

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

COIMBATORE | TUESDAY 1 | SEPTEMBER 2020

WEATHER



Max: 33°C
Min: 23°C
Rainfall: 23.8mm

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Aavani 16
Tithi: Pournami
Star: Avittam
Rahukalam:
3 pm to 4.30 pm
Yamagandam:
9 am to 10.30 am

PRAYERS

Fajar: 4.46 am
Zohar: 12.15 pm
Asar: 3.21 pm
Maghrib: 6.21 pm
Isha: 7.33 pm

SUNSET TODAY 6.31 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.12 AM
MOONRISE TODAY 6.11 PM
MOONSET TOMORROW 6.57 AM

CORONA COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+65,166)	(+810)
36,84,339	65,427

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+5,956)
TN: 4,28,041 7,323

WORLD CONFIRMED CASES

2,55,08,258

DEATHS
8,52,390

COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES
215

worldometers.info

No scheduled int'l flights till Sept 30

New Delhi: The suspension of scheduled international passenger flights has been extended till September 30, said Directorate-General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Monday. “However, international scheduled flights may be allowed on selected routes by the competent authority on a case-to-case basis,” noted the DGCA in a circular.

Shah discharged from AIIMS

New Delhi: Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who was admitted to the AIIMS here on August 18 for post-Covid care, was discharged on Monday, sources said. On August 2, Mr Shah, 55, had said on Twitter that he had tested positive for Covid-19. He had undergone treatment at Medanta Hospital and was discharged after he tested negative. *PTI*

COUNTER POINT



The government has replaced my Black Cat security with this swadeshi dog!

SANJAY BASAK | DC
NEW DELHI, AUG. 31

Former President of India and stalwart of Indian politics Pranab Mukherjee, who was often called the “man for all seasons”, died at the Army’s Research and Referral Hospital in New Delhi on Monday after ailing for some weeks. He was 84.

His son Abhijit Mukherjee announced the news of his death. He is survived by his son Abhijit and

daughter Sharmistha Mukherjee.

Mukherjee’s funeral will be held at the Lodhi Road crematorium in New Delhi on Tuesday. The government announced seven days of state mourning throughout the country, when the tricolour will be flown at half-mast and there will be no official entertainment.

Mukherjee, who was found to be coronavirus positive, was admitted to the Army R&R Hospital,

NATION | 4

Sushanth case: ED questions Goa hotelier



WORLD | 5

Merkel condemns ‘shameful’ virus stir

SPORT | 8

Anand: Sports ministry to recognise chess players



deccanchronicle.com, facebook.com/deccannews, twitter.com/deccanchronicle, google.com/+deccanchronicle

Vol. 10 No. 245 Established 1938 | 8 PAGES | ₹4.00

GDP contracts 23.9% in Q1; agri remains green

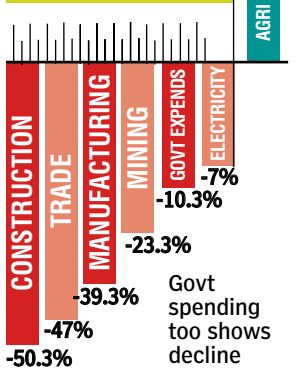
MADHUSUDAN SAHOO
NEW DELHI, AUG. 31

India’s economy saw its steepest fall in GDP growth in April-June 2020, the first quarter of this fiscal, as it contracted by 23.9 per cent - negative growth for the first time - as coronavirus-related lockdowns weighed on the already-declining consumer demand and investment.

This is the sharpest contraction in 24 years - since quarterly figures started being released from 1996 - and contrasts with 3.1 per cent growth in January-March quarter and 5.2 per cent expansion in the same period last year, official data released Monday showed.

The data showed that GDP at constant (2011-12) prices in Q1 of 2020-21 was estimated at Rs 26.90 lakh crores, against Rs 35.35

THE BIG SLIDE +3.7%



lakh crores in Q1 of 2019-20, showing a contraction of 23.9 per cent. India’s economic activities were crippled after the nationwide lockdown imposed in March to tackle the spread of Covid-19.

Chief economic adviser K.V. Subramanian said: “We are witnessing a V-

shaped recovery as the economy unlocks e-way bills at 99.9 per cent vs August last year, despite local lockdowns. This will continue. Once the Unlock phase was undertaken, the decline has been progressively lower. The trend is of a V-shaped recovery. There is still residual uncertainty, that will persist till pandemic isn’t brought under complete control.”

The data shows manufacturing has already entered recession as output fell 39.3 per cent in the June quarter after falling 1.4 per cent in the earlier quarter. The positive news is that the farm sector’s annual growth stood at 3.4 per cent in April-June, offering hope that the rural economy can support millions of migrant workers who returned to their villages during the lockdown

period. The data further showed that the manufacturing, construction and trade sectors reported massive slumps of 39.3 per cent, 50.3 per cent and 47 per cent respectively.

“The government expenditure, as represented by the public administration services, contracted by 10.3 per cent, while mining and electricity sector contracted by 23.3 per cent and 7 per cent, respectively,” it said.

The stock markets, meanwhile, turned red hours before the data was announced.

“Investment growth has been going down for quite some time and investment growth slowdown is understandable in this environment. Issue is what will revive first: investment or consumption,” said senior economist DK Joshi of Crisil.



CM WRITES TO MODI FOR 1 LAKH CR GRANT

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, AUG. 31:

Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami has told Prime Minister Narendra Modi that the States were in need of resources and urged him to permit them a one-third additional borrowing over the 2019-20 level and a untied special grant of Rs 1 lakh crore as budgetary support, in addition to other grants.

In a letter to the Prime Minister on Monday, Palaniswami said most States, particularly Tamil Nadu, agreed to the implementation of GST due to the unequivocal commitment given by the Centre to compensate the States for revenue loss.

“So far, no compensation has been released for the shortfalls in revenue collection since April 1, 2020. As on date, a total sum of Rs 12,250.50 crores is due to Tamil Nadu as compensation for shortfall in GST collections, of which Rs 11,459.37 crores has accrued from April to July, 2020,” he pointed out.

States had suffered a severe loss in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, incurring an additional expenditure of nearly Rs.7,000 crore towards upgrading health facilities, providing medical supplies and towards relief for the most affected. ■ **P3**

Maha, AP, K’taka account for half of Covid-19 deaths

SANJAY KAW
NEW DELHI, AUG. 31

India reported 79,870 more coronavirus infections on Monday, fewer than the previous Sunday when it posted the highest single-day tally of infections of any country in the pandemic. With the record surge, the total number of cases in the country now stands at 36,22,603. For the last five days, India has also been reporting over 75,000 cases every day, more than any other country has ever done.

So far, 64,487 people have succumbed to the viral infection across the country. Half of the country’s coronavirus death load has been reported from Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. Of the 989 deaths reported across the country in the last 24 hours, about 30.48 per cent were from Maharashtra.

The three states also account for the highest number of new cases. Of the total cases reported in the last 24 hours, 21 per cent were from Maharashtra, 13.5 per cent from Andhra Pradesh and 11.27 per cent from Karnataka.

About 70 per cent of all new cases were reported from just seven states. Uttar Pradesh and Tamil

TN daily caseload down by a whisker

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, AUG. 31:

Fresh infections came down slightly to 5,956 when fatalities stood at 91 on Monday as the spread of Coronavirus has seemingly moved the western parts of the State.

Coimbatore had 589 new cases and 14 deaths and Salem had 497 cases while in Chennai the number

was at 1150 with 19 fatalities. The Other districts that had high numbers were Chengalpattu 347, Cuddalore 307 and Thiruvallur 299.

A 26-year-old woman and a 31-year-old man were among the people who succumbed to the virus. The death toll in the state has crossed 7,300 which includes 2,747 deaths in the capital Chennai.

INSIDE

WARY CHENNAI BACK ON FEET

■ **REPORT ON PAGE 2**

THUGS WITH MACHETES AT BJP MEET

■ **REPORT ON PAGE 3**

Nadu each accounted for 8.27 per cent of the cases, West Bengal was at 3.85 per cent while Odisha reported 3.84 per cent of the total new infections in the country.

India’s case fatality rate (CFR) – the proportion of deaths among those who test positive for the infection – stands at 1.78 per cent, much lower than the global average of 3.34 per cent. The highest CFR has been recorded by the United Kingdom, where 12.4 per cent of those diagnosed with the infection have died, and Mexico, where 10.7 per cent have died.

There are 7,83,333 active cases of novel coronavirus disease in the country, while 27,74,801 people have recovered. The recovery rate has increased to 76.62 per cent.

TN appoints first woman ambulance driver

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, AUG. 31

Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami flagged off 118 vehicles belonging to the 108 ambulance scheme as part of an initiative to strengthen the emergency services in the state, and also appointed a woman as one of its drivers, which is claimed to be a first in the



country. In a press release, the government said the woman driver M. Veeralakshmi, hails from Bodinayakkanur, in Theni district. She currently is a resident in Tiruvottiyur near Chennai, living with her

husband and two children. Veeralakshmi had been working as a car driver for the last two years, and her husband also is a car driver.

“It was my long desire to become an ambulance driver. I have been doing this work since the last month. It is very satisfying to work as an ambulance driver,” said Veeralakshmi.



where he also underwent surgery for a blood clot in the brain. His condition

deteriorated over weeks and he was put on ventilator support. “With a heavy heart, this is to inform you that my father Pranab Mukherjee has just passed away in spite of the best efforts of the doctors of R&R Hospital and prayers, duas and prathanas from people throughout India,” his son tweeted.

Mukherjee was conferred the Padma Vibhushan in 2008 and the Bharat Ratna in 2019. Speaking about his long journey, Pranab

Mukherjee once said: “I have seen vast, perhaps unbelievable changes during the journey that has brought me from the flicker of a lamp in a small Bengal village to the chandeliers of Delhi.”

His political career spanned nearly five decades. Mukherjee, who started as an election manager, reached the top of the pyramid when he became President in 2012. He served as President till 2017.

During his long political

career, he donned many hats. He served as external affairs minister, finance minister, defence minister, commerce minister, besides being leader of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.

Mukherjee was born on December 11, 1935 at Mirati, a village in the Bengal Presidency of British India (now in Birbhum district of West Bengal). He studied history, political science and law at Calcutta University.

SC lets Bhushan go off with ₹1 fine

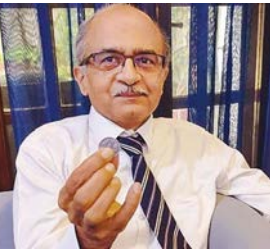
PARMOD KUMAR | DC
NEW DELHI, AUG. 31:

Lawyer-activist Prashant Bhushan, held guilty of contempt for his tweets criticising Chief Justice of India S.A. Bobde, former CJs and the Supreme Court, was asked to pay a notional fine of Re 1 by the top court on Monday. If he did not pay the fine by September 15, he will face jail for three months and a ban from practising in the Supreme Court for three years, a three-judge bench ordered while saying that despite its repeated suggestions, Mr Bhushan had refused to tender an apology, showing both “adamance and ego” though his act of denigrating the judiciary was “very serious”.

In a tweet Monday afternoon, Mr Bhushan said he had “gratefully accepted” the contribution for the fine from his lawyer.

“My lawyer & senior colleague Rajiv Dhavan contributed 1 Re immediately after the contempt judgement today which I gratefully accepted,” Mr Bhushan tweeted with photographs of him holding up a Re 1 coin.

“I propose to submit to the order and respectfully pay the fine. I did not mean to disrespect the court with my tweets. I will pay the fine,” he told reporters in the evening.



Noted lawyer Prashant Bhushan shows a one rupee coin after the Supreme Court’s verdict on the contempt case against him, in New Delhi, Monday. — *PTI*

While passing the order, Justice Arun Mishra, who was heading the bench, said, “In our considered view, the act committed by the contemnor (Prashant Bhushan) is a very serious one. He has attempted to denigrate the reputation of the institution of administration of justice of which he himself is a part.”

Speaking for the bench also comprising Justice B.R. Gavai and Justice Krishna Murari, Justice Mishra said, “The court, from the very beginning, was desirous of giving quietus to this matter. Directly or indirectly, the contemnor was persuaded to end this matter by tendering an apology and save the grace of the institution as well as the individual, who is an officer of the court”.

PAWAN BALI
NEW DELHI, AUG. 31:

Indian Army thwarted an attempt by Chinese troops to open a new front in the Ladakh sector by transgressing and grabbing land on the southern banks of Pangong Tso in eastern Ladakh on the intervening night of 29-30 August. Till now the stand-off here was in the Finger area on the Northern Bank of Pangong Tso but now Chinese are also looking to infiltrate in the Chushul sector.

In a pre-emptive move, Indian Army has now occupied a few heights in South Pangong Tso to dominate the area, said sources.

Indian Army in a statement on Monday said the PLA troops carried out provocative military movements to change the status quo on the night of 29-30 August 2020. “Indian troops pre-empted this PLA activity on the Southern Bank of Pangong Tso Lake, undertook measures to strengthen our positions and thwart Chinese intentions to unilaterally change facts on ground,” said Indian Army statement.

It said the Army is committed to maintaining peace and tranquility through dialogue, but is



THE STAND-OFF Indian Army has occupied a few heights in South Pangong Tso in a pre-emptive strike to thwart Chinese aggression plans on August 29-30. Chinese army’s western theatre command has asked India to immediately withdraw the troops that have “illegally crossed the LAC”.

Representational image of Pangong Tso lake

also equally determined to protect its territorial integrity.

A brigade commander level flag meeting was held at the Chushul to resolve the issue.

As per the initial reports, the Army had received information that Chinese have started building up forces to occupy Indian territory in the southern banks of the Pangong Tso. The Army physically occupied the area as soon as the PLA tried its transgressions. There was no physical clash between the troops.

The Army’s pre-emptive move comes days after Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat had warned that India has ‘military options’ to deal with Chinese transgressions in Ladakh if talks between both the countries at the military and diplomatic level don’t yield any result.

Meanwhile, Chinese

army’s western theatre command accused India of crossing the LAC on Monday and of purposely launching provocations. “China strongly opposes the acts and urges India to immediately withdraw the troops that have illegally crossed the LAC,” it said.

It said the Chinese troops are taking necessary measures in response to Indian troops provocations and will closely follow the situation and resolutely safeguard national sovereignty, peace and stability at the border area. The military stand-off between India and China in Ladakh will complete four months this week. The two armies are involved in stand-off in Pangong Tso, Hot Springs area and Despang-DBO sector in Ladakh. A series of military and diplomatic talks between India and China have failed to persuade China to disengage its forces.

