing proceedings against Mallya in the UK as the government of India is not party to the process.

Mallya, an accused in bank loan default case of over Rs 9,000 crore involving his defunct Kingfisher Airlines, is in the UK since March 2016. He is on bail on an extradition

warrant executed three years ago by Scotland Yard on April 18, 2017.

On August 31, the top court had directed Mallya to appear before it on October 5 while dismissing his plea seeking review of the 2017 verdict which held him guilty of contempt for transferring USD 40 million to his children in violations of court orders.

During the hearing conducted through video-conferencing on Monday, the solicitor general told the bench that Agarwala has filed an application from discharge from the case.

This is aggravating the matter. We have filed an affi-

davit saying that there are some proceedings going on which is confidential in nature.

Without that legal issue being resolved extradition can not be done, Mehta said.

The application seeking discharge is rejected and advocate E C Agarwala will continue to appear for the contemnor on the matter, the bench said in its order.

When the bench asked Mehta about time-frame of proceeding pending in the UK, the solicitor general said they have no information about it from the London High Commission. He sought six-week time to file status report on the issue. The Ministry of Home

Affairs, in its affidavit filed earlier in the contempt case in which Mallya has been held guilty, said that the pending legal issue in the UK is outside and apart from the extradition process and is confidential.

Before Debts Recovery Tribunal-II, Delhi 4th Floor, Jeevan Tara Building, Parliament Street, New Delhi-110001

O.A. No. S13/19 Dt. 27-10-2020

STATE BANK OF INDIA Versus Applicant

SANDEEP KUMAR SINGH & ORS. Respondent

To, Defendant

1. Sh. Sandeep Kumar Singh & Sh. Dharam Raj Yadav Prop. Mis Sai Safety Engineer

2. Smt. Lalita Singh & Sh. Sandeep Kumar Singh, Both at: House No. 1 Pratap Vihar Colony Block-B, Khoda Colony Ghaziabad, UP-201301 Also at: 131-A, Tehsil Compound Ghaziabad UP-201301

Also at: K-17 Sect.-58 Bishanpura Noida U.P. Also at: 216 Gali No. 4 Shankar Vihar Colony, Ghaziabad U.P.-201301

Also at: No 13 Pratap Vihar Colony Ghaziabad U.P.-201301

3. M/s. Amrapali Leisure Valley Developers Pvt. Ltd., C-56/40, Sector-62 Noida U.P. Also at: 307, 3rd Floor Nipun Tower Plot No. 15 Community Centre Karkardooma Delhi-110092

Whereas the above named applicant(s) has / have instituted a case for recovery of Rs 25,55,071/- (Rs Twenty Five Lakh Fifty Five Thousand and Seventy One Only) against you and where as it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in the ordinary way therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to make appearance in the Tribunal on 16-02-2021 at 10.30 A.M.

Take notice that in default of your appearance on the day before the mentioned, the case will be heard and determined in your absence.

By order of the Tribunal for Registrar DRT-II, Delhi

## Has geo-strategic Gilgit-Baltistan been made 5th province of Pakistan under pressure of China?

**SP SHARMA**  
JAMMU, 2 NOVEMBER

The geo-strategic Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) which has illegally been made the provisional fifth province of Pakistan by Prime Minister Imran Khan was a part and parcel of Jammu and Kashmir since the past 180 years when the troops of the Dogra ruler Gulab Singh conquered the territory.

The action of Imran Khan has triggered protests in Pakistan and elsewhere as the move was being viewed as a step to please China that after constructing the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) through GB was planning heavy investments in power and other infrastructure sectors in the area.

Moreover, GB is only road connection for China

to penetrate into Pakistan. It is strategically placed and has the potential to grow as an economic centre as being the tri-junction it is the gateway to Afghanistan, Tajikistan and the central and west Asia.

Zorawar Singh, the commander of the Dogra Army of Maharaja Gulab Singh, launched

## Winter of discontent

After a summer of fear provoked by the coronavirus epidemic and the death it brought in its wake, and an autumn that offered hope of a revival in fortunes and control over the disease, Europe is bracing for a winter of discontent as countries around the continent, concerned by fresh spikes in cases, pull down the shutters on economic activity to varying degrees. Germany became the latest country to announce shutdowns of bars, restaurants, cafes, cinemas and theatres. The measures will remain in force until the end of the month. This decision followed a far more severe lockdown announced in the United Kingdom over the weekend which put the brakes on non-essential economic activity while confining people to their homes. France is already under lockdown, having now clarified that even supermarkets can sell only essential goods, and not everything on their shelves. Spain is under nighttime curfew, while Belgium and Italy have already tightened controls on movement in a bid to control the spread of the virus. These measures may well be warranted by the public health situation, for every day there are reports of the disease striking where least expected. The WHO chief is the latest to go into quarantine following contact with an infected person while authoritative reports from Britain said Prince William, second in line to the crown, had contracted the disease last April, at about the same time his father Prince Charles was ill with Covid.

But these reports have not emphasized to many Europeans the nature of the continuing threat, for many are now furious with their governments for the fresh restrictions. Protestors clashed with police in Spain over the weekend, angry over the restraints placed on them. The biggest demonstrations were in Madrid where people torched garbage bins and set up makeshift barricades to shout of "Freedom". There has been violence in several Italian cities and in Prague in the Czech Republic, where too protestors have reacted with anger to restrictions. While authorities may have few options open to them in view of the higher incidence of cases, it is clear that restraints on business and commercial activity will severely impact the lives of many who may already have stretched their resources and savings in coping with the first rounds of lockdown. To be asked to curtail activities once again is causing anger to bubble over.

Authorities must also be anxious to get a grip on the spread of the virus by December for Christmas is important both socially and commercially. Certainly, the holiday season will see greater movement of people and if the virus rages at the present rate, catastrophe is sure to follow. Across the Atlantic, the costs of vigorous and not always cautious election campaigns will soon have to be paid by the United States, where already political meetings have been linked to large numbers of afflictions and significant numbers of deaths.

## Tanzanian tremors

First it was Alexander Lukashenko, then Prayuth Chan-o-cha and now the action appears to be shifting to distant Tanzania where leaders of opposition groups who alleged that the election that saw the return to power of President John Magufuli was rigged have been arrested by the regime. In terms of vote percentage at least there is a striking parallel with Belarus for in Tanzania too, the incumbent is said to have polled more than four-fifths of the votes cast. But it is what happened before polling that the Opposition is upset about. For as independent reports have confirmed, the build-up was marred by reports of access to social media being blocked to rein in dissent with Twitter confirming its platform had been "throttled". When Opposition leaders attempted to protest the outcome, they were arrested; authorities say it was to prevent them from destroying property in the guise of voicing dissent. The United Kingdom, whose colony Tanzania was until 1961, has urged election authorities to investigate reports of irregularities and expressed concern at what it terms heavy-handed policing of the election. The American Ambassador, Donald Wright, has said "I urge the government to ensure the safety and security of all opposition leaders, cease these targeted arrests, release detainees, restore telecommunications, and afford due process under the law to all citizens." While these may seem strong expressions of disapproval, they are unlikely to bother the regime in Dar es Salaam. Already the national election commission has given a clean chit to itself by saying it has found no evidence of electoral fraud.

Mr Magufuli's CCM Party, which has held power ever since independence in 1961, first as part of a single-party system and since 1994 as part of a multi-party system, already controls 97 per cent of Parliament. In effect, therefore, the President may well have been returned to power in an untargeted election, for he is widely credited with investing heavily in infrastructure and instituting reforms in mining and telecommunications to garner more revenues for the state.

The country has recorded more than 5 per cent GDP growth continuously since 2007 and for the past four years GDP growth has outstripped inflation. It is also one of two countries in the East African Community likely to record growth post-Covid with the African Development Bank having forecast a 5.5 per cent GDP increase this year. This projection is far more optimistic than that of the World Bank which in June had predicted that GDP growth would drop from 6.9 per cent in 2019 to 2.5 per cent in 2020 consequent upon the public health emergency. In short, and amid general gloom in its neighbourhood ~ the six EAC states are projected to lose up to \$79 billion due to Covid ~ Tanzania has fared well, largely due to President Magufuli's decision to keep the economy open.

# Economic Insights

Economic inequality is the most visible and painful aspect of inequality, which can be reduced only by instituting a suitable macroeconomic policy environment. Appropriate fiscal and monetary policies can have a direct impact on income distribution and can also mobilize resources for progressive social policies



The prediction by IMF that our per capita GDP (in US \$) would drop below that of Bangladesh by the end of 2020 has generated a disproportionate amount of controversy. Most Indians have been left wondering as to how Bangladesh, till recently a basket case, can race ahead of us, a country, supposedly on a trajectory to becoming a \$5 trillion economy? Government spokesmen, serving and retired, are claiming that the comparison of the two economies is flawed because a proper comparison should be based on purchasing power parity and not in dollar terms, while the opposition is using the IMF prediction to lambast the Government's economic policies.

The truth is somewhat mundane. According to World Bank statistics, in 2019, India had the 5th largest GDP of \$2,875 trillion and a per capita GDP of \$2,104 placing it at 142nd rank amongst 189 countries. Bangladesh had a nominal GDP of \$302 billion (rank 40) while its per capita GDP was \$1,856 placing it at the 147th position. After a record 10.5 per cent contraction in 2020, India's per capita GDP is expected to decline to \$1,877 while that of Bangladesh is expected to grow by 4 per cent to \$1,888 - the projected difference between the per capita GDP of the two countries being a paltry \$11, which is also predicted to disappear by the next year.

However, a major but scarcely acknowledged concern for us is that our considerable economic gains are being offset by our burgeoning population; India would be the most populous country in the world in 2027 with a population of about 147 crore. Looking further in the future, India is set to increase its population by more than 27 crores (i.e. 20 per cent) by 2050. The ill-effects of unbridled population growth are manifest everywhere - be it our hugely overpopulated cities or decreasing agricultural land holdings. Problems of poverty, unemployment, sanitation, rising crime all are due to the absence of effective population control measures.

Despite the obvious need to control population growth, all Governments since 1977, have fought shy of addressing the problem, remembering the aftermath of the infamous population control experiments of the Emergency. Since 2000, the Government has limited its role in family planning to making contraceptive facilities available at Primary

Health Centres (PHCs) and Sub-Centres (SCs) in rural areas as well as the Urban Family Welfare Centres and Postpartum Centres in urban areas.

Volunteers, called Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA), distribute contraceptives and pregnancy testing kits to beneficiaries at their doorsteps. Looking at the way PHCs are run and the many responsibilities they handle, one can well imagine the services that would really be available there. As regards, ASHA workers, they are not volunteers, but unqualified and minimally trained health workers who are paid a pittance as an incentive for certain tasks they perform.

It would appear that the National Population Policy 2000, which brought about a holistic and target free approach, has effectively ended the Government's efforts for population control, though we desperately need to control our population, for the social and economic well-being of the nation.

Coming back to GDP, one can argue that a per capita GDP of \$1,877, translating into an average income of approximately Rs 14,000 per year, is sufficient for a person to live decently. However, this is not the case, because distribution of income and wealth in India is highly skewed. According to the RBI Report of 2019, 22 per cent of our population lives below the poverty line but, at the same time, the richest Indian, Mr. Mukesh Ambani, has a daily income exceeding Rs 300 crore. According to an Oxfam study the top 10 per cent of the Indian population holds 77 per cent of the total national wealth. Also, the rich are getting richer; according to the same Oxfam study, 73 per cent of the wealth generated in 2017 went to the richest 1 per cent. The Coronavirus pandemic that saw a 23.9 per cent decline in the Indian economy in the first quarter, with a loss of 2.1 crore salaried jobs till August, also saw the wealth of most Indian billionaires increase dramatically.

Over the years, successive Governments have tried to reduce inequalities within our society but success has been mixed. According to United Nations Development Programme Administrator Achim Steiner, India lifted 271 million people

out of poverty in a 10-year time period from 2005-06 to 2015-16, but the absolute number of poor people remains large and those lifted out of poverty are only sure of two square meals a day.

Looking to the seriousness of the problem, a coherent and integrated strategy is required to reduce inequality of opportunity, firstly, by providing access to better healthcare and education to the disadvantaged. The rot in our public healthcare set-up was mercilessly exposed by the Coronavirus pandemic; almost all Government hospitals were found to be woefully understaffed with highly deficient infrastructure. This was not unexpected because till today, Government schools and hospitals, established by the British a century ago, are the backbone of our public healthcare and education systems.

The Government spends only 1.28 per cent of GDP on healthcare, which is insufficient even for maintenance, let alone improvement. The poor have nowhere to go for proper healthcare because despite Ayushman Bharat, private hospitals do not welcome poor patients. Improvement in public healthcare is possible only if the Government increases expenditure on healthcare to a realistic level of 6 per cent of GDP.

Education has the potential of breaking the poverty cycle but, the quality of education imparted by our schools is pitiable. According to Annual Status of Education Reports (ASER) most middle school children are unable to do simple arithmetical sums or even read and write in their mother tongues. Government schools, which cater to the majority of poor students, are plagued by grave shortages of infrastructure, with most schools being without toilets and having several classes operating from one room. Add to it vacancies of teachers, commanding of teachers and students by the Government for various non-educational purposes and you have a sure-fire recipe for an educational disaster.

