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Gaikwad, Jadeja help
CSK beat KKR; MI
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NEARBY



Delhi reports highest single-day spike in cases

NEW DELHI

Delhi recorded 5,739 new COVID-19 cases in the past 24 hours, the highest in the city so far. A total of 60,124 tests were conducted with a positivity rate of 9.55%, in the past 24 hours. The Capital also saw 27 virus-related deaths and 4,138 recoveries.

CITY ▶ PAGE 3

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'Act against BJP leaders for hate speeches'

NEW DELHI

The Delhi Assembly's Minority Welfare Committee has directed government officials concerned to pursue criminal action against BJP leaders – Parvesh Verma and Kapil Mishra – for giving "provocative speeches" before the riots in north-east Delhi earlier this year.

CITY ▶ PAGE 3

3 killed in French church attack

Knife attacker, who beheaded a woman, shot by police while being detained

REUTERS

NICE

A knife-wielding attacker shouting "Allahu Akbar" beheaded a woman and killed two other people at a church in the French city of Nice on Thursday.

Within hours of the Nice attack, the police killed a man who had threatened passersby with a handgun in Montfavet, near the southern French city of Avignon. He was also shouting "Allahu Akbar", according to radio station Europe 1.

Nice's Mayor Christian Estrosi said the attack had happened in or near Notre Dame church and was similar to the beheading earlier this month near Paris of a teacher who had used cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed in a civics class.

Thursday's attacks, on the birthday of the Prophet Mohammed, came at a time of growing Muslim anger at France's defence of the right to publish the cartoons.

Protesters have denounced France in several Muslim-majority countries.

After the Nice attack, Prime Minister Jean Castex raised France's security alert to its highest level and said the government's response



State of disbelief: A relative of a knife attack victim cries in front of the Basilica of Notre-Dame de Nice in France on Thursday. ▶ AFP

would be firm. One of the people killed inside the church was believed to be the church warden, Mr. Estrosi said, adding that one woman had escaped from inside the church into a bar opposite the 19th century neo-Gothic building.

Enough is enough'

"The suspected knife attacker was shot by police while being detained. He is on his way to hospital, he is alive," Mr. Estrosi told reporters.

"Enough is enough," he

added. "It's time now for France to exonerate itself from the laws of peace in order to definitively wipe out Islamo-fascism from our territory".

The attack was also condemned by the European Commission, the Vatican, Britain, the Netherlands, Italy, Spain and Turkey, whose President Tayyip Erdogan earlier this week slammed France over displays of the Prophet Mohammad.

MORE REPORTS ON ▶ PAGE 11

Embassy guard attacked

A Saudi citizen wounded a guard in a knife attack on Thursday at the French consulate in Jeddah. "The assailant was apprehended by Saudi security forces immediately after the attack. The guard was taken to hospital and his life is not in danger," the French Embassy said in a statement. ▶ PAGE 11

PLA upgrading troops' quarters ahead of winter

ANANTH KRISHNAN

China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) on Thursday outlined plans to upgrade the living conditions along the border of its troops in high-altitude areas through the winter, suggesting that it was preparing for the long haul amid continuing tensions along the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

PLA Senior Colonel Wu Qian, a spokesperson for the Ministry of Defence, outlined the plans for what he called "improvement of border defence troops' training and living conditions on [the Tibetan plateau] by high-tech applications".

Insulated cabin

This included, he said, new accommodation with "a self-energised insulated cabin" that would in areas "where the outdoor temperature is -40°C with an elevation of above 5,000 m [keep] the indoor temperature at higher than 15°C".

The new cabins, he said, would also have installed "new thermal insulation devices for food storage".

MORE REPORTS ON ▶ PAGE 8

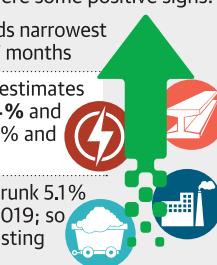
Lowest core sector shrinking since March

Rise in steel, electricity, coal output

Core correction?

India's core sector output contracted for the seventh consecutive month. However, there were some positive signs:

- At 0.8%, the decline in core sector output in September is the least since March
- Coal (21.2%), steel (0.9%) and electricity (3.7%) record positive growth
- Output had shrunk 5.1% in September 2019; so lower base boosting numbers



SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

India's eight core industry sectors shrank just 0.8% in September on a year-on-year basis, recording their lowest contraction since March 2020, with electricity and steel output clocking positive growth for the first time since March, and coal production rising for the second month in a row.

The final growth rate of Index of Eight Core Industries for June 2020 is revised to (-) 12.4%, said an official statement on Thursday. Earlier, output was estimated to have declined by 15% in June. Similarly, August had recorded a 8.5% dip in the index as per earlier estimates, which has been moderated to a 7.3% decline.

contracted in September by 0.3%. The Office of the Economic Adviser in the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, which compiles the Index of Eight Core Industries, also revised its estimates for June and August.

"The final growth rate of Index of Eight Core Industries for June 2020 is revised to (-) 12.4%", said an official statement on Thursday. Earlier, output was estimated to have declined by 15% in June. Similarly, August had recorded a 8.5% dip in the index as per earlier estimates, which has been moderated to a 7.3% decline.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Centre sets up commission to tackle NCR pollution

22-year-old EPCA dissolved; new body brought in through ordinance, awaits formal perusal by SC

JACOB KOSHY

NEW DELHI

Dissolving the 22-year-old Environmental Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority that has so far addressed air pollution in Delhi, the Centre has constituted a "permanent" body – Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas.

Encompassing Delhi, Punjab, Rajasthan, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, the all-powerful body assumes several powers to coordinate action among States, levy fines – ranging up to ₹1 crore or five years in prison – to address air pollution. Brought in via an ordinance on Thursday, the commission awaits a formal perusal by the Supreme Court before it can be



No respite: Smog engulfs NH-24 as Delhi's air quality remains in the 'very poor' category on Thursday. ▶ SANDEEP SAXENA

brought into effect.

The panel will have at least six permanent members and will be headed by a former or incumbent Secretary to the Central government, or a Chief Secretary to a State government. It will have members from Ministries as well as representatives from States.

The Central Pollution Con-

ditionalists and experts have said in tackling air pollution in Delhi-NCR, has been the inability of agencies such as the CPCB to consistently enforce rules on the ground.

Rules enforcement

A senior government official said the commission will be empowered to constitute special investigative groups for stricter implementation, but the letter of the ordinance has no such details.

"EPCA had almost similar powers but failed miserably in cleaning the air even after being in force for more than 20 years. The question of whether it's a positive move or just a wasteful exercise will be decided on the fact whether the ordinance changes the status quo when it comes to

MORE REPORTS ON ▶ PAGE 2

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SC stays HC nod for probe against CM

'Uttarakhand High Court order for CBI inquiry too drastic'

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday stayed an Uttarakhand High Court order directing a CBI probe into corruption allegations against Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat.

A bench, led by Justice Ashok Bhushan, said it was too "drastic" for the High Court to have passed such an order without giving Mr.

Rawat an opportunity of hearing.

'Caught by surprise'

Attorney General K.K. Venugopal, appearing for Mr. Rawat, said the order "caught everyone by surprise" and was against the principles of natural justice.

The case pertains to corruption allegations levelled by two journalists – Umesh Sharma and Shiv Prasad

Semwal – pertaining to money transferred allegedly into the accounts of relatives of Mr. Rawat in 2016 to support appointment of a person as head of "Gau Seva Ayog" of Jharkhand when he was the in-charge of Jharkhand BJP unit.

Justice Bhushan said even the State was not arraigned as a party before the court.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

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NIA searches on in Kashmir and Delhi

NGO run by ex-DMC chief raided

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI/ SRINAGAR

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) conducted searches at seven locations in the Kashmir Valley and two locations in Delhi for the second day in connection with a case pertaining to "certain NGOs and Trusts raising funds in the name of charitable activities and then using those funds for carrying out secessionist and separatist activities in J&K".

The NIA said the case was registered under various sections of the anti-terror law, UAPA, on directions of the Union Home Ministry, on receipt of credible information that certain NGOs and Trusts are collecting funds domestically and abroad through donations and business contributions in the name of various welfare activities such as public health and education.

"Further, these funds are sent to J&K through various channels such as hawala and cash couriers and are used to carry out and sustain secessionist and terror-

rism activities in J&K," the NIA said in a statement.

<p

IN BRIEF

Protesters block DND flyway over death of man

Commuters on Delhi-Noida-Direct (DND) flyway witnessed heavy traffic jam on Thursday as hundreds of people blocked the road, demanding strict action over death of a 22-year-old man in Rohini here. The man was allegedly found dead at his home in Rohini a month ago. The father of the deceased, had filed a complaint alleging that three people were responsible for the death of his son. The victim had uploaded a video on social media before his death. The protesters gathered at DND flyover at 11 a.m., demanding action against the three persons.

Artisans in the spotlight at Diwali Mela in Capital

NEW DELHI

To bring in the festive cheer of Deepavali, and give the residents an opportunity to shop for traditional gifts, the Delhi Tourism is organising a Diwali Mela along with the Ministry of Minority Affairs. The theme for the mela is 'vocal for local' with over 100 stalls at Dilli Haat Pitampura and INA, being dedicated to artisans. "We will be allowing just 100 people in at a time to ensure distancing, coupled with regular sanitisation of the premise, hand sanitiser stations and strict adherence to the general guidelines of wearing masks," the Tourism Department said. The mela will be held from November 4 to 14.

No action against seniors, Head Constable tells CP

'Cases were lodged against my sons'

HEMANI BHANDARI

NEW DELHI

In a letter to the Commissioner of Police, a Head Constable posted in the Police Control Room unit has alleged that low-rank officials face several issues while sharing grievances against other officials on the force.

The Head Constable claimed to have written over a hundred requests and complaint letters against several officers over the last eight years. "In 2012, I saved a boy from being harassed by a local goon. I took him to the police station concerned and helped him submit a complaint. Following that, the officials who were involved with the goon told him about how I helped. Since then, the goon and the officials have been after my life," he said.

A case under POCSO Act was registered against the Head Constable's son (22-

CM launches app for registration of pollution-related complaints

Rai says they have already received 228 complaints on the 'Green Delhi' application

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday launched an app - Green Delhi - which will involve citizen participation and ensure timely action in the government's fight against pollution.

The app enables citizens to register complaints, report pollution sources and violations of anti-pollution norms.

"The people of Delhi are suffering due to rising pollution levels. In the last five years, pollution has reduced by 25% due to several measures taken by the Delhi government and the people. Today, we are launching the 'Green Delhi' App. Our aim is to enable every citizen to participate in our 'Yuddh, Pradushan Ke Viruddh' campaign. No movement can happen until people take part in the movement," Mr. Kejriwal said.

Citizens can take photos, videos and audio of local causes of pollution such as garbage burning, industrial pollution and construction dust among others and upload on the app. For the effective resolution of the



Foam seen at the Yamuna on a smoggy day on Thursday in the national capital. • R.V. MOORTHY

complaints, Mr. Kejriwal said, constant monitoring will be done at the Delhi government's Green War Room. Complaints lodged on the app, which is currently available on the Play Store and will soon be rolled out on other platforms, will be received by the departments concerned and will have to be resolved in a time-bound manner as per specified timelines.

Mr. Kejriwal said citizens will also have the option of reopening complaints if they feel they have not been addressed adequately. He said when the issue is resolved, the department will also upload a picture that should show that the com-

plaint has been resolved in a specified timeline.

Environment Minister Gopal Rai later said the app has received 228 complaints related to pollution since its launch.

He added that a meeting on the complaints received and overall monitoring with nodal officers and coordinators of every department will be conducted on November 2.

Green marshals deployed
"For the monitoring of the complaints, we are deploying 70 Green Marshals. For instance, if a complaint is being registered repeatedly despite being resolved, the green marshals will visit the

location to inspect the situation for any false reporting," Mr. Rai added.

"Please make us aware of any difficulties that you may face in the app initially, and we will work towards resolving them. Our aim is to involve every agency and department, be it DDA, MCD, Delhi government, to strengthen our Yuddh, Pradushan Ke Viruddh," Mr. Kejriwal said.

Around 21 departments, including civic bodies, DDA, DJB, Delhi Police, DSIDC, Delhi government departments, he said, are attached to the app and every department has a nodal officer along with a senior officer who is in charge of all the complaints registered related to the department.

"Around 12 coordinators have been assigned to the green war room who will check every complaint and overlook the resolution of all the complaints as per the timeline, especially a specified timeline of 48 hours. If the complaints are not resolved within 48 hours, they will coordinate with the senior officials of the departments and work to resolve the complaints," Mr. Rai said.

City's air quality deteriorates to 'very poor' category, says CPCB

Delhi recorded its lowest minimum temp. for Oct. in 26 years

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The air in the Capital deteriorated on Thursday with the average AQI rising to 395, which is in the upper end of the "very poor" category, said Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

This was a day after the AQI improved on Wednesday to the "poor" category.