ADANI TO BUY GVK STAKE IN MUMBAI AIRPORT

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

Gujarat-based Gautam Adani-led Adani Group will take over the operations of Mumbai airport from Hyderabad-based GVK Group, both companies said in two separate announcements on Monday.

Though financial details of the deal were not revealed, the Adani Group would take over the entire 50.5 per cent stake of the GVK Group and 23.5 per cent shareholding of two other foreign minority investors. As part of the deal, the Adani Group would take over the debt of GVK Airport Developers Ltd.

This deal marks the exit of the GVK Group, which operated prestigious Mumbai and Bengaluru airports, from the airport business in India. It had sold its stake in Bengaluru airport’s operating firm to Hyderabad-born Indian-Canadian Prem Watsa’s Fairfax India Holdings Ltd. The GVK Group now operates only one airport in Bali, Indonesia.

GVK Reddy, founder and chairman, GVK said, “The aviation industry has been severely impacted by COVID-19, setting it back by many years and has impacted the financials of Mumbai International Airport Ltd.”

FIRST DEATH REPORTED IN DECADES

Tiger kills woman in MTR

B RAVICHANDRAN | DC
OOTY, AUG. 31

A tribal woman was mauled to death by a tiger in front of her husband on Monday, when she went inside the woods in the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR) buffer zone fringes. This is the first death caused by a tiger attack in the Mudumalai jungles in decades.

Deputy director, MTR (buffer zone) L. C. S. Srikanth, identified the

deceased as Gowri, aged about 50 years, hailing from Kurumbarpadi tribal village adjoining Kallallah area, where the incident took place, in the Singara reserve forest range of the MTR buffer zone.

“The deceased was accompanied by her husband, Madhan, and three others namely Selvam, Gopi and Jaya of Kurumbarpadi village, who traditionally go cattle grazing in this area. ■ **P3**

SHORT TAKES

Puducherry reports 291 new corona cases

Puducherry: Puducherry reported seven more Covid-19 related fatalities pushing the death toll to 228 while 291 fresh cases were recorded, a top Health department official said on Monday. The 291 new cases were identified at the end of examination of 1,074 samples taking the overall tally to 14,411, Director of Health and Family Welfare S. Mohan Kumar said in a press release. Seven patients including a 70-year old woman succumbed to the infection during the last 24 hours ending 10 am today. Mohan Kumar further said of the total 14,411 cumulative cases, 4,849 were active while 9,334 patients had recovered and were discharged.—PTI

House burgled in Guduvanchery

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, AUG. 31

Gold jewels and cash were burgled from a locked house of a farmer in Guduvanchery. The burglary came to light after the residents returned home on Monday.

Police said Selvaraj, 45, a resident of Perumattunallur is a farmer. The burglary happened on Sunday when the family left for a relative's wedding in the city. According to sources, the family stayed there overnight and returned home on Monday afternoon. When they reached home, the bureau was found forced open and the contents were strewn about. gold jewels worth 30 sovereigns and ₹10,000 in cash were stolen from the house. A complaint had been lodged at the Guduvanchery police station.

The Guduvanchery police have registered a case. The police were checking footage from CCTV cameras in the area. Further investigations are on.

CCTV footages help nab accused: In an unrelated case, the Mangadu police have solved a house break-in case after scrutinising footages from 100 CCTV cameras and arrested three suspects, including a juvenile.

The complainant, S. Prabu had gone to his native place after locking his house located on Gerugambakkam on August 11. When he returned home after a week he was shocked to find that the lock of the house was broken open and 20 sovereigns gold was stolen from the steel bureau. He complained to the Mangadu police.

The Mangadu police began an investigation after scrutinising CCTV cameras which were installed from Gerugambakkam to Madurvoyal. After going through footage of 100 CCTV devices, police apprehended Surya alias 'Kosuru' Surya, 20, of Tsunami quarters, Thiruvottiyur, Vignesh alias Vikki, 19 of Nerkundram and a 17-year-old juvenile. A total of 20 sovereigns of gold jewellery were recovered from them.

62 booked under Goondas Act in Thoothukudi

ARULOLI M. | DC
THOOTHUKUDI, AUG. 31

Cracking down on anti-social elements in the district, police here booked 62 men under the Goondas Act, who were arrested in various criminal cases in the past two months, said district police superintendent Jayakumar.

This coastal district, being a hub for drug smuggling in the southern parts of the state, police here have intensified patrolling along the coastal areas, and seized around 52 kg of ganja. "Thirty cases against 39 ganja peddlers have been registered in just two months on July and August," said Jayakumar, adding that police had seized 3,063 kilograms of gutka in the same period. "So far, 56 men were arrested and 54 cases registered for possessing and selling gutka in the district since July," said the police officer, who too added that all possible steps to enhance police-public relationship.

South zone IG Murugan, who visited the family of police constable Subramanian, who died in his attempt to nab a murder accused a couple of weeks ago in Thoothukudi district, lauded the stringent measures taken by police here. He said that police action had been intensified against anti-social elements to maintain law and order in the district.

The IG also handed over a cheque for ₹86,50,000 as the department's contribution to the family of constable Subramanian.



With malls opening on Tuesdays, workers spray disinfectant in a popular shopping mall on Anna Salai. — DC



MTC buses get a disinfectant spray at Pallavan House depot on Monday after the government announced buses will be operated from Tuesday. — DC

Wary Chennai back on feet

Have darshan of deities, at a distance

Luxury hotels, malls go extra mile for SOPs in new normal

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, AUG. 31

Monday was the most hectic of days for malls and hotels which had to swing into action on preparation for the opening on Tuesday all over Tamil Nadu. The surprise announcement late on Sunday night left them only a little time to fine-tune the SOPs and finalise the protocols that will ensure hygiene while offering their clients the best safety features to keep off the coronavirus. Furious sanitisation work was set in motion as many premium establishments had been virtually closed for 160 days.

The new normal that will greet shoppers and visitors will be in personal hygiene practices like offering handy sanitisers. The markings for social distancing were also in place for those who will start stepping out of homes in an adventurous way in the coming days as they visit their favourite shops and eating places.

"The opening of hotels is welcome news," says Zubin Songadwala, General Manager, ITC Grand Chola. Area Manager – ITC Hotels, South. Among the new things that guests will be offered at the group's flagship in Guindy are one-time use cutlery, strict protocols for contactless delivery of most services including pre-arrival check-in of guests, safe car rides, PPEs for servers and security personnel and clinical levels of safe-



Safe banqueting at ITC Grand Chola in Chennai.

The new normal that will greet shoppers and visitors will be in personal hygiene practices like offering handy sanitisers. The markings for social distancing were also in place for those who will start stepping out of homes in an adventurous way in the coming days as they visit their favourite shops and eating places

ty and hygiene, including in sanitised service trolleys and pre-packaged sauces and condiments. "Grab & Go" and "Knock

& Drop" menus, which ensure zero contact, will be a novelty when the new normal kicks in.

To begin with, "Buffet Armours" may seem novel too but would soon enough be just a SOP at food stations, besides sustainable food selection, revised seating norms and contactless snack and welcome drink stations and digital menus. The hotel will also insist on a 30-minute interval between guests to ensure deep cleaning of salon spots and tables and QR-enabled menus in restaurants.

Malls are looking at putting into practice lessons from AI to predict patterns after studying foot-

falls. The ensuring of maximum possible distancing in use of escalators (at least two empty steps between any two users), sanitising of frequently used contact points like elevator buttons and floor markings for social distancing are SOPs that will be in place at opening time. It is not only the commercial spaces that are welcoming the reopening but also places of worship where the public spaces are being disinfected and priests have been accustomed to wearing protective masks as they have been conducting rituals during the severe lockdowns too.

Plea in HC to fix cement price in TN

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, AUG. 31

A Public Interest Litigation has been filed in the Madras high court to direct the state government to fix the price of the cement in accordance with the Competition Act and also in the light of the order passed by the Competition Commission of India dated August 31, 2016.

A division bench comprising Justices M.M.Sundresh and R.Hemalatha before whom the PIL filed by Coimbatore Corporation Contractors Welfare Association represented by its Treasurer A.Ammaisaiappan, came up for hearing, ordered notice, returnable by four weeks, to the State Public Works Department Secretary and Industries and Commerce department secretary.

According to petitioner, the state PWD every year will issue Revised Standard Schedule of Rates with Basic Rates in respect of cost of Cement,



Steel, Sand, M-Sand, Bitumen, Labour, Materials, Head Loads, Conveyance in plains, Conveyance in Hills, Rates of other construction materials and Rates of electrical items of work etc., Which are basic for the preparation of every work. Normally, the Standard Rates includes all the taxes, freight charges, excise duty and VAT (Now GST). The Rates Committee fixes the Standard Rates so that it should be adopted in the preparation of the estimate for that revenue year, he added.

He said the members of the petitioner association were all doing business in civil construction. The Cement was the essential ingredient for the construction. During July, 2019 a bag of cement cost was ₹385 in Tamil Nadu. Five months back prior to July 2019 the cement was sold at ₹340 per bag. The cement manufacturers in Tamil Nadu have entered into an agreement with themselves and without any reason they have increased the cost by 13.23 percent and now the cement was sold at Rs 395 per bag. The increase of the cost of the cement was not made on the basis of any increase of cost of the manufacturing materials. Because of sudden increase of the cement price, their business was heavily affected. They have entered into contract agreement with the government and the general public on the basis of the cost of the cement prevalent at the time of agree-

ment. Because of the sudden increase of the cement price by nearly 13.23 per cent (during July 2019), they have to incur heavy loss, he added.

He said the members of the petitioner have employed more than three lakh employees. Because of the increase of the cement price, the livelihood of the employees was affected. They could not give quality work due to the increase in the cement price. The cement price per bag in Andhra Pradesh was ₹320, Karnataka ₹335, Telangana ₹320.

The construction industry in Andhra Pradesh has also protested against the fixation of the cement price at ₹320 per bag. When compared to other southern states, the difference of cement price in Tamil Nadu was ₹65, which was higher than other states. That apart they have to pay the GST at the rate of the increased price.

State govt issues elaborate SOPs for places of worship

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, AUG. 31

The government has come out with elaborate standard operating procedures to be followed in the various religious places that would be opened to the faithful from Tuesday with the view to preventing the spread of coronavirus.

Stressing mostly on social distancing, hygiene, cleanliness and non-touching of objects in the various places of worship, the norms fix the number of people who could be allowed into an enclosure at one point of time.

Similarly, it mandates the use of audio recordings to play music instead of using live performers or choirs at all places of worship and bans ablutions and sharing of vessels, sprinkling of water and

such religious rituals that might help the spread of the virus.

Requesting people above 65 years, with co-morbidities, pregnant women, children below 10 years to stay away from the crowded places, the SOPs lay immense stress on wearing masks, without which no one should be allowed into any premises, and the six feet physical distance between two individuals.

Respiratory etiquette should be strictly followed. Coughing or sneezing should be done into tissue, handkerchief or flexed elbow while spitting is totally banned. Self-monitoring of health and the use of Arogya Setu App are recommended. Importance should be given on crowd management by providing parking facilities outside the premises and earmarking

separate entry and exit points. Leaving shoes and footwear inside own cars or in enclosures should be encouraged. Social distancing should be followed in all shops, stalls, cafeteria, dining facilities and kitchens on premises of the place of worship and facilities should be made for washing hands and legs with soap and water.

No offering of prasadam or the serving of Holy Communion or even touching of idols or Holy Books while offering prayers and even premises should have a Covid-19 Safety Committee to monitor the implementation of SOPs.

Separate SOPs have been released for temples, mosques, churches, gurdwaras, Buddhist Viharas and Jain and Parsi places of worship.

SHORT TAKES

Over 1K participate in Madras Open Quiz 2020

Chennai: Chennai's popular quizzing event, the Madras Open Quiz, topped a new avatar and went online this year. Hosted by renowned Quizmaster, Dr Sumanth C Raman, this fun-filled quiz on Namma Madras had over 1000 participants at the preliminary round. The top-scoring 6 individuals battled it out in the final round conducted virtually. This event was also webcast live and was watched by over 250 viewers. Sriram Sridhar won the Madras Open Quiz 2020 while Jayakanthan was the first runner up followed by Tejas Venkataraman as the second runner-up, according to a press release.

Modi idlis be sold in Salem at ₹10 for 4 pieces

Coimbatore, Aug. 31: 'Modi Idlis', priced at Rs 10 for four pieces, named after the Prime Minister, are all set to be offered to the public at Salem, courtesy a senior BJP functionary. 'Modi idli' posters have been put up in various parts of the city as part of giving wide publicity to the initiative, a brainchild of BJP propaganda cell state vice president Mahesh. The posters have the picture of Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the left side, "four idlis for Rs 10" written on the centre and a photograph of Mahesh.

"Lotus hero Mahesh presents Modi idli. Four idlis for Rs 10 with sambar, to be introduced soon in Salem. Made with modern kitchen equipment, tasty and healthy," the posters read.

'Bharath' R Balasubramanian, BJP Tamil Nadu secretary, Media, said the plan was to open 22 shops initially to sell the idlis and depending on its success, the number of outlets would be increased. Machinery for the project, to make 40,000 idlis per day has already arrived and is expected to start next week, he said. — PTI

Hubby stages drama over wife's murder, arrested

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUCHY, AUG. 31

Police here arrested a 30-year-old man for murdering his 26-year-old newly-wedded wife, allegedly for refusing to have sex with him, by pushing her in the stagnated water pool inside the Kollidam river at suburb Vazhavandhipuram near here in the wee hours of Sunday.

It might be recalled that the deceased, Christy Helan Rani, who got married with one Arulraj of the same area only on July 10, was brutally murdered by unidentified miscreants and her body thrown in a water pool inside the Kollidam river. Police arrested the woman's husband, and he confessed of murdering his wife.

Thugs with machetes at BJP Vandalur meet

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, AUG. 31

The presence of half a dozen local criminals, armed with machetes, at a BJP event in a community hall near Vandalur in Chengalpattu district caused a flutter as police stormed in and whisked them away to the station for an enquiry.

Though the six armed men claimed that they had come for the function, attended by State President L. Murugan to distribute welfare measures, at the behest of BJP local leaders with the view to joining the party, police took them away. Some of the BJP func-

Six armed men claimed that they had come for the function, attended by State President L. Murugan to distribute welfare measures, at the behest of BJP local leaders with the view to joining the party, police took them away

tionaries reportedly went to the station and questioned the police as to why they had taken away people who had come to the meeting with the intention of joining the party. But police reportedly explained to them their background.

The criminals, who were part of the crowd of the BJP members and leaders in the hall, were identified

by some local people, who called in the police.