The quality of healthcare and education can be improved if instead of promoting high-sounding schemes with names like alphabet soups and fancy monetary allocations, which are generally eaten away; the Gov-

ernment appoints good micro-level administrators in each school and hospital, with an adequate budget and a clear mandate to stem the rot.

The best social and economic policies will have little impact on inequality if we continue to discriminate on the basis of religion, caste and gender. So, to reduce inequality, we need to tackle prejudice and discrimination in society and promote the participation of disadvantaged groups in social, economic and political life. Along with measures targeted at specific groups for their special needs, we should frame policies to address the root causes of poverty and inequality in all sections of society because policies grounded in universalism enjoy broader support than those focused narrowly on addressing the symptoms of poverty and traditional disadvantages.

Economic inequality is the most visible and painful aspect of inequality, which can be reduced only by instituting a suitable macroeconomic policy environment. Appropriate fiscal and monetary policies can have a direct impact on income distribution, and can also mobilize resources for progressive social policies. We should go in for a rational and comprehensive taxation policy designed to prevent concentration of wealth and straightening out the glaring inequalities in our society - which would entail reducing GST, which is an indirect tax paid mostly by the poor, and promote direct taxation by bringing back taxes on wealth and inheritance. Otherwise, there are fair chances of our socialist republic morphing into a plutocracy.

According to Mahatma Gandhi, co-operation and not competition is the natural state of mankind and also of economic activities. However, presently, we seem to believe more in a command and control economic and social model which exacerbates inequality. The time has come to re-orient our goals towards ensuring distributive justice rather than following a policy of economic expansionism which benefits the rich, at the cost of the poor. Mahatma Gandhi had once said "Whenever you are in doubt, or when the self becomes too much, recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man whom you may have seen, and ask yourself, if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him." It is high time that we applied the Mahatma's precepts to our economic policies.

A MEMBER OF THE **ANN**  
ASIAN VOICES

## The Pope's strong signal

One story that has emerged from the AIDS years illustrates exactly what Pope Francis meant when he called for allowing "civil unions" between LGBTQ couples, the better to "protect" their rights.

The story involves a gay couple (one of many, we might add) in the United States, one of them dying of AIDS. Since the family of the dying man was against their relationship, they refused to let his partner have a voice in his care and even to visit him and provide comfort and commiseration. When the patient died, his partner was not allowed to say farewell, and was prevented from attending the wake, funeral, and burial.

The story brought home the devastating toll that homophobic, judgmental, and perhaps even vindictive attitudes can have on the lives (and deaths) of gay couples. We can very well understand the sense of loss, deprivation, and devastation that the surviving partner felt. But what of the dead man? Can we even wrap our minds around the sorrow he must have felt, the isolation and loneliness arising from the absence of the most important person in his life during his last hours?

The couple was kept cruelly apart because of one crucial element: the lack of any document or ritual that would have certified that they were more than just friends and partners, that they were in fact a family, that they were each other's partner for life. All that heartbreak could have been prevented if only the couple had been married (where allowed) or recognised as a couple through a civil union. Such a contract and procedure would have given each of them the right to be consulted and to decide on the course of

**PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER**  
In case of illness, the right to be present at the ailing one's bedside, the right to determine the manner in which termination of life should take place, the way in which the deceased is to be laid to rest, the right to be present at the last rites.

These rights spouses and family members take for granted. But they are rights LGBTQ couples and families must jump through hoops to enjoy and maintain. Perhaps now it will help that sexual minorities have the Pope on their side. The documentary "Francesco," which recently premiered at the Rome Film Festival, shook the world when it showed the leader of the Roman Catholic Church categorically saying about gay people: "What we have to create is a civil union. That way they are legally covered."

Amid the resulting hubbub, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines came out firmly behind the Pope's words with a statement, "Where Pope Francis is Coming From," which made clear that in making the pitch for "civil unions" between gay individuals, "(the Pope) is not out to destroy our morals and orthodoxy. He just wants to do as Jesus himself did. He valued being kind and compassionate more than being right and righteous." Caloocan Bishop Pablo Virgilio David, acting president of the CBCP, pointed out that the Pope "is aware of the extent of the bullying, rejection, and exclusion that many homosexuals normally go through."

To be sure, there are other voices raised in protest. Retired Filipino bishop Arturo Bastes of Sorsogon told reporters that "this is a shocking statement coming from the Pope... I am really scandalized by his defense of homosexual union, which surely leads to immoral acts."

Yours, etc., Aranya Sanyal, Siliguri, 29 October.

**EXCEPTIONAL**  
SIR, This is with reference to Manish Nandy's 'A Man and a Photo' published in *The Statesman* today.

Irrespective of whether it was a real life story or an imaginary one, I was delighted to read it and cannot but appreciate the lucid style of his writing.

In our life we at times come across exceptional characters who leave a permanent image in our mind. The character of the litigator portrayed in his story appears to be of one such person.

Yours, etc., AK Deb Biswas, Hooghly, 2 November.

## Religion must not divide

SIR, The article on religion by Swami Sandarshananda in your edition of 24 October is a very timely alert to the people of India.

Religion is not meant for creating division among people, nor for defaming or harming followers of a community or sect. On the contrary, it brings peace and harmony among people of different religions which Shri Ramakrishna, the great mystic, through his disciple Swami Vivekananda and his brethren of Shri Ramakrishna order, preached. This brought about brought about the religious renaissance in Bengal as well as in India.

Unfortunately, as the writer has aptly explained, religion is being practiced or rather used, by a few sections of people, as a tool for their petty gains, be it political or otherwise.

Since India is a multi-religious country, everyone must believe that all religious faiths must co-exist here with equal right, responsibility and without fear support-

ed by spontaneous and selfless mutual love and respect for each other.

Fanning sentiments of religious fanaticism among people of any particular sect, caste or belief, which is directly repugnant to the philosophy of Shri Ramakrishna,

will simply lead India to the brink of irreversible disaster.

Yours, etc., Anjan Bhattacharya,

Kolkata, 24 October.

### GRASP US' HAND

SIR, I do not conform to Harsha Kakar's view in his article 'QUAD and Malabar exercises' (28 October).

In the event of a full-blown

military conflict between India and

China, will India's once time-tested ally Russia solidly stand by India when she is bent on countering American global dominance along with China?

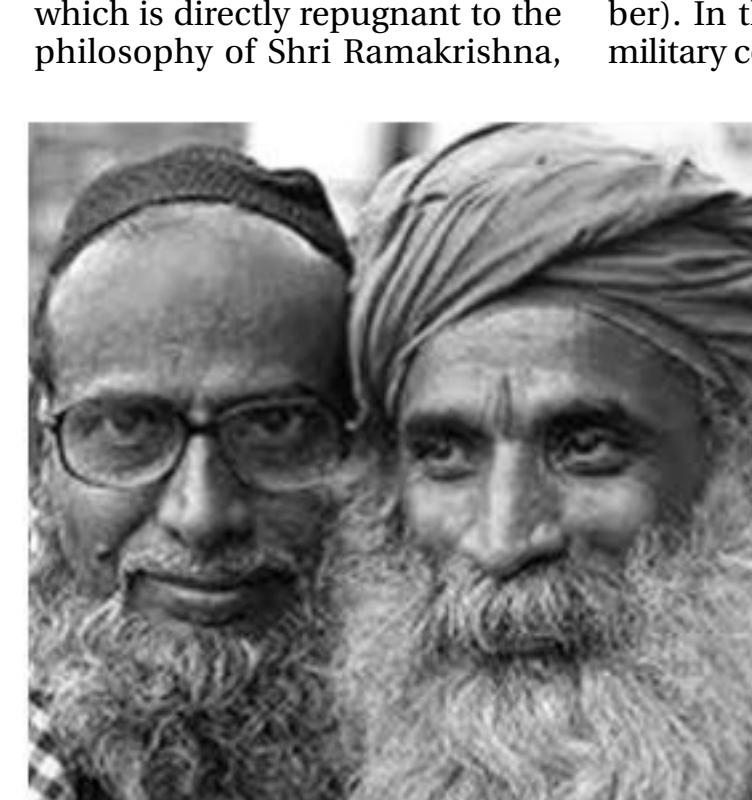
India needs to be practical; China is an emerging superpower; it is not Pakistan. And it will be foolish to assume that a few newly-acquired Rafale fighter aircraft from France will alter the scenario

### CURIOUS STAND

SIR, I completely agree with Mr Arun Gupta's observation as expressed in his letter in *The Statesman* dated 23 October, 2020. It is indeed noteworthy that certain central BJP leaders, with an ally in the WB Governor, have been persistently raising issues regarding the law and order situation in West Bengal, intending to overthrow the Mamata Banerjee government.

Nobody denies that the situation calls for improvement, but it is pertinent to point out that it is blatantly curious and significant that the same leaders choose to turn a blind eye to the deplorable and far worse scenario in UP and Maharashtra. Such partisan attempts only indicate their obvious ambition of territorial expansion.

Yours, etc., Ruma Chakravarty, Kolkata, 25 October.



HARSHA KAKAR

In a speech in the National Assembly last week, Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) leader Ayaz Sadiq, a former speaker of the assembly, stated that Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi had in a meeting of parliamentary leaders, after the downing of Abhinandan, the Indian pilot, in a dogfight, pointed out that if Pakistan did not release him, India would attack Pakistan that night. He commented, "I remember Shah Mahmood Qureshi was in the meeting which Imran Khan had refused to attend and Chief of Army Staff General Bajwa came into the room, his legs were shaking, and he was perspiring. Foreign Minister said for God's sake let Abhinandan go, India's about to attack Pakistan at 9 PM."

Ayaz Sadiq also stated that many disagreed with Qureshi. He said, "We did not agree with the decision. There was no rush to return Abhinandan; you could have waited a little. It was done in the national interest. But Imran Khan's decision betrayed weakness of the civil leadership."

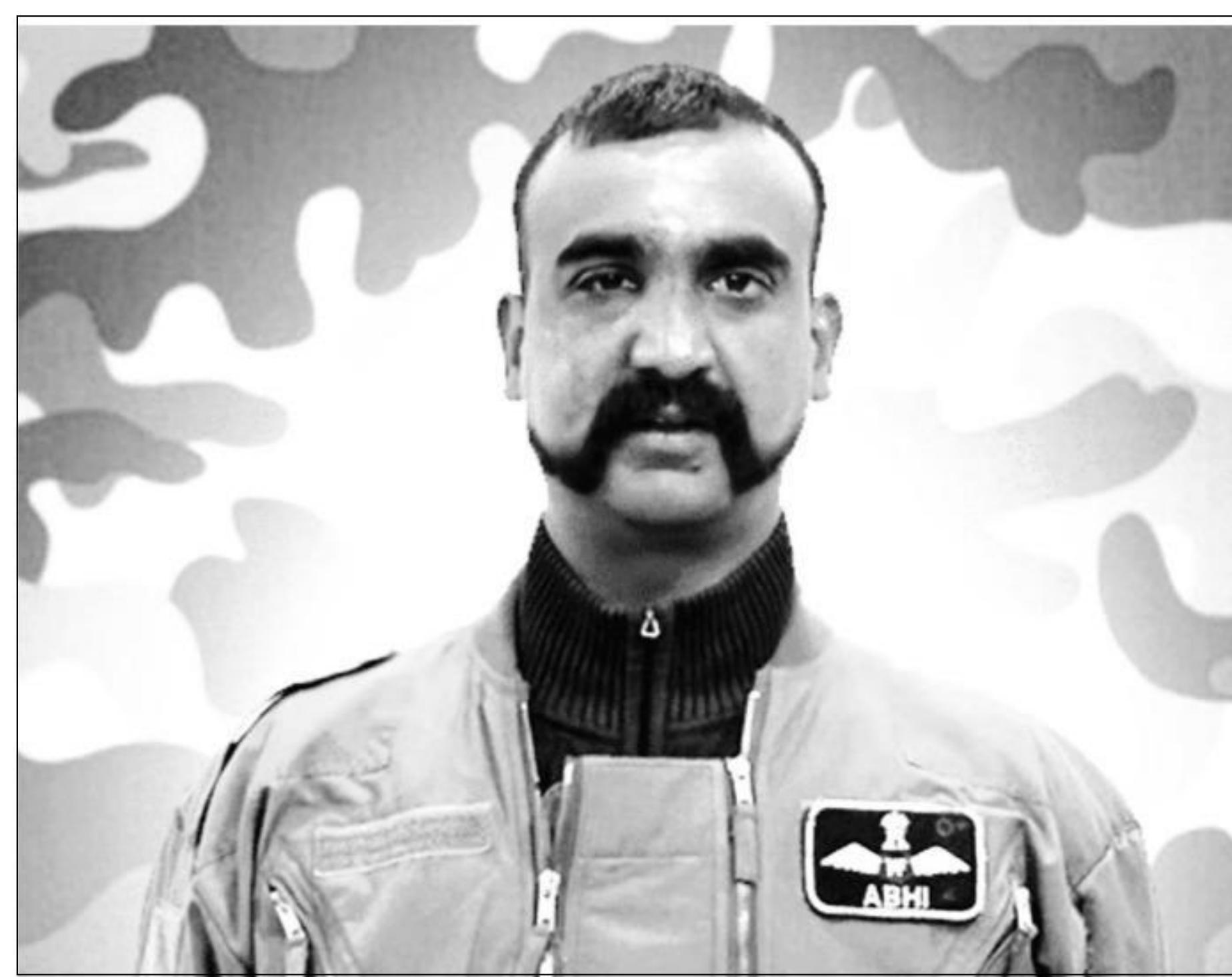
Qureshi commented, "I did not expect Ayaz Sadiq to say such a thing," adding, "we didn't want to give India a chance to take Pakistan to the International Court of Justice again." No excuse could be lamer than this. The fact that Qureshi did not dispute the statement implied that Sadiq had spoken the truth.