The AQI at Noida, Gurugram and Ghaziabad were 383, 384 and 389 respectively - all of which are in the "very poor" category. Greater Noida with an AQI of 412 was in the "severe" category.

Around 21 departments, including civic bodies, DDA, DJB, Delhi Police, DSIDC, Delhi government departments, he said, are attached to the app and every department has a nodal officer along with a senior officer who is in charge of all the complaints registered related to the department.

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"Extremely calm surface and boundary layer winds along with the low night-time boundary layer height resulted in low ven-

Air quality of Delhi-NCR

	Delhi	Gurugram	Noida
Good	395	384	389
Satisfactory	389	383	383
Moderate	383	383	412
Poor	383	383	412
Very poor	301-400	301-400	>401
Severe	101-200	101-200	
Extremely hazardous	201-300	201-300	

AIR QUALITY INDEX AT 4 P.M. YESTERDAY (AVERAGE OF PAST 24 HOURS) SOURCE: CPCB

upto 10-15 kmph, mainly clear sky and mist in the morning on October 30. The predominant surface wind is likely to be coming North-West direction of Delhi with wind speed up to 08-15 kmph, mainly clear sky and mist in the morning on October 31," the forecast read.

The Capital also recorded its lowest minimum temperature for October in 26 years with the night temperature on Thursday falling to 12.5 degrees Celsius, which was three degrees colder than the normal for this time of the year, said Met officials.

The city recorded the all-time lowest temperature 9.4 degrees Celsius on October 31 in 1937, according to data available with the Met department.

Last year, the lowest minimum in October was 16.5 degrees Celsius. The minimum temperature is likely to fall to 11 degrees Celsius on October 31.

The maximum temperature on Thursday was 32.2 degrees Celsius which was one degree above normal. The maximum temperature is likely to stay around the 30 degrees mark for the next few days.

SC says will study ordinance to check stubble burning

Chief Justice endorses bicycles as a clean mode of transport



The ordinance is meant to prevent and monitor stubble burning.

will issue directions," Chief Justice Bobde observed, posting the case to Friday next week.

As an aside, Chief Justice Bobde urged the lawyers appearing in the case to shed their "beautiful cars" and take to bicycles as a clean mode of transport.

On Monday, the court had decided to "keep in abeyance" its pre-Dasara order appointing former apex court judge, Justice Madan B. Lokur, to a one-

man committee to monitor/prevent stubble-burning.

The decision came soon after Mr. Mehta had informed the Bench about the coming of a law to "tackle the problem".

On October 16, the court had asked Justice Lokur to protect Delhi NCR from air pollution with the help of student volunteer forces deployed from the NCC, the NSS and the Bharat Scouts and Guides.

The court had said the student forces could patrol highways and fields in the three States and ensure that no fires were started in the fields.

The court had chosen Justice Lokur as he had headed the Green Bench which was monitoring stubble-burning for two whole years before his retirement.

The prisoners were lodged in 16 jails across Delhi before they were released on bail amid the pandemic.

Released on bail, High Court had ordered them back in jail

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday stayed an order of the Delhi High Court directing the surrender of 2,674 undertrials, who were released on interim bail in a move to prevent the spread of COVID-19 infection within the prison walls in the National Capital.

Stays HC order

A Bench led by Justice L. Nagendra Rao stopped the implementation of the High Court order of October 20 on the basis of a petition filed by NGO, National Forum on Prison Reforms, represented by advocates Harini Ragupathy, Ritu Kumar and Anika Wilson.

The prisoners were lodged in 16 jails across Delhi before they were released on bail amid the pandemic.

The High Court had or-



dered them to surrender from November 2 in a phased manner.

On October 20, the High Court had ordered 2,300 undertrial prisoners, who were granted bail by district courts, to surrender district-wise from November 2 to November 13. Another 356 prisoners, allowed to go on bail by the Delhi High Court itself, were ordered to surrender before their respective jail superintendents on November 13.

The High Court had however allowed them liberty to apply for extension of their bail.

In its petition the NGO said the order was passed under the "gross misunderstanding" that there were only three cases of COVID-19 amid the 16,000 inmates now.

Secondly, the HC order describing the undertrials as accused in heinous crimes was baseless as the High-Powered Committee which had recommended their release had looked into the facts of the cases.

Finally, the petition said the release of the undertrials on interim bail was based on a suo motu order of the apex court on March 23 in a frantic effort to reduce the number of inmates in the overpopulated prisons of the Capital. At the time, the prison population was 170% above capacity.

Man stabbed to death by two others

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

A 21-year-old man was allegedly stabbed to death by two men after he raised objection over an outsider visiting their co-

lony in south Delhi's Tughlaq Extension, the police said on Thursday.

The victim - Satish Kumar from Tughlaq Extension - was stabbed on Tuesday. He was rushed to Ba-

tra Hospital where he was declared dead. Kumar worked as a delivery man for a popular online food ordering and delivery platform site. One accused has been arrested.

IPL betting racket busted; three arrested

NEW DELHI

With the arrest of three people, the police on Thursday claimed to have busted an IPL betting racket.

Acting on a tip-off, they arrested Ashish Gupta, Yogesh and Himanshu Rawat for allegedly accepting bets.

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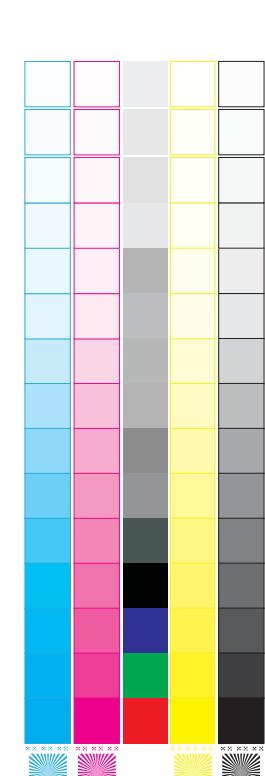
Jamia celebrates its centenary

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Jamia Millia Islamia on Thursday celebrated its Centenary Foundation Day with limited guests at the university's M.A. Ansari Auditorium. The university was founded at Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh on October 29, 1920.

Vice-Chancellor Najma Akhtar said that Jamia Millia Islamia is a unique institution as it believes in the philosophy of action and casts sloth and laziness aside.



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RISE 06:33	SET 17:37
RISE 17:43	SET 06:03
SUNDAY, NOV. 01	
RISE 06:33	SET 17:37
RISE 18:14	SET 06:56

Delhi Weather
max min
Delhi City 32 13
Safdarjung 32 13
Palam 29 15

Delhi Palam Today
30°C Cool morning with thick smoke haze and hazy warm day likely.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
31°C Dry weather would continue. Wide spread smog during morning and warm day with clear sky.

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IN BRIEF

Magsaysay winner interacts with students

NEW DELHI
Social entrepreneur and founder of NGO 'Goonj' Anshu Gupta interacted with students of Delhi government schools as part of their Entrepreneurship Mindset Curriculum (EMC) on Thursday. Deputy CM and Education Minister Manish Sisodia also joined the online session where Mr. Gupta shared his journey from starting his NGO in 1999 to winning the 2015 Ramon Magsaysay Award.

BJP gives ₹5 lakh aid to murder victim's kin
NEW DELHI
Delhi BJP chief Adesh Gupta on Thursday met the family of Sushil who was allegedly murdered for playing loud religious music in Adarsh Nagar. During the quarrel, two of his siblings also suffered injuries. Mr. Gupta also provided financial assistance of ₹5 lakh to the family and assured them of strict action against the culprits. "I appeal to CM Arvind Kejriwal to get this case heard in fast track court," Mr. Gupta said.

Nikita murder case: third accused held

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
FARIDABAD
Another accused has been arrested by the Faridabad police in the Nikita murder case for allegedly supplying a pistol used in commission of crime, the police said. This is the third arrest in the case. The 20-year-old was shot point-blank outside her college by a stalker and his friend on Monday.

The third accused, Azru, was arrested from Nuh late on Wednesday.

Haryana Home Minister Anik Vij said that the trial for the case will be conducted in a fast track court. The police have been asked to file the chargesheet at the earliest.

A senior police officer said that Tausheef, the prime accused, had come in contact with Azru through his maternal uncle Islamuddin, who has criminal antecedents. "Azru provided a country-made pistol to Tausheef for the murder," said the officer. Azru was arrested from Nuh after raids at a dozen places, said a tweet by Faridabad Police.

Tausheef and Azru were both produced in the court during the day and remanded to judicial custody.

Tausheef and his friend Rehan were arrested within 24 hours of the murder.

Delhi reports highest single-day spike in cases

With 5,739 new COVID-19 cases, Capital's tally reaches 3,75,753

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Delhi recorded 5,739 new COVID-19 cases in the past 24 hours, the highest number of daily cases reported for the third consecutive day since the pandemic began.

On Wednesday, 5,673 cases were reported and on Tuesday, 4,853 cases were reported in the Capital.

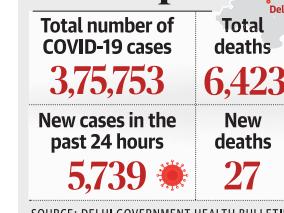
A total of 60,124 tests were conducted with a positivity rate of 9.55% in the past 24 hours. The city also saw 27 deaths and 4,138 recoveries. The total number of cases now stands at 3,75,753 and total number of deaths at 6,423. With a total of 3,38,378 recoveries, there are 30,952 active cases in the city at present.

The number of containment zones has risen to 3,113. The government bulletin showed that out of 15,749 available hospital beds, 9,895 were vacant.



A healthcare worker at Kamaruddin Nagar in New Delhi on Thursday. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Virus spread



Delhi Health Minister Sa-

tyendar Jain said that the city is seeing a spike in virus cases as the Delhi government is conducting aggressive tracing and testing. He said that it was too early to comment if the spike was a "third wave" in the city, but said that factors like the festive season could also be another reason.

The Minister said that the government was fully prepared to deal with the rise in cases.

the

Govt. changes land use of plot for V-P's residence

Master Plan and Zonal Plan modified 'after carefully considering all aspects of matter'

DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI

The Centre this week approved the change in land-use of a 15-acre plot near Rashtrapati Bhavan for the construction of a new residential complex for the Vice-President as a part of the Central Vista redevelopment project.

The Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry on Wednesday notified the change in land-use of the plot on Church Road, near the Delhi Transport Corporation's Central Secretariat Bus Terminal, from "transportation (bus terminal/parking) and government (President Estate and Parliament House)" to "residential" in the Master Plan for Delhi-2021. In the Zonal Development Plan, the land-use was changed from transportation and re-



Centre had approved change in land use for plots for PM's residence, new Parliament and govt. offices in March.

■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

creational (neighbourhood play area) to residential.

The plot is located with Church Road to its north, Rashtrapati Bhavan and North Block to its south, part of North Block to its east, and

the Delhi Development Authority's (DDA) Board of Enquiry had considered the objections. It said the Central government had decided to modify the Master Plan and Zonal Plan "after carefully considering all aspects of the matter".

While the notification does not mention what the plot will be used for, sources involved with the Central Vista project, which includes the construction of a new Parliament building, Prime Minister's residence and 10 new office buildings for Ministries, said it will house the Vice-President's Enclave.

In March this year, the Centre had approved the change in land-use for plots for the new Parliament, Prime Minister's residence and government offices.

'Govt. ignored plaints on misgovernance at JNU'

We wrote 3 letters to President: JNTUA

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Reacting to an order issued by the Ministry of Education stating that the President of India and the Visitor of DU has initiated an inquiry against the Vice-Chancellor of the university, the JNU Teachers' Association asked why the Ministry had ignored complaints about alleged misgovernance at the JNU.

The JNTUA said that the President is the Visitor of both universities and the common appointing authority of their Vice-Chancellors. Similar provisions to those in the DU Act have been invoked in taking the present action also exist in the JNU Act.

"The charges of misgovernance in JNU have been repeatedly brought to the attention of the Department of Higher Education along with details, including documentation that served as evidence. The JNTUA had also

written three open letters to the Visitor between December 9, 2019 and January 6, 2020," it said.

The background to these letters, the association said, included the crisis created in the university by the unilateral host fee hike decision, the mockery of an attempted "WhatsApp examination" and then the gruesome incident of mob violence that was unleashed at JNU on January 5.

"In the background of the inquiry against, and suspension of, the DU V-C and the initiation of the process of selection of the next JNU V-C, JNU faculty can thus legitimately ask why the Department of Higher Education has remained a mute spectator to the systematic destruction of one of India's premier universities and the unique synergy of academic excellence, social equity and democracy that became its hallmark," the JNTUA said.

Desist from politics over salary issue, Sisodia tells Mayors

'Outstanding loan to civic bodies is ₹6,008 cr.'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Thursday wrote to the Mayors of the three municipal corporations in Delhi, requesting them to desist from "petty politics" over the issue of delayed salaries to health workers in MCD hospitals.

The three Mayors had earlier this week protested in front of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's residence claiming a large amount of balance payment from the Delhi government to the MCDs was due. Mr. Sisodia had termed their claim "bogus".