Reacting to the incident, a senior state leader of BJP said that the party had no compulsion to rope in rowdies and anti-social elements.

BJP is a growing party and people from all over the State were enthusiastically enrolling themselves, he said, adding that the State President would not have known about the identity of the six men if they were criminals.

He also said that it was not clear if the men had come to join the party or for something else.

However, the BJP had been drawing flak for enrolling several men

with criminal records of late and one of its office-bearers was expelled after he was caught smuggling narcotics near Trichy. So, later in the day, Murugan, while addressing the media in Trichy, was asked about the general charge that the BJP was taking in criminals and rowdies as party members.

He said anyone can join the party as it was not possible to verify their background beforehand. However, once they enroll themselves in the party, they would be assessed and would be given responsibilities only if they were found to be without blemish.

Condolences to Pranab

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, AUG. 31

Rich tributes were paid by political leaders to former President Pranab Mukherjee, who passed away in New Delhi on Monday.

Governor Banwarilal Purohit described the late leader as an outstanding parliamentarian and a Statesman par excellence.

In his statement, he said he was respected by everyone across all sections of society and political parties. 'He brought dignity to all posts he held and worked diligently and tirelessly for the common man,' he said.

Governor of Telangana, Tamilisai Soundarrajan, expressing her condolences to his grieving family, said Mukherjee was a man who upheld Indian traditions and culture.

His death was a great loss to the nation, said Chief Minister Edappadi

K Palaniswami, recalling their political career that the Congress leader had, heading a plethora of Ministries at the Centre.

Deputy Chief Minister O Pannarselvam tweeted that he was greatly saddened by his demise. He prayed Almighty to give strength and solace to the family member to tide over this difficult time.

Born in Mirati, a small hamlet in West Bengal, in a mud house, Mukherjee reached the pinnacle of his career by living in the Rashtrapathi Bhavan, said DMK President M K Stalin, adding that he achieved everything through his efficiency and hard work.

PMK founder S Ramadoss said Mukherjee, who was identified at a young age by Indira Gandhi, excelled in every Ministry he headed.

Mukherjee guided the nation at various points of

time, said BJP State President L. Murugan, adding that he interacted with people irrespective of party differences.

The Prince of Arcot, Nawab Mohammed Abdul Ali, in his condolence message, said that 'one of the towering personalities and elderly stalwart in the country, our respected former President of India, late Mr Pranab Mukherjee Saheb, was highly respected and will be long remembered by many, who admired and regarded him for his noble services to the nation, till his last breath.'

He was a simple living and high thinking personality, with a vision to strengthen the basic secular fabric of the nation.

It will be very difficult to fill the vacuum left by Pranab Mukherjee Saheb, the Prince of Arcot added in his statement.

CM flags off 118 ambulances

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, AUG. 31

Tamil Nadu made history as the first ever woman to be appointed as ambulance driver in the country, M Veeralakshmi, drove one of the 118 new ambulances flagged off by Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami on Monday.

Of the total 118 vehicles, 90 were procured by the government at a cost of Rs 20.65 crore for the 108 emergency service, 10 of them, bought for Rs 3.90 crore, were blood donation vehicles to be used by the government blood banks and remaining 18 ambulances, costing Rs 1.26 lakh, were donated by Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd.

The 108 Emergency Service had a fleet of 1005 ambulances and it had benefited over 1,00,20,000 persons, the release said, adding that it was those vehicles that were used to ferry Covid-19 patients to hospitals and also to their homes after recovery during the pandemic.

The new 90 ambulances, fitted with life-saving equipment, and 10 blood donation vehicles formed the first batch of the 500 ambulances, proposed to be bought by the government at a cost of Rs 125 crore.

The announcement on the procurement of ambulances was made by the Chief Minister at the State Assembly on March 24, the release said.

Zee Entertainment that had promised 45 ambulances for deployment in the Coronavirus control activities had also released the 18 vehicles in the first phase of their donation, the release said.

Besides taking part in the event to mark the launch of the fleet of ambulances for public service, the Chief Minister also issued appointment orders to some candidates chosen for jobs in the health department.

'States must get their full dues of compensation in current yr'

From P1

"This support was sought, anticipating shortfall in State tax revenues, but after assuming that the States would receive the entire GST compensation", the Chief Minister said, adding, 'Our stance has consistently been that the Government of India has a moral and legal obligation to pay the compensation for the shortfall in GST collections.'

At the 41st GST Council meeting on August 27, the State Minister D Jayakumar had suggested that the Government of India could mobilise resources and lend the funds required to the GST Compensation Fund and that loan could be serviced through an extension of the GST Cess for a few years beyond 2021-22.

But, Palaniswami said he was concerned about the two options given to the States after the meeting. One the States would borrow from the market to make good the shortfall in compensation due. Two, the entire ₹2.35 lakh crore could be borrowed by States.

Both options were unacceptable, Palaniswami said, adding "Whether the Government of India borrows or the State Governments borrow, for rating agencies and others who monitor the macro-economic indicators, it is the overall General Government deficit."

"Hence, I reiterate the Government of Tamil Nadu's stance that the Government of India should advance funds to the GST Compensation Cess fund, if need be by borrowing in the market and service the debt by an extension of the compensation cess. Further, in an effort to reduce the total



CM requested the Prime Minister to direct the Ministry of Finance to agree to a mechanism in which the Government of India raises the required funds and lends it to the GST Compensation Fund against future cess receipts

amount of borrowing in 2020-21, an artificial distinction is being drawn between GST implementation based losses and COVID-induced losses," he said.

So, he requested the Prime Minister to direct the Ministry of Finance to agree to a mechanism in which the Government of India raises the required funds and lends it to the GST Compensation Fund against future cess receipts.

He also wanted the Prime Minister to ensure that the States get their full dues of the compensation in the current year itself, and reduce neither the compensation payable nor the already announced and committed additional borrowing permissible to States of 2 percent of GSDP under the Atma Nirbhar Bharat stimulus package in any circumstances.

Jumbo attack: Man found dead on temple premises

DC CORRESPONDENT
COIMBATORE, AUG. 31

A 55-year-old construction worker died after suffering a mild injury dealt by a 'Makna elephant' (tuskless male elephant) that entered Coimbatore forests from Kerala, a couple of days ago.

Sources said Nagaraj, resident of Seeranaickenpalayam, had on Sunday night slept at the Thadagam

Eshwaran Kovil premises, allegedly after consuming alcohol.

The Makna elephant with an injured mouth which is now being treated by forest officials, had come to the temple premises in the early hours of Monday, and attacked Nagaraj, in which he suffered a mild hip injury.

The elephant had moved away without hurting him any more. On hearing his cry, the night watchman there

rushed in and helped Nagaraj by providing him water frequently, even as he made attempts to inform the police. Nagaraj had stopped him from calling the police, claiming that he would go to the hospital after sunrise, after which the security man left.

While the security man came to the temple around 5:30 am, he was shocked to see Nagaraj dead.

250 buses will run, says Collector

DC CORRESPONDENT
THANJAVUR, AUG. 31

A total of 250 state transport corporation buses will be operated in the district following the unlock measures announced by the state government from September 1, said Collector M Govinda Rao,

here on Monday. He told presspersons that private and mini buses would be operated soon. He also said that temples would be opened for worship from Tuesday.

The collector said Corona recovery rate was good in the district. "Recovery is 85 per cent."

the collector added.

Stating that a total of 3,948 fever camps have been conducted in the district so far and 1.86 lakh persons screened for fever, he appealed to people having fever, cough and cold to check for corona infection.

A plasma bank was inaugurated by Chief minister Palaniswami at the Thanjavur medical college hospital, last Friday.

Twenty corona cured persons have donated plasma so far. Two persons have been given plasma therapy, added the collector.

Two die in mishap

Pudukkottai: Two persons on a motorcycle were killed as they rammed into the rear of a lorry at Athanakottai near Gandarvakottai, on the Pudukkottai - Thanjavur highway, late on Sunday night. Police identified the deceased as K Marimuthu (45) and Ramesh (50) of Thanjavur district, and they were on their way home from Pudukkottai. While Marimuthu died on the spot, Ramesh died on the way to hospital, police added.

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUCHY, AUG. 31

State BJP president Murugan, came down heavily on the Opposition DMK, stating that the DMK was playing a dual role in the three-language formula, even as schools run by DMK leaders and their family members have adopted the three-language formula.

Addressing a press conference here on Monday on the sidelines of the state BJP's youth wing executive meeting, Murugan said that the

BJP youth wing members would stage a demonstration in front of schools run by DMK partymen, to highlight the dual role played by the DMK.

Referring to the party's ties with the AIADMK, Murugan said their relationship was very cordial. He further said, the BJP contested in 60 assembly constituencies in the last assembly elections, in which they lost with a low margin.

If the party would contest in all 60 constituencies on its own next year in the Tamil Nadu

Assembly polls, it would have better chances to win these 60 constituencies, he added.

Replying to a question on those with criminal background joining the BJP, to protect them from criminal charges, Murugan said, "Membership enrollment is going on through missed calls, and so, there is no chance of knowing the background of the new entries. But, if the party comes to know about their criminal background, their membership will be cancelled."

Water to be released from Veeranam tank

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, AUG. 31

Water was released from Veeranam tank for irrigation purpose in Cuddalore district on Monday. Industries minister M.C. Sampath and Collector Chandra Sekhar Sakhamuri opened the sluice of the giant lake and strew flowers as water gushed out from the tank. The minister has also released water from Lower Anicut.

Paddy raised on more than 1 lakh acres of land in Cuddalore, Thanjavur and Nagapattinam will benefit from the water. Minister Sampath said that around 1,400 cusecs of water would be released from the Lower Anicut.



Malayalis celebrate Onam festival in front of their house at Mogappair West on Monday.

— DC

Rise in tiger count in Kovai forests

ANANTH MATHIVANAN | DC
COIMBATORE, AUG. 30

For the first time, the forest department had claimed that the numbers of big cats in Coimbatore forest division has increased, accounting to more than 10 in number, and are proclaimed to be healthy. While conservationists, activists, wildlife photographers and NGOs here are stressed over the serial deaths of wild elephants in the division, the forest department's report for the first time about increase in numbers of tigers in the Bolovampatty range, has left them all surprised.

Recently, the department installed over 60 camera traps to study and monitor elephant movement. But fortunately, the camera traps apart from elephants have also recorded pictures of tigers, leopards and bears.

The number of tigers in Coimbatore forest division is recently estimated to be between 10 and 12, based on reports of field staff after

'All witnessed tiger attack but could not save victim'

From P1

"Though all witnessed the tiger attack, nothing could be done to save the victim."

The incident happened around 12 noon on Monday. Camera traps would be placed in the area to trace and track tiger movement in the vicinity adjoining the tribal village."

Meanwhile, Madhan, husband of the deceased said, that their group would generally venture into the Kallallah area to graze cattle and goats. "On Monday noon, when we were inside the woods, a kilometer away

witnessing the presence of a huge tiger in the interior forest area of Bolovampatty range.

According to District Forest Officer (DFO) D Venkatesh, in a joint tiger monitoring programme con-

ducted by WWF and Coimbatore forest division, few camera traps were kept in unspecified location inside the Boluvampatty range, based on sign survey exercise and the presence of a healthy male tiger has been confirmed by the cam-

era trap pictures within a week of placing the cameras. This is the first tiger presence recorded in the watershed of Noyal river in decades.

This indicates a good ecological health status of thick vegetation in the Coimbatore forest division, and also an indicator of good status of the protection offered by forest field staff.

The movement of tigers also indicates that tiger breeding areas of Mudhumalai and Sathyamangalam tiger reserves possess good ecological integrity and tigers are successfully breeding and dispersing into neighboring parts of the landscape from there, and settling down in areas with good prey abundance.

Pictures of a leopard and sloth bear in the same area also indicate the high quality of wildlife habitats in the forest. This is also the southernmost tiger presence recorded in the Western Ghats, added the DFO, quashed the order of the RDO.

section for any disturbances which if not controlled, by the participant, in a given time frame can lead to accidents.

Thus, the nature of the job required them to understand the plant (industrial section) behaviour and take appropriate decisions and actions if any disturbance occurred.

Rajagopalan Srinivasan, Department of Chemical Engineering, was published recently in the peer-reviewed Journal of Computers and Computer Engineering.

Prof. Srinivasan said that the team fixed sensors to the heads of six participants and had them perform eight tasks each. The nature of the tasks was to monitor a typical industrial

section for any disturbances which if not controlled, by the participant, in a given time frame can lead to accidents.

Thus, the nature of the job required them to understand the plant (industrial section) behaviour and take appropriate decisions and actions if any disturbance occurred.

IIT-M researchers use EEG to read mind during crisis

DC
CHENNAI, AUG. 31

Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IITM) researchers have used electroencephalogram (EEG) to assess their mental sharpness, especially during times of crisis.

The result of the research led by a team headed by Prof.

recently in the peer-reviewed Journal of Computers and Computer Engineering.

Prof. Srinivasan said that the team fixed sensors to the heads of six participants and had them perform eight tasks each. The nature of the tasks was to monitor a typical industrial

SHORT TAKES

7 HURT IN FAILED GRENADE ATTACK ON ARMY CONVOY

DC CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR, AUG. 31

Seven pedestrians sustained splinter injuries when a militant tossed a hand grenade at an Army convoy passing through Aazad Gunj area of Jammu and Kashmir's north-western Baramulla town on Monday.

The police and Army officials said that the failed attempt on the Army convoy was made at around 1.15 pm but the grenade thrown at it missed the intended target, fell on the road and exploded causing splinter injuries to civilians. The injured were evacuated to a nearby hospital from where two of them were shifted to a Srinagar hospital for specialised treatment, the officials said.

A police spokesman here said, "The terrorists lobbed a (hand) grenade at an Army convoy near Aazad Gunj Bridge in Baramulla which, however, exploded on the road resulting in injuries to seven civilians. The police continue to work to establish the full circumstances of this terror crime incident."

Defence spokesman, Colonel Rajesh Kalia, said that the Army convoy was moving towards Srinagar from Baramulla. He added, "The area has been cordoned off and search operation is in progress".

The police sources said that no arrests were made during the search operation in the area.

MAOISTS KILL ABDUCTED COP IN CHHATTISGARH

DC CORRESPONDENT
BHOPAL, AUG. 31

Suspected Maoists killed an assistant sub-inspector who was abducted by them at Mengapat under Kutru police station in Chhattisgarh's south Bastar district of Bijapur on Sunday evening.

Body of Korsa Naigaiya (59), posted in Kutru police station, was recovered at Ketulnar nearly two km from Mengapat on Monday, a senior Bijapur district police officer said.