Ayaz's comments caused an uproar in both Pakistan and India. The account of an individual present in the meeting where the final decision was taken projected reality in decision-making at the apex level in Pakistan. In his address to the assembly the next day, Fawad Chaudhary, the Pakistani minister for science and technology, seeking to counter Ayaz's statement mentioned that Pakistan was behind the Pulwama attack.

It was the first time that a sitting Pakistani minister had admitted to Pakistan's role in the Pulwama attack. This countered what Imran Khan had repeatedly said about Pakistan having nothing to do with the Pulwama attack. He had even requested India to provide information and intelligence on which Islamabad could act. Fawad Chaudhary was interviewed by a couple of Indian channels on his comments. This brash outspoken politician was, for the first time, nervous and unconvincing, despite the interviewers not pushing him on his comments.

The ex-Indian air force chief, BS

# Abhinandan still haunts Pakistan



Dhanoa, stated that he had been confident of the return of Abhinandan. In an interview, Dhanoa mentioned that while political and diplomatic pressure was being continuously applied, the armed forces were prepared to attack Pakistan's forward brigades across the LOC in case Abhinandan was not returned unharmed. The Indian NSA, Ajit Doval, is also reported to have spoken to the Pakistan DG ISI and warned of strong retaliation in case Abhinandan was not returned. Pakistan faced similar warnings conveyed through nations close to both countries.

Gul Bukhari, a Pakistani journalist now based in UK, tweeted, "sources informed Geo TV that India had planned to target 6-7 Pak airbases. In panic Pak sent a message through friendly nations and returned the pilot." She added, "Saudi Arabia, Turkey and UK played a major role. Pakistan also conveyed through these countries to India, that it was now Modi's turn to reduce tensions."

Imran had attempted to project a brave face and declared that he was repatriating Abhinandan as a goodwill gesture, whereas the reality was that he was pressured into acting. The truth, which Pakistan had attempted to hide is now out. It was pressure and fear of Indian retaliation that compelled Pakistan to act.

Post publication of these comments there were three simultaneous

actions in Pakistan, which highlighted that the country's leadership was rattled. The first, Ayaz Sadiq was compelled to retract his statement. He released a video wherein he stated he had been misquoted. There was nothing to misquote, on the contrary his words were clear and unambiguous. Subsequently, he stated that he sticks to his comments and would not be cowed down. The second was a hurried meeting between the army chief and Imran Khan to discuss options to overcome the situation.

Finally, the DG ISPR, head of Pakistan army public relations, held a one agenda press conference to negate Ayaz Sadiq's comments. He stated, "It is extremely disappointing and mis-

leading to link Abhinandan's release with anything other than a responsible state's mature response." He added, "negative narrative directly affects national security, and the enemy is taking thorough advantage of these things in the information domain and you all can see a glimpse of this in the Indian media."

Mohsin Dawar, a Pashtun leader and member of the national assembly, tweeted, "Why is the ISPR responding to a former speaker? What authority do they have to respond? Where is the foreign minister?" Evidently, not many, even in Pakistan, believed the coverup.

There is no doubt that comments by both Ayaz Sadiq and Fawad Chaudhary have been made with in-depth knowledge of the truth. These were not off-the-cuff remarks as both were part of decision-making and aware of the proceedings. Subsequent justification would only add to fires already ignited.

Pakistan had declared Balakote as nothing but elimination of trees and a cow. However, they knew that another strike would be impossible to cover-up and casualties beyond the ability of the army to hide. This would have broken the invincible halo that the army had created around itself. Pakistan also knew that Indian actions could in no way be countered by a nuclear threat as that myth had been smashed.

The unfolding of this incident has led to Pakistan exposing itself to the globe. It has proved that its hierarchy is directly involved in terrorism. It has also proved that the Indian strike in Balakote had caused irreparable damage to its terrorist infrastructure. Finally, it has displayed that it lacks the capability to counter Indian military power and its nuclear bluff has lost all steam. The myth of invincibility of the Pakistan army has been broken, though would be kept suppressed within.

Abhinandan still gives Pakistan leaders nightmares and would continue to do so for a long time.

The writer is a retired Major-General of the Indian Army.

100 YEARS AGO

## OCCASIONAL NOTE

A cable message from South Africa, announcing the formation by General Jan Smuts of a United South African party, marks an epoch in the political life of the Empire. General Smuts declares that South Africa stands threatened by the Hertzog party, who are deliberately working for political revolution, and by another smaller party straining for social economic revolution. Behind them hovers the spectre of Bolshevism. General Smuts fought against the British in the war of 1898-1901. Before that he was a stubborn political opponent. As a Boer he inherited much of the fanaticism of the Boer - and only those who know the land of the veldt can realise what this means. Then came the Three Years War - and the Treaty of Vereeniging. It was then that General Smuts, as a signatory to the Treaty, swore fidelity to British rule. He has never forgotten his oath. Steadfastly he, and the late lamented General Botha, led a no inconsiderable party of Dutch-speaking Afrikaners who recognised that English and Dutch had to live as brothers in a country which could be made a worthy home alike for white men and aborigines. South Africa's commercial position today indicates the liberal and generous policy of the British connection. Nationalism, as represented by Hertzogism, reveals yet another instance of the curious phenomenon of political unrest following and going along with wave of great material prosperity, in which the "oppressed" class has the biggest share.

NEWS ITEMS

## KHALSA COLLEGE

Lahore, Nov 2

A special meeting of the Khalsa College council was held in the College building at Amritsar. Thirty members attended. The President drew attention to a letter which had been published in the press and which was originally addressed by some of the College professors to H.E. the Lieutenant-Governor, and explained that the College professors had acted mistakenly in addressing the Lieutenant-Governor, as the local Government had no power to alter the fundamental rules which prescribed the constitution of the College. Sardar Khark Singh proposed a resolution recording the Council's fully sympathy with the aspirations of the Sikh community for the liberalisation of the constitution of Khalsa College, so as to place the control of the College in the hands of the Sikh community.

## ALLEGED MURDER OF A MAHOMEDAN

Two little children, aged 10 and 8 years, stood in the witness-box at Howrah court, and alleged that their father Ahmed Ali had been killed by their mother and stepmother in his residence while he was asleep. The children stated that they were sleeping in another room when they were startled by a groan proceeding from the direction of their father's room. They found that their mother and stepmother were holding their father by the feet, their maternal uncle sitting on the chest of their father and throttling him and another man holding down their father by the head. Court Inspector said that the crime was of a most heinous nature. The Sub-divisional Officer remanded the two wives and another man in custody pending the further hearing of the case.

## TRACED BY SPEAR WOUND

Babu Kalidas Mondal, a landlord and moneylender of Lakhinarayan, Joy-nagar, recently received the attentions of a gang of dacoits who paid him a visit during the night armed with spears, swords and lathies. The villagers turned out in a body and prepared to check the attack. A free fight ensued and Huri Charan Sirdar, a young man of the village, threw a spear with such force that it passed through the body of one of the dacoits who was carried away by other members of the gang. A thousand rupees were stolen from the village. Inspector Russick Lall Chuckerbutty traced the wounded dacoit who was in hiding in a hut at Diamond Harbour. The accused are on trial in the court of Mr. P. Sen, Sub-divisional Magistrate of Alipore.

## MADRASSA SCHOOL

A number of students of the SMadrassa School were seen last evening wending their way from the School Boarding house to a house at Colootollah with their bags. It was ascertained on enquiry that 20 boarders of the Arabic Department left the School practically without notice and were joined on their way by a number of day scholars who made a demonstration. Questioned by a Statesman representative on their way the students said they were going to take their residence in a house in Zachariah Street at Colootollah, and join the National Madrassa which was going to be started in a few days. A meeting of the Directors of the Institution will be held on Thursday to consider the situation.

## What if Trump wins?



SUNIL SHARAN

If Donald Trump wins reelection as American president, expect amongst the first things that he will do is fire Dr. Anthony Fauci, America's foremost virus expert. Fauci has been a stick in Trump's craw ever since the pandemic broke, speaking the truth and contradicting Trump's never-ending lies, which has made him wildly popular with the American public and therefore impossible to sack until Trump wins his second and final term.

Accounting for underreporting,

about 300,000 Americans have died in the pandemic according to the Journal of the American Medical Association. If masks and social distancing had been in place, about half the number would have perished. By the time an effective vaccine and/or therapeutics take control, it could well be the middle of next year. Trump would continue sneering at masks and social distancing. About a million Americans could die by the middle of next year if he continues with his macho, reckless antics.

MAGA is Trump's slogan, which

means Make America Great Again. If Trump wins, it will explicitly become MWAGA, which it has been all along, even if implicitly, during his first term and which stands for Make White America Great Again. Trump's Gestapo police (and I don't use the word lightly) has been killing one innocent African-American every week. Expect that rate to double or even treble in Trump's second term. Trump's border guards will separate more and more babies from their parents and shove them into cages, where many will spend all their child-

hood.

Trump has imposed some of the most crippling sanctions on any country in history, those on Iran. Yet Iran defies and survives. Trump just about attacked Iran in his first term. This time, egged on by Israel and Saudi Arabia, he will go the distance. A pitiless war will ensue in the Middle East. Iran is no Iraq or Afghanistan. Even they have given America a licking. Iran will give America such a hiding that it will never forget.

If climate change is as deleterious as many people advocate, expect the world to say goodbye to itself because a second Trump term would prove disastrous for the planet. Trump has spurned science during the pandemic just as he has mocked at global warming. If he wins, he will feel vindicated by his stance on climate change. The world has stood aghast during his first term as he has continually mocked climate change.

Not many world leaders really want to do anything effective against climate change, even though they might pay lip service to it. They have taken Trump's inaction against climate change as an excuse for themselves not to do anything either. Trump's second term and continuing inaction will give them more of an excuse.

Trump has coddled dictators like Putin, Kim, and Xi and spurned his democratic western allies. That is because Trump is a dictator himself. The chasm between Europe and America will continue to grow. Trump will ignore his western allies on Iran and climate change. They will be left wringing their hands in despair as the 800-pound gorilla of the world will keep behaving crazily.

America has been falling off a cliff since the Soviet Union collapsed and

there was no one left to counter-balance its depredations. The fall accelerated after 9/11. Now the fall will become a tumble. Instead of making America great again, a second Trump term could cause it to self-implode. As Americans go to the polls, they must consider the ill-effects of putting Trump in the White House again.

Are there any positives to come out of Trump's second term? Yes, the economy will rebound faster under him than under Joe Biden. Biden will be very careful about reopening the economy. Death rates from the pandemic will matter more to him than economic growth rates or stock market surges. For Trump, it would be the exact opposite. He will force the economy to open up before it is ready to do so. Growth and the stock market will jump, but at the cost of many American lives. But Trump doesn't care much about American lives as he's already demonstrated by his handling of the pandemic.

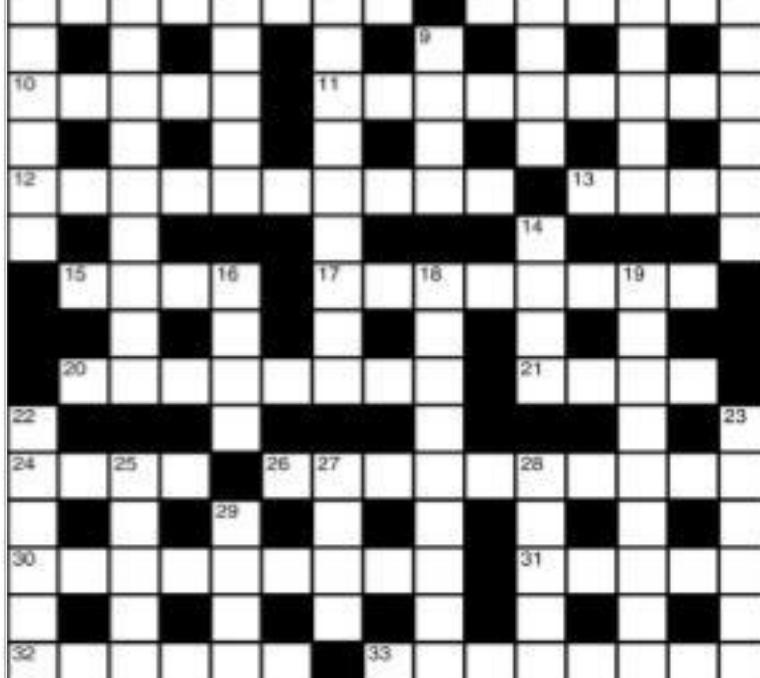
Biden seems a good, decent man, even if he seems hobbled by the wokes in his party who will force him to make radical leftist decisions. America is a centre-right country for the most part, and decisions coming from the left wing may not go down well with the populace. Biden also seems sure to upset whatever Trump has done. Trump has made America come close to its allies like Israel and Saudi Arabia, whom Obama had spurned for Iran. Expect Biden to do the same as what Obama did. America might be left with no real friends in the Middle East under Biden.