"From your actions, it is clear that rather than finding a viable resolution to the matter using all administrative options available to the MCDs, you are only interested in peddling lies and indulging in shameful politics over the issue," Mr. Sisodia stated.

He also sought to present facts showing that not only had the Delhi government paid all the funds due to the MCDs as per the Fifth Finance Commission

it paid over and above this amount resulting in a "huge outstanding loan".

According to Mr. Sisodia, as on April 1 2020, out of a total outstanding loan of ₹6,008 crore, as per records of the Urban Development Department, ₹1,977 crore was outstanding from the EDMC, ₹3,243 crore from the North Corporation and ₹788 crore from the SDMC. The three civic bodies, he said, collectively owed ₹2596.32 crore in arrears to the Delhi Jal Board.

Woman alleges rape inside hospital

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GURUGRAM

A 21-year-old woman, who was undergoing treatment for tuberculosis, was allegedly raped inside Fortis Memorial Research Hospital in Sector 44 here. The police have registered a case, but the culprit is yet to be identified.

The woman, a resident of Mahendragarh, was brought to the hospital on October 21 for the treatment and was admitted to the ICU.

On Tuesday, the woman, in a semi-conscious state, scribbled on a piece of paper about the alleged incident to her father. The matter was then reported to the police and an FIR was registered at Sushant Lok police station on charge of rape.

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• NOIDA, Nirula's Sec-2, Near Metro Station, Sec-15, Noida, UP
• LAJPAT NAGAR, 49, Main Ring Road, Adj. Haldi Ram, Near Moolchand Crossing

Delhi riots: 'Act against BJP leaders for hate speeches'

Minority panel issues order to Delhi govt.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Assembly's Minority Welfare Committee has directed the government officials concerned to pursue criminal action against BJP leaders for giving alleged provocative speeches before the riots in north-east Delhi earlier this year.

According to a statement issued by the committee, its chairman Amanatullah Khan had directed that action be pursued against BJP MP Parvesh Verma and party leader Kapil Mishra. Mr. Khan, it said, had directed Principal Secretary (Home) B.S. Bhalla for prompt action in relation to Delhi Police's alleged refusal to share copies of FIRs registered in riot cases.

Mr. Bhalla, as per the statement, said that the opinion of the Law Department will be sought over refusal of police to provide copies of FIRs.

The committee looked at cases of loss suffered by complainants whose shops and houses were looted and burnt, but they were either paid little or no compensation, added the statement.

The committee also watched a video clip in which four men in police uniform entered a mosque, which was allegedly later set ablaze, and heard submissions from some riot victims whose grievous injuries were documented as "minor" by doctors and the compensation amount disbursed to them was less than the losses suffered.

Compensation worth over ₹24 crore has been paid, the statement said. Out of a total 3,300 cases of compensation, 657 were rejected by officials, following review by the Waqf Board, but 86 were again found suitable for reconsideration, the statement added.

Almost a month after bail, riot accused released

NGOs, individuals helped arrange surety

HEMANI BHANDARI
NEW DELHI

Almost a month after Noor Mohammed – an accused in nine cases in connection with Delhi riots – was granted bail in all of them, he was released from jail on Wednesday night.

The Hindu on October 13 had reported that Mohammed's family has been unable to arrange for the surety of approximately ₹1.75 lakh for his release after which several NGOs and people in individual capacities approached his advocate Akhtar Shamim and expressed their willingness to help.

Mr. Shamim said Jamian-Ulema-e-Hind was finally decided as the organisation which would raise surety for Mohammed. "Fixed deposits receipts were made in the name of Mohammed's family members and the same were produced

before the court on Tuesday after which verification was conducted and he was released on Wednesday night," the advocate said.

On October 5, a Delhi court granted bail to Mohammed in three cases of rioting, vandalism and causing mischief by fire among other charges, stating that "he cannot be made to incarcerate in jail for infinity just on the ground that the investigations of the cases are going on".

Court closes defamation case against Kapil Mishra after apology

He had made offensive statements against AAP leaders

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Following an unconditional apology tendered by BJP leader Kapil Mishra to AAP leader and Health Minister Satyendar Jain, a Delhi Court has closed a criminal defamation case against him.

The case stems from a complaint filed by Mr. Jain against the BJP leader in 2017 for his defamatory statements against him and Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal.

Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Vishal Pahuja recorded the statement of Mr. Mishra that he was willing to tender the unconditional apology.

After recording the statement of Mr. Mishra, and Mr. Jain, the court disposed of the defamation complaint as withdrawn.

"It is submitted by the accused [Mr.

Mishra] that he is ready to make a statement before the court tendering unconditional apology. Complainant [Mr. Jain] also submitted that in the case the accused gives his statement before the court, he shall withdraw the present complaint," the court noted.

AAP's response

Reacting to the development, Mr. Jain said the accusations made were extremely offensive which left him completely distressed. "His unconditional apology exposes the reality that he had no ground to such allegations and did that with a political purpose," Mr. Jain added.

AAP leader Saurabh Bhardwaj said, "This whole incident proves that the BJP was behind the comments of Kapil Mishra."

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DEATH



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Rev. Dr. E.C. John

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I will quit politics if MSP scheme ever ends: CM

Cong. has a habit of misleading people'

ASHOK KUMAR
GURUGRAM

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal, addressing a rally at election-bound Baroda Assembly segment in Sonipat, on Thursday said he would quit politics if the Minimum Support Price scheme ever ended, adding that Congress had a habit of misleading people by telling lies. He also accused the grand old party of being "status quoist" and averse to bringing changes.

In his first election rally for the Baroda bypoll, Mr. Lal, addressing a gathering at Kathura village, assured farmers that the MSP scheme would continue to stay and never end. "If the MSP scheme ever ends, I will quit politics," announced Mr. Lal, in an election being fought in the backdrop of large-scale protests in the State over farm legislations and Baroda being predominantly a rural segment.

Allaying the fears of the farmers, Mr. Lal said the *mandis* would stay. He said the farmers earlier had only one shop to sell their produce, but now they have two. "They can sell at the government shop (*the mandis*) or the private shop (outside the *mandis*)," said Mr. Lal, attacking Congress for misleading people by spreading lies on *mandis* and the MSP scheme.

He said Congress was in habit of telling lies and the party tried to spread misinformation on amendments to Article 370 and enact-



ment of Citizenship Amendment Act as well.

Enlisting the initiatives taken by his government, including providing government jobs on merit, Mr. Lal said his party in Haryana was working to change the system, but Congress was "status quoist" and was pained at bringing changes.

Hinting at factionalism at Congress, Mr. Lal said members from both Bharatiya Janata Party and the Jannayak Janta Party were present in the rally, but in Congress only the father-son duo (former Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda and his Rajya Sabha MP son Deepender Hooda) were canvassing. He said the Congress had fielded a "dummy candidate" and no one knew him before he was made the party's nominee.

Baroda being a Jat-dominant Assembly seat, Mr. Lal, subtly addressing the concerns of voting along caste lines, alluded how his party candidate Yogeshwar Dutt, a Brahmin, trained a Jhajjar-based Jat wrestler Bajrang Punia to bring home the point that his party did not believe in caste.

Test rates cut

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GURUGRAM

The Haryana government on Thursday reduced the rates for RT-PCR and Rapid Antigen tests for private laboratories to ₹900 and ₹500 respectively.

Punjab parties criticise Centre's move to withhold rural fund

Decision will badly hit development work in the State, say Chief Minister

VIKAS VASUDEV

CHANDIGARH

Political parties in Punjab – the Congress, the Shiromani Akali Dal and the Aam Aadmi Party – have hit out at the BJP-led Central government for its decision to withhold the State's Rural Development Fund (RDF).

While the ruling Congress termed the decision 'unfortunate', AAP described it as a revengeful act on the part of the Centre. The Shiromani Akali Dal accused it of resorting to 'victimisation' of farmers.

Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Thursday urged the Centre to review the decision as the move would badly impact rural development works in the State as he termed the move 'unfortunate'.



CM Amarinder Singh

ny of utilisation of funds, this was, however, a first as far as non-release of RDF was concerned," he said, expressing serious concern over the development.

The Chief Minister said doubts were being raised in several quarters about the timing of the Union Cabinet's decision not to release RDF funds to the tune of more than ₹1,000 crore at the present juncture, amid the controversy over Centre's farm laws.

"The timing is suspect and points to dubious motivation behind the move," he said, urging the Centre to immediately reconsider and give the State's dues against RDF while the scrutiny continues, as has been the case in the past.

Leader of the Opposition

and AAP MLA Harpal Cheema said, "The move is an assault on the federal structure of the country and an attempt to implement the black laws on agriculture, which AAP vehemently opposes."

'White paper' sought
Mr. Cheema demanded that the Chief Minister immediately issue a "white paper" not only on the RDF used during his own tenure but also on the previous SAD-BJP government's tenure.

Shiromani Akali Dal chief Sukhbir Singh Badal accused the Union government of resorting to victimisation of farmers and said that with the Centre not making any provision for RDF in the cash credit limit, it would adversely affect the food grain procurement system in Punjab.

Fresh unrest on Assam-Mizoram border

Non-withdrawal of Mizoram Police from disputed area reason behind local anger'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI

The boundary dispute between Assam and Mizoram has flared up again after a brief lull.

Locals in southern Assam's Cachar and Karimganj districts on Wednesday blocked the roads to Mizoram to leave more than 100 goods-laden trucks stranded. The blockade to protest the alleged refusal of Mizoram Police personnel to withdraw from National Highway 306, the lifeline of Mizoram.

Officials in Assam said people of Mizoram, allegedly backed by local authorities and NGOs, have encroached upon large swathes of area in Cachar and Karimganj districts. The two States share a 164.6 km border.

dent of Police of Mizoram's Kolasib district adjoining Assam.

"Our investigation shows miscreants from Mizoram could be involved in the violence and arson along the border. Since the cases are under the purview of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, we have decided to transfer the probe to a Central agency," he said.

Move to ensure peace
Officials in Mizoram said the governments of the two States were trying to find a way to ensure peace along the border.

The situation on the border took an ugly turn on October 17 after some 20 shops and houses were burnt and more than 50 people injured

in attacks and counter-attacks by people on either side.

Meanwhile, the indefinite economic blockade from Thursday, called by traders, transporters and local NGOs in Assam against Meghalaya, has been called off. This followed a meeting between the Deputy Commissioners and Superintendents of Police of western Assam's Goalpara and Meghalaya's North Garo Hills district on Wednesday.

"We called off the blockade after Meghalaya officials informed us about the revised standard operating procedures and easing of travel restrictions for people from Assam and other States if COVID-19 protocols are adhered to," a leader of the local unit of the All Assam Students' Union said.

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr. P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Anuj Kumar S/o Vinod Kumar, R/o A-265, Gali No. 11, 1st Pusta, Circular Road, Sonia Vihar, Delhi, has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case registered vide FIR No.14/2017 U/s 379/411/34 IPC has been lodged at P.S. Timarpur, Delhi punishable and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused Anuj Kumar cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Anuj Kumar has absconded (or is concealing themselves to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Anuj Kumar of case FIR No.14/2017 U/s 379/411/34 IPC IPC at PS. Timarpur, Delhi are required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before 17.12.2020.

By Order
Ms. Riya Guha
Metropolitan Magistrate
Room No. 28, Tis Hazari Court,
Delhi

DP/663/N/2020

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of a male namely **Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown** was found on 22.10.2020 at Near Coat Market, Dharampura Red Light, Shastri Park, Delhi. In this regard

DD No. 10-A dated 22.10.2020 has been lodged at Police Station, Shastri Park, Delhi. Identification of unidentified dead body of male is as under:

Name: Unknown, Age: About 35 Years, Height: 5'4", Complexion: Black, Face: Oval, Hair: Curly, Wearing: Cream Colour Shirt and Blue Colour Jeans.

If anyone have any information or clue about this male deceased may kindly be inform undersigned.

SHO
Police Station, Shastri Park, Delhi
Ph.: 011-22170120, 875087023

DP/393/NE/2020

SEARCH FOR MISSING GIRL

General public is hereby informed that one Girl Namely: Manshi D/o Raj Kumar Sharma R/o Near Aryam International School Pooth Khurd, Delhi. Age: About 16 Years, Height: 3'8", Built: Thin, Face: Round, Complexion: Fair, Wearing: White top and Yellow pant and chappal, has been missing/kidnapping for her house on 15.10.2020 from 7:00pm the area of PS. Bawana, Delhi.

In this regard a FIR No. 644/20, U/s 363 IPC Dated 17.10.2020 has been lodged at P.S. Bawana, Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this girl but no clue has come to light so far.

Any person having any information or clue about this girl kindly inform to the following.