The slain cop had taken a fortnight's leave to visit his home in Dantewada in south Bastar and started for Dantewada on his bike on Sunday evening, police said.

He was abducted by Maoists at Mengapat, nearly five km from his place of posting at Kutru.

His abduction came to light when the police found his bike abandoned in Mengapat.

"A search operation was launched by security forces to rescue him. His body was recovered at a deserted place in Ketulnar. A Maoist leaflet was found near his body", police said.

In another incident, a Naxal was gunned down in an encounter with security forces under Pushav police station in Dhamtari district in Chhattisgarh on Monday.

The slain has been identified as Ravi, member of Gabra Local Organisation Squad of CPI (Maoist).

● **THE BODY** of Korsa Naigaiya (59), posted in Kutru police station, was recovered at Ketulnar nearly two km from Mengapat on Monday, a senior police officer said.

MAN HELD FOR HOISTING PAK FLAG IN M.P

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC
BHOPAL, AUG. 31

A man in a Madhya Pradesh village was arrested for hoisting the national flag of Pakistan at his house, police said on Monday.

Faruq Khan (44), a resident of Shipra village in Dewas district, was arrested on Sunday night under IPC section 153A (promoting enmity between groups on ground of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language and disturbing harmony) following a complaint filed by a local revenue officer.

A video clip showing the Pakistan flag fluttering atop his house has gone viral, prompting local tehsildar to order the revenue inspector of the area Lakhman Singh to make an on-the-spot enquiry.

Mr Singh recorded Khan's statement and then lodged a complaint with the local police, leading to the latter's arrest, industrial area police station in-charge R.K. Sharma said.

Chief inspection



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan inspects a flood-affected area with Army jawans near Hoshangabad district on Monday. He assured farmers that all possible measures will be taken to compensate for their losses. "Farmers should not get worried about the losses. The government is in action and all possible measures will be taken to compensate them through crop insurance scheme and RBC (revenue book code) provisions," he said.

— PTI

ED questions Goa hotelier

DC CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI, AUG. 31

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Monday grilled Goa hotelier Gaurav Arya in connection with actor Sushant Singh Rajput's suicide and possible laundering of his money as per allegations of his father. Arya's name cropped up after some text messages on narcotics substances were allegedly shared between Rhea Chakraborty, the main accused in the case, and him.

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) is also likely to grill Arya in connection with the drugs angle. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) meanwhile grilled Chakraborty for the fourth consecutive day on Monday.

The ED began questioning Arya from 10.30 am at the agency's south Mumbai office to undergo scrutiny on whether there was any laundering of money and on the narcotics messages that were exchanged in 2017. The text messages were later shared with the NCB and the CBI by the ED. Arya has however refuted the allegations saying he neither ever peddled drugs



Sushant Singh Rajput

nor spoke to Rhea till date.

The Enforcement Directorate earlier questioned Rhea, her brother Showik and two sisters of Rajput apart from his chartered accountant and other staffers.

Meanwhile, the CBI again summoned Chakraborty on Monday for questioning at their DRDO guest house in Santacruz. "Chakraborty and her brother Showik, Rajput's cook Neeraj Singh were questioned on Monday. They may be summoned again as the probe progresses," said an officer privy to the investigation.

On Sunday, Rhea was questioned for around nine hours. She along with some other accused in the case have been grilled by the ED on multiple occasions before the CBI took over the probe.

India may overtake US in Oct. in number of Covid-19 cases

Delhi breaches 2,000-mark indicating that the curve is rising again

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, AUG. 31

After being admitted to AIIMS for post-Covid care, Home Minister Amit Shah was discharged on Monday after 13 days.

During his stay in AIIMS, the minster was attending to all his official work from the hospital itself.

Ministry officials claimed that Shah was likely to attend his North Block office in the next couple of days.

He was discharged from AIIMS on Monday at around 7 am.

Shah was admitted to AIIMS on August 18 after he complained of "fatigue and body ache" having recovered from Corona.

Earlier, the Home Minister was admitted to the Medanta hospital in Gurgaon after he tested positive for the coronavirus.

Shah had himself tweeted on August 14 that he would be in home isolation for a few more days on the advice of his doctors even after recovering.

Ministry officials claimed that Shah had

now recovered completely.

Meanwhile, home ministry, which is the nodal agency for administrative issues related to Corona, is putting in place a detailed blueprint to deal with the crisis as India recorded its biggest increase in cases of 78,761 on Monday.

It is estimated that India will overtake Brazil next month and US in October with most Corona cases in the world.

Delhi too breached the 2,000-mark on Monday after nearly two months indicating that Corona curve was once again on the rise.

Now that limited operations of metro are likely to resume from September 7, officials felt that there could be a sharp increase in cases.

Thus, efforts are being made to further strengthen the health infrastructure, particularly on availability of beds, in all the states.

Home ministry has also permitted states to decide on their lockdown schedule though advising them to ensure that supply chain of essential commodities is not disrupted.

DC CORRESPONDENTS
AUG. 31:

Vijayawada: Andhra Pradesh has crossed one lakh mark of Covid-19 active cases on Monday. The state has now 1,00,276 cases with the addition of 10,004 cases in the last 24 hours.

The state health authorities said the Covid-19 positive tally in the state now is 4,34,771 while the death toll was up by 85 at 3,969.

East Godavari continues to top the state by registering the highest number of 1,383 new Coronavirus infections followed by 1,142 in West Godavari, 1,023 in Srikakulam, 1,086 in Nellore, 973 in Anantapur, 936 in Chittoor, 686 in Kurnool, 634 in Visakhapatnam, 540 in Vizianagaram, 524 in Prakasam, 498 in Guntur, 420 in Kadapa and 159 in Krishna.

Maha eases curbs on travel, offices

SHAHAB ANSARI | DC
MUMBAI, AUG. 31

The Maharashtra government on Monday announced extension of the Coronavirus-induced lockdown till midnight of September 30. While restrictions on inter-district movement of persons and goods have been lifted, schools, colleges, cinema halls and swimming pools will continue to remain closed till September end.

As per the new guidelines issued, hotels and lodges will be allowed to operate at 100 per cent capacity from September 2. No separate permission/approval/e-permit will be required for the vehicles and persons travelling therein for such movements, the government said in its Mission Begin Again order that encapsulated "Unlock" norms.

The Uddhav Thackeray government also allowed passenger movement by private bus/mini bus and other operators. However, metro rail services will be disallowed. The states

Transport Commissioner will issue the standard operating procedure for the same. The government said that outdoor physical activities with no restrictions will be allowed.

Easing of restrictions came even as Maharashtra continues to register a record number of new Coronavirus cases with no flattening of curve in sight in the state.

The order further stated that the Maharashtra governments Group A and Group B officers can attend offices to 100 per cent of their strength across the state from September 2. Other government staffers can attend offices with 30 per cent of their strength or minimum 30 employees, whichever is more, in areas under municipal corporations in Mumbai Metropolitan Region, Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad and others — all Covid-19 hotspots. In the rest of the state, the non-Group A and Group B staffers can attend office to the extent of their 50 per cent strength.

Active cases in Andhra Pradesh cross 1-lk mark

1,873 more cases in Telangana

Hyderabad: Covid-19 cases showed a significant drop on Sunday in Telangana due to an equally steep fall in the number of people tested for the disease. The health department on Monday said fresh Covid-19 cases registered between Saturday and Sunday evening were 1,873, down from 2,924 the day before.

The number of Covid-19 determination tests fell to 37,791 from 61,148 on Saturday. As per the Covid-19 bulletin, nine more persons lost their lives taking the toll to 827.

Kerala's Covid tally crosses 75K mark

Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala's Covid-19 tally crossed the 75,000 mark

with the addition of 1,530 fresh cases on Monday. While the number of positive cases rose to 75,384, seven more deaths took the toll to 294.

At least 1,693 people were discharged, taking the total of cured to 51,542. "Currently, there are 23,488 people under treatment in the state," Shailaja said in a release here.

6,495 new cases, 113 deaths in Karnataka

Bengaluru: Karnataka on Monday reported 6,495 new cases of Covid-19 and 113 related fatalities, taking the total number of infections to 3,42,423 and death toll to 5,702. The day also saw 7,238 patients getting discharged after recovery. Out of 6,495 fresh cases reported on Monday, 1,862 cases were from Bengaluru urban.

Pranab wanted 'Red Diary' to be cremated with him

SANJAY BASAK | DC
NEW DELHI AUG. 31

A magazine once described him as "The man who knew too much."

Pranab Mukherjee, former President was the "veteran insider" in the corridors of power. The man, who apparently had "the memory of an elephant," Pranab, the treasure trove of political secrets was an avid diary writer as well.

His much talked about 'Red Diary' is apparently the "truthful account of his political journey." It is believed that this diary if ever published could stir the hornet's nest in Indian

politics.

In his e-book - *Akothito Pranab* (Untold Pranab), journalist and author, Goutam Lahiri wrote that Pranab Mukherjee had said, "My Red Diary will never be published. It will be cremated along with my body." There were speculations that he would eventually handover his 'Red Diary' to his daughter Sharmishtha.

Pranab Mukherjee's, political journey began in West Bengal in 1969, as the election agent for V.K. Krishna Menon, who was contesting a Lok Sabha by-election as an independent candidate.

In his 50-odd years, he was the ultimate insider. He had a vast network of key political players, cutting across party lines. He was not only close to the CPI(M) leader and the then West Bengal chief minister, Jyoti Basu but had often invited RSS chief, Mohan Bhagwat to Rashtrapati Bhawan during his tenure as the President.

He had powerful allies and equally powerful enemies. The man, who was virtually "number two" during the rule of Indira Gandhi was expelled from the party by her son, Rajiv Gandhi. Rajiv influenced

by Congress leaders, like Arun Nehru, A.B.A. Gani Khan Chowdhury, Balaram Jharkar among the few not excluded Mukherjee from Union Council of Ministers but later expelled him.

He was told that Pranab nurtured the ambition of being the Prime Minister after the assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984.

Lahiri in his e-book recounts the details of this "misunderstanding."

Lahiri writes, "Rajiv Gandhi (on his way to Delhi from Bengal) sought Pranab's advice on "who after Indira".

Mukherjee reminded that

when Jawaharlal Nehru died in 1964 and Lal Bahadur Shastri in 1966, the senior-most cabinet minister, Gulzari Lal Nanda was appointed as acting PM.

Pranab Mukherjee was number two in Indira Gandhi's cabinet. This apparently was distorted and the coterie close to Rajiv Gandhi indicated that Pranab was pitching for himself.

This was the beginning of Pranab's fall during Rajiv Gandhi's tenure. However, hit by Bofors scam, a revolt by V.P. Singh later forced Rajiv Gandhi to get Pranab back into Congress in 1988.

BIRTH | DATA

Study projects that highest deficit in birth of girls will occur in UP

India will see fewer female births by 2030

New Delhi, Aug. 31: An estimated 6.8 million fewer female births will be recorded across India by 2030 due to sex-selective abortions, according to a study. The study also projects that the highest deficit in the birth of girls will occur in Uttar Pradesh.

Researchers from King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST), Saudi Arabia, and Universite de Paris, France, noted that there has been a reported imbalance in India in the sex ratio at birth (SRB) since

the 1970s due to the emergence of prenatal sex selection and the cultural preference for male babies. Unlike other countries affected by such imbalances, India is unique in its regional diversity of sex ratio imbalance, they said.

Previous projections of sex ratio at birth in India have been constructed at the national level or were based primarily on expert opinion rather than reproducible modelling.

In the latest study, published in the journal PLOS ONE, researchers project-

ed the SRB in the 29 Indian states and seven union territories (UTs), which covered 98.4 per cent of the total population of India as of the year 2011.

Among the 21 Indian states or UTs with high quality birth data, 17 showed a positive effective of son preference on the SRB, with the highest SRBs concentrated in the most northwestern states or UTs, the researchers said.

The team found that, in particular, the effect of son preference is statistically significant in nine states or UTs.

"We project that the highest deficits in female births will occur in Uttar Pradesh, with a cumulative number of missing female births of 2 million from 2017 to 2030," the researchers said.

"For the whole of India, summing up the 29 state-level projections, the cumulative number of missing female births during 2017 to 2030 is projected to be 6.8," they wrote in the study.

The average annual number of missing female births between 2017 and 2025 is projected to be

4,69,000 per year and is projected to increase to 5,19,000 per year for the time period 2026 to 2030, according to the researchers.

The projects represent an essential input for population projection models in India, especially at the sub-national level, they added.

In India, sex-selective abortions and prenatal sex discernment tests were banned in 1994 under the Pre-conception and Prenatal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act. — PTI

IN BRIEF

Nod to Amazon drone delivery

San Francisco: Amazon on Monday said a freshly-issued Federal Aviation Administration certificate has cleared the launch pad for drone deliveries in the US. "This certification is an important step forward for Prime Air and indicates the FAA's confidence in Amazon's operating and safety procedures for an autonomous drone delivery service that will one day deliver packages to our customers," Amazon VP David Carbon said. "We will continue to develop and refine our technology to fully integrate delivery drones into the airspace," he said. — *AFP*

Chinese-born Oz journalist held

Sydney: A Chinese-born Australian journalist for CCTV-News, the English-language channel of China Central Television, has been detained in China, Australia's government said Monday. Australian officials had a consular visit with Cheng Lei at a detention facility via video link on Thursday, foreign minister Marise Payne said in a statement. They will continue to provide assistance and support to her and her family, Australia had been informed by Chinese authorities of her detention, but made its first public announcement on Monday. — *Agencies*

2 detained over Ryanair security

London: British counter-terrorism police were holding two men on Monday following a "security threat" aboard a Ryanair flight that led to fighter jets being scrambled to intercept it. Police said they a 34-year-old man from Kuwait and a 48-year-old man from Italy under terrorism laws late on Sunday at Stansted Airport after the flight from Vienna landed. Britain's Royal Air Force said it had launched two Typhoon fighter jets from a base in nearby Lincolnshire "to intercept a civilian aircraft". "The aircraft was escorted safely to Stansted," it added. — *AP*

2 die in UAE restaurant blast

Abu Dhabi: A powerful blast ripped through a restaurant in the UAE's capital here on Monday, killing two persons, police said. A number of people were injured in the explosion which took place at the fast food restaurant in a building on Rashid Bin Saeed Street, according to a newspaper report. According to on-site investigations, the incident was caused by a misalignment in the gas container fittings following refuelling, the Abu Dhabi Media Office said. Emergency response teams evacuated residents of the building and cordoned off the area. — *PTI*

SUDAN, REBELS STRIKE DEAL TO END ROW

Juba, Aug. 31: Sudanese leaders and rebel commanders agreed Monday on a historic peace deal, a crucial step towards ending 17 years of conflict in which hundreds of thousands of people were killed.