The Middle East always seems a dangerous place at best. Why make it more so?

The writer is an expert on energy and contributes regularly to publications in India and overseas.

NO 28124

### CROSSWORD



### YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

#### ACROSS

- Where American bigwigs may come together for sex? (8)
- After short amount of time, Cruz perhaps becomes very wealthy (6)
- Currently elected, and hopeless! (2-3)
- Corrupt doctrine overshadows current administration (9)
- A poor plan - developed with veep's lead - is subject to ratification (2,8)
- Politically, the West Coast usually erupted, we're told (4)
- Block silly vote (4)
- Inarticulate aides essentially have lower levels of intelligence (4,4)
- Utter ruin leaves one under government control (5-3)
- Workers from The Hill? (4)
- Unionist with stovepipe, say, going round western state (4)
- Favoured presidential retreat is grand, and certainly large on the inside (4,6)
- Proper sign used for initial stages of public voting (9)
- Ex-POTUS laid back early in the day with a dog he owns (5)
- Some get an escort around part of the Capitol Building (6)
- In the first instance, Biden's age is a striking characteristic (8)

#### DOWN

- Right-wing party requiring mass protection (6)
- Provider of daily information given to Secret Service operative (9)
- Competed as a candidate prior to winning and accumulated debts? (3,2)
- Rice possibly is upset with the heads of Dubya's executive organisation (4,5)
- Have a burning desire to throw Pence out (4)
- Opponent loses heart following tense event in the Supreme Court? (5)
- Democrat dealing with vital representation of party? (6)
- A Republican leading each district (4)
- Narcos providing support for one proposal (4)
- Bit of hullabaloo at Hoover's inauguration recital (4)
- Policy document is clear and well-founded at heart (9)
- A tweet put out with rage almost creates White House scandal (9)
- Uproar in America after 'The Chosen One' loses his head (6)
- New taxes irritated the Bushes? (6)
- Foreign article contains 'fake news'? (5)
- Miss Ohio snubbed Senator Romney (4)
- Crazy Democratic fool in days long past (2,3)
- Time to get behind former leader and Chief Justice (4)

NOTE: Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required. (By arrangement with The Independent, London)

## THUMBNAILS

**NTPC buyback:** State-owned power giant NTPC board on Monday approved the buyback of 19.78 crore equity shares for Rs 2,275.74 crore. "The board of directors of the company, in a meeting held on 2 November 2020, has inter alia approved... buyback of the fully paid-up equity shares of the company of face value of Rs 10 each," NTPC said in a BSE filing. The board approved the proposal to buy back 19,78,91,146 fully paid-up equity shares at a price of Rs 115 per unit for an aggregate consideration not exceeding Rs 2,275.75 crore, the filing said. PTI

**PNB profit:** Punjab National Bank (PNB) on Monday reported a 22 per cent jump in net profit to Rs 620.81 crore for the second quarter ended 30 September. The state-owned lender had posted a net profit of Rs 507.05 crore during the corresponding quarter a year ago. The bank's total income during July-September rose to Rs 23,438.56 crore as against Rs 15,556.61 crore in the year-ago period, PNB said in a regulatory filing. SNS

## GST shortfall: Centre releases ₹6,000 crore for states/UTs

The government today released Rs 6,000 crore as the second tranche of GST compensation shortfall to 16 states and 3 Union Territories (UTs). In a Press note, the finance ministry informed that it has facilitated loans of Rs 12,000 crore under the special window to states and UTs so far.

"This amount was raised at a weighted average yield of 4.42 per cent. This amount will be passed on to the states/UTs at the same interest rate, which is lower than the cost of borrowings for the states and UTs, thus benefiting them. The ministry of finance has facilitated loans of Rs 12,000 crore till date under the special window to states/UTs,"

# Manufacturing growth at 13-year high in Oct

Factory production increases at the quickest pace since October 2007

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
NEW DELHI, 2 NOVEMBER

India's manufacturing sector activity improved for the third straight month in October with companies raising output to the greatest extent in 13 years amid robust sales growth, a monthly survey said today.

The headline seasonally adjusted IHS Markit India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) rose from 56.8 in September to 58.9 in October, and pointed to the strongest improvement in the health of the sector in over a decade.

### SURVEY FINDINGS



► The headline seasonally adjusted IHS Markit India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) rose from 56.8 in September to 58.9 in October, and pointed to the strongest improvement in the health of the sector in over a decade.

► Manufacturers indicated that the ongoing relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions, better market conditions and improved demand helped them to secure new work in October.

► On the employment front, the compliance of government guidelines related to the Covid-19 pandemic caused a further reduction in employment. The fall was the seventh in consecutive months.

sharp monthly rates of expansion," said Pollyanna De Lima, economics associate director at IHS Markit.

Lima further noted that "companies were convinced that the resurgence in sales will be sustained in coming months, as indicated by a strong upturn in input buying amid restock-

ing efforts".

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**IOC has no plan to buy back shares as of now but will consider if there is a mandate**

**SANDEEP KUMAR GUPTA**  
DIRECTOR (FINANCE), INDIAN OIL CORP

## Auction of coal blocks sees good response on first day

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
NEW DELHI, 2 NOVEMBER

The auction of coal blocks for commercial mining which kick-started today saw Vedanta bidding the highest for a mine in Odisha, while Hindalco bid the most for a block in Jharkhand.

Vedanta made highest bid for Radhikapur Westmine at 21 per cent revenue sharing, with auction of some of the mines going on for more than three to four hours. "In all the mines auctioned, the final offer received is above 10 per cent signalling strong demand of coal mines in the market," it noted.

Hindalco Industries, Adani Enterprises and Agarwal Min-

ing Ltd also in the race for the Chakla coal block.

In case of Radhikapur (West) coal block, besides Vedanta, Jindal Steel and Power Ltd and two other firms had put in bids.

In June, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the auction process for 41 coal blocks for commercial mining, a move that opens India's coal sector to private players, and heralded a major step in the direction of India achieving self-reliance.

The auction of coal blocks for commercial mining is expected to generate annual revenue of Rs 1,556.68 crore for the states, the ministry said.

All the five blocks will generate annual revenue of Rs 1,556.68 crore for the states, the ministry said.

The blocks put on auction by the ministry generated wide interest from bidders who had submitted their bids for various blocks on offer.

## HDFC profit falls 57% to ₹4,600 cr

**SNS & PTI**  
NEW DELHI/KOLKATA, 2 NOVEMBER

Mortgage lender HDFC Ltd today said its consolidated net profit declined by 57.5 per cent to Rs 4,600 crore in the July-September quarter of financial year 2020-21. The consolidated profit after tax during the corresponding three months of fiscal 2019-20 stood at Rs 10,389 crore, HDFC said in a statement.

Total income on a consolidated basis rose to Rs 34,090.45 crore in the said quarter from Rs 32,850.89 crore a year ago.

"During the quarter ended 30 September 2019, Rs 8,000 crore pertained to profit/loss of control of a subsidiary, GRUH Finance Limited. The stake sale of GRUH Finance by the Corporation was to facilitate the merger of GRUH with Bandhan Bank," it said. On a standalone basis, its net profit declined by 28 per cent to Rs 2,870.12 crore from Rs 3,961.53 crore in the year-ago period. Total income (standalone) decreased to Rs 11,732.70 crore from Rs 13,494.12 crore a year ago. The net interest income (NII) for the quarter ended 30 September 2020 stood at Rs 3,647 crore compared to Rs 3,021 crore in the previous year, representing a growth of 21 per cent.

## Govt extends ECLGS for MSMEs till 30 Nov

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, 2 NOVEMBER

The government today extended the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) for MSMEs by one month till 30 November as the scheme is still to meet the target of Rs 3 lakh crore. The scheme, which was launched in May as part of Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan package, was valid till the end of October.

"The Union government has extended the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) by one month till 30 November 2020, or till such time that an amount of Rs 3 lakh crore is sanctioned under the scheme, whichever is earlier, in view of the opening up of various sectors in the economy and the expected increase in demand during the ongoing festive season," reads the Press release of the finance ministry.

ing festive season," reads the Press release of the finance ministry.

It was launched by finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman to help industries that witnessed downfall in coronavirus-induced lockdown. As per the scheme, fully guaranteed and collateral-free additional credit to MSMEs, business enterprises, individual loans for business purposes, and Mudra borrowers is provided to the extent of 20 per cent of their credit outstanding as on 29 February 2020. Borrowers with a credit outstanding up to Rs 50 crore as on 29 February, and with an annual turnover of up to Rs 250 crore are eligible under the scheme. Interest rates are capped at 9.25 per cent for banks and financial institutions (FIs), and 14 per cent for NBFCs.

## Sensex snaps losing streak, RIL down over 8%

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
MUMBAI, 2 NOVEMBER

Equity indices found firmer ground today after three days of declines as robust demand for banking and financial stocks amid upbeat macroeconomic data neutralised heavy selling in heavyweight Reliance Industries.

A positive trend in global markets too bolstered sentiment, though a sharp depreciation in the rupee capped the gains, traders said. After gyrating 633.11 points in a choppy session, the 30-share BSE Sensex settled 143.51 points or 0.36 per cent higher at 39,757.58 points.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty advanced 26.75 points or 0.23 per cent to 11,669.15 points. IndusInd Bank was the top gainer in the Sensex pack,

rallying 7.10 per cent, followed by ICICI Bank, HDFC, Axis Bank, Bharti Airtel, SBI, Bajaj Finance and HDFC Bank.

ICICI Bank on Saturday reported an over-four-fold jump in consolidated net profit at Rs 4,882 crore for the September quarter, driven largely by core income growth and lesser provisions for the pandemic-related impact.

Mortgage lender HDFC Ltd today said its consolidated net profit declined by 57.5 per cent to Rs 4,600 crore in the July-September quarter of 2020-21.

Reliance Industries (RIL) was the top laggard among the Sensex constituents, crashing 8.62 per cent, after the company on Friday evening reported a 15 per cent drop in second quarter net profit as a slump in core oil and chemicals business

dragged down continued good showing in consumer-facing verticals such as telecom.

HCL Tech, TCS, Asian Paints, Tata Steel, Bajaj Auto, Maruti and UltraTech Cement also ended in the red, skidding up to 2.49 per cent.

"The weak opening reflected the rough waters the market entered last week. However, some recovery was seen as investors showed interest in banking stocks as major players announced Q2 results, beating the street estimates with positive outlook."

Sectorally, BSE bankex, telecom, finance, realty, power and utilities indices rallied as much as 4.17 per cent, while energy index cracked 7.12 per cent. BSE oil and gas, healthcare, IT and basic materials also closed with losses.

## PUBLIC SECTOR ROUNDUP

### VIGILANCE AWARENESS WEEK OBSERVED



Air India, along with its subsidiaries, observed Vigilance Awareness Week from 27 October to 2 November with the theme 'Satark Bharat Samridhi Bharat' (Vigilant India, Prosperous India) through various activities strictly adhering to Covid-19 safety protocol under the guidance of Air India CVO Arti Bhattacharya.

### DFCCIL



DFCCIL kicked off the Vigilance Awareness Week with an integrity pledge administered by R N Singh, MD DFCCIL in the presence of Ashish Kumar, CVO and others.

### CENTRAL BANK OF INDIA



Central Bank Of India celebrated Vigilance Awareness week from 27 October to 2 November and the bank has conducted various programmes and activities.

### NFL



Virendra Nath Datt, C&MD, National Fertilizers Limited (NFL) administered Vigilance oath to employees on the occasion of Vigilance Awareness Week at corporate Office, Noida on 27 October.

### 'We Care' ~ an initiative of ICAI

ICAI launched an initiative 'We Care - a unique social security scheme and benevolence programme for senior 'CAs' of aged 75 years and above. This initiative would provide support to this valuable segment of ICAI fraternity which endeavours for providing respect, continuous engagement, care

and support of the Profession by creating a sense of belongingness. The initiative was launched by Arjun Ram Meghwal, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs & Heavy Industry and Public Enterprises through virtual mode in the presence of President, Vice-President & Central Council Members of ICAI.

### DIGITAL LEARNING LABORATORY



Dalmia Bharat Foundation, an arm of Dalmia Bharat Group launched a digital learning lab named 'HP World on Wheels' (WoW) in partnership with HP India in Odisha. The lab was inaugurated by Sagarika Nath, Superintendent of Police, Sundargarh in the presence of Sunil Gupta, Regional Manufacturing Head (East), Dalmia Cement (Bharat) Limited, along with other officials.

### BIS gets first licence for anti bribery management systems

Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) granted first licence on all India basis for Anti Bribery Management Systems (ABMS) Certification as per IS/ISO 37001:2016 to M/s Central Warehousing Corporation, for their corporate office along with 14 regional offices across the country.