E-Mail: cic@cbi.gov.in
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WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Friday: Heavy rainfall very likely at isolated places over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal; thunderstorm with lightning very likely at isolated places over Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Kerala and Mahe

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	35.4	24.2	Kozhikode	—	33.8	26.3
Ahmedabad	—	35.0	18.4	Kurnool	—	29.8	23.3
Aizawl	—	27.3	17.1	Lucknow	—	33.2	17.6
Allahabad	—	32.8	19.4	Madurai	—	34.8	22.7
Bengaluru	—	27.0	18.2	Mangaluru	—	33.5	24.0
Bhopal	—	32.6	16.7	Mumbai	—	—	17.7
Bhubaneswar	—	31.6	19.5	Mysuru	—	31.0	21.0
Chandigarh	—	31.4	14.1	New Delhi	—	31.4	13.4
Chennai	133.4	26.3	23.6	Patna	—	33.2	17.3
Coimbatore	—	35.4	22.9	Poorni Blair	18.8	29.8	24.2
Dehradun	—	—	13.1	Puducherry	—	30.0	23.6
Gangtok	—	22.1	13.1	Pune	—	31.9	18.2
Goa	—	31.5	24.8	Raipur	—	32.4	19.5
Guwahati	—	33.0	23.4	Ranchi	—	28.8	13.0
Hubballi	—	28.0	18.0	Shillong	—	24.8	15.4
Hyderabad	—	31.0	17.6	Shimla	—	20.4	10.2
Imphal	—	30.6	16.9	Srinagar	—	19.7	2.0
Jaipur	—	—	17.1	Thiruvananthapuram	—	32.3	23.6
Kochi	0.4	31.2	24.2	Tiruchi	—	34.0	23.0
Kohima	—	25.8	17.2	Vijayawada	—	32.0	24.0
Kolkata	—	33.2	22.8	Visakhapatnam	—	33.8	23.3

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

Yesterday

CITIES	SO ₂	NO _x	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	29	122	.39	133	127	...
Bengaluru	.8	.60	.36	88	102	...
Chennai	48	.15	.51	79	—	...
Delhi	37	159	113	424	429	...
Hyderabad	.6	.59	.29	137	124	...
Kolkata	12	.21	.24	209	130	...
Lucknow	15	.72	.18	188	—	...
Mumbai	10	.90	.31	155	154	...
Pune	—	.52	—	—	—	...
Visakhapatnam	14	.60	.28	72	116	...

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_x: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Maharashtra's active COVID-19 cases come down to 1,27,603

With discharge of 7,883 more patients, State's recovery rate reaches 89.69%

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PUNE

Maharashtra reported 5,902 new COVID-19 cases on Thursday as opposed to 7,883 recoveries, taking the State's total tally to 16,66,668 while its number of active cases dipped further to 1,27,603. With 156 deaths, the fatality toll reached 43,710.

The cumulative recoveries have risen to 14,94,809 with the State's recovery rate climbing further to 89.69%.

"Of a total 88,37,133 laboratory samples tested thus far, 16,66,668 (18.86%) have returned positive with 69,000 samples across the State being tested in the last 24 hours," State Surveillance Officer Dr. Pradeep Awate said, adding that the case fatality rate currently stood at 2.62%.

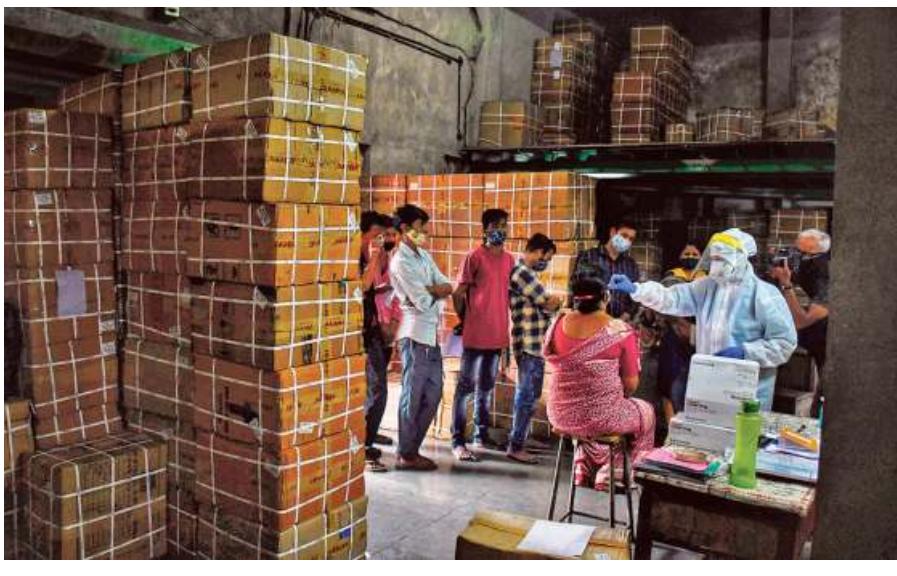
Pune district reported only 762 cases to take its total tally to 3,32,354 while 21 deaths saw its toll reach 6,657. As per the Pune district administration, the recovery rate is currently 93.69% with 12,576 cases active.

Mumbai tally

Mumbai reported 1,120 cases to take its total tally to 2,55,360 of whom 19,082 are active. As many as 33 fatalities saw the city's death toll touch 10,229.

Nagpur district in Vidarbha reported 499 new cases, taking the district's total tally to 1,01,341 of whom 5,156 are active. Ten deaths saw the toll stand at 2,722.

In western Maharashtra, Satara reported seven deaths with its toll reaching 1,406. As many as 186 fresh cases saw the total tally rise to 47,113 of whom 4,665 are active. Sangli reported 133 cases and seven deaths as the district's total tally



Test and isolate: A health worker runs an antigen test in a logistics godown at Goregaon in Mumbai on Thursday. ■ AADESH CHAUDHARI

jumped to 46,562 of whom 3,013 are active.

total tally climbed to 93,412 of whom only 5,037 are active. Neighbouring Jalgaon reported 70 new cases and no deaths as its total tally touched 53,417 of whom only 2,149 are active, while its death toll stood at 1,344.

In the Mumbai Metropolitan Region, Thane reported 293 cases as its total tally crossed the 80,500 mark. Seven deaths were recorded, which saw its fatality

count rise to 2,036.

Lockdown extended

The State on Thursday announced extension of the lockdown till November 30. An order issued by Chief Secretary Sanjay Kumar said that guidelines issued under Mission Begin Again on September 30 and October 14 remained unchanged.

(With inputs from Alok Deshpande)

Minister Dilip Walse-Patil tests positive

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PUNE

Senior Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader and Maharashtra Minister for Excise and Labour Department, Dilip Walse-Patil, on Thursday tested positive for COVID-19.

A legislator from Ambegaon in Pune district, Mr. Walse-Patil tweeted about his health condition, while

stressing that he was perfectly fine and was undergoing treatment as a precautionary measure.

"Recently, I had undergone a COVID-19 test whose results have returned positive. However, my health is fine and I am not experiencing any trouble. I urge others who have come in contact with me to get themselves tested as well,"

the six-time MLA tweeted.

A few days earlier, Mr. Walse-Patil's fellow partymen – Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar and former minister Sunil Tatkare – tested positive.

Mr. Walse-Patil was present along with the NCP brass when former BJP leader Eknath Khadse joined Sharad Pawar's party on October 23.

All interim orders to continue till Dec. 22: HC

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Thursday directed that all interim orders passed by all courts in Maharashtra and Goa would continue till December 22, in view of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The direction is in continuation of previous orders passed by the HC which said that all the orders for eviction, dispossession, and demolition already passed by the courts would remain in abeyance till December 22.

A Bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta along with Justices A.A. Sayed, S.S. Shinde, and K.K. Tated was hearing a suo motu petition.

The HC said, "Although the situation in Maharashtra because of the pandemic has improved over the past few days, access to the courts of law is yet not free. To ensure that persons suffering orders of dispossession, demolition, eviction, etc., passed by

public authorities are not inconvenienced by reason of disability to approach the courts of law because of the restrictions on movements imposed by the State government as well as the requirement to maintain social distancing norms, we consider it just and proper to extend the interim orders passed by this court on this writ petition till December 22 or until further orders, whichever is earlier."

The court read the complaint and said, "The allegations are based upon the comments of the accused on social media. Evidence against the accused is of electronic nature. Therefore, an inquiry at the hands of the police is necessary for proceeding against the accused. Such inquiry will be helpful to decide the roles of the Indian Penal Code.

The court ordered an inquiry reported to be called in under Section 202 (postponement of issue of process) of the Code of Criminal Procedure from the police station concerned.



The Bombay High Court

The detailed tender document containing scope of service and other details, terms & conditions are available on www.jktenders.gov.in and complete bidding process will be online on said e-tender portal, as per following schedule:

S.No.	Nomenclature	Schedule
01	Tender Fee	Rs. 1000/-
02	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	Rs. 20,000/-
03	Last date for downloading & submission of tenders	04/11/2020 upto 4:00 p.m.
04	Date & time for opening of technical bids	05/11/2020 at 11:00 a.m.

Any clarification with regard to this tender can be obtained from the office of undersigned personally or through e-mail ammpurchase2@skims.ac.in. The tender notice is also available on SKIMS website www.skims.ac.in (for reference only).

Complete bidding process will be online at www.jktenders.gov.in. Technical and Price bids shall have to be submitted in electronic format on the said tender portal.

Director SKIMS reserves the right to accept/reject or cancel any tender or all tenders in full or part thereof without assigning any reason.

The tenders should be submitted strictly in accordance with the provisions of the detailed eNIT.

No: SIMS 323/2020-1928-34-5546-49
Dated: 27/10/2020

Sd/-
Asstt. Materials Management Officer
(Purchase-2nd)

No: SIMS 5549
Dt: 28.10.2020

CMYK

A N D N D E

Mayawati suspends 7 MLAs for rebelling

Will vote for BJP to defeat SP, she says

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
LUCKNOW

Accusing the Samajwadi Party (SP) of trying to break away her MLAs, Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) chief Mayawati on Thursday vowed to

ensure the defeat of the SP candidate in the MLC polls in Uttar Pradesh, even if it

meant that her party legislators would have to vote for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

The new phase of acrimony between the two parties comes a year after they contested the 2019 Lok Sabha election together.

The BSP would ensure the SP's defeat "even if our MLAs have to vote for



Grand collision

Livelihood concerns of present, not misgovernance of past, motivate Bihar's voters

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar had started with the advantage of Opposition disunity when campaigning began for the Assembly election in Bihar, but his patchy record in governance soon became the central conversation in the State. The voting rate in the first of the three phases of the election on Wednesday matched 2015 levels, and the COVID-19 pandemic has had little impact on voter enthusiasm. There is a new urgency and competitiveness in the arena ahead of the next two phases as some of the original calculations of parties are being tested. Mr. Kumar, who has been on the back foot following his mishandling of the pandemic, is hoping to win a fourth straight term by cashing in on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's popularity, which by all accounts has overtaken his own. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is seeking to chart an independent path, while professing to reinforce the alliance with the Janata Dal (United) that Mr. Kumar leads. The BJP campaigning has put the spotlight on Mr. Modi. The Lok Janashakti Party (LJP), another ally of the BJP at the Centre, is contesting separately and has focused its fire on Mr. Kumar, with considerable impact. It is possible that the BJP let one ally loose on another to fish in troubled waters. At the very least, the BJP has shown little interest in keeping the alliance tent in order.

Partly fuelled by this friction within and largely due to Mr. Kumar's inherent failures, the vulnerabilities of the JD(U)-BJP alliance have increased over the last fortnight. Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Prasad Yadav, carries a mixed bag of his father Lalu Prasad's legacy – of social justice and misgovernance. The 30-year-old leader of the Opposition alliance that also includes the Congress and the Left, had appeared to be a callow challenger to the battle-hardened Kumar at the beginning. His campaigning has forced a rethink among sceptics. He is rallying noticeable enthusiasm, and has struck a chord with the young voters on a question that matters the most to them – unemployment. The BJP mocked his promise of 10 lakh jobs initially, but came around to offering double that number itself. Mr. Kumar and Mr. Modi are invoking the memories of the RJD rule that ended in 2005, which they think will turn away voters from the party. The young Mr. Yadav is trying to take his politics beyond his father's legacy by appealing to new concerns. Mr. Modi has also deployed the familiar trope of the Ram temple to seek votes in Bihar. All said, the JD(U)-BJP alliance has a formidable social base that is not easy to breach. What Mr. Yadav has clearly managed to do so far is to challenge the alliance's impetuousness.

Gaps in learning

Students can still learn during the pandemic, if they get textbooks and resources

In a year of severe disruption for schools caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, students in rural areas have received only marginal assistance in the form of structured learning materials from teachers, and have had to rely more on parents and siblings to study at home. This unsettling finding by the Annual Status of Education Report 2020 should prompt the Centre and the State governments to plan remedial measures for the future, when it will be safe again for students to return to the classroom. In the interim, they must work with schools to make remote learning possible. The ASER 2020 survey covering 26 States and four Union Territories has come up with striking findings, including one of a shift in enrolments from private schools to government institutions, of about five percentage points over 2018, ranging from class one to higher secondary levels. Also, with the suspension of physical classes since the lockdown in March, there is a marked rise in students not being enrolled, either because they dropped out, or because it was not possible to get admitted. It must also concern governments that the digital divide stands out starkly once again: the survey found 43.6% of students in government schools without access to a smartphone, while 67.3% of those who received learning materials in these institutions got them over WhatsApp, underscoring the role played by gadgets and connectivity. On the other hand, only half the children got help with studies at home, a third got materials from teachers, and nearly 60% used textbooks.