Leaders of the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF), an umbrella organisation of rebel groups from the western region of Darfur and the southern states of South Kordofan and Blue Nile, raised their fists in celebration after inking the agreement.

Fighting in Darfur alone left around three lakh people dead after rebels took up arms there in 2003, according to the United Nations, with former government leaders accused of carrying out genocide and of crimes against humanity.

Conflict in South Kordofan and Blue Nile erupted in 2011, in the wake of South Sudan's independence, resuming two decades of war. "I congratulate all in Sudan on reaching a historic comprehensive peace that addressed the roots of the problem and ended the war, God willing," said Gibril Ibrahim, commander of one of rebel groups, the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM).

He paid tribute to all those killed or affected by the long years of war.

Sudanese paramilitary commander Mohamed Hamdan Daglo — best known by his nickname "Hemeti", and who commanded fighters in the war — signed the deal on behalf of Khartoum. — *AFP*

Israeli flight in UAE

US National Security Adviser Robert O'Brien speaks next to US Presidential Adviser Jared Kushner (centre) and Head of Israel's National Security Council Meir Ben-Shabbat (left) in front of an airplane of El Al at the tarmac of Abu Dhabi airport, following the arrival of the first-ever commercial flight from Israel to the UAE, on Monday. The US-Israeli delegation took off on a historic first direct commercial flight from Tel Aviv to Abu Dhabi to mark the normalisation of ties between the Jewish state and the UAE. — *AFP*

Trump seizes on protests, Dems slam him for tension

Aides want Don to give aggressive message on law, order

Washington, Aug. 31: Democrats accused President Donald Trump of trying to inflame racial tensions and incite violence to benefit his campaign after he praised supporters who clashed with protesters during a deadly night in Portland, Oregon, and announced he will travel to Kenosha, Wisconsin, amid anger over the shooting of another Black man by police.

Trump unleashed a flurry of tweets and retweets the day after a man identified as a supporter of a right-wing group was shot and killed in Portland. The city has been the site of months of daily protests, and a large caravan of Trump supporters and Black Lives Matter protesters clashed Saturday night. Trump praised the caravan participants as 'GREAT PATRIOTS' and retweeted what appeared to be the dead man's name along with a message to 'Rest in peace'.

Trump also retweeted those who blamed the city's Democratic mayor for the death.

"The people of Portland, like all other cities & parts of our great Country, want Law & Order," Trump wrote Sunday. "The Radical Left Democrat Mayors, like the dummy running Portland, or the guy right now in his basement unwilling to lead or even speak out against crime, will never be able to do it!"

Trump has throughout

State cops in Portland to probe clashes death

Portland, Aug. 31: State Police will return to Portland to help local authorities after the fatal shooting of a man following clashes between President Donald Trump supporters and counter-protesters that led to an argument between the president and the mayor over who was to blame for the violence.

Protesters were back on the streets for a demonstration Sunday night out-

side a public safety building. Police declared an unlawful assembly and arrested 29 people. Two of those arrested had handguns and others had knives and at least one had an expandable baton, police said.

Many wore helmets, gas masks, goggles and external armour. Police said some carried shields and reflective squares used to reflect police lights back toward officers. — *AP*

4 hurt in shooting at Kansas City club

Kansas City, Aug. 31: Four people were shot and injured Sunday at a night club in Kansas City, Missouri, where a mass shooting occurred in January, police said.

Kansas City Police spokesman Sgt Jake Becchina said the latest shooting at the 9ine Ultra Lounge was reported around 2.30 a.m. Sunday.

the summer cast American cities as under siege by violence and lawlessness, despite the fact that most of the demonstrations against racial injustice have been largely peaceful. With about

Investigators said the shooting was related to an argument that started inside the club and then moved outside where several people fired shots.

One victim found at the scene with several gunshot wounds was taken to a hospital. Three others arrived separately at hospitals. All four victims remained stable. — *AP*

nine weeks until Election Day, some of his advisers see an aggressive "law and order" message as the best way for the President to turn voters against his Democratic rival, Joe Biden. — *AP*

CORONAVIRUS CASES IN U.S. NEAR 6 MILLION

New York, Aug. 31: The United States neared six million Coronavirus cases on Sunday, nearly a quarter of the planet's total, as nations around the world battle to contain the raging pandemic.

Global Coronavirus infections soared past 25 million, as countries tightened restrictions to halt the health crisis that has upended life for most of humanity.

A million additional cases have been detected globally roughly every four days since mid-July, according to an AFP tally, with India on Sunday setting the record for the highest single-day rise in cases with 78,761.

The United States, had recorded 5.99 million cases of infection as of 0030 GMT Monday, according to Johns Hopkins University's tracker. The death toll is just over 183,000. The US hit five million cases three weeks ago, just 17 days after reaching four million, the tracker said.

The virus has hobbled the US economy and cast a shadow over President Donald Trump's once-promising re-election prospects. — *AP*

Merkel condemns 'shameful' virus stir**38,000 had gathered in Berlin on Saturday to protest restrictions to curb Coronavirus**

Berlin, Aug. 31: German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Monday condemned as "shameful" an attempt by protesters angry at Coronavirus restrictions to storm Parliament, saying they had abused the right to demonstrate peacefully.

Several hundred people tried to get into the Reichstag building during a rally against Coronavirus rules in Berlin on Saturday.

"This right to demonstrate peacefully is of course a very valuable asset even during a pandemic," Merkel's spokesman Steffen Seibert said at a government press conference in Berlin.

However, he said their actions were "a clear abuse".

"The result was disgraceful images at the Reichstag which are unacceptable, anti-democrats trying to make themselves heard on the steps of our democratic Parliament," he said.

Police estimated 38,000 people, double the number expected, gathered in Berlin on Saturday to protest at restrictions imposed to curb the spread of the Coronavirus, such as wearing masks and social distancing. Several hundred broke through barriers and a police cordon to climb the steps leading to the entrance to the Reichstag. They were narrowly prevented from

Germany tells Russia to probe poisoning

Paris, Aug. 31: Germany on Monday urged Moscow to step up its efforts to investigate the apparent poisoning of opposition leader Alexei Navalny who is currently being treated at a Berlin hospital in a coma.

Foreign minister Heiko Maas said in an address to French ambassadors that Europe needed "constructive" relations with Russia for the sake of the continent's own security but it was clear now that "dark clouds" were hanging over bilateral ties.

entering the building by police, who used pepper spray and arrested several people.

Merkel praised as "quick-witted and brave" three police officers who were seen pushing back crowds from the entrance to the Reichstag alone until reinforcements arrived. President Frank-Walter Steinmeier on Monday invited the officers to Berlin's Bellevue Palace to thank them for their work. He described the protesters' actions as "despicable", adding: "We will not tolerate any anti-democratic smear campaign or disparagement of the Federal Republic of Germany at the

"Of course we have the expectation that Russia should contribute more to clearing up of the Navalny case than it is doing at the moment," he said alongside French counterpart Jean-Yves Le Drian. Berlin's Charite hospital said on Friday there was "some improvement" in Navalny's condition, but the 44-year-old remains in a medically induced coma and on a ventilator. Navalny fell ill after boarding a plane in Siberia earlier this month. — *AFP*

Bundestag." About 300 people were arrested in scuffles with police, in front of the Reichstag but also outside the Russian embassy, where protesters pelted police with bottles.

Resistance to Coronavirus restrictions in Germany has gathered pace in recent weeks with demos attracting a diverse crowd of conspiracy theorists, anti-vaxxers and far-right or far-left activists.

Health minister Jens Spahn was spat on at the weekend as he tried to talk to protesters in Bergisch Gladbach. Seibert condemned the incident, saying it was "certainly not democratic dialogue". — *AFP*

China carries out forced medication on Uighurs

Beijing, Aug. 31: The government in China's far northwest Xinjiang region is resorting to draconian measures to combat the Coronavirus, including spraying detainees with acidic disinfectant, physically locking residents in homes, imposing strict quarantines of more than 40 days and arresting those who do not comply.

Furthermore, in what experts call a breach of medical ethics, some residents are being coerced into swallowing tradition-

al Chinese medicine despite a lack of rigorous clinical data proving it works, according to government notices, social media posts, and interviews with three people in quarantine in Xinjiang.

One middle-aged Uighur woman said that when she was detained at the height of China's Coronavirus outbreak, she was forced to drink a medicine that made her feel weak and nauseous. She and others in her cell had to strip naked once a week as guards hosed them and

their cells down with disinfectant, she said.

"It was scalding," recounted the woman by phone from Xinjiang, declining to be named out of fear of retribution. "My hands were ruined, my skin was peeling."

The latest gruelling lockdown, now in its 45th day, comes in response to 826 cases reported in Xinjiang since mid-July. China's largest caseload since the initial outbreak.

The lockdown is especially striking because of its severity. — *AP*

Strike chief held in Belarus crackdown

Minsk, Aug. 31: Belarus' authorities on Monday detained the organiser of a strike at a top industrial plant, part of a methodical effort to stifle weeks of protests demanding the resignation of the country's authoritarian leader of 26 years after an election the opposition denounced as being rigged.

President Alexander Lukashenko has dismissed the protesters as Western puppets and rejected the European Union's offers of mediation. After a ferocious crackdown on demonstrators in the first days after the August 9 vote that caused international outrage, his government has

avoided large-scale violence against demonstrators and sought to end the protests with threats and the selective jailing of activists.

Anatoly Bokun, who leads the strike committee at Belaruskali, a huge potash factory in Soligorsk, was detained by police and is facing a 15-day jail sentence on charges of organising an unsanctioned protest. The factory, which accounts for a fifth of the world's potash fertiliser output, is the nation's top cash earner. Strike committee spokesman Gleb Sandras said authorities had managed to halt a strike that began two weeks ago. — *AP*

200 PAKISTANIS STRANDED IN INDIA TO RETURN

SHAFQAT ALI | DC ISLAMABAD, AUG. 31

At least 200 people stranded in India due to the Coronavirus lockdown will return to Pakistan on September 3, officials said Sunday.

Pakistan had sealed its border with India in March after a surge in number of Coronavirus infections. The people who had gone to India got stuck there as a result of the lockdown.

Pakistanis, stranded in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Delhi and Rajasthan, will return via Wagha border. The border between the two countries will be especially opened for them.

According to a source in the foreign office, their return was made possible because of the efforts of the Pakistani High Commission in India.

SHARIF AT RISK IF EXPOSED TO COVID: REPORT

DC CORRESPONDENT ISLAMABAD, AUG. 31

Fresh medical reports of former PM Nawaz Sharif were submitted in Lahore High Court showed that he may be "at much greater risk than a normal person" if exposed to Covid-19.

Sharif, given his age and significant disease burden, falls in the category of patients who, if exposed to the virus,

INDIA | ABROAD

Indian-origin leader underlines need to focus on foreigners' living conditions**Pritam Singh is Singapore's first Leader of Oppn**

Singapore, Aug. 31: Pritam Singh, Singapore's Indian-origin politician scripted history on Monday when the city-state's Parliament conferred the duties and privileges to him as the country's first Leader of the Opposition.

Singh's Workers' Party won 10 parliamentary seats out of the 93 it contested in the July 10 General Election, making it the biggest opposition presence in Singapore's parliamentary history.

As the House began proceedings on Monday, one of the first orders of business

was a ministerial statement by the Leader of the House Indranee Rajah on formally recognising Singh, 43, as the country's first Opposition leader.

Addressing Parliament, Singh underlined the need to focus on foreigners and their living conditions. He said how foreign workers are managed and accommodated needs to be improved.

Their (foreigners) presence gives Singapore a vitality that keeps us economically relevant and also provides jobs and opportunities to our fellow Singaporeans. Many of us

count the foreigners in our midst — regardless of race, language or religion — as our friends, Channel News Asia quoted Singh as saying.

It is precisely because we need foreigners to help power our economy that we need to pay more attention to the Singapore worker... some of whom feel excluded from (the) opportunities created in their homeland, Singh said.

The House passed a motion to double Singh's speaking time from 20 minutes — which is allotted to backbenchers — to

40 minutes, the duration allotted to office holders.

Singh took the seat directly opposite Prime Minister Lee in the chamber. This is similar to the practice in other countries that formally recognise the role of the Leader of the Opposition, Indranee pointed out. Singh called on the Ministry of Manpower to publish the names of "recalcitrant" employers who do not give locals a fair chance in hiring and promotion. The MOM had recently placed 47 companies on the Fair Consideration Framework (FCF) watchlist. — *AP*

DECCAN Chronicle

1 SEPTEMBER 2020

As Covid-19 cases spike, go slower on ‘unlocking’

As the Centre and states open up more sectors and allow the resumption of further activities from Tuesday, September 1, as India begins the “Unlock 4.0” phase, it is important not to forget how the pandemic is spiralling across the country, with daily coronavirus cases crossing 80,000 Sunday, the highest anywhere in the world. The last week of August witnessed a huge spurt in cases, and not just in Maharashtra and some southern states but also Delhi, that earlier seemed to have the numbers under control. And while there has also been a considerable increase in the number of tests per day, which is likely to rise, there is no hard evidence to say the rise in infections detected is primarily due to the increased testing – as health officials and the government fondly hope.

One really wonders how the Centre and state governments are confident that this is the right moment to open more activities. Schools/colleges will remain shut till September 30, but the authorities have decided to go ahead with the JEE and NEET exams for medical and engineering admissions, which will expose thousands of students across the country to the risk of contracting the virus. Also, teachers and some students from Classes 9 to 12 might be called to schools for “guidance” from later in September, the first time most will come into physical contact with each other since March – which again appears to be an avoidable step.

Most important, the government’s decision to allow the resumption of Metro rail services – even if in a staggered manner – appears premature. To allow public transport buses (with 20 people allowed and with seats spaced out; or taxis or autos, with two/three passengers) is one thing, but the Metro trains carry thousands of passengers travelling in close proximity, not to mention the thousands who will collect at Metro stations even if the capacity on the trains is restricted. All this creates a situation which might facilitate the spread of the virus. A serious rethink needs to be done prior to September 7, when Metro services are set to resume, and it should be permitted only in those areas where the Covid-19 pandemic is completely under control. That, unfortunately, is not yet the case in any of India’s major metropolises.