Pramod Kumar Tiwari, DG, BIS handed over the licence to Pranay Prabhakar, CVO, CWC

recently in the programme organised by BIS during observance of Vigilance Awareness Week.

The ABMS certification is designed to help an organisation in preventing, detecting and responding to bribery. The system also helps to comply with anti-bribery laws and voluntary commitments applicable to its activities.

### N Rly organises vendor meet

Northern Railway celebrated the Vigilance Awareness Week from 27 October to 2 November.

As part of ongoing activities during Vigilance Awareness Week, Northern Railway organised a vendor meet at Baroda House, New Delhi on 29 October. Due to challenges of COVID-19 pandemic and the norms of social distancing, the vendor meet was held on digital platform.

One of the main focus areas of the vendor meet was 'Ease of Doing Business' with Railways.

### DIGITAL LEARNING LABORATORY



Punjab National Bank (PNB) donated emergency vehicle to Bhaora Deoras Sewa Nyas. It will be used by the Nyas for the help of sick persons and their families who visit Delhi for treatment at AIIMS. Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Science and Technology and Earth Sciences, Dr. Harsh Vardhan along with CH SS Malikarjuna Rao, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of PNB handed over the key to the trust.

### PNB DONATES EMERGENCY VEHICLE



Punjab National Bank (PNB) launched the PNB tracking & monitoring staff accountability cases (TMSAC) portal and PNB's 2020 vigilance manual. Suresh N Patel - Vigilance Commissioner, Central Vigilance Commission and P. Daniel - Secretary-in-charge of Central Vigilance Commission along with CH SS Malikarjuna Rao - Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of PNB were present on the occasion.

### VIGILANCE AWARENESS EVENT



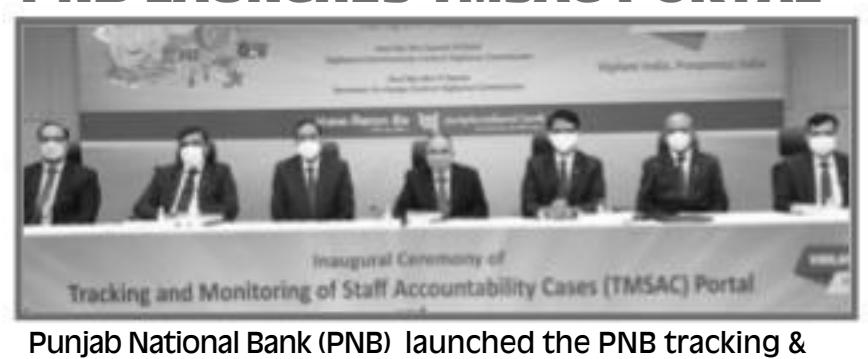
Vijayendra, CMD, NSIC administered the 'Integrity Pledge for Organisations' on the occasion of Vigilance Awareness week. P. Udayakumar, director (P&M), Gaurav Dixit, director (finance), NSIC and Rajan Trehan, CVO, NSIC along with NSIC employees were also present on this occasion.

### PNB



PNB organised a Walkathon to observe the Vigilance Awareness Week in New Delhi. Vijay Kumar Tyagi, CVO, Vivek Jha, GM and Ram Kumar, Zonal Manager, Delhi unit of PNB were also present on the occasion. The Walkathon began with a memorable floral tribute to martyrs from the Police.

### PNB LAUNCHES TMSAC PORTAL



Punjab National Bank (PNB) launched the PNB tracking & monitoring staff accountability cases (TMSAC) portal and PNB's 2020 vigilance manual. Suresh N Patel - Vigilance Commissioner, Central Vigilance Commission and P. Daniel - Secretary-in-charge of Central Vigilance Commission along with CH SS Malikarjuna Rao - Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of PNB were present on the occasion.



We had the greatest economy in the history of our country. And then we got hit by the China plague, which we're not going to forget

US PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP  
ON CHINA FAILING TO CHECK COVID

The Statesman

NEW DELHI, TUESDAY 03 NOVEMBER 2020

09

# Hindu homes attacked in Bangladesh

Over rumours about an alleged Facebook post slandering Islam, the households were vandalised and later set on fire

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
DHAKA, 2 NOVEMBER

**T**he houses of several Hindu families have been vandalised and burned by some radical Islamists in Bangladesh's Comilla district over rumours about an alleged Facebook post slandering Islam, according to a media report on Monday.

The households were vandalised and later set on fire on Sunday after a Bangladeshi man, who lives in France, allegedly praised President Emmanuel Macron for taking steps against inhumane ideologies after a teacher in Paris was decapitated for showing caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad, bdnews24.com reported.

The headmaster of a kinder-



The households vandalised and set on fire (FILE PHOTO)

Qamruzzaman Talukder, Officer-in-Charge of Bangra Bazar Police Station, as saying.

They include the headmaster of the kindergarten. The other person is a resident of nearby Andikot village.

The situation is under control now, Md Abdul Fazal Mir, deputy commissioner of Comilla district, told bdnews24.com after visiting the area. Syed Nurul Islam, Superintendent of Police, has also visited the scene.

The deputy commissioner said the locals carried out arson attacks on homes, including those of the two arrestees.

Asked what measures the authorities have taken against the attackers, Mir said the administration has swung into action.

Qamruzzaman said the process to file a case over the attack was underway.

The police will watch videos to identify the attackers, he added. Demonstrations against France over caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad have been taking place in different Muslim-majority countries for some days.

Bangladeshi authorities have deployed four platoons of police in Kurbanpur and Andikot villages to keep the situation under control.

The police launched a case under the Digital Security Act against the headmaster and the other arrestee.

A court denied bail and sent them to jail pending trial when the police produced them before it late on Sunday afternoon.

## Tens of thousands march in streets to protest against France

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
DHAKA, 2 NOVEMBER

Tens of thousands of Muslims marched in the streets of Bangladesh's capital on Monday in the country's largest protest yet against the French president's support of secular laws that allow caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad.

The protesters, organised by the Hefazat-e-Islam group, a network of teachers and students at thousands of Islamic schools, gathered outside the main Baitul Mukarram Mosque in downtown Dhaka.

They chanted Down with France and Boycott French Products and burned effigies of French President Emmanuel Macron.

I ask the French government to apologise to the 2 billion Muslims in the world. I also ask the world's Muslims to demonstrate their faith by boycotting French products and terminating diplomatic relations with France, Nur-Husain-Kashemi, a leader of the group, told the protesters.

I ask the government to shut down the French Embassy. It's a shame that they haven't passed a resolution of condemnation in Parliament, he said.

Monday's protest was the largest in a series of anti-France demonstrations in Bangladesh since last week that have called for the clo-



Protesters take part in an anti-France demonstration and set an effigy of French President Emmanuel Macron on fire during in Dhaka on Monday. AFP

sure of the French Embassy and for Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to condemn France. Hasina has yet to officially comment.

Hefazat-e-Islam and other Islamist groups and parties support the introduction of Islamic law in Bangladesh, which is governed by a legal system largely based on British common law.

Muslim-majority countries across the world have been outraged by Macron's refusal to condemn the publication or display of caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad.

In Islam, any depiction of the prophet is prohibited. The issue reemerged following the gruesome beheading near Paris of a French teacher

who showed caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad in class. The 18-year-old Chechen refugee who carried out the attack was later shot dead by police.

The teacher, Samuel Paty, has been heralded as a symbol of France's staunch secular ideals and its rejection of religious intrusion in public spheres.

Macron and members of his government have vowed to continue supporting such caricatures as protected under freedom of expression.

Muslim politicians, religious scholars and everyday people have condemned such depictions as a form of hate speech and view them as sacrilegious and insulting to Islam.

## HARVEST TIME



A Yemeni farmer harvests wheat in a field near their village on the outskirts of Yemen's third city of Taiz on Monday. AFP

## Algeria votes on new constitution amid opposition boycott

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
ALGIERS, 2 NOVEMBER

Algerians voted on Sunday on whether to approve a revised constitution that imposes term limits, promises new freedoms and is aimed at answering demands from pro-democracy protesters who pushed out their long-serving, autocratic president last year.

In one example of public discontent, residents in the opposition bastion of Tizi-Ouzou shut down voting stations to protest the referendum, prompting electoral authorities to annul the voting in 63 of the region's 67 towns.

Pro-democracy activists say the revised charter does not go far enough to open up politics to a new generation of leaders. Islamist parties say it does not do enough to promote Islam and the Arabic language, and oppose a measure on religious freedom.

The results are expected to be announced by the interior minister on Monday.

The overall turnout was just



National Independent Elections Authority (ANIE) chief Mohamed Charfi delivers a speech in the capital Algiers on Monday. AFP

pushed for the referendum, President Abdelmadjid Tebboune, is hospitalised in Germany after several people in his administration showed symptoms of the virus. The 74-year-old's exact ailment and

whereabouts are unclear, though a presidential adviser said on Sunday that Tebboune was "in good health" and continuing to undergo medical examinations.

For many Algerians, the most dramatic proposed constitutional change would allow the Algerian military to intervene abroad, in the United Nations or the African Union peacekeeping operations, a major departure from the current doctrine of non-interference.

The military has long played a key role in Algeria, and military chief Gen. Said Bengriha has campaigned around the country for a "yes" vote.

The revision of the constitution was among the promises the president made when he was elected in December. It limits presidents and parliament members to two terms, makes it easier to create political parties, and hands

some presidential powers to the prime minister, among other changes.

During a final campaign rally on Wednesday, Prime Minister Abdelaziz Djerrad said the amendments would "make it possible to definitely turn the page on the old practices of management of public affairs, with the emergence of new institutions and new methods of exercising responsibilities based on democracy, competence, transparency". He insisted that it "reflects the major demands" of the Hirak protest movement, and will give young people and non-governmental actors more of a say in Algerian policies.

Hirak activists and their supporters, who want a wholesale overhaul of Algeria's leadership, see the referendum as an effort to look progressive while leaving the overall power structure in place.

## Philippines: 16 dead, thousands of homes damaged in typhoon

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
MANILA, 2 NOVEMBER

At least 16 people were killed as Typhoon Goni lashed the Philippines over the weekend, and about 13,000 shanties and houses were damaged or swept away in the eastern island province that was first hit by the ferocious storm, officials said Monday.

Goni blasted into Catan- duanes province at dawn Sunday as a super typhoon with sustained winds of 225 kilometers (140 miles) per hour and gusts of 280 kph (174 mph). But the storm weakened considerably after making landfall and shifted direction to spare the capital, Manila, before blowing out into the South China Sea.

The Office of Civil Defense said at least 16 people were

killed in Catanduanes and nearby Albay province, where three others remain missing.

Catanduanes, an island province of more than 260,000 people that is often lashed by Pacific storms, was isolated after losing power and communications due to Goni and another typhoon that had hit a week earlier. But managed to connect to the outside world on Monday after disaster-response authorities flew to the devastated island with satellite phones.

Catanduanes Gov Joseph Cua and other officials said at least five people drowned and four were injured in the typhoon, which whipped up 5-meter (16-foot) storm surges. About 13,000 shanties and houses were damaged or swept away when the typhoon slammed into the province, they said. Many residents fled to safety from their homes as the typhoon approached.

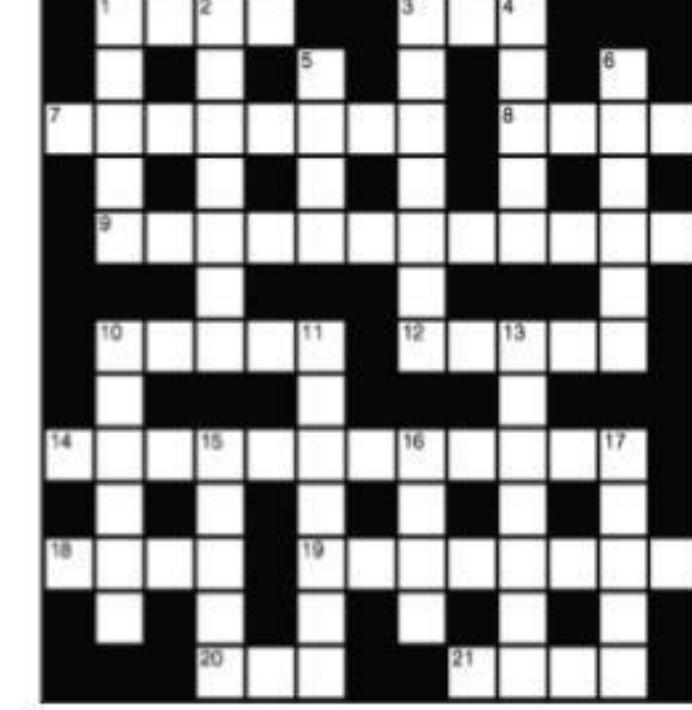
Cua described the onslaught as severe and reported that some coastal areas were swamped by frightening storm surges. His brief conversation with some Cabinet officials in Manila was broadcast live on state-run TV. About 10,000 shanties were totally washed out along the coastlines that were hit by the typhoon, Catanduanes Rep. Hector Sanchez said.

About 80 per cent of the electric posts on the island were toppled and roads linking the province's 11 towns remained impassable to vehicles, Cua said.