The ASER survey provides data that could facilitate intervention by the education system in some respects, even if, going forward, schools opt for a hybrid solution of partial reopening and online learning. Expanding availability of textbooks to all, including those who dropped out or are waiting to be formally admitted, will help parents and siblings aid learning. Bridging the divide on educational aids, now including smartphones, will enable transmission of learning materials, and personal tutorial sessions. Beyond these basics, however, the education system could creatively use opportunities during the current year to broaden learning. Students could use the safety of the open countryside to learn, under guidance from teachers, a host of topics by doing things themselves. This is particularly feasible for lower classes, where observational learning creates a strong foundation. Educational video, which has helped thousands, can advance learning even beyond the pandemic, using talented teacher-communicators. States such as Tamil Nadu and Kerala have already hosted curriculum-based video lessons on the Internet, after beaming them on television. It will take out-of-the-box thinking during the pandemic to come up with interventions that are a substitute for traditional methods and prevent 2020 becoming a zero year, as parents everywhere remain wary of sending children to school.

The India-U.S. defence partnership is deepening

The optics around the 2+2 Dialogue in Delhi are defining — the defence ties between the two countries have come of age



RAKESH SOOD

The India-United States defence partnership received a major boost earlier this week with the visit of U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and U.S. Defence Secretary Mark Esper for the third round of the 2+2 Dialogue with their Indian counterparts, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. The joint statement spells out the highlights but the optics are what define the visit. At a time when most ministerial engagements and even summits are taking place virtually, the significance of two senior U.S. officials travelling to Delhi a week before the U.S. goes to the polls conveys an unambiguous political message — the defence partnership has come of age.

A long road

It has been a long process, with many ups and downs since the first modest steps were taken with the end of the Cold War three decades ago. The 1991 Kicklighter proposals (Lt. Gen. Claude Kicklighter was the Army commander at the U.S. Pacific Command) suggested establishing contacts between the three Services to promote exchanges and explore areas of cooperation. An Agreed Minute on Defence Cooperation was concluded in 1995 instituting a dialogue at the Defence Secretary level together with the setting up of a Technology Group.

The end of the Cold War had helped create this opening but the overhang of the nuclear issue continued to cast a shadow on the talks. There was little appreciation of each other's threat perceptions and the differences came to a head when India undertook a series of nuclear tests in 1998. The U.S. responded angrily by imposing a whole slew of economic sanctions

and leading the international condemnation campaign.

An intensive engagement followed with 18 rounds of talks between the then External Affairs Minister, the late Jaswant Singh, and then U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott spanning two years that helped bring about a shift in perceptions. Sanctions were gradually lifted and in 2005, a 10-year Framework for Defence Relationship established, followed by a Joint Declaration on Defence Cooperation in 2013 (<https://bit.ly/3mCnKsr>). The Framework agreement was renewed in 2015 for another decade.

The Framework laid out an institutional mechanism for areas of cooperation including joint exercises, intelligence exchanges, joint training for multinational operations including disaster relief and humanitarian assistance, technology transfer and a sharing of non-proliferation best practices. Initial movement was slow; it gathered momentum once the nuclear hurdle was overcome in 2008 with the India-U.S. civil nuclear deal.

There were other factors at play too. Equally important was the progressive opening up of the Indian economy that was registering an impressive annual growth rate of over 7%. Bilateral trade in goods and services was \$20 billion in 2000 and exceeded \$140 billion in 2018. The four million-strong Indian diaspora in the U.S. has come of political age and its impact can be seen in the bipartisan composition of the India Caucus (in the House) and the Senate Friends of India group. From less than \$400 million of defence acquisitions till 2005, the U.S. has since signed defence contracts of \$18 billion.

A bipartisan consensus

A bipartisan consensus supporting the steady growth in India-U.S. ties in both New Delhi and Washington has been a critical supporting factor. The first baby steps in the form of the Kicklighter proposals came in 1991 from the Bush administration (Republican) when P.V. Narasimha Rao led a Congress coalition. Following the nuclear tests,



Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee (Bharatiya Janata Party) welcomed President Bill Clinton (Democrat) to Delhi. The visit, taking place after 22 years — the previous one being U.S. President Jimmy Carter's visit in 1978 — marked a shift from "estranged democracies" to "natural allies". A Congress coalition led by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh carried the process forward with a Republican Bush administration. Heavy political lifting was needed to conclude the historic nuclear deal in 2008, removing the biggest legacy obstacle.

The biggest push has come from Prime Minister Narendra Modi overcoming the "hesitations of history" and taking forward the relationship, first with a Democratic Obama administration by announcing a Joint Strategic Vision for the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean Region in 2015 (<https://bit.ly/3IOX1uk>), followed by elevating the India-U.S. Strategic and Commercial Dialogue (launched in 2009 and the first round held in 2010) into the 2+2 dialogue in 2018 with the (Republican) Trump administration reflecting the 'Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership'. Mr. Modi is not constrained (at least on the strategic side) unlike Dr. Singh during his second term who faced opposition within his party, had a Defence Minister who preferred to shy away from any decision, and often had to prod a reluctant bureaucracy.

The signing, last week, of the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) providing for the sharing of geospatial data is the last of the foundational agreements. The first, General Security

Of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA), relating to securing of each other's military information was signed in 2002. The Congress-led Progressive Alliance government signed the End Use Monitoring Agreement (EUMA) in 2009 but then dragged its feet on the others on the grounds that it would jeopardise India's strategic autonomy. However, it was apparent that as military exercises with the U.S. expanded, both in scale and complexity, and U.S. military platforms were inducted, not signing these agreements was perceived as an obstacle to strengthening cooperation. Nearly 60 countries have signed BECA. In 2016, Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) relating to exchange of logistics support had been concluded, followed by Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) in 2018 permitting encryption standards of communication systems. More than 100 countries have signed these agreements with the U.S. Equivalent agreements on logistics and mutual security of military communication have also been signed with France but without the political fuss.

Breaking away from 'labels'

Developing the habit of working together has been a long process of building mutual respect and trust while accepting differences. The U.S. is used to dealing with allies (invariably junior partners in a U.S.-dominated alliance structure) and adversaries. India falls into neither category. Therefore, engaging as equal partners has been a learning experience for both India and the U.S. Recognising this, the U.S. categorised India as "A Major Defence Partner" in 2016, a position unique to India that was formalised in the National Defense Authorisation Act (2017) authorising the Secretaries of State and Defence to take necessary measures.

It has helped that India also joined the export control regimes (Australia Group, Missile Technology Control Regime and Wassenaar Arrangement) and has practices con-

sistent with the Nuclear Suppliers Group where its membership was blocked by China spuriously linking it to Pakistan. In 2018, India was placed in Category I of the Strategic Trade Authorisation, easing exports of sensitive technologies.

In every relationship, there is a push factor and a pull factor; an alignment of the two is called the convergence of interests. An idea matures when the timing is right. After all, the Quad (Australia, India, Japan and the U.S.) was first mooted in 2007 but after one meeting, it petered out till its re-emergence now. Alongside the ministerial meeting in Tokyo earlier this month, India was invited for the first time to attend the Five Eyes (a signals intelligence grouping set up in 1941 consisting of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the U.S.) meeting.

The policy debate in India is often caught up in 'labels'. When Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru described non-alignment as the guiding principle of Indian foreign policy, it was designed to expand India's diplomatic space. Yet, in 1971, when the Cold War directly impinged on India's national security, a non-aligned India balanced the threat by signing the Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation between the Government of India and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. However, during the 1970s and 1980s, it was often hijacked by the Non-aligned Movement tying up policy in ideological knots. Such became the hold of the label that even after the Cold War, India defined strategic autonomy as Non-alignment 2.0! The Indian strategic community needs to appreciate that policies cannot become prisoners of labels. Ultimately, the policy objective has to enhance India's strategic space and capability. That is the real symbolism of the in-person meeting in Delhi.

Rakesh Sood is a former diplomat and presently Distinguished Fellow at the Observer Research Foundation

An eviction in Sri Lanka, this day, that age

The sustained return of the Muslims to the north is crucial for the country's plural and democratic post-war future



AHILAN KADIRGAMAR

As societies overwhelmed by the novel coronavirus pandemic witness heightening fear, economic deprivation and a persisting curtailment of public events, remembering the past to chart a progressive future has become a casualty.

On October 30, 1990, the northern Muslims of Sri Lanka, a population of 75,000, were abruptly evicted by the LTTE that sought to reign supreme as the "sole representative" of the Tamils and their "homeland". The families were forced to leave with just a shopping bag and a few 100 rupees in hand. For the 30th anniversary of the inhuman expulsion, there will not be any public events of remembrance, unfortunately.

Over the last decade since the end of the war, remembering this act of ethnic cleansing at gun point (which displaced generations to live in refugee camps) was a way of mobilising support for resettling this long suffering community, and in doing so, rebuilding fraught relations between Muslims and Tamils, fellow minorities in Sri Lanka.

The tragic predicament of the Northern Muslim community, distraught by an unwelcoming Tamil nationalist political landscape and in fear of being attacked by Sinhala-Buddhist majoritarian forces, is but a symptom of polarisation that

gravely threatens Sri Lanka's chances for a plural and democratic post-war future.

A polarisation

After the end of the war in 2009, the Muslim community began returning to the North gradually, but the state had no coherent plan for their resettlement. Of the approximately 8,000 families who originate from Jaffna, about 2,000 registered with the local authorities to return; now only about 700 families have been able to return as residents. The displaced families have faced social and economic challenges, including bureaucratic hurdles to gain housing grants for the war affected, contested claims over land after their displacement and the abject lack of support for livelihoods. While there has been some progress with respect to their housing needs, the changing political context in the backdrop of attacks on Muslims in the south, particularly by chauvinist goon squads since 2012, to the vilification of Muslims after the Easter Sunday 2019 bombings, has cornered the community even in places like Jaffna.

Constituting about 10% of Sri Lanka's population, Muslims have proved ready targets in the past even if they are geographically spread over and are mainly Tamil-speaking but with a distinct ethnic identity. The extreme nationalists among the Sinhalese and Tamils, seem to be objective allies as they draw from the global and South Asian discourses of Islamophobia. The "war on terror" spearheaded by the United States in 2001 continues to resonate with the military



isled Sri Lankan state; the anti-Muslim assertions of Hindutva in neighbouring India are also being emulated by chauvinist actors in Sri Lanka.

In a country fast coming under the grip of majoritarianism and authoritarian populism, the everyday lives of minorities are eclipsed by fear. And the dynamics of such polarising politics at the national level inevitably manifests itself regionally as well. Indeed, the current context does not bode well for Tamil-Muslim relations in the remotest villages in the island's north and east. For, when polarisation is the dominant game in politics, suspicion and fear of treachery prevail.

Competing for resources

During the nearly 30 years of the civil war, massacres and counter massacres by the LTTE, the military and Muslim militias in the Eastern Province led to the redrawing of ethnic enclaves that to this day are being fiercely contested. In the post-war decade, it is claims over resources (from land to fishing landing sites) that have aggravated inter-ethnic relations not only in the deeply divided east, but also in the north where the Muslim community is smaller

and weaker. In many parts of the rural north today, the novel coronavirus pandemic has pushed people to re-double their efforts to cultivate land in order to survive. As income streams grind to a halt in many urban livelihoods, more people are turning to agriculture, betting on the upcoming monsoon. Regular farmers are increasing their acreage and irregular farmers are cultivating any small plots they can access, through renting and sharecropping, with a view towards subsistence.

As Sri Lanka turns to the rural economy and agriculture for survival in a pandemic-struck economy, families are putting more of their own labour into agriculture, while clearing fallow lands for cultivation. In this context, issues around ownership of land and access to state lands by displaced Tamil and Muslim communities can create ethnic tensions. Across the country, such contestations over land become fertile ground for ethno-nationalist mobilisation of social bases by the polarising political elite.

Plural north

Muslims who have resided in the north for centuries, had historically good relations with the Tamils. They added much to the colour and culture of the northern towns with their distinct architecture (as evident in urban Jaffna) and with businesses, such as tailoring and trading. In the rural north, Muslim families and villages, like those of the Tamils, were involved in agriculture and fisheries. Since the 1990 eviction, the north has become increasingly in-

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sular under the sway of bankrupt Tamil nationalist politics holding on to the legacy of the LTTE. In this context, the sustained return of the Muslims to the north is crucial for its plural future. As the pandemic-triggered economic depression reshapes the political economy of Sri Lanka, and an authoritarian and militarised regime is seen as the panacea for national problems, what would become of the future of the Northern Muslims? How will their voice emerge as existential fears of the pandemic and repression take hold?