From September 21, social, religious, political, academic and sports functions can be held with up to 100 people, and weddings and funerals (now allowed with lesser numbers) will be permitted with 100 people. This, in our view, is also premature, and should wait till things stabilise further. The festival season is fast approaching, and it is vital to set strict norms now to ensure that low-key celebrations are held which will not endanger people’s lives. There is, of course, the counter-argument: that we must “learn to live with Covid” till a vaccine is found and distributed, which might take up to a year, and that people cannot put off economic and other activities indefinitely. The lockdown that India imposed in March was one of the world’s harshest – which severely hurt a lot of people and its benefits remain debatable. But now we might be swinging to the other extreme – rapidly opening up activities without considering all the consequences. We need to find a balance – and move a little slower.

Trouble for NRC ‘rejects’

The stalemate in the process of preparing the Supreme Court-mandated National Register of Citizens in Assam has put the lives of 19 lakh-odd people who were excluded from it in serious trouble. The process mandates that each excluded person should be issued a rejection slip which can be challenged in the Foreigners Tribunal, which is empowered to declare a person non-citizen. The failure to issue the slips has stalled the entire process. As a result, those affected face difficulties in matters of their normal life such as finding a job, getting married, going on a foreign tour and contesting polls. The government blames it on Covid-19, which made most government departments other than those involved in the containment of the pandemic non-functional for months on end.

The very process of preparing the NRC was riddled with serious issues. It was at first perceived as an attempt to exclude Muslims who had migrated to Assam from other parts of the country. Serious discrepancies such as members of the same family getting different status were reported as soon as the list was published. The BJP, which had all along called it a tool to ‘eliminate infiltrators’, changed its stand after discovering that a third of those excluded were Hindus. The party’s Assam unit called for the verification of the list but it looks next to impossible after reports said the basic data of the NRC has been lost.

Citizenship is the primary identity of a person, and its denial, rightly or wrongly, compromises the very right to life. No government has the right to keep a decision on it pending for long. The government must admit that it had not thought through the process and hence the present mess. It must either cancel the entire exercise or fast-track it. This is not an issue for which it can blame an act of God.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

ADITYA SINHA
Editor

R. MOHAN
Resident Editor

K. SUDHAKAR
Printer & Publisher

DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:

Chennai: SP 3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai 600032. Phones: (044) 22254747, 22254748

Coimbatore: 77 Vivekananda Road, Ramnagar, Coimbatore 641009. Phone: (0422) 2231255, 2231256

Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad 500 003. Phone: (040) 27803930-4. Fax: (040) 27803256

Bengaluru: 5th Floor, BMTC Commercial Complex, 80 Ft. Road, Koramangala, Bangalore-560095. Ph: 08043460500; Fax: 080-22960551/52/55

Visakhapatnam: Survey No. 1/3A Beach Road, Near Kailasagiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017. Phones: (0891) 2552333/2552334, Fax: (0891) 2755285

Vijayawada: No. C 3 & 4, Patamata, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.). Phones: (0866) 2555284/ 2555287, Fax: (0866) 2555234

Rajahmundry: Vemagiri, Dhanawessaram Rd, Rajahmundry 533125. Phones: (0883) 2417208, 2417618

Anantapur: Thapovan Colony, Bangalore Bye-Pass Road, Anantapur 515004. Phones: (08554) 276903, Fax: 08554-276904

Nellore: Survey No. 527/2, Burranpur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chemudugunta Panchayat, Nellore. Phone: (0861) 2348581/ 82, Telefax (0861) 2348580

Karimnagar: Survey No. 1341, Vavilalapally Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar 505 001. Phone: (0878) 2228908; Telefax (0878) 2220433

Kochi: No. 3-B, 3rd Floor, DD TRADE TOWER, Kaloorkadavanthara Road, Ernakulam, Ph: 0484-4039408

Kozhikode: No 6/1002 E, First Floor City Mall, Opp. YMCA Kannur Road, Kozhikode - 673 001 Fax : 0495 4019018

Thiruvananthapuram: St Joseph Press Thycad post, Cotton Hills, Thiruvananthapuram-14, Ph: 0471-2735105/67, Fax: 0471-4016112 Gram: CHRONICLE

Postal registration no: No. H/SD-348/2006-08ss

Subhani

INDIA CAPABLE
OF BECOMING
TOY HUB: MODI



Is another global eco crisis now inevitable?



Mohan Guruswamy

Speaking at the London Business School recently, former Reserve Bank governor Raghuram Rajan warned that the global economy was “slowly slipping” into the Great Depression-like problems of the 1930s and that central banks must sit together and define the new “rules of the game” to find better solutions. Dr Rajan, who was earlier IMF’s chief economist, was one of the few to have predicted the 2007-08 financial crisis.

The essential problem we must confront is how to rectify a world economic system that has gone hopelessly wrong and resembles nothing like what was envisaged in early 1940s. To understand the situation we are in, imagine living on an island as a part of a small group, in which people are assigned specific vocations and tasks. In this system one person makes clothes, another shoes, someone pots and pans, someone grows food and someone else prints money to facilitate the exchange of goods and services. The shoe-maker exchanges his goods with another for money which he uses to pay for food or whatever. Since everybody in this system can produce as much as possible, the person who prints the money will be best off among all as he can buy whatever he wants and pay for it with his own money. Take this one step further. Producers who hold more paper than they need then start leaving it with the person who prints them to hold.

In 2019, world GDP was about \$88 trillion, and the per capita GDP was \$11,400. In the past 10 years, world GDP growth declined from 3.13 per cent to 2.47 per cent. In 1960, WGDGP was \$11.35 trillion (constant 2010). It was just \$1.1 trillion in 1900 and took 50 years to

grow fourfold to \$4.01 trillion. The big leaps began after 1971 when US President Richard Nixon unilaterally delinked the US dollar from the international gold standard. In 2000, it scaled \$51 trillion.

The total world merchandise trade in 2019 was \$19.5 trillion, with China (without Hong Kong) the biggest player, accounting for \$5.31 trillion, with a trade surplus of \$422 billion. The top five global traders account for 50.6 per cent of world trade. The EU’s share is \$4.49 trillion and the United States’ is \$3.91 trillion, also accounting for about a quarter of world trade. The most preferred global currency is the US dollar. Total world reserves in 2019-Q2 was \$11.8 trillion, of which 61.8 per cent was held in US dollars, 20.5 per cent in euros, 5.7 per cent in yen and 1.8 per cent in Renminbi.

Almost all these reserves are held by individual countries in the form of bonds, mostly earning very small or even zero interest rates. This is like money deposited in a bank, but it’s really money lent to the issuing country. As the reserves are mostly in US dollars and euros, the issuing countries have little reason to hold much of them as reserves. The total US reserves are about \$132 billion. Contrast this to India’s \$535 billion (including \$35 billion in gold) and China’s \$3,300 billion.

In 1995, advanced economies held around 67 per cent of total foreign exchange reserves, with 82 per cent of these being allocated reserves. By 2011, the picture had been flipped on its head: emerging and developing countries held 67 per cent of total reserves.

The purpose of sharing these three world economy snapshots is to offer a

The international system was unilaterally abrogated in 1971 when US President Nixon delinked the dollar from the gold standard.

general backdrop on how we have come to this pass. A situation where the rest of the world invests in the US, so that it can splurge on itself. When it’s short, it can just print more dollars, which the rest of us lap up quite happily. Every time the US goes into convulsions due to its innate profligacy and economic mismanagement, the world economies go into a tailspin as the US is the world’s biggest importer and it’s where the world keeps its money. Now let’s turn to how the system actually works.

Countries like China and India produce goods and services at low cost for consumption in the US, which in turn pays them in dollars, that they deposit in American banks. Since money can’t sit still, this money in then lent to Americans, who today have the highest per capita indebtedness in the world, to splurge on houses, cars, flatscreen TVs and computers, that mostly they can often ill-afford. In effect, the rest of the world is plying the US with cheap credit, encouraging it to splurge even more. But there is no global regulator to caution the US on its profligacy or force it to mend its ways.

At the July 1944 Bretton Woods Conference, in the last phase of World War II, Lord Keynes had in mind an elaborate scheme that called for the establishment of an inter-

Total world reserves in 2019-Q2 was \$11.8 trillion, of which 61.8 per cent was held in US dollars, 20.5 per cent in euros, 5.7 per cent in yen and 1.8 per cent in Renminbi.

national reserve currency called “bancor”, administered by a global central bank, but this had to be shelved in the face of American obduracy. This central bank would be vested with the possibility of creating money and with the authority to take action to ensure balanced trade. As outlined by Keynes, countries with payment surpluses should increase imports from the deficit countries, thereby ensuring foreign trade equilibrium.

But the United States, as a likely net exporter and creditor nation, and eager to take on the role of the world’s economic powerhouse, thwarted the Keynes plan. The American delegates seemed more concerned about inflationary pressures in the post-war economy. Its delegate, Harry Dexter White, argued that an imbalance was a problem only of the deficit country. White’s determined obduracy is now under a cloud after he was unmasked as a Soviet spy. Did he scuttle “bancor” at Moscow’s insistence to ensure the crisis we now are living through?

The international system was unilaterally abrogated in 1971 when US President Nixon delinked the dollar from the gold standard. In the absence of a standard and a useful regulatory function for the IMF, the great private banks were given a licence to run amok. We now reap the bitter harvest. With the US dollar as the world’s preferred currency, the US and its profligate citizens have an apparently endless access to easy credit to satiate their sundry appetites. Ironically, the ever-rising annual US trade deficit is the de facto engine of growth for many economies, like China, the Asean countries and even India.

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

LETTERS

BHARAT RATNA

The news that the former President Pranab Mukherjee is no more has pained millions of our nation. One of the most highly respected personalities among politicians he was affectionately known as Pranab Da and was well known for his intelligence, wit and for his astute political skills. More than intellect, he’s one of the few politicians in his career spanning for over a few decades was unquestionable when it comes to “integrity”, which was rare among in his own colleagues during his tenure in the Congress Party. We will miss an upright man who led a life by setting an example by loving his country and for the people of India.

A.P. Thiruvadi
Chennai

INTERPRETERS OF DISSENT

RIGHT TO THE freedom of expression and the right of the State to secure its citizens have all suffered or thrived on how they are interpreted. Free speech, meaning free argument, is at the heart of a self-governing society and cannot be a partisan issue. Dissent being a product of application of sane human intellect to an issue at hand, but the government would brand intellectualism per se, as anti-national. There is a price to pay for sponsoring and pursuing freedom of speech and sadly, few are prepared to pay for what is the very sap that nurtures nations and men. We just find newer ways to sustain the lid on free speech through pedantic obfuscation.

R. Narayanan
Chennai

UNLOCK 4.0

IT IS REALLY disturbing to know that India has become the first country to cross 80,000 cases in a day. So is the case with Tamil Nadu State, which too has peaked with 6,495 cases on Sunday. Despite such alarming increase in COVID cases in our country, especially in Tamil Nadu, the Govt. has come out with unlock 4.0 norms, allowing public transport, opening of malls, etc. Fortunately they have wisely excluded educational institutions and cinema halls, which is laudable. Still Unlock 4.0 is fraught with danger, as cases are bound to increase. Unless stringent punishment is meted out to the offenders against basic set norms like wearing mask, social distancing in public places, etc. the tally of our nation could even cross a lakh a day.

Capt. N. Viswanathan
Coimbatore



Aakar Patel

‘Unlock’ rules are illogical: If flights allowed, why not trains?

From Tuesday, September 1, we will have Unlock 4.0. I have lost track of what this means and I do not think anybody really understands it. What the Indian government has done is try and manage the spread of Covid-19 by keeping things shut. If India forces people to stay away from one another by denying them access to services, it will stop or slow the spread of the infection.

This has produced rules that, as I said, I do not really understand. For instance, the airlines have been operating since May, and have been flying for more than three months now. Flights are allowed to be flown at full capacity, with the middle seat occupied. However, the Indian Railways is still by and large largely shut, and has been shut since the lockdown began. From running 17,000 trains daily, it today runs only 230 special ones. What is the logic of not having trains run when planes are allowed to run full? Air passengers cannot maintain the six-foot separation on their seats so it seems illogical to allow people to fly but not travel by train.

The benefit to the stopping the spread of Covid-19 is uncertain but

Schools and colleges will remain shut but exams will continue to be held. If we are asking all schools and colleges to do online classes, why are we then asking students to gather in masses to take their exams?

the damage to the economy is visible. Reports from Surat last month said that the production of textiles was less than 25 per cent of normal and the big reason was the lack of labour.

More than 30 lakh people had left Surat and its surrounding industrial zones in April and May, according to a report in the Hindu Frontline magazine published on July 31. There is almost no way for these people to return to their jobs even if they wanted to now come back. There are reports that mill owners and other businesses have begun flying labourers back. But why not just open the Railways? This has not been explained to us.

Delhi’s Metro will reportedly open

this week with 50 per cent capacity (again note the difference with airlines), while Mumbai’s local trains, the city’s lifeline and its artery, have stayed shut. I saw a very moving note from journalists to the chief minister asking that those who were not accredited with the government to be allowed to use the trains because it was too expensive for them to take taxis everywhere.

Schools and colleges will remain shut but exams will continue to be held. Again, this makes no sense to me. If we are asking all schools and colleges to do online classes, why are we then asking students to gather in masses to take their exams?

We are told that cinema halls will have to stay shut as it won’t be feasible to run shows with only 25 per cent capacity due to physical distancing norms. But a movie is about as long as a flight and the seats are equidistant in both. What is the thinking behind the decision to disallow movie halls, a very large sector of the entertainment industry and its employment, from opening?

It all seems slightly eccentric to me, and I suspect that some of this is touched with the moralism that we

see in the Prime Minister. For instance, restaurants were allowed to open but not bars. Why? There is no standard format in a restaurant’s seating, as we know. And the same is true for bars. The only reason seems to be that the government in some way looks down on those who drink.

In Unlock 4.0 bars, will be allowed to serve liquor over the counter but not inside. Meaning the bar will be turned into a liquor store and the employment that its waiters and cooks and other staff would have otherwise got is not available even today, in September, more than five full months after the lockdown began.

Some of the confusion has then come from the Centre versus State differences. Apparently, the opening of gyms is allowed by the Centre but many of the states are not letting them do so.

In other nations, the lockdowns have been mostly voluntary. In India, it has been like a curfew. Even today, the Mumbai police can confiscate your vehicle if you cannot show a “good reason” for being out. What is a “good reason” is left for the police to determine of course.

We have one nation one tax, but we do not have the free movement of people. Those going from one state to another state must fill out some application and ask for permission which may or may not be given.

As I said at the beginning, India has tried to slow or stop the spread of Covid-19 through denial of services. Has it worked? I don’t think so. India is the only large nation along with Argentina whose numbers have continuously and without a break risen from March. The only way of stopping the spread of Covid-19 is good individual behaviour at the mass level. But we have Union ministers in meetings wearing their masks on their chin instead of covering their mouth and nose. How can such people communicate good behaviour to the public? They simply cannot. And so we have the endless tweaking of rules, all leading to failure as is visible in the numbers, with bureaucrats being kept busy making funny and illogical rules for 1.0 and 2.0 and 3.0 and now 4.0.