An army general on the island appealed for more troops to help distribute food packs and water to residents.

## LEISURE

### 10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



**ACROSS**  
1. Swindle (Slang) (4)  
3. Small vegetable (3)  
7. Occur at the same time (8)  
8. Disastrous (4)  
9. Short of money (4-8)  
10. Section of a recording (5)  
12. Vestige (5)  
14. Unyielding (12)  
18. Manage (4)  
19. Fated (8)  
20. Arithmetical problem (3)  
21. Norse god of thunder (4)  
**DOWN**  
1. Uncomplaining (5)  
2. Loss of memory (7)  
3. White-faced clown (7)  
4. Make sense (Informal) (3,2)  
5. Partiality (4)  
6. Change to ice (6)  
10. Minor earthquake (6)  
11. Realm (7)  
13. Do away with (7)  
15. Tartan trousers (5)  
16. Thrown (4)  
17. Bullock (5)  
**SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD**  
1. Distinguished, 11. Virulent, 21. Slab, 13. Satsuma, 15. Petty, 16. Lack, 18. Lie.  
3. Supplement, 17. Mental, 19. Toucan, 4. Eye, 20. Stay, 5. Llama, 6. Teenager, 10. Sou'wester,  
5. Late (Circumlate), 22. Ask., 21. Ear, 14. Challenge, 17. Mental, 19. Toucan, 4. Eye, 20. Stay, 5. Llama, 6. Teenager, 10. Sou'wester,  
7. Dahlia, 8. Elated, 9. Able seaman, 12. Ask.

By arrangement with The Independent  
Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required

### BEETLE BAILEY/Mort Walker



RED EYE/Bill Yates & Mel Casson



DADDY DAZE/John Kovaleski



### NEED TO KNOW

#### HOSPITALS

22586262, 22585007

#### RAILWAY INQUIRY

General Inquiry 139

Toll Free Nos. 1800125159

Chemist Shop 42000047

Vidysagar Institute for Mental and Neuro-Sciences 26924300, 26924304

Batra Hospital & Medical Research Centre 29051280, 29958747

Deen Dayal Upadhyay 25496320, 25494403

Guru Tegh Bahadur 23717473, 23253250

Port 011-25671580; Terminal I-B 25671576, Palam Road 25671579, 18001803838

JET AIRWAYS Flight Inquiry and Reservation 39841111

EMIRATES Flight Inquiry and Reservation 3373377

U.P. Roads 23868709

#### FLIGHT INQUIRY

AIR INDIA Flight Inquiry and Reservation 18001801407

INDIGO AIRLINES New Delhi City Office 43513185, Call Center 09910383838, 18001803838, Reservation 43513186; Indigo Airlines Airline 25656421/25656431 Reservation 41528181

Air France Flight Inquiry and Reservation 23466262 (City) 25652294 (Airport)

Kuwait Airways Flight Inquiry and Reservation 23354373

#### ROADWAYS INQUIRY

General Inquiry: 23868836, 23865181

Haryana Roadways 23861262

City Office 43513185, Call Center 09910383838, 18001803838, Reservation 43513186; Indigo Airlines Airline 25656421/25656431 Reservation 41528181

Port 011-25671580; Terminal I-B 25671576, Palam Road 25671579, 18001803838

JET AIRWAYS Flight Inquiry and Reservation 39841111

EMIRATES Flight Inquiry and Reservation 3373377

U.P. Roads 23868709

#### PAR SCORE 110-120

by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL TIME: 20 MIN

#### SCRABBLE BRAND

22586262, 22585007

#### RACK 1

23864470

#### RACK 2



You never have to ask anyone's permission to lead.... I eat 'no' for breakfast. So, I would recommend the same.

DEMOCRATIC VICE PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEE KAMALA HARRIS

RESPONDING TO A QUESTION ON WHAT ADVICE SHE HAS FOR WOMEN

## WEATHER

CITY	MAX(°C)	MIN(°C)
SINGAPORE	30	26 R
HONG KONG	26	22 H
TOKYO	18	10 S
LONDON	11	02 R
DUBAI	33	22 S
SAN FRANCISCO	18	12 H
NEW YORK	11	05 H
MOSCOW	09	06 R

S=sunny, CL=clear, H=hazy, R=rainy...

## THUMBNAILS



A cotton-candy seller walks by the Mediterranean seaside promenade in Lebanon's capital Beirut on Monday. **AFP**

**Actor Eddie Hassell dies in shooting:** Actor Eddie Hassell, best known for starring in 2010 film "The Kids Are All Right" and the TV series "Surveillance", has died after being shot in Texas. He was 30. According to Deadline, Hassell was shot in the stomach outside his girlfriend's apartment in Grand Prairie, Texas at approximately 1.00 am on Sunday morning. **PTI**

**WHO chief to quarantine after contact gets Covid:** The head of WHO says he will self-quarantine after being identified as a contact of a person who tested positive for Covid. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus wrote on Twitter that he is well and without symptoms but will self-quarantine in coming days, in line with WHO protocols, and work from home. **AP**

## Johnny Depp loses UK libel case over wife-beater claims

LONDON, 2 NOVEMBER

Johnny Depp lost his high-stakes libel case Monday against the Sun tabloid newspaper for labelling him a "wife-beater," as a British judge pointed to several episodes that he said showed the actor's ex-wife had feared for her life.

Justice Andrew Nicol said that the defendants had proved that what they published was "substantially true" during a trial in London over the summer that included lurid and irreconcilable accounts from Depp and Amber Heard in which each accused the other of abuse. Depp's lawyers said they would appeal the decision. In arguably the biggest English libel trial of the 21st century, Depp sued News Group Newspapers, publisher of The Sun, and the newspaper's executive editor, Dan Wootton, over an April 2018 article that accused him of assaulting fellowactor Heard.

For now, the ruling deals a big blow to Depp's reputation that could seriously damage a lucrative movie career, which has seen the actor take the lead in some of the most popular family movies in recent times. That comes with an indeterminate financial cost on top of the legal costs he will be required to pay that could run into several million pounds. **AP**

# Campaign closes with US facing crossroads

Trump and Biden each painted the other as unfit for office and described the next four years in near apocalyptic terms if the other were to win

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
PHILADELPHIA, 2 NOVEMBER

President Donald Trump and Democratic challenger Joe Biden have one last chance to make their case to voters in critical battleground states on Monday, the final full day of a campaign that has laid bare their dramatically different visions for tackling the nation's pressing problems and for the office of the presidency itself.

The candidates are seeking to lead a nation at a crossroads, gripped by a historic pandemic that is raging anew in nearly every corner of the country and a reckoning over race.

More than 93 million people have already voted and each campaign insists it has a pathway to victory, though Biden's options for picking up the 270 Electoral College votes needed to win are more plentiful. Trump is banking on a surge of enthusiasm from his most loyal supporters.

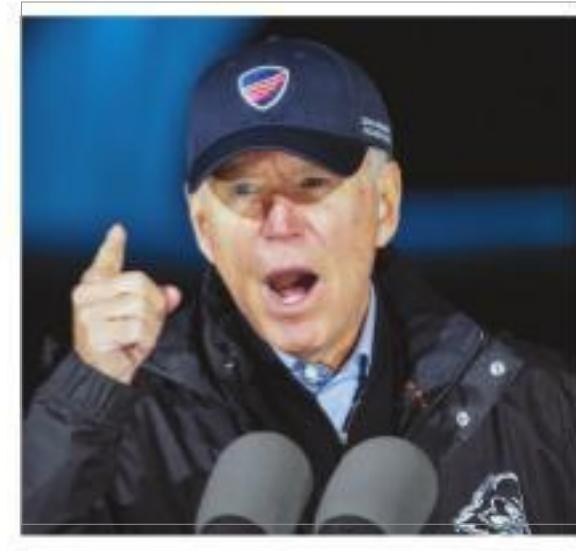
The president's final day has him sprinting through five states, from North Carolina to Wisconsin.

Biden, meanwhile, was devoting most of his time to Pennsylvania, where a win would leave Trump with an exceedingly narrow path. Biden was also dipping into Ohio, a show of confidence in a state where Trump won by 8 percentage points four years ago.

Heading into the closing 24 hours, Trump and Biden each painted the other as unfit for office and described the next four years in near apocalyptic terms if the other were to win.

The Biden plan will turn America into a prison state locking you down while letting the far-left rioters roam free to loot and burn. Trump thundered Sunday at a rally in Iowa, one of five he held in battleground states.

Biden said America was on the verge of putting an end to



Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden speaks during a drive-in campaign rally at FDR Park on Monday in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. (R) Supporters cheer Joe Biden as speaks during a drive-in rally in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on Monday.

AFP



## Biden discloses names of 800 major bundlers, including Indian-Americans

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
WASHINGTON, 2 NOVEMBER

Rangaswami, Ajay Jain Bhuraria and Frank Islam.

Among other prominent Indian-American bundlers are Neil Makhija, Rahu, Prakash, Deepak Raj, Raj Shah, Rajan Shah, Radhika Shah, Jill and Raj Singh, Nidhi Thakar, Kiran Jain, Sony Kalsi and Bela Bajaria.

Indian-American Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal has also been listed as a bundler.

Given that the list of bundlers includes all those who have raised more than USD 100,000, the number of Indian-Americans in far less than those of former presidents Barack Obama and

Bil Clinton campaigns. Some of the traditional Indian-American Democratic donors like hotelier Sant Chatwal are missing from the list.

According to The Wall Street Journal, the list of bundlers includes the who of Democratic politics, including former and current governors, senators, Cabinet secretaries and big names from Hollywood.

Film producer Jeffrey Katzenberg, writer and director Lee Daniels, LinkedIn co-founder Reid Hoffman; media mogul Haim Saban and former US Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker are on the list, the daily said.

a presidency that's fanned the flames of hate. When America is heard, I believe the message is going to be clear: It's time for Donald Trump to pack his bags and go home, Biden said in Philadelphia, the biggest city in a state that could decide the presidency. We're done with the chaos, the tweets, the anger, the hate. As the candidates close out the campaign, the pandemic,

which has killed more than 230,000 Americans and cost nearly 20 million to lose jobs, reached a new peak in infection rates, threatening yet another blow to lives and livelihoods of voters.

The election caps an extraordinary year that began with Trump's impeachment, the near collapse of Biden's candidacy during the crowded

Democratic primary and then was fully reshaped by the coronavirus outbreak.

A record number of votes have already been cast, through early voting or mail-in ballots, which could lead to delays in their tabulation.

Trump has spent months claiming without evidence that the votes would be ripe for fraud while refusing to guarantee

that he would honor the election result.

In the starker terms yet, Trump on Sunday threatened litigation to stop the tabulation of ballots arriving after Election Day. As soon as polls closed in battleground states such as Pennsylvania, Trump said, we're going in with our lawyers. It was unclear precisely what Trump meant. There is already an appeal pending at the Supreme Court over the counting of absentee ballots in Pennsylvania that are received in the mail in the three days after the election.

The state's top court ordered the extension and the Supreme Court refused to block it, though conservative justices expressed interest in taking up the propriety of the three added days after the election. Those ballots are being kept separate in case the litigation goes forward. The issue could assume enormous importance if the late-arriving ballots could tip the outcome.

Under the shadow of possible legal battles, Pennsylvania loomed as most important battleground on the map. For Biden, who lives in neighboring Delaware, Pennsylvania has long been the focus of his campaign, a bulwark to block Trump from securing the electoral votes needed for reelection.

Both he and his running mate, Sen. Kamala Harris, and their spouses will crisscross the state on Monday. But Biden's other travel telegraphed his campaign's hope to deliver a knockout blow to Trump that would make any Pennsylvania legal challenges essentially irrelevant.

Trump is focusing his last rounds of stops only on states he won four years ago, playing defense in a campaign that has become a referendum on his handling of the pandemic. Both parties say the election holds outside importance given the confluence of challenges facing the country.

## Legal armies ready if cloudy poll outcome heads to court

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
WASHINGTON, 2 NOVEMBER

Signature matches. Late-arriving absentee votes. Drop boxes. Secrecy envelopes.

Democratic and Republican lawyers already have gone to court over these issues in the run-up to Tuesday's election. But the legal fights could take on new urgency, not to mention added vitriol, if a narrow margin in a battleground state is the difference between another four years for President Donald Trump or a Joe Biden administration.

Both sides say they're ready, with thousands of lawyers on standby to march into court to make sure ballots get counted, or excluded.

Since the 2000 presidential election, which was ultimately decided by the Supreme Court, both parties have enlisted legal teams to prepare for the unlikely event that voting wouldn't settle the contest.

But this year, there is a near presumption that legal fights will ensue and that only a definitive outcome is likely to forestall them.

The candidates and parties have enlisted prominent lawyers with ties to Democratic and Republican administrations.

A Pennsylvania case at the Supreme Court pits Donald Verrilli, who was President Barack Obama's top Supreme Court lawyer, against John Gore, a once high-ranking Trump Justice Department official.

It's impossible to know where, or even if, a problem affecting the ultimate result will arise. But existing lawsuits in Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Minnesota and Neva-

da offer some hint of the states most likely to be ground zero in a post-election battle and the kinds of issues that could tie the outcome in knots.