Those on the peripheries

Sri Lanka has a history of failing to learn from its past and a tendency to step on its minorities. And in referring to minorities, we should not limit it to the vocal elite in Jaffna, but must include those on the peripheries. They are the hill country Tamils toiling in the plantations and rural masses oppressed along caste lines, and minorities within minorities, such as the Northern Muslims. Addressing the concerns of such minorities will require focusing on their freedoms as much on the resources for their economic rejuvenation, particularly during these times of a great social and economic upheaval. Remembering the tragic past of the northern Muslims and giving their plight the national attention it deserves is just one strand of the collective conscience needed to forge a plural and democratic country.

Ahilan Kadirgamar is Senior Lecturer, University of Jaffna and a member of the Jaffna People's Forum for Coexistence

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failed the test of time.

A.V. NARAYANAN, Tiruchi, Tamil Nadu

■ Why has the leader all of a sudden stumbled upon a 'revelation' and trying to sow the seeds of an agitation? If left unchecked, there could be adverse effects on harmony in the State.

MANI NATARAJAN, Chennai

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

COVID-19 data
It is good news that lesser numbers of COVID-19 cases are being reported from some States in India. But the caveat is that our systems of health statistics are known to be vulnerable to administrative and political pressures. Moreover, statistics may not reveal the reality. For example, there has been a huge reduction in the detection of TB during the

past months, indicating a decline in the disease. The truth is that people could not go to hospitals due to the lockdown restrictions while the disease has been escalating.

Dr. T. RAMA PRASAD,
VERSHA RAJEEV,
Perundurai, Tamil Nadu

Politics over text
Citing Periyar on *Manusmriti*, Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi

President Thol Thirumavalavan has claimed that "Manu Dharma" demeans women. The text does not only prescribe 'control' over women's autonomy but also sees this 'control' as 'reverence' and 'protection' than it being about oppression. Such obsessive control over women is being advocated to ensure existing caste hierarchies remain unchanged.

M. JEVARAM,
Sholavandan, Tamil Nadu

Manusmriti's impact can be seen in some of the vehement opposition to inter-caste and inter-faith marriages.

THARCUS S. FERNANDO,
Chennai

■ The VCK leader has only cited verbatim what is stated in *Manusmriti* and it is shocking that the BJP has twisted this to make it appear as if he has intentionally denigrated

■ The VCK's harping on a non-issue by raking up an age-old text is unwarranted, and it seems to be politically motivated. The party and leaders should note that many edicts and *smritis* have



Is the U.S. on the wane as a superpower?

PARLEY

The U.S. has an unparalleled position militarily and economically, but faces an ideational problem

Russian President Vladimir Putin recently said that China and Germany are soon going to be superpowers as U.S. influence wanes globally. Today, as the U.S. is on the cusp of a new presidency, after a remarkable almost four years under President Donald Trump, it is worth examining whether its superpower status endures in the realms of politics, economics, military and diplomatic power, and culture. In a conversation moderated by Narayan Lakshman, Richard Lachmann and Robert J. Lieber discuss this question. Edited excerpts:



Richard Lachmann
is Professor of Sociology at the University at Albany of the State University of New York



Robert J. Lieber
is Professor of Government and International Affairs at Georgetown University



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Some have argued that for the U.S. to have been a robust superpower, it should not have tried, in the post-Cold War era, to adopt a grand strategy of liberal hegemony, spreading democracy markets and other liberal values abroad, when it was driven by partisanship and conservative ideologies at home, which constantly tried to shrink the size of the state. Could this apparent contradiction be the undoing of the U.S. as a superpower?

Richard Lachmann: For much of the post-war period, there was bipartisan support for an aggressive U.S. foreign policy. Members of both parties supported large military budgets for most of the wars that the U.S. initiated, as well as smaller interventions. The only break for that came well into the Vietnam War when some Democrats and fewer Republicans opposed that war. With the Gulf and Iraq wars, there was a good bit of opposition from Democrats, but enough support so that presidents were able to move ahead with those ventures. To the extent that there's a challenge to the U.S. taking an aggressive position around the world, it's come now. This is the real break in the bipartisan support for U.S. intervention around the world.

Robert J. Lieber: I see that question as problematic in itself. First, the Putin quote is typical Moscow disinformation. Claiming that Germany will be a superpower is an

sidious effort to puff up Germany. There is no way Germany can or will be a superpower. Its people don't want it, its institutions won't handle it. And the nature of its coalition governments would make it impossible in any case. What Mr. Putin longs for is to cripple the European Union, as well as cripple NATO.

Second, Russia cannot be a superpower. Its economy remains a basket case. The only thing it produces that anyone wants involves raw materials and energy. It's run by a corrupt, thuggish mafia state. More than half the economy is controlled through outfits nominally under the state, but which really are tied to Mr. Putin and his cronies. The one thing the Russians do have is modern weaponry, and a rebuilt armed forces, but they lack the attributes to be a great power. The real question is China, no doubt.

Let me therefore respond just to the one part of your multi-part question about the U.S. To describe the U.S. foreign policy up until Mr. Trump as a policy bent on liberal hegemony bears little relation to reality. It's true that U.S. interventions had bipartisan support. But the fact is that George W. Bush in his last days of presidency, Barack Obama throughout his presidency, and then Mr. Trump in his own unique way were all seeking to retrench or pull back from America's extensive overseas involvements. Those involvements, however, had to do, above all, with seeking to sustain a rules-based international order, which the U.S. and its allies had done so much to construct, but which was increasingly under siege, from both the Russians and the Chinese, as well as from forces unleashed by globalisation itself – economic change and technology.

Even if there was bipartisan consensus in terms of the manner in which the U.S. intervened abroad, was there sufficient state capacity afforded to the machinery of the government, the economic muscle to intervene to spread its liberal values abroad?

RL: The military budget has been



more than ample throughout the post-war period. To the extent that the U.S. military has been unsuccessful abroad, it's not from lack of money; it's from poor strategy or trying to push policies in certain countries for which there was no local support. The one thing that's changed is, since the Vietnam War, it's been impossible in the U.S. to draft citizens into the military. So the U.S. military has had to operate with a much smaller number of soldiers, and that certainly affects strategy. Domestically, from the Reagan era, there have been very sharp cutbacks in government spending. So the U.S. government's capacity to deal with domestic issues to provide for its citizens has been declining, and that has an effect on the U.S. and weakens it even if it doesn't directly affect foreign policy.

RJL: This connects closely to a book that I'm nearly finished writing. In it, I ask three questions. First, is the U.S. world role of deep engagement and periodic leadership essential for a decent, rules-based international order? Second, if the U.S. role is indispensable for that order, is it the case that much greater challenges abroad from hostile great powers – China, Russia, Iran – coupled with important changes and challenges domestically, including polarisation and division, no longer make it possible for the U.S. to play that role in some way? And third, if the U.S. cannot play that role, what will the consequences be? My answer to the first question is yes, the U.S. is still as indispensable. Second, the problems abroad and at home are very real: the U.S. faces much greater obstacles to playing that role than it had, say, after the end of the Cold War for about two decades. And third, if the

Somebody like Trump can be elected president once, by mistake, but if he is re-elected, that's a sort of endorsement. That would make a statement about Americans and their values that the rest of the world will recoil from with horror.

RICHARD LACHMANN

U.S. is unwilling or unable to play that role, the consequences are likely to be nasty. The reason has to do with what are called collective action problems. That is to say, it's all well and good to say that if the U.S. pulls back from its commitments, other countries will band together to counterbalance Russia or Iran or China. But it doesn't work that way.

Do you think then that at the present juncture, the U.S. is moving towards a more isolationist model, even as rising powers in other regions are starting to become more assertive and squabble with each other? Does it matter that this is happening even as the world faces a blowback on decades of globalisation dogma?

RL: It depends on which realm you refer to. In terms of global finance and regulating the global economy, the U.S.'s powers have become greater. Since the 2008 financial crisis, the Federal Reserve is seen around the world as the one institution that can generate enough money to sustain the global economy. In that area, the U.S. remains indispensable, is recognised by other countries as indispensable, and the Fed has enough autonomy within the U.S. to

play that role.

In the realm of military, the U.S.'s lack of success in Afghanistan and Iraq has had a profound effect. It has led to governments elsewhere to feel that they have more room to challenge the U.S. without having to worry as much about the consequences. That will lead to instability. It's important for us to recognise that the decline of the U.S. doesn't necessarily mean that another power will take its place. We could move into a world where you have regional powers exerting influence. You have a number of strong countries challenging each other, hopefully without direct military clashes.

In the realm of culture and championing democracy, the U.S. has had a double role. On the one hand it has been a champion of democracy and liberal values even though in a number of countries the U.S. has fomented coups suppressing democracies. That is something that has happened under both parties. If we look at Latin America, one of the ironies of the post-war period is that it was under Presidents John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson and Barack Obama, the most liberal U.S. presidents, that you had waves of coups in Latin America. If Mr. Trump is re-elected, it will be a blow to American prestige, the image of the U.S., that it won't be able to recover from. Somebody like that can be elected president once, by mistake, but if they're re-elected, that's a sort of endorsement. That would make a statement about Americans and their values that the rest of the world will recoil from with horror.

The U.S. national debt is something in the range of \$16 trillion and growing, real wages are falling, productivity growth is down, some U.S. companies are losing their competitive edge in global markets to rising powers, the nation's infrastructure is not in good shape, nor is the healthcare system. Given that countries such as China and India have engines of growth, a young population, a growing manufacturing base, and a culture of innovation, does the U.S. risk losing its global economic pre-eminence to these countries?

RJL: The U.S. and the Fed remain

effectively the world's central bank. Despite the rise of China, the U.S. still possesses advantages almost across the entire spectrum by which power is measured that are largely unmatched elsewhere: natural resources, population, population size and scale, inventiveness, flexibility, entrepreneurial skills, high tech, great research, universities, energy and natural resources, agriculture, and resilient institutions. The problem for the U.S. is not so much in the material realm, but in the ideological. It has to do with public consensus and human beliefs. The issue now is polarisation, deep domestic dissensions. The confirmation of Supreme Court Justice Amy Coney Barrett was without a single vote from the Democrats.

RL: The U.S. certainly has an unparalleled position militarily and economically. What is worrisome are the trends, the direction in which things are going. I don't think the large government debt is an issue, because the U.S. is unique in that the dollar is the world currency and most of that debt can be dealt with by just the Fed creating more dollars. The inflation rate is so low that that danger doesn't exist. If anything is dangerous, it is not too much spending but too little, or spending that goes in the wrong direction. We see that directly in healthcare: the U.S., both in actual amounts, and as a percentage of GDP, spends much more unhealthily than any other country in the world without getting results to justify that sort of spending. Countries that spend a lot less have longer life expectancy, less illness. The only way to explain that is that healthcare is delivered in a way that allows all sorts of providers to collect enormous sums, in essence, to loot the healthcare system.

The U.S. is facing a mortal threat if Mr. Trump is re-elected and the limits on foreign students coming to the U.S. are sustained, especially in the sciences at the graduate level. Not that many Americans want to study science and technology, they want to go into finance. The U.S.'s edge in science and technology is sustained almost entirely by international students come to the U.S. The day when they're not allowed in or they decide they want to study elsewhere, or they want to remain at home, the U.S.'s edge in technology will very quickly evaporate.

Less pollution, more soil fertility

If the PUSA Decomposer is successful in tackling stubble burning, we may see a revolution in farming

VARUN VARMA

Stubble burning refers to the practice of farmers setting fire to plant debris that remain in farms after harvest. Before the 1980s, farmers used to till the remaining debris back into the soil after harvesting the crops manually. The origin of stubble burning can be traced to the advent of the Green Revolution and mechanised harvesting, which utilised the combined harvesting technique. The Green Revolution increased greatly rice and wheat production, which simultaneously increased stubble post harvest. However, the popular combined harvesting technique was not efficacious, as machines left behind one-foot-tall stalks. This prompted stubble burning as a low-cost and speedy solution available to farmers due to the limited time period of 20-25 days between harvesting one crop and sowing another.

Environmental impact

Stubble burning is practised predominantly by farmers in north India. It releases harmful gases including nitrogen oxide and carbon monoxide into the atmosphere. In recent years, this practice has created vast smoke blankets across the Indo-Gangetic Plain and numerous neighbouring States, including Delhi. This directly exposes millions of people to air pollution. As per a TERI (The Energy and Resources Institute) report, in 2019 the air pollution in New Delhi and other parts of north India was 20 times higher than the safe threshold level as prescribed by the World Health Organization. Stubble burning also has a deleterious impact on soil fertility, destroys organic fertilizers and reduces ground water levels. Stubble burning during a pandemic could worsen the situation by making lungs weaker and people more susceptible to disease. It could also impact those recovering from infection.

In 2013, stubble burning was banned by the Punjab government. In 2015, the National Green Tribunal imposed a ban on stubble burning in Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab and directed government to assist farmers by obtaining equipment like happy seeders and rotavator. Stubble burning is an offence un-

der Section 188 of the Indian Penal Code and the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1981.