Aakar Patel is a senior journalist and columnist

quick
BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	38,628.29	-2.13
Nifty 50	11,387.50	-2.23
S&P 500*	3,505.94	-0.06
Dollar (₹)	73.60	-0.27
Pound Sterling (₹)	97.93	0.50
Euro (₹)	87.50	0.10
Gold (10gm) (₹)	52,638.161	0.30
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	45.84	0.03
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.078	-0.019
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.723	-0.006

* As of 9:30 PM IST

Vedanta ties with
SBI for ₹10,000 cr
syndicated loan

Vedanta Ltd said it has tied up with State Bank of India for a long-term syndicated loan facility worth ₹10,000 crore. A syndicated loan is offered by a group of lenders. SBI has given a commitment of ₹5,000 crore as a lender, Hindustan Zinc, a subsidiary of Vedanta, said in a filing to the BSE. The facility end use stipulates refinancing of near-term debt maturities of Vedanta and for capital expenditure.

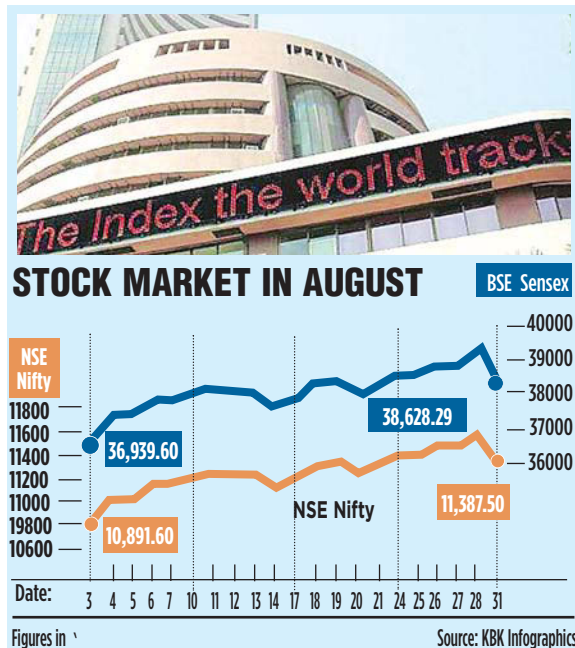
Sebi's new margin rules sour sentiments
Border clash, GDP
worries fell stocksRAVI RANJAN PRASAD
MUMBAI, AUG. 31

Market benchmark Sensex fell more than 1,600 points intra-day on fresh China military buildup and unconfirmed reports of clashes in the Ladakh region. This unexpected development together with fear of a likely sharp fall in the first quarter GDP growth, scheduled to be announced after market hours, led to profit-taking in the market.

The selling pressure may increase on Tuesday, with GDP contracting by -23.9 per cent in the June quarter. "Indian Army informed that Chinese troops violated the earlier agreement and carried out provocative military movements to change the status quo on the nights of August 29-30," reports said.

Sameet Chavan, chief analyst-technical and derivatives, Angel Broking, said, the sell-off was triggered mainly by the news of India-China clash once again taking place at the border. This resulted in a massive liquidation in the market by continued selling in the remaining part of the day.

New Sebi rule for margins in equity trading coming into effect from September 1 also played spoilsport in the second half of trading, as the market regulator has declined an extension being sought by the broking community. Sensex and Nifty-50 final-



ly closed more than 2 per cent down after strong early morning gains pushed the Sensex above the 40,000 mark.

The Sensex closed 839 points down at 38,628.39, recovering partly from the day's low of 38,395.89 and the Nifty-50 closed at 11,387.50, down by 260 points.

Investors lost more than ₹4.55 lakh crore in a day as the broader market fell more, with the BSE Mid-cap Index down 3.79 per cent and the BSE Small-cap Index down 4.73 per cent.

All sectoral indices closed down by 2 to 4.5 per cent except the IT index, which was down over half

a per cent. Sectoral heavy-weight banks and financials fell heavily with the BSE Bankex Index plunging 3.29 per cent and the Nifty Bank, by 3.14 per cent.

Deepak Jasani, head of retail research, HDFC Securities, said, "The change in margin system and securities pledge-repledging could undoubtedly bring disruptions in volumes of daily trading, as there is insufficient preparation and validation by the participants in this system, viz. exchanges, depositories, depository participants, Clearing Corporation, brokers and clients."

SWEDEN MOVES
CLOSER TO MAKING
FOSSIL-FUEL-FREE
STEELHANNA HOIKKALA &
JESPER STARN
AUG. 31

A Swedish joint venture that hopes to rewrite the rules of steel production took a major step forward on Monday.

Hybrit, an initiative run by steelmaker SSAB AB, iron ore producer LKAB and energy supplier Vattenfall AB, aims to remove fossil fuels from the steelmaking value chain by replacing coking coal with hydrogen and clean energy.

The project is now starting test operations for the production of fossil-free sponge iron - something that SSAB's chief executive Martin Lindqvist sees as a "milestone" given the industry accounts for 7 per cent of carbon dioxide emissions globally and 10% in Sweden, he said.

The Hybrit project aims to reduce CO2 emissions to 25 kg per tonne of steel from about 1.6 tonnes by using hydrogen to produce direct reduced iron (DRI) as a feedstock, along with scrap, to make the metal. Electrolysing water from renewable energy sources will generate the hydrogen.

Product launch in a "big, commercial scale" is planned for the first quarter of 2026 and will target "the automotive industry and others," Lindqvist said in an interview. —Bloomberg

Norway fund drops Page Inds.
over human rights breach riskGWLADYS FOUCHE &
TERJE SOLSVIK
OSLO, AUG. 31

Norway's \$1 trillion wealth fund said it had excluded Taiwan's Formosa Chemicals and Fibre, Formosa Taffeta and India's Page Industries from its portfolio, saying they posed an "unacceptable risk for violation of human rights".

The world's largest sovereign wealth fund said holdings before announcing such exclusions to avoid excessive market moves.

Formosa Chemicals and Fibre declined to comment. An official reached by telephone at Formosa Taffeta said the company was closed for the day. Page Industries was not immediately reachable for comment.

In recent years, the fund, which operates under guidelines established by the Norwegian parliament, has focused on working conditions in textile factories in Asia, excluding companies it



thinks pose an ethical risk to its investments.

Set up in 1996 to preserve Norway's oil revenues for future generations, the fund holds around 1.5 per cent of globally listed shares and its decisions are often followed by other investors.

At the end of 2019, NBIM held a 0.84 per cent stake in Formosa Chemicals & Fibre, valued at \$144 million, and a 0.64 per cent stake in Formosa Taffeta valued at \$12.2 million.

The stake in Page Industries at that time stood at 0.42 per cent, with a market value of \$15.4 million.

The fund said in the statement that its management will also scrutinise oil firm PetroChina's work, engaging in active ownership in the hope of boosting the company's anti-corruption practices.

PetroChina had been under observation for possible exclusion since 2017 and had not responded to inquiries from the fund's ethics watchdog, the Council on Ethics, Norges Bank said.

The board of the Norwegian central bank, which manages the fund, concluded "active ownership" was therefore appropriate. —Reuters

Singapore's Atlantis launches digital bank

New Delhi, Aug 31: Singapore-based fintech company Atlantis on Monday said it has entered the Indian market with the launch of its digital bank, Neo-Bank.

Eying the \$15.7 billion global millennial banking industry, Atlantis has launched Neo-Bank for Gen Z and millennials, a company release said. The financial value of

millennials to the banking system is expected to increase by almost 80 per cent in the next five years to more than \$27 billion from the current \$15.7 billion in revenue that millennials contribute.

The company believes that customer-first intelligent systems and design will drive the future of neo-banking, it said. Neo banking is an online con-

cept where there are no physical branches of a bank and customers transact all services digitally.

The bank is looking to sign up not more than 3,000 users in the first three months as it aims to create a personalised experience for each of its users.

Currently, it accepts a new user either through a waitlist or an invite from an existing member.—PTI

COFFEE-BREAK

Your day today By Dr C.V.B. Subrahmanyam



Aries: Work-wise, today runs smoothly; your reputation at work may increase. Health issues may resolve. Artists may expect financial difficulties to end.



Taurus: Expect more money than anticipated. Family members support; spouse provides love. Misunderstandings with partner may cause business to suffer.



Gemini: Frequent arguments could vitiate your home's harmony; avoid arguing. Settle minor disputes and resolve past differences now. Cash flow is normal.



Cancer: Expenditures on beautifying your home or domestic requirements may rise. Stress may trigger emotional outbursts. Be patient through difficult situations.



Leo: An old friend might make a surprise visit. Today is about being cautious. Work projects could be unsuccessful despite multiple efforts. Stick to routine duties.



Virgo: You may go abroad. Maintain harmony with family and relations. Act on new plans. Your efforts bear fruits. Communicate wholeheartedly with people who matters most.

You share your b'day with

Sonam Wangchuk, an Indian engineer, innovator and education reformist. He invented the Ice Stupa technique that creates artificial glaciers, used for storing winter water in form of conical shaped ice heap.



Libra: Respecting your romantic partner's feelings help cementing the bond. You may bubble with ideas, but control them to enjoy peace. Keep adjusting your opinions situationally.



Scorpio: A trustworthy and fun-loving romantic partner's company helps you immensely. Remember how comfortable you've been when working in a team.



Sagittarius: You may feel bewildered about a short separation from family. Ensure it doesn't affect the kids. At work, it is advisable to not heed to gossips.



Capricorn: Expect hectic activities across different fields. Keep your work statements short to avoid confusion. You'll love your partner's company.

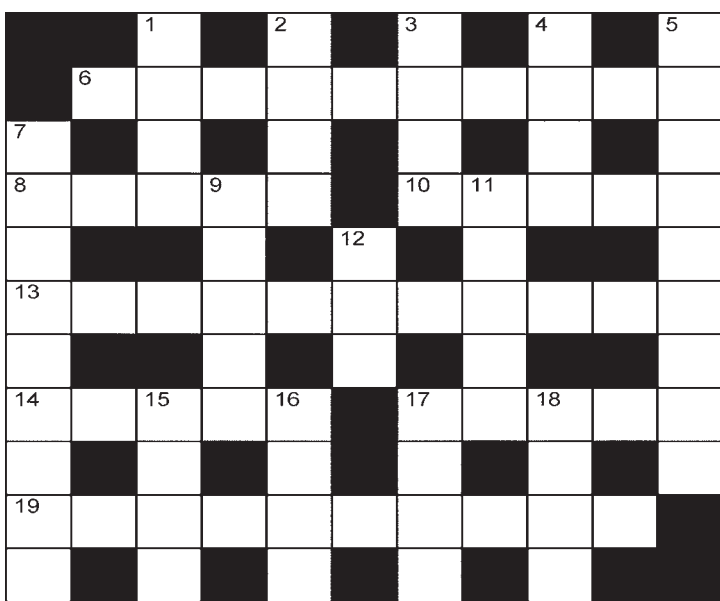


Aquarius: Peace of mind is affected by constant pressure from creditors, children's affairs and arguments with close relatives. Stay cautious. Old issues crop up.



Pisces: Politicians should avoid unwanted controversies. Businessmen earn good returns. Sign new partnerships, expand business activities and initiate business ventures. Secret rivals attempt to undermine your prospects. Stay alert.

QUICK CROSSWORD



- Across**
- Red tape exponent (10)
 - Springtime constructions (5)
 - Swampy lake outlet in the southern US (5)
 - Plight (11)
 - Removes heat from (5)
 - Semiaquatic animal (5)
 - Laden past capacity (10)

- Down**
- Unopened flowers (4)
 - Clutter (4)
 - Speechless (4)
 - Quarry (4)
 - Building (9)
 - Official examiner (9)
 - Of tides (5)
 - Let in (5)
 - Frozen water (3)
 - Unlocked (4)
 - Lustrous fabric (4)
 - Colourful femstone (4)
 - Bound (4)

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

Across: 1. Driver, 3. Crab, 7. Toss, 8. Sprain, 10. Frantic, 13. Rebuked, 16. Pliant, 17. Limb, 18. Romp, 19. Innate.

Down: 1. Duty, 2. Insure, 4. Ream, 5. Banner, 6. Split up, 9. Inferno, 11. Draper, 12. Retina, 14. Firm, 15. Able.

Word Mine

K
AAL
IALBA

TODAY'S RATINGS: 5 AVERAGE; 4 GOOD; 5 OUTSTANDING

How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown in today's puzzle? In making a word, each letter may be used once only. Each word must contain the letter at the top of the pyramid. There should be at least one nine letter word. Plurals, foreign words and proper names are not allowed.

Dealer: South
Vulnerable: North-South
South Pass SNT All Pass
Opening lead: ♠6

IGNAA
SOGSR
NRCETH
YLASAW



Jumbles: SUNNY
Answer: When the student said, "Can I ask a question?" the teacher said — YOU JUST DID

IGLOO HUDDLE INJECT
Answer: When the student said, "Can I ask a question?" the teacher said — YOU JUST DID

CALVIN AND HOBBS | Bill Watterson



THE WIZARD OF ID | Parker and Hartsd



ARCHIE | Bill Henry Scarpelli & craig boldman



BLONDIE | Dean Young and John Marshall



ANDY CAPP | Reg Smythe



TARZAN | Edgar Rice Burroughs



bridge
PHILLIP
ALDER

WHEN
BACKED UP
TO
A WALL,
HOPE

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, "Finish each day before you begin the next, and interpose a solid wall of sleep between the two."

That is sound advice for sure. Sometimes at the bridge table, you have your back against the proverbial wall, seemingly destined to dive to defeat. But maybe you can get lucky -- as in today's deal.

How should South play in three no-trump after West leads a low club to the king

and ace?

South's bid was in the modern style, whereby you may open in no-trump with a singleton ace or king. Obviously, South might have begun with one diamond, planning to reverse into hearts. Note that here, four hearts and five diamonds would make without too much difficulty.

Three no-trump, though, looks high impossible. South cannot play a spade to force a dummy entry, because the defenders will cash too many

club tricks. Declarer must get lucky in a red suit. He starts by cashing the heart ace and king, but the jack does not appear. Then he tries the diamond ace and king. Bingo! The queen does drop. So South plays a diamond to the jack, returns to his hand in hearts and runs the diamonds to take 10 tricks: four hearts, five diamonds and one club.