Roughly 300 lawsuits already have been filed over the election in dozens of states across the country, many involving changes to normal procedures because of the coronavirus pandemic, which has killed more than 230,000 people in the U.S. and sickened more than 9 million.

Most of the potential legal challenges are likely to stem from the huge increase in absentee balloting brought on by the coronavirus pandemic.

In Pennsylvania, elections officials won't start processing those ballots until Election Day, and some counties have said they won't begin counting those votes until the following day.

Mailed ballots that don't come inside a secrecy envelope have to be discarded, under a state Supreme Court ruling.

I still can't figure how counting and verifying absentee ballots is going to go in some of the battleground states like Pennsylvania, said Ohio State University law professor Edward Foley, an election law expert.

The deadline for receiving and counting absentee ballots is Friday, an extension ordered by the Pennsylvania's top court.

The Supreme Court left that order in place in response to a Republican effort to block it. But several conservative justices indicated they'd be open to taking the issue up after the election, especially if those late-arriving ballots could mean the difference in the state.

## Prince William's Covid-19 kept secret in first wave of UK pandemic: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
LONDON, 2 NOVEMBER



Britain's Prince William kept his positive coronavirus test in April a secret in order to not worry anyone around the time his father, Prince Charles, was also self-isolating after his own Covid-19 diagnosis. UK media reports claimed on Monday. The 38-year-old Duke of Cambridge, who is the second in line to the British throne, was treated by palace doctors and followed government guidelines by isolating at his family home Anmer Hall, in Norfolk, eastern England.

Despite his illness, he managed to carry out around 14 telephone and video call engagements in April, including phoning National Health Service (NHS) workers at Queen's Hospital in Burton.

A source told The Sun newspaper that the prince had been "hit pretty hard by the virus", adding that it "really knocked him for six". Kensington Palace, the Duke of Cambridge's office in London, declined to comment but did not deny the claim.

William has not publicly confirmed that he had the virus, but according to reports he told an observer at an engagement: "There were important things going on and I didn't want to worry anyone."

"Around that time in April, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson was admitted to hospital after testing positive for the virus and was moved to intensive care and later thanked healthcare workers for saving his life, saying it 'could have gone either way'."

Prince Charles, 71, meanwhile, had spent time in self-isolation after his positive coronavirus test at Balmoral Castle in Scotland around end-March, early April, which marked the peak of the first wave of the coronavirus pandemic.

William, father to George, 7, Charlotte, 5, and Louis, 2, had a seven-day break after April 9 but opened the Nightingale Hospital in Birmingham by video on April 16. Last week, William joined wife Kate Middleton to praise NHS workers for their "humility and compassion" at the Pride of Britain Awards.

The royal couple met six representatives of the NHS to present them with the award at one of Britain's oldest hospitals, St. Bartholomew's in the City of London.

"The devastating impact of the coronavirus pandemic has reminded us as a nation of how much we owe to the thousands of NHS workers who have gone far beyond the call of duty this year," said William.

## Trump threatens to fire Fauci in rift with disease expert

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
OPA-LOCKA, 2 NOVEMBER

President Donald Trump is suggesting that he will fire Dr Anthony Fauci after Tuesday's election, as his rift with the nation's top infectious disease expert widens while the nation sees its most alarming outbreak of the coronavirus since the spring.

Speaking at a campaign rally in Opa-locka, Florida, Trump expressed frustration that the surging cases of the virus that has killed more than 230,000 Americans so far this year remains prominent in the news, sparking chants of Fire Fauci from his supporters. Don't tell anybody but

let me wait until a little bit after the election, Trump replied to thousands of supporters just after midnight Monday, adding he appreciated their advice.

Trump's comments on Fauci less than 48 hours before polls close all but assure that his handling of the pandemic will remain front and center heading into Election Day.

It's the most direct Trump has been in suggesting he was serious about trying to remove Fauci from his position. He has previously expressed that he was concerned about the political blowback of removing the popular and respected doctor before Election Day.

Trump's comments come

after Fauci leveled his sharpest criticism yet of the White House's response to the coronavirus and Trump's public assertion that the nation is rounding the turn on the virus.

Fauci has grown outspoken that Trump has ignored his advice for containing the virus, saying he hasn't spoken with Trump in more than a month. He has raised alarm that the nation was heading for a challenging winter if more isn't done soon to slow the spread of the disease.

In an interview with the Washington Post this weekend, Fauci cautioned that the U.S. will have to deal with a whole lot of hurt in the weeks ahead due to surging coronavirus cases.

In response, White House spokesman Judd Deere said Trump always puts people's well-being first and Deere charges that Fauci has decided to play politics right before Tuesday's election.

Deere said Fauci has a duty to express concerns or push for a change in strategy but instead is choosing to criticize the president in the media and make his political leanings known.

Trump in recent days has stepped up his attacks on Biden for pledging to heed the advice of scientists in responding to the pandemic. Trump has claimed Biden would lock down the nation once again.

## New Zealand's new deputy leader first gay man to hold role

WELLINGTON, 2 NOVEMBER

New Zealand's new Deputy Prime Minister Grant Robertson will be the country's first openly gay man to hold the role and is among a team of top lawmakers announced Monday that is remarkable for its diversity.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern announced her new Cabinet lineup after her liberal Labour Party won reelection in a landslide victory last month. Ardern has assigned a number of indigenous Maori lawmakers to top positions, including Nanaia Mahuta, who will take on the role of foreign minister, and Kelvin Davis, who will be minister for children.

Robertson, who will also continue his previous job as finance minister, has long been a close friend and political ally of Ardern. He said he has tried to be a minister for all New Zealanders, but also thinks it's important for younger members of the LGBT community to see people they identify with take on top roles. I still get a lot of messages from young gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people who look towards us to provide that kind of role-modeling, Robertson said. So, I'll keep doing my job the way that I've been doing it, but I'm very proud to have the role. **AP**

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
BERLIN, 2 NOVEMBER

Germany became the latest European country to embark on a partial shutdown Monday as authorities across the continent scramble to flatten a rapid rise in coronavirus infections that threatens to overwhelm their health care systems.

**Introducing robotics from elementary level will pique students' interest in science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics and enhance their 21st-century skills**

## Nurturing creativity amongst learners

BEAS DEV RALHAN

Digital classrooms and interactive e-learning solutions are gaining popularity among educators and learners. This is helping develop skills like computer fluency, adaptability and problem-solving skills among learners at the right age.

Today's competitive world demands learners to be well-versed with the latest technology such as robotics, coding, artificial intelligence, machine learning and more. So, teachers and the curriculum must help students stay updated with technological innovations and their applications.

Realising the need to keep up with the demands of the tech world and make students ready to take on a future where robots are expected to become a part of life, schools are incorporating subjects such as coding and robotics in their curriculum. This move will surely produce a positive impact on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) education. It will pique students' interest in science, technology, engi-

neering, art and mathematics and enhance their 21st-century skills, i.e. critical thinking, collaboration, creativity and communication, which will, in turn, make them future-ready.

Children these days find robots intriguing. So, if learners are introduced to the basics of robotics and programming languages from an early age, it can help bring out their creativity and satisfy their curiosity. When students learn various technologies to program robots, it becomes easier for them to understand the intricacies. They develop the desired skills to create precise and accurate instructions. Be it nurturing creativity amongst learners, motivating them to innovate, or making them future-ready, robotics is all about empowering learners. Introducing robotics at the school level can yield positive results.

In line with this objective and to foster creativity and imagination in young students, the government of India has established Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs) in schools across the country. These labs aim to inculcate essential skills in students, such as design mindset, adaptive learning,

programming skills and computing skills. Under this initiative, students gain hands-on experience to understand the concepts of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) and their applications.

Students develop and hone the following skills while learning robotics, which in turn, prepares them for the future:

### 21st-century skills

Robotics hone 21st-century skills of critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication among learners through different activities like designing the robot, planning the instructions, devising a strategy to program it and finding issues and bugs.

### Perseverance

Creating and programming robots is challenging. Working through complicated situations helps students develop a strong and determined attitude which is crucial for any technological or scientific activity.

### Interdisciplinary learning

Robotics provides students with

an opportunity to learn programming in a tangible way. Integrating robotics with other STEM subjects will expose them to various disciplines.

### Teamwork

Creating a robot from scratch is not a cakewalk. It requires a range of skills, and thus promotes a learning environment for students with different talents. When students work in a group, they not only learn collaborative skills but also learn to take responsibilities and help others.

### Problem solving

Getting the entire robot design and programming correct in the first attempt might not be always possible. Hence, it is essential for students to have an eye for detail and innovative thinking to come up with solutions and fix the problems.

### Decision making

Robotics is full of choices and provides plenty of options for designing and programming the robot. Therefore, students should be exposed to various scenarios that require them to analyse the problem

from various angles and use logic and reasoning to decide the best way of solving a problem.

### Application of knowledge

Students take interest in robotics only when theoretical knowledge is applied practically. When students explore robots and program them, it becomes easier for them to understand the concepts and capabilities of robots.

### Active learning

There are so many topics within robotics that cannot be mastered solely through theoretical understanding or practical application. It is essential to have a perfect combination of theory and practicality.

Incorporating robotics in the K-12 curriculum empowers students to think out of the box and develop an interest in the STEM subjects, which facilitate a better understanding of robotics. This, in turn, builds a strong foundation for learning and makes them future-ready.

The writer is CEO and co-founder, Next Education India Pvt Ltd

### PLUS POINTS

#### Precious assemblage



Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee commemorated World Space Week 2020 through a week-long series of webinars with renowned luminaries as speakers. The sessions shared strategic insights on space technology and the working of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). The objective of the event is to commemorate the contribution of science and technology to the betterment of human lives. Prof. Ajit K Chaturvedi, director, IIT Roorkee inaugurated the event.

The first webinar titled "Space Materials" witnessed Dr Bhanu Pant, scientist, group director, Materials and Metallurgy Group, ISRO, enlightening the audience on the rationale of using various materials and their role in space programmes.

Titled "Interesting Facts on Indian Space Agency", the second webinar was presided by Kali Shanker, an IIT Roorkee alumnus and a former scientist in Space Applications Centre (SAC), ISRO. The closing session- "Satellite Launchers & Payloads" featured Vijai Kumar, who worked on satellite payload project progress monitoring and on development and realisation of mechanical subsystems for communication satellite payloads, as a group head, SAC, ISRO

#### Spreading awareness



KIIT World School, Gurgaon in collaboration with Borouge organised an online workshop to reduce single-use plastic with the theme "Discovering Plastic in Everyday Life". The workshop aimed to describe what plastics are, how they generate, and what they cause to the environment. In the programme, Umang Tyagi (market development manager, ISC), Sanchita Roy (manager application marketing) and Michaela Schaller (application marketing manager) of Borouge made the students aware through photos, quizzes and videos. Neelima Kamra principal, KIIT World School gave information about diseases and problems caused by plastic pollution and advised the students to ban polythene use in and around their homes.

#### A ray of hope



FORE School of Management, New Delhi in association with Federation for World Academics (FWA) organised a webinar on "Academia & Industry Post Pandemic: New Learnings and Implications" recently.

Dr Jitendra K Das, director, FORE School of Management was the session moderator. Citing a few initiatives taken up at the institute which resulted in a steep learning curve, Das said this would ensure continuity for both freshers and final year management students and the experience will lead to better interactions post Covid. More than 250 attendees participated in it.

#### Enhancing knowledge

Careerera- a platform for higher education courses and certification programmes on the web platform announced a post-graduation programme on data science that aims at achieving the par excellence in the field of data science.

This one-year long programme includes bonus courses in cloud computing tools such as AWS and advanced python language like Flask. Besides Careerera is offering an Employability Enhancement Program (EEP) - crafted to bridge the gap between skills possessed by the candidates and the abilities that are looked for by the organisation. The programme focuses on assisting the students to prepare for job opportunities at leading organisations and companies. The data science certification deals with the engineering and analytical aspect of data science. For details visit: <https://www.careerera.com>

## PROMOTING SOCIAL INCLUSIVENESS

**Over the years, India has initiated multiple programmes to make education accessible not just for mainstream candidates but also for the differently-abled**



huge role. The digitised education experience has changed the entire societal dynamics offering know-how to all students reducing class, caste, gender, religion, linguistics, region and disabilities to mere jargons.

There are various schemes that have been introduced by the University Grants Commission for the upskilling of differently-abled candidates by offering them financial and social support:

### Higher education for persons with special needs

This scheme aims at creating an environment in schools and colleges to enrich higher education experiences for differently-abled students. Creating awareness about their capabilities, construction aimed at

improving accessibility, purchase of equipment to enrich learning, etc, are the broad categories of assistance under this scheme. A three-part financial assistance will be offered to students.

### Teacher preparation in special education

This scheme is meant for assisting various educational departments to prepare special teachers to teach children with disabilities in both special and inclusive settings. The scheme provides financial assistance to cover BEd and MEd expenses with specialisation in one of the disability areas.

### Financial assistance to visually challenged teachers

This scheme helps visually challenged permanent teachers to pursue teaching and research with the help of a reader. It provides teaching and learning aids through an allowance of funds for purchasing Braille books, recorded materials, etc. and thus empowering them by using various aids for teaching, learning and research. Financial assistance under the scheme is available to such universities and colleges which come within the purview of section 2(f) and are fit to receive central assistance under Section 12B of the UGC Act, 1956.