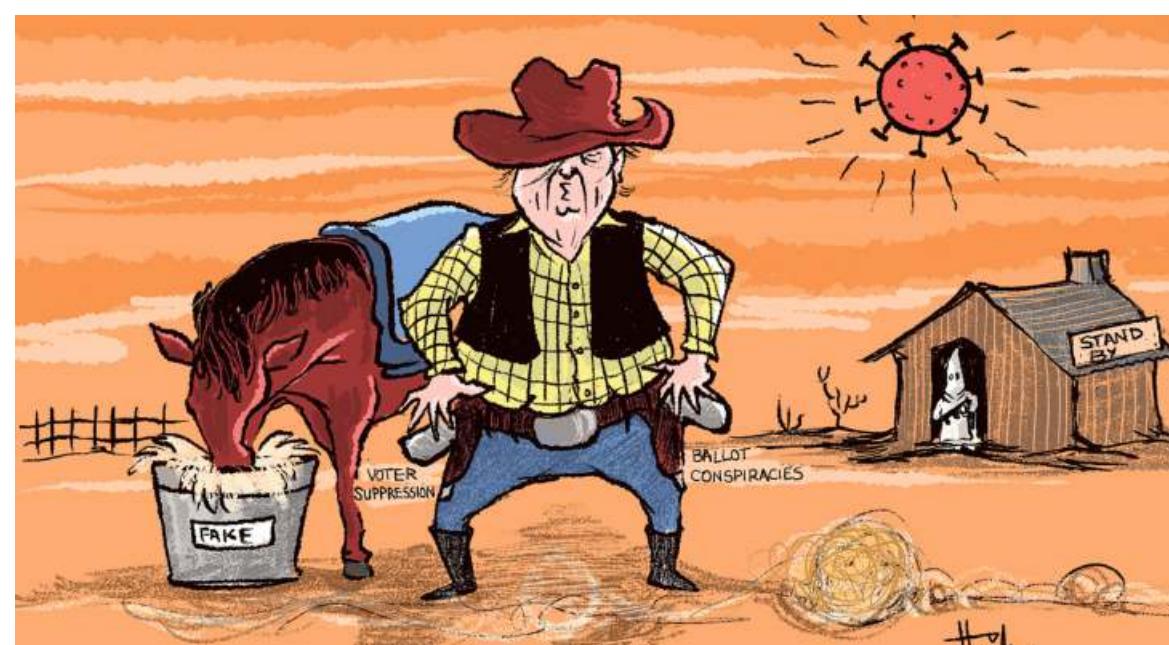
Recently, in *Aditya Dubey v. Union of India*, the Supreme Court appointed retired apex court judge Justice Madan B. Lokur as a one-man committee to monitor and provide steps to prevent stubble burning activities in Punjab, Haryana and U.P. Haryana submitted that numerous steps are taken to curb stubble burning in Punjab and Haryana, including the development of an app to detect and notify authorities about stubble burning committed in a particular field. Now the Union government has brought out an ordinance to set up a permanent commission for air quality management, which will replace the Justice Madan B. Lokur Commission.

New revolution

A revolution in timely stubble removal is the need of the hour. The action plan of Punjab and Haryana appears to focus more on setting up Custom Hiring Centres which will facilitate farmers removing stubble by providing them with machinery such as the happy seeder, rotavator, paddy straw chopper, etc. on rent along with the supply of more balers. As per a study by the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre, the application of happy seeders and super SMS machines can improve agricultural productivity by 10% to 15% while reducing labour costs and allowing the soil to become more fertile.

This year, the Union government is testing an innovative method, the PUSA Decomposer, developed at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute, Pusa. The PUSA Decomposer is a set of four tablets made by extracting fungi strains that help the paddy straw to decompose at a much faster rate than usual, giving farmers the option to shred the straw, spray a solution containing the fungal strains, and mix it with the soil for decomposition. If methods such as this become successful, it will be a new revolution in farming. This has the potential to both reduce air pollution and increase soil fertility.

Varun Varma is an advocate practising before the Supreme Court



NOTEBOOK

In Bihar, identity politics is taking another turn

There are many lessons in covering elections during a pandemic

NISTULA HEBBAR

Bihar is the first State to have Assembly polls in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, bringing with it not just the challenge of holding socially distant and safe polling, but also robust media coverage.

Covering elections – which necessarily means engaging with the wisdom of crowds – during a pandemic comes with many challenges. The first casualty for me was the act of loitering, that simple joy of shooting the breeze with your fellow man, preferably at a tea stall on the highway, or engaging in a politically charged debate. Much of that was curtailed as I followed very strict SOPs with regard to COVID-19. However, that did not stop me from venturing deep into rural areas to chase stories that had captured the country's sympathy and imagination over

the last few months – stories that were more than just the stacking of caste arithmetic and were about issues such as the flight of migrants from host States back home to Bihar; the constituency of women voters, so assiduously courted by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar; and angry voices on prohibition.

"Yeh chunaav 80% jaat ka pinjara main hai, 20% feelings par (this poll is 80% in a cage of caste arithmetic, 20% on feelings)," said a senior leader acknowledging that issues like prohibition and events following the lockdown weighed in on the usual caste discourse, if only, in his assessment, a mere 20%.

My travels into sparsely populated interior villages gave important pointers on how politics is to pan out in the rest of India for the next few years, on hyperlocal aspirations, and the mutation of identity politics 30

years after 'Mandal' and 'Mandir'.

One of the many interesting encounters I had in Bihar was with Aditya Mohan, who started the Mithila Student Union (MSU) in Darbhanga and its surrounding areas a few years ago. The organisation started with the aim of getting the academic session at the Lalit Narayan Mithila University to start on time. From that, the MSU has grown into an organisation that works in panchayats in Darbhanga and surrounding areas and has also, this time round, put up around 12 candidates extolling 'Mithilawadi', the hyperlocal interests of Mithila. The party has no symbol at the moment but the issues are to do with the establishment of an AIIMS in Darbhanga, an airport to be sanctioned for the area and, of course, academic sessions to start and finish on time with examinations.

The group is in no hurry to be a big political force as members feel the future of politics is going their way; that caste and identity on their own are not going to be enough to win an election; that delivery on aspirations (not just roads and foodgrain) will be the way. Much of the poll rhetoric on job creation by the mainstream parties reflected this trend.

Encounters such as this show me that faith in democracy is alive and kicking, and identity politics is taking another turn in its evolution. Bihar, again, is showing the way in Indian politics. This election that I covered with masks, sanitizers, and a diary full of numbers of contacts in Patna from whom to cadge home-cooked meals and private sanitised vehicles, had lessons to offer me yet again, other than just trying to be safe while doing my job.

The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO OCTOBER 30, 1970

Dangerous sweetness

In long and verse sweetness has through the ages been equated with goodness but some hard-hearted research scientists have now found that one of the sweetest substances in existence, the cyclamate, spells danger for the consumer. Cyclamates are hydrocarbon compounds 30 times sweeter than sugar and since they are also non-fattening are being widely used as artificial sweeteners in the preparation of low-calorie beverages, confectionery, canned fruits and fruit juices. In today's world of increasing calorie-consciousness, the manufacture of dietary foods has become a billion-dollar (Rs. 750 crores) a year industry. Saccharine is said to be 400 times sweeter than sugar but since it leaves a bitter aftertaste, makers of dietary foods and beverages have gone in for cyclamates. The United States is the biggest user of cyclamates. On the market for two decades, cyclamates first came under suspicion in 1966 when two Japanese scientists discovered that a metabolic product of cyclamate called cyclohexylamine could cause severe skin irritation in some people. Close investigation was therewith begun in many countries and the World Health Organisation fixed the safe daily intake limit for human beings at 3 1/2 grams for adults and 1 1/2 grams for children. A group of American scientists has now established a connection between cyclamates and cancer.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO OCTOBER 30, 1920

Hyderabad State
(From an Editorial)

The report on the administration of His Exalted Highness the Nizam's Dominions for the year 1928 Fasli (1918 Oct.-1919 Oct.) is an interesting record of the measures adopted to secure the efficiency of administration and the policy followed by the Government to improve the economic condition and to advance the material progress of the people of the State notwithstanding the adverse conditions resulting from the failure of the monsoon and the prevalence of influenza and plague. It is worthy of note that the liberal programme of revenue collection pursued by the Durbar saved the people from undue oppression of tax collectors and the remissions granted, on account of bad season, amounted to Rs. 72,90,587. During the year under review, inams to the value of Rs. 93,356, were confirmed. The net excise revenue increased from Rs. 1,03,50,956 to Rs. 1,27,40,851.

FROM PAGE ONE

PLA upgrading troops quarters ahead of winter

Talks between the Corps Commanders discussing disengagement on the LAC have made little progress after seven rounds, with an agreement to not add troops but a continuing stalemate on any consensus to disengage.

Senior Colonel Wu did not directly link the new plans to the ongoing LAC stand-off but said "the logistic support capabilities are directly connected with the combat effectiveness".

"The application of high-tech means," he said, "will facilitate the construction of logistic support capacity and promote the troops' war preparation work."

2+2 Delhi dialogue

On Tuesday's 2+2 ministerial dialogue in New Delhi between the Foreign and Defence Ministers of India and the U.S., Senior Colonel Wu reiterated the Chinese foreign office's statement from earlier this week, saying China "believes that the

development of U.S.-India relations should help maintain regional peace and stability and should not be directed at any other country".

China's Foreign Ministry also hit out at comments made by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in Delhi criticising the Communist Party of China and pledging support to India on the boundary issue, accusing the U.S. of looking to interfere in a "bilateral" dispute.

Its statements have, so far, not mentioned India, only directing ire at Washington.

'Cold War mentality'

On Thursday, the PLA too took aim at the U.S.

"Regarding the so-called U.S. alliance system, this is a product of the Cold War period, which embodies the outdated Cold War mentality and the zero-sum game concept," Senior Colonel Wu said. "China has always firmly opposed this."

Lowest core sector shrinking since March

Consequently, output contraction from the core sectors, which account for little over 40% of the Index of Industrial Production, stood at 14.9% in the first half of 2020-21, recovering slightly from the 17.8% decline recorded by August.

"While many lead indicators have displayed signals of a strengthening economic recovery in September 2020, we caution that the sustainability of the upturn may not be universal, and await signs of its durability," said Aditi Nayar, principal economist at ICRA Ratings.

September's improvement in core sector numbers is also attributable to the effect of a lower base, as the index had recorded negative growth of 5.1% in September 2019, with coal, steel and electricity clocking output contractions.

Coal output which had shrunk in September 2019 by 20.9%, has reported 21.2% growth in September 2020.

Steel production grew by 0.9% in September 2020, compared to a 1.4% contraction a year ago. Electricity output similarly grew 3.7%, vis-a-vis a 2.6% decline re-

corded in September 2019.

Production of natural gas (-10.6%), crude oil (-6%) and refinery products (-9.5%) continued to fall in September, indicating that these sectors are yet to recover from the demand shock that followed the lockdown imposed in late March.

Natural gas output fell for the sixteenth month in a row, crude oil fell for the 34th successive month and refinery products recorded their seventh month of contraction, as per a CARE Ratings note on Thursday's data.

Core sector

"The sharp improvement in the core sector output is encouraging and collates well with the higher consumer spending seen in early October. A low base effect in the next month and the further unlocking of the economy is likely to push this growth into positive territory in the next month. The negative growth in the oil segment will further narrow in the coming months as the unlock process becomes more prevalent in the country," the firm noted.

SC stays HC nod for probe against Uttarakhand CM

Mr. Venugopal said the order could even unsettle the government. The top law officer said the Chief Minister was bound to be heard.

The High Court was entirely wrong in law when it said that it could direct lodging of an FIR without hearing the party. The High Court cannot be oblivious

that it would result in the unsettling of the government, Mr. Venugopal argued.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the two journalists, said he was not opposing the stay order but there was ample evidence in support of the corruption allegation against Mr. Rawat.

Sivasankar guilty of offence of money laundering, says ED

He aided Swapna in layering proceeds of crime on pretext of untainted money'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHEE

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) believes that "former Principal Secretary to Kerala Chief Minister, M. Sivasankar, has knowingly assisted Swapna Suresh in layering and usage of proceeds of crime on the pretext of untainted money," considering the materials it has gathered in the diplomatic baggage gold smuggling case.

The agency made these claims in a statement filed on Thursday before the principal sessions court here, which is also the special court for trying offences under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act.

The ED suspects that the proceeds of the crime, seized by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) from safe lockers of Swapna, the second accused in the case, could belong to Mr. Sivasankar, who had an interest in the finances of Swapna.

The NIA had seized around ₹1 crore from Swapna's bank locker. The proceeds of the crime were generated by Swapna with the active support of Mr. Sivasankar. The accused re-



ED officials taking away M. Sivasankar after presenting him in the special court in Kochi on Thursday. ■ H. VIBHU

mained evasive and non-cooperative when confronted with these facts, the ED said.

The agency said that during the investigation, it was revealed that Mr. Sivasankar was involved in the commission of the offence.

WhatsApp chats between the two revealed that she had requested him to intervene with the terminal manager/ airport authorities/ Customs for some work at the airport/ clearance of diplomatic baggage without Customs examination.

Chartered accountant P. Venugopal had admitted that Mr. Sivasankar wanted to manage the finances of Swapna and Mr. Venugopal had submitted the WhatsApp chats to that effect, it said.

The agency submitted that Mr. Sivasankar had accepted that he had spoken/ sent messages to some officer in April 2019 for the clearance of some diplomatic baggage which was to be examined by the Customs. He made the call following a desperate request made by her. An analysis of the evidence gathered and state-

ments of various persons clearly established that he was guilty of offence of money laundering as defined under Section 3 of the Act, the ED submitted.

Mr. Sivasankar, who has been arraigned as fifth accused, was given to the custody of the agency for seven days.

'CM should resign'

Meanwhile, the Opposition's demand for the resignation of Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan got shriller on Thursday.

The Congress and the BJP unleashed a wave of protests across the State accusing Mr. Vijayan of allowing economic offenders to harness the heft of his office to facilitate the smuggling of gold in air freight addressed to foreign officials at the diplomatic mission.

The police used water cannons to disperse Youth Congress workers who attempted to storm the Chief Minister's official residence at Cliff House here. Congress workers held torchlight processions in panchayats and municipal wards in the evening to highlight Mr. Vijayan's "culpability" in the racket.



In the net: Bineesh Kodiyeri after his arrest by the Enforcement Directorate in Bengaluru on Thursday.

ED officials arrest Kodiyeri's son Bineesh

He faces money laundering charge

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Enforcement Directorate officials on Thursday arrested Bineesh Kodiyeri, son of Kerala CPI(M) State secretary Kodiyeri Balakrishnan, for his alleged financial links to a businessman, Mohammed Anoop, who had been arrested by the Narcotics Control Bureau in Bengaluru in connection with a drug racket in August.

Incidentally, Bineesh told ED officials that he in turn had borrowed the money from a friend to help Anoop, said ED sources.

"We asked him to substantiate his claims about the money and gave him time, but he failed to do so," said an ED official.

The Enforcement Directorate has booked a case against Bineesh under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act.

The ED probe stems from a case being investigated by the Narcotics Control Bureau that claimed to have busted an ecstasy pills drug trafficking racket in Karnataka in August.

IN BRIEF



POSCO delegation calls on Andhra Pradesh CM

VIJAYAWADA

A delegation of the POSCO India led by its chairman and managing director Sung-Lae Chun met Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy here on Thursday and expressed their willingness to invest in the State.

Bathing in the Pampa river will not be allowed. Instead, showers will be installed by the Irrigation Department and the Kerala Water Authority will supply water.

Paper plates will be made available for Annadanam at Nilakkal, Pampa, and Sannidhanam adhering to the COVID-19 guidelines.

Rajmahendravaram to get archaeological museum

RAJAMAHENDRARAM

Andhra Pradesh State Archaeology and Museums Department Commissioner Vani Mohan on Thursday said that the State government would set up a museum in Rajmahendravaram to showcase the city's connection with Chalukyas and Buddhism.

A.P. to spend ₹17,300 cr. on healthcare sector: CM

VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has directed officials of the Medical & Health Department to finalise by January the tenders for 16 new medical colleges proposed to be established in the districts at an estimated cost of ₹7,500 crore. He said the government would be spending ₹17,300 crore on revamping the existing hospitals and setting up new medical colleges.

Sabarimala pilgrims allowed with riders

COVID-19 negative certificate, health insurance card have been made mandatory

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Karnataka government has decided to ban its employees from acting in films and television serials, publishing books, and voicing criticism against the State and Union government policies.

A draft of the Karnataka State Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 2020, said they could not act in films and television serials without permission from the competent authority. The draft rules also seek to stop government staff from sponsoring media programmes in radio and television channels.

The Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms notified these draft rules on October 27, 2020, seeking objections within 15 days. The rule said a government servant should not publish any book or engage him/herself habitually in literary or artistic or scientific work without the permission of prescribed authority.

A new set of rules, likely to be enforced soon, also states that government servants cannot consume intoxicating drinks in public places. It also prohibited employees appearing in a public place in a state of intoxication.

The rules also seek to ban employees from embarking on foreign tours without permission.

The rules will apply to about six lakh employees.



Strict measures: The two-month pilgrimage season of the Ayyappa temple at Sabarimala begins on November 16.

datory for those coming for duties from various departments will be made at Nilakkal, Pampa, and en-route places for the devotees to undergo the test. The COVID-19 negative certificate will be man-

five days of the week, 2,000 on Saturdays and Sundays, and 5,000 on the days of Mandala puja and Makaravilakku, Travancore Devaswom Board president N. Vasu told a press conference

A maximum of 1,000 devotees will be allowed to have darshan during the first

days of the week, 2,000 on Saturday and Sunday, and 5,000 on the days of Mandala puja and Makaravilakku, Travancore Devaswom Board president N. Vasu told a press conference

here on Thursday.

The pilgrims will have to follow the COVID-19 guidelines and wear gloves and masks and ensure social distancing.

The base camp will be at Nilakkal. Light motor vehicles will be allowed to drop pilgrims at Pampa and return to Nilakkal.

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The protocol here allows only the government or those authorised by the government to medicines suggested as 'immunity boosters' by the Union government.

In an order on October 20, the Secretary, AYUSH, said the direction was in line with the August 21 judgment of the Kerala High Court which said that AYUSH medicines could be used only as

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EC orders removal of Munger DM and SP

Decision comes amid violent protests over firing incident

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENTS

PATNA

The Election Commission (EC) on Thursday ordered the immediate removal of the District Magistrate (DM) and the Superintendent of Police (SP) of Munger over the death of one person and the injuries sustained by several others in a police firing in the town over the immersion of an idol of Goddess Durga on October 26.

The EC has also ordered an investigation by Divisional Commissioner, Magadh, Asanga Chuba Ao in the next seven days, and asked the State government to appoint a DM and an SP. "The EC has ordered removal of Munger DM Rajesh Meena and SP Lipi Singh over violence and police firing in the town...it has also ordered probe into the incident which is to be completed in next seven days," an EC official, Sanjay Kumar Singh, said.

The order came amid violent protests by people against the police firing,



Volatile situation: A vehicle in flames after it was torched by a mob in Munger on Thursday. ■ PTI

which had led to the death of Anurag Poddar, 22. The protesters indulged in arson at the office of district officials on Thursday, setting some vehicles on fire.

The Opposition Congress and the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) have condemned the incident and demanded that the Prime Minister immediately dismiss the Nitish Kumar government.

Sharing a video that has gone viral on social media, Congress spokesperson Randeep Singh Surjewala asked, "Will the BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) JD(U) (Janata Dal-United) government

trash Goddess Durga worshippers like animals?... The Munger police firing has reminded us about General Dyer of the Jallianwala Bagh incident of 1919."

Ms. Lipi Singh, a 2016-batch IPS officer, is the daughter of senior JD(U) leader R.C.P. Singh. "During Durga Puja immersion, some anti-social elements resorted to stone throwing, which injured 20 policemen, and after this, someone from the crowd fired shots, leading to one death and others injured," Ms. Singh told mediapersons after the incident.

Licking the wounds of lockdown

There is a seething anger against Nitish, but opinion is divided over Modi

SOBHANA K. NAIR
PURNIA/KISHANGANJ

Seven months after lakhs of migrant workers returned to their homes – many on foot – following the announcement of a sudden and extended nationwide lockdown, the narrative on the ground in Bihar is divided.

There are no official figures on how many people migrate out of Bihar in search of work each year. But as per reports, 25-30 lakh migrant workers returned home during the lockdown.

The anger against the Nitish Kumar government on lack of jobs, leaving no option but to migrate, is all pervasive. The voter is clear that 'bijli-paani-sadar' (electricity-water-road) is not the only parameter of development. However, the view about the Narendra Modi government's culpability varies.

In Simalbari village, in Kishanganj, Khurshid Alam is livid. His four brothers worked at a garment factory in Ludhiana. They had been living there for four years. Due to the extended lockdown, their family had to send them money, which



A group of men from the Dalit community of Rajavanshis at Mahesh Bhatna village in Bihar. ■ SOBHANA K. NAIR

IN FOCUS

they borrowed on interest, to bring the four back home. "They set us back by five years. It will take us a long time to pay back the loan.

How come coronavirus was only for the common man. There is no coronavirus now that Modiji is doing election rallies," Mr. Alam said. As soon as the travel restrictions were lifted, his brothers were back in Ludhiana.

Strong support

A few kilometres away in Mahesh Bhatna village, Lalchand Singh, who belongs to the Dalit community of Rajavanshis, recalls how his brother, who worked in Bengaluru,

waited many days hoping that the lockdown would be lifted. When he and others with him realised that the lockdown might not be lifted anytime soon, they pooled in their money and hired a bus to return. The lockdown also meant that the villagers, who usually leave for Punjab during the harvest and sowing season, could not go due to the travel restrictions and lost one part of their key annual income. But asked if they blame Mr. Modi for this hasty decision, Mr. Singh says, "What is Modi's fault in it? Modi is only trying to save the country. This is a foreign disease. If he had not imposed lockdown in time, then we all would have contracted it."

In Kathi, Fayaz Alam, 19, who was working as an electrician in Mumbai, took five days to return after spending ₹8,000, and since then he has not been able to garner the courage to return. "Why do our children have to go outside Bihar. Nitish says he brought roads and water. Will these roads feed our stomachs... And then we have Modiji to top it, he has only been taking decisions that hurt us, from demonetisation to lockdown," Mohammad Salim said.

Some 70 km away, in Damdaha constituency, a group of Dalits from the Godi community effusively praise Mr. Modi, the free grains and ₹500 a month for a period of three months given to women Jan Dhan account holders. Suman Kumar, who worked at a steel plant in Hyderabad, took 10 days to return after spending ₹5,000. But standing next to him, Shambhu Singh, a farm worker, finds no fault with Mr. Modi's announcement. "No government has given us a single paisa till now and he gave us ₹500 for three months to feed our children dal and sabzi," he says.

PM could've spoken on key issues'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PATNA

A day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi took a jibe at him, calling him 'jungle raj ka yuvraj' (crown prince of the rule of lawlessness), Tejaswi Yadav, Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader and heir apparent of party chief Lalu Prasad, on Thursday said he [Modi] is the PM of the country and he can say anything".

"He is country's Prime Minister, he can say anything and I don't want to react to that. He came to Bihar and he could have spoken about what happened to a special package for the State, issues of unemployment, migration etc..." Mr. Yadav told media persons. "It [BJP] is the world's biggest party and they're using 30 helicopters in campaign... if their Prime Minister talks like this, what can I say... people know everything... he [Modi] should have spoken on more important issues such as poverty, unemployment, factories, farmers..." stated Mr. Yadav, who is the only star campaigner of his party

SC seeks early hearing of Varavara Rao's plea

Court flags long delay in taking it up

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday did not order the immediate release from jail of ailing poet-activist Varavara Rao, even as it voiced concern over a month-long delay witnessed in the Bombay High Court (HC) to hear urgent pleas for his liberty and medical treatment.

"The obstacle bothering us is that the matter is not being heard," said Justice U.U. Lalit, heading a three-judge bench.

The last hearing of the case before the High Court was on September 17. The Supreme Court requested the Chief Justice of the Bom-

bay HC to list the case for hearing at the earliest.

Justice Lalit said the case had "three dimensions". One, a competent court had taken cognisance of the case, and thus, Mr. Rao's detention was not *per se* illegal. Second, the question of bail was, again, under the consideration of the High Court. Finally, the issue of setting Mr. Rao at liberty, either on merits of the case or on medical grounds, was being looked into by the High Court. "So, how do we [Supreme Court] hear the case now?" he asked.

Mr. Rao, 79, was arrested in August 2018 in the Elgar Parishad case.

Militants kill 3 BJP workers in Kashmir

Police say Lashkar hand suspected

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

SRINAGAR

Suspected militants shot dead three BJP workers in the Y.K.pora area of Kulgam in south Kashmir on Thursday evening.

"Terrorists fired upon the three BJP workers. They were shifted to a nearby hospital where all were declared brought dead," Inspector-General of Police Vijay Kumar told *The Hindu*.

The police identified the deceased as Fida Hussain Yatoo, the BJP's district youth secretary, and Umar

Rahseed Beigh and Umer Ramzan Hajam, both party workers.

Senior police officers reached the terror spot and the area was cordoned off to nab the attackers. We suspect the hand of the Lashkar-e-Taiba," Mr. Kumar said.

"Investigation is on, and officers are establishing the circumstances of this terror crime," the police said.

Earlier this year, three BJP leaders were killed in Bandipora district of north Kashmir.

Protesting PDP leaders arrested in Srinagar

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

SRINAGAR

A street protest organised by the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Srinagar against the recently notified land laws for the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir was disallowed by the administration on Thursday.

Several PDP leaders were arrested when they assembled at the party's headquarter, which was later sealed by the security forces.

"We are protesting against the black laws of the black day. Swords are kept hanging over our heads and a barrel is pointed towards our heads, as there is no space left to express our opinion," said PDP spokesman Suhal Bukhari minutes