Finally, note that if West had had queen-doubleton of diamonds, it would have been great defense for either

defender to drop the heart jack on the second round of the suit. Then declarer would have crossed to the heart 10 and taken the diamond finesse. Or ... he might have wondered why the defender with the heart jack suddenly followed on the third round! Would he have noticed an aroma of roset?

Copyright United Feature
Syndicate
(Asia Features)

SHORT TAKES

Root returns for ODIs, misses T20s

Manchester: England announced on Monday they had recalled several World Cup winners for their upcoming white-ball series against Australia but Test captain Joe Root has again been omitted from the Twenty20 squad. Fifty-over world champions England have been fielding separate red and white ball squads in a season hit by the coronavirus pandemic. But with all six Tests spanning two series wins against the West Indies and Pakistan now completed, England have recalled some of their multi-format players for next month's limited-overs matches against Australia. Root was the third-highest run-scorer at the 2016 T20 World Cup but has not played a T20 international for over a year, despite still wanting to feature in the format. He has, however, hit scores of 64 and 65 for Yorkshire in this season's Twenty20 Blast. — AFP

Birdie bomb lifts Rahm to victory

Washington: Jon Rahm drained a swinging 60-foot birdie putt at the first playoff hole on Sunday to win the US PGA Tour BMW Championship over world number one Dustin Johnson. Spain's Rahm, ranked second in the world behind Johnson, was in the right rough off the tee at the first playoff hole, the 18th at Olympia Fields near Chicago. His second shot rolled to the back of the green, leaving him what could have been a tough two-putt for par. "Never did I think I'd be making another 50-, 60-footer — couple of breaks in there, too — to end up winning it," said Rahm, who gave a roaring fist pump as the putt dropped. Johnson's tee shot was also off course, but ricocheted off a tree to settle in the fairway. The American found the middle of the green, but after Rahm's miraculous birdie effort, Johnson's birdie attempt settled inches from the cup. — AFP

Oly flame out on display in Tokyo

Tokyo: The Olympic flame is going on display in Tokyo, just a short walk from the new National Stadium where it was supposed to be burning a month ago. The flame arrived in Japan from Greece in March and has been largely hidden away in Tokyo since the Olympics were postponed until next year because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The flame was unveiled on Monday at a small ceremony with Yoshiro Mori, the president of the Tokyo Olympic organizing committee, and Yasuhiro Yamashita, the president of the Japanese Olympic Committee. — AFP

Ewan takes Tour Stage 3 honours

Sisteron, France: Australian Caleb Ewan timed his effort to perfection to win the third stage of the Tour de France in a bunch sprint at the end of a 198-km hilly ride through the Alpine foothills on Monday. Sam Bennett looked in control but the Irishman had probably underestimated the headwind and settled for second place as he watched Lotto-Soudal fast-man Ewan whizz around him to snatch his fourth stage win on the Tour. Italian Giacomo Nizzolo took third place. — Reuters

Live on TV

CARIBBEAN PREMIER LEAGUE

Jamaica Tallawahs vs Trintago Knight Riders from 7.30 pm;
Guyana Amazon Warriors vs Barbados Tridents from 3 am
(Tuesday) on Star Sports 1, 2, HD

CRICKET

England vs Pakistan third T20 from 10.30 pm on Sony Six, HD

TENNIS

US Open matches from 8.30 pm on Star Sports Select 1, HD

WWE RAW

Bouts from 5.30 am (Tuesday) on Sony Ten 1, 3, HD

Regd. No.
TNENG/2010/35692

Printed & Published by
K. Sudhakar on behalf of
Deccan Chronicle Holdings
Limited and Printed at
Deccan Chronicle Press situated at
No 2/22, Sengalipalayam Road,
N.G.O Colony Post,
Kurudampalayam Village,
Coimbatore - 641 022. RNI
Registration No: TNENG/2010/35692
Ph No : 2231252, 253, 255, 257 & 358
Editor: ADITYA SINHA

SURASH SHOT!

CSK might part ways with its star Raina

New Delhi, Aug. 31: His exit from the IPL attributed to personal reasons this season, all-rounder Suresh Raina's stint with Chennai Super Kings seems in jeopardy even next year as the franchise might part ways with him before the 2021 edition.

The CSK camp based in Dubai reported 13 COVID-19 cases, including two main squad members Deepak Chahar and Ruturaj Gaikwad, a development which an IPL source said, played a role in the recently-retired India player's exit from the event starting September 19.

However, it has now emerged that the team management was not particularly happy with the 32-year-old's "conduct" during the quarantine time, something which infuriated CSK owner and former BCCI president N. Srinivasan.

"In CSK, the norm is that the coach, captain and the manager get suites. However, Raina also gets a suite in any hotel that the franchise stays. It's just that his room didn't have a balcony," an IPL source said.

"It was an issue but I don't think big enough to warrant a comeback (to India). There could be something more than just the scare of rising COVID-caseload in Chennai," the source added, alluding to a speculated breach of the bio-bubble by Raina.

He said given the situation, Raina could well be gone for good now not only this season but also the next IPL scheduled in April, 2021. Is there a possibility of Raina coming back this season, thereby changing the circumstances?

"He is unavailable this season and that is clear from the official statement issued by the CSK. Now there are certain things that have not gone down too well with the top people," the source said.

"It looks highly improbable that someone who has retired



Royal Challenger Bangalore's AB de Villiers (centre) at a training session in Dubai.

and likely won't play any cricket will come back for CSK. Maybe, he will be back in auction and someone else might pick him."

CSK is punting heavily on young Ruturaj, expecting that he will come good once he completes the quarantine and rejoins the training session after two negative tests.

"CSK has not yet asked for an official replacement for Raina...they are undecided," the source added.

On the speculated bio-bubble breach, the source said an apology from Raina will have little impact given that the team is looking ahead. "I don't know about the apology part but CSK will now be eyeing to prepare Ruturaj looking at the future and Dhoni and Fleming will rejig their strategy accordingly," the source added.

— PTI

Dhoni should bat at No. 3: Gambhir

New Delhi, Aug. 31: Mahendra Singh Dhoni should be batting at number three for Chennai Super Kings now that Suresh Raina has pulled out of the Indian Premier League, feels former India opener Gautam Gambhir.

Raina pulled out of the IPL due to "personal reasons" and Gambhir thinks that Dhoni, who has been away from the game for over a year, should try and play as many balls possible.

"It will be a good opportunity for M.S. Dhoni to come and bat at No. 3," Gambhir said Gambhir said on Star Sports' show.

"And he has been away from the game for the last one year, so he would end up getting a lot more balls to face and then he can

● **Former India opener Gautam Gambhir said that M.S. Dhoni can come at one down as there are batsmen who can play the finishing game.**

actually play the anchor innings as well which he has been doing for India for the last couple of years," the two-time IPL-winning skipper said.

Gambhir said that Dhoni can come at one down as there are batsmen who can play the finishing game.

"So, MS Dhoni at No. 3 and then they have got depth with Kedar Jadhav, Dwayne Bravo, Sam Curran, all those guys they can come in." — PTI

DADA SEES HIGHEST IPL TV RATINGS

Pune, Aug. 31: Bullish about the IPL's success as a TV-only event, BCCI president Sourav Ganguly on Monday said he expects the T20 extravaganza to shatter viewership records this year.

The IPL begins on September 19 and will be played across three cities in the UAE — Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Sharjah.

"Crowds will watch it on television... they (the broadcasters) are actually expecting the highest rating of IPL this season because they believe if (people) don't turn up in the ground, they will be actually watching on their television sets," Ganguly said while delivering an online lecture as part of the 'Symbiosis Golden Jubilee Lecture Series'.

"There is a positive in everything," he added. Ganguly also said holding the IPL was important to ensure a sense of normalcy amid the pandemic.

Asked how cricketers would feel about playing in front of empty stands, Ganguly said, "...because of the COVID and infection, you don't want people to be too close to each other, but very soon you will see there will be 30 per cent people in the ground with social distancing."

"They are properly tested and allowed to enter the ground. But I think that is going to happen over a period of time," he added referring to the possibility of IPL's later matches being opened for fans depending on the COVID-19 situation.

"...it is actually an effort to bring life back to normal. This will go on for another five-six months till the vaccine comes and I am sure everything then will be back to normal," he asserted. — PTI

US OPEN | TENNIS

Kerber cruises into 2nd round

New York, Aug. 31: Former champion Angelique Kerber returned to action for the first time in seven months and beat Australian Ajla Tomljanovic 6-4, 6-4 on Monday to reach the second round of the U.S. Open.

The 17th-seeded German, who entered the match having not competed since the fourth round of the Australian Open, overcame a shaky start on serve and got better as the 88-minute match at Louis Armstrong Stadium wore on.

Kerber, a three-times Grand Slam champion who triumphed at Flushing Meadows in 2016, traded breaks with Tomljanovic through the first four games of the match and then found her footing to take over the match.

The German southpaw converted all three break point chances to pull ahead 5-4 and then went on to serve out at love to grab the first set.

In the second, Kerber settled into a groove and broke her opponent twice before sealing the win on

her third match point when a Tomljanovic forehand sailed long.

The US Open is the first Grand Slam to be contested since the Covid-19 pandemic shutdown global tennis in March.

Meanwhile, Novak Djokovic sets out on his quest for an 18th Grand Slam title at the US Open with his world number one standing enhanced in the latest ATP rankings released on Monday.

Fresh from his success in the ATP Western & Southern Open final against Milos Raonic, the Serb headlines the opening day at Flushing Meadows where he faces Damir Dzumhur of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

He leads the ATP chart on 10860 points from Rafael Nadal who like fourth-ranked Roger Federer is skipping the rescheduled US Open being held under tight Covid-19 health restrictions. While Djokovic heads an unchanged top 10, Raonic jumps 12 places to 18th on the back of his run to Saturday's decider in the US Open tune-up. — AFP

CELTICS ROUT RAPTORS IN NBA SERIES OPENER

Miami, Aug. 31: Jayson Tatum and Marcus Smart each scored 21 points to lead the Boston Celtics over defending champion Toronto 112-94 in Sunday's opening game of their second-round NBA playoff series.

Kemba Walker added 18 points and 10 assists for the Celtics, who also had

17 points from Jaylen Brown plus 13 points and 15 rebounds from Daniel Theis. "Marcus today was unbelievable on both ends," Celtics coach Brad Stevens said.

"All our guys played with great purpose, great enthusiasm. We just have to clean some stuff up." — AFP



A screengrab of an online media interaction of India's gold medal winning Olympiad team.

Recognise chess players: Anand

C. SANTHOSH KUMAR
CHENNAI, AUG. 31

The first online chess Olympiad that witnessed an anticlimactic finish due to a global internet outage has triggered controversy after India and Russia were declared joint winners. Russian grandmaster Daniil Dubov didn't mince words when he termed the event a "circus" and said "don't just call it an Olympiad and it was a failure."

The controversial ending, however, didn't stop the Indian team from celebrating their maiden Olympiad gold by organising an online meeting where each member of the side spoke about the memorable day.

During the final, India's Nihal Sarin and Divya Deshmukh were disconnected from the host server. Viswanathan Anand said the global internet outage wasn't India's fault. "We did nothing wrong. We were ready for anything. We were ready to play two games or even six games. Fide looked at the big picture," Anand said.

There was a hint of disappointment when Anand spoke about the lack of recognition for chess players in the past few years. "There's been a drop off in the attitude of the Sports Ministry towards chess players. I don't mean at a personal level obviously. Just that institutionally we no longer get the awards for international competitions," said Anand.

The veteran player from Chennai feels the issues in the All India Chess Federation could be a reason for the awards snub. "I think some of it might be due to various issues they have brought up pertaining to the code of conduct and so on. And our federa-

TNEB saves the day for Vishy

Viswanathan Anand said India's non-playing captain N. Srinath called up Tamil Nadu Electricity Board with a request to cancel the scheduled power cut in the Grandmaster's area as he was competing in the online Olympiad. And TNEB duly obliged. "When I was wondering what to do, Srinath called up TNEB and ensured the power supply was not interrupted. I would have been only halfway through my first match if the power cut had happened," said Anand.

tion has had some difficulties. But it would be nice to reset this," he said.

Anand said the best way to bring about the scenario is not by writing long letters to the editor but by having good results like the Olympiad success.

"I hope that this result will have a positive impact and that they will look at chess as they did years ago. Several years ago they had recognised this as one of the sports where we do incredibly well...and that we have a good team. And I hope this will have an impact and we will once again start coming in for Arjuna and Dronacharya awards," he added.

Grandmaster P. Harikrishna said it's the responsibility of the federation to take up this issue. "It is said that none of the chess players have won an Arjuna Award or Dronacharya Award for several years. But these are not the reasons why chess players are playing the game. These are however small things that the govt and federation can take up," he said.

Lyon ladies leap for joy



Lyon players run towards the trophy after beating VFL Wolfsburg in the UEFA Women's Champions League football final in San Sebastian, Spain, on Sunday. Lyon won 3-1 to win their fifth straight Champions League. — AFP

Bindra's gold thrill lasted 2 seconds

New Delhi, Aug. 31: Olympic champion Abhinav Bindra says the thrill — the biggest of his life — lasted merely two seconds after his gold at Beijing Games where relief was the first and only emotion he felt despite scripting history.

A web series titled 'The Finish Line' has been conceptualised to relive eight defining moments of Indian sports through the athletes themselves. And Bindra was the first guest to feature on the show hosted by ace squash player

Saurav Ghosal.

"It was the greatest emotion that I had felt. I was very happy as this moment was the biggest thrill of my life, that thrill lasted for two seconds and that's it," Bindra said on the show, recalling the moment 12 years later.

"The greatest emotion I felt at that moment was the feeling of relief because, throughout my journey, I have been very obsessive with my goal.

"All my eggs were in one basket, certainly not the way I promote to young

● **Bindra remains India's only individual gold medallist at the Olympics and he came tantalisingly close to adding another podium finish at the 2016 Rio Games, only to miss out by a point.**

athletes. It was a huge amount of relief that, what I had set out to do in my life, I was able to

achieve that."

Bindra remains India's only individual gold medallist at the Olympics and he came tantalisingly close to adding another podium finish at the 2016 Rio Games, only to miss out by a point.

While it is documented, Bindra recalled how he carried on with his shooting after finding out that his gun had been tampered with just before the big final in Beijing.

"Just five minutes before the big final, I realised that the sight of my gun

had been altered just a little bit. There was complete panic that was running through my head, but funnily enough, going into Beijing I had also trained for it.

"I was frozen for a moment though and had no clue what to do but giving up was not an option. I decided that I have to fight, hence I got up and tried to get my sights working in order. From there on I shot the best 10 shot of my life that eventually got me the medal." — PTI