### National fellowship for persons with disabilities

Under this scheme, fellowship will be available to students with disabilities who are covered under The

Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995. Thus a person with disability, who wishes to avail the benefits under this act, has to produce a disability certificate from the medical authority notified for the purpose.

Even though there might be a few roadblocks in the learning capabilities and the adoption of edtech infrastructure, one must note that such a system is here to stay and the adoption of these is the only way to bring in social inclusiveness. There's no doubt that the virtual space will slowly but steadily bring in equality for the future generations.

The writer is president, Narayan Seva Sansthan



For more updates

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## GUNNAR AND GUNNERS

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer (*in photo, left*) agrees with Roy Keane that his Manchester United side lacked fight and intensity during their lone-goal defeat by Arsenal at Old Trafford on Sunday. Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang's second-half penalty, conceded through a Paul Pogba foul on Hector Bellerin, proved decisive.

## THUMBNAILS

**Dhoni Farewell:** Former England captain Michael Vaughan believes Mahendra Singh Dhoni must play his last game in the Indian Premier League in front of a jam-packed stadium as the former India skipper deserves a grand farewell as the sport he added a lot to.

**Big shock:** Sir Bobby Charlton, a 1966 World Cup winner and one of England's greatest footballers, has been diagnosed with dementia. The news was disclosed by his wife following the death of Nobby Stiles who, apart from Jack Charlton, suffered from dementia.

**Bale strikes:** Substitute Gareth Bale was Tottenham Hotspur's match-winner again, requiring only three minutes on the field to clinch a 2-1 victory over Brighton on Sunday. A bit of relief and a lot of happiness, Bale said after being set up by Sergio Reguilón.

**Everton upset:** Callum Wilson scored twice as Newcastle beat Everton 2-1 in the English Premier League to extend Everton's dip in form following a strong start to the season. Everton went into the game second only to Liverpool in the standings.

**Lille unbeaten:** Lille remain the only unbeaten team in the French league but are now two points behind defending champions Paris Saint-Germain after drawing 1-1 at home with 10-man Lyon. Jonathan Bamba had put Lille ahead but Lyon equalised all right.

**Silva shines:** With a goal against his former team, David Silva ended his scoreless streak in his return to the Spanish league. Silva opened the scoring with a header on Sunday as Real Sociedad beat Celta Vigo 4-1 to take a one-point lead at the top of the league.

**Clarke wins:** At Boca Raton, in Florida, Darren Clarke won the TimberTech Champions for his first Tour Champions golf title, two-putting for birdie on the par-5 18th for a one-stroke victory over Jim Furyk and Bernhard Langer. Clarke hit his second shot on 18 to 30 feet.

**In camera:** The ATP Finals, the flagship event on the men's tennis Tour outside the four Grand Slams, will continue preparations to be held without spectators in London this month, organisers said following the announcement of a month-long lockdown in England.

**Nadal unfazed:** Rafael Nadal said in Paris on Sunday that he "is not worried" about his history of injury withdrawals at the Paris Masters ahead of his latest bid to win the event for the first time in his eighth appearance at the Bercy Arena, close to Roland Garros.

**Formula One:** Mercedes team chief Toto Wolff on Sunday dismissed the possibility that Lewis Hamilton was poised to retire from Formula One and said he did not believe it was about to happen. Wolff expected to see Hamilton back for a 15th year in F1 next year.

**East Bengal launch kits:** SC East Bengal on Monday unveiled its jerseys for the upcoming Hero Indian Super League, retaining the club's iconic red and gold/yellow pattern for the home games. East Bengal started their home, away and third kit for the 2020-21 ISL season.

**National Karting Championship:** Ruhaan Alva and Ishaan Madesh scored a grand double for Bangalore even as Surya Varatan kept Coimbatore's flag flying in the Meco-FMSCI National Karting Championship (X30 Classes) held in Bangalore. Surya Varatan began Round 3 on commanding note in the Senior Category, winning three out of the four races to build a comfortable lead.

## Saha impact boosts Sunrisers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

SHARJAH, 2 NOVEMBER

Riding high, a resurgent Sunrisers Hyderabad will back themselves to topple the mighty Mumbai Indians and qualify for the Indian Premier League play-offs here tomorrow. Thanks to their healthy run rate, a win against Mumbai Indians should be enough to send the Sunrisers into the round of the final four. After taking a tough call to leave the dangerous Jonny Bairstow out of the playing 11, the Sunrisers have managed to strike the "right" balance. Wriddhiman Saha has made an instant impact as David Warner's opening partner and the inclusion of Jason Holder has given them an all-round option.

Pacemen Holder and Sandeep Sharma were extremely impressive, both upfront and at the death, in the previous game, which was against Royal Challengers Bangalore. Add left-arm quick bowler T Natarajan and trump

card Rashid Khan to their bowling attack and it seems well-rounded. The Sunrisers are also full of confidence, having outplayed Delhi Capitals and RCB in their two previous outings.

"In 2016, we had to win three games and we did that," said skipper Warner after the RCB game, referring to their title-winning campaign four seasons ago. The Sunrisers also know there is little scope for getting away with errors against a formidable outfit like Mumbai Indians, who seem to be on course for an unprecedented fifth IPL title.

**SRH vs MI: Match begins at 7.30 pm IST.**

In the absence of the injured skipper, Rohit Sharma, Mumbai steamrolled RCB and Delhi Capitals in their previous encounters, becoming the first team to qualify for the play-offs.

Trent Boult and Jasprit Bumrah have looked menacing with the swinging new ball.

They have also been ever so frugal with the old. Kieron Pollard has been impressive with his captaincy in Sharma's absence. With the Indian team not picking Sharma for the Australia tour, there is no official update on his recovery from a hamstring injury he suffered two weeks ago.

"Rohit is getting better and hopefully he'll be back soon," Pollard said after the match against DC without detailing Sharma's fitness status.

Already assured of the top spot in the points table, Mumbai will be expected to put up another ruthless show against the Sunrisers. The nature of the surface in Sharjah has changed drastically with low scores replacing 200-plus totals, which was the norm at the start of the tournament.

In Saturday's game, RCB managed only 120 against the Sunrisers who got to the target in 14.1 overs. CSK were limited to 114 for nine by Mumbai on 23 October. Again, the chasing team got the job done rather comfortably.



## Padikkal, de Villiers guide RCB to 152/7 against DC

AGENCIES

ABU DHABI, 2 NOVEMBER

Sports.

Devdutt Padikkal (*in photo*) and AB de Villiers played knocks of 50 and 35 respectively as Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) posted a total of 152/7 in the allotted twenty overs against Delhi Capitals here at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi.

Virat Kohli then joined Padikkal in the middle and the duo kept the scoreboard moving for RCB. Kohli was given a big reprieve in the 10th over as his catch was dropped by Anrich Nortje off the bowling of Axar Patel.

Both Kohli and Padikkal eventually put together 57 runs for the second wicket. Delhi Capitals came back strongly in the match as Ravichandran sent Kohli (29) back to the pavilion in the 13th over, reducing RCB to 82/2.

In trying to get some quick runs, Padikkal also perished soon after completing his half-century. The left-handed batsman played a knock of 50 runs. In the same over Anrich Nortje also dismissed Chris Morris (0), reducing RCB to 112/4 in the 16th over.

In the final three overs, Delhi Capitals managed to keep a check on RCB and

sent into bat first, RCB got off to a steady start as openers Devdutt Padikkal and Joshua Philippe put on 25 runs for the first wicket. However, this partnership was broken by Kagiso Rabada in the fifth over as he dismissed Philippe (12).

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out and in the end, RCB was restricted to under the 160-run mark.

## SCOREBOARD

Royal Challengers Bangalore Innings:		S Ahmed not out	1
J Philippe c Shaw b Rabada	12	Extras (b-1, w-3) 4	
D Padikkal b Nortje	50	Total: (For 7 wkt, 20 Overs) 152	
V Kohli c Steinic b Ashwin	29	Fall of Wickets: 1-25, 2-82, 3-112, 4-112,	
AB de Villiers run out	35	5-145, 6-146, 7-150.	
C Morris c Pant b Nortje	0	Bowling: Sans 4-0-40, Ashwin 4-0-18-	
S Dube c Rahane b Rabada	17	1, Nortje 4-0-33-3, Rabada 4-0-30-2,	
W Sundar not out	0	Patel 4-0-30-0.	
I Udana c Iyer b Nortje	4		

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**It will be impossible to perform if Dhoni decides on playing IPL to IPL: Kapil Dev**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 2 NOVEMBER

The legendary Kapil Dev feels that it will be "impossible" for MS Dhoni (*in photo*) to perform well if he decides on playing in the IPL without getting any match practice, which was the case this year.

Chennai Super Kings were out of IPL play-offs for the first time in 11 appearances and Dhoni, who played competitive cricket for the first time since last year's World Cup semi-final, scored only 200 runs in 14 games with no half-centuries and a poor strike rate of 116.

Kapil, who recently underwent an angioplasty after suffering a heart attack, wants

to play a lot more in the domestic circuit to get his form back.

"If Dhoni decides on playing only IPL every year, then it's impossible for him to perform. It's not a good thing to talk about age but at his age (39 years), the more he plays, the more his body will be tuned," Kapil told ABP News. "If you don't play any cricket for 10 months a year and suddenly play IPL, you can see what happened. You can

always have a season up or down if you have played so much cricket.

It has happened to someone like Chris Gayle also," the World Cup winning former skipper said. Kapil feels that it's high time that Dhoni plays some domestic cricket this season. "He should go back to first-class cricket (domestic List A and T20) and play there."

The straight-talking former all-rounder made it clear that it will be a challenge for Dhoni to perform.

"It's not a good thing to talk about age but at his age (39 years), the more he plays, the more his body will be tuned," Kapil told ABP News. "If you don't play any cricket for 10 months a year and suddenly play IPL, you can see what happened. You can

train hard to fight the toughest opponents, tooth and nail, right till the final shot of the game. I have done it before, I can do it again.

"But how do I defeat this invisible virus that has the entire world in a fix? It has been months at home and we still question ourselves every time we step out," she wrote.

Sindhu said the reason why she started the post with a shocker like 'I Retire' was to ensure that maximum people take note of the message she was trying to convey on dealing with the virus.

"I might have given you guys a mini heart attack; unprecedented times requires unprecedented measures. I could

guess I needed to get you guys to sit up and take notice."

Sindhu said she will continue to fight the circumstances created by the virus and her opponents on the courts. "That being said, we must be hopeful about the light shining at the end of the tunnel. Yes, Denmark Open didn't happen but that won't stop me from training. When life comes at you, one must comeback twice as hard."

"So will I for the Asia Open. I refuse to give up without putting a solid fight. I refuse to give up without conquering this fear."

"And will carry on doing so till we have a safer world," she concluded.

Sharphooter tests positive for Covid-19

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, 2 NOVEMBER

An athlete training at the Karni Singh Shooting Range in the national Capital has tested positive for Covid-19. The identity of the athlete has, however, not been revealed. There will, however, be no impact on the national squad of Olympics-bound sharpshooters training at the range.

"An exclusive slot has been given in the first half of the day to Olympic athletes to train and a one-hour gap is allowed between the first and the second halves," the SAI said. India has won a record 15 quota berths in shooting for the Tokyo Olympics and can still get more on the basis of world rankings.

The star shuttler, who last visited the range on 28 October in the second half of the day intimated to his coach that his test result had turned out to be positive," said a statement from the SAI. The identity of the athlete has, however, not been revealed. There will, however, be no impact on the national squad of Olympics-bound sharpshooters training at the range.

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lete who last visited the range on 28 October in the second half of the day intimated to his coach that his test result had turned out to be positive," said a statement from the SAI. The identity of the athlete has, however, not been revealed. There will, however, be no impact on the national squad of Olympics-bound sharpshooters training at the range.

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## I retire, not from game, but COVID-19 negativity and fear: posts Sindhu

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 2 NOVEMBER

She was referring to her pullout from the event last month due to the pandemic.

"...I'm writing today to tell you that I'm done... Not being able to represent India in the Denmark Open was the last straw," Sindhu's note on Twitter stated.

"Today, I choose to retire from this current sense of unrest. I retire from this negativity, the constant fear, uncertainty. I choose to retire from a complete lack of control over the unknown," she said.

"Most importantly, I choose to retire from substandard hygiene standards and our lackadaisical attitude towards

the virus."

The 25-year-old's post drew a response from sports minister Kiren Rijiju, who said he was stunned by a moment.

"You actually gave a mini shock@Pvsindhu but I had unflinching faith in your power of determination. I'm sure you have the strength and stamina to bring many more laurels for India," he tweeted.

The star shuttler, who last competed at the All England Championships in March, is targeting a return to action when the world tour comes to Asia in January.

"This pandemic has been an eye-opener for me. I could

train hard to fight the toughest opponents, tooth and nail, right till the final shot of the game. I have done it before, I can do it again.

"But how do I defeat this invisible virus that has the entire world in a fix? It has been months at home and we still question ourselves every time we step out," she wrote.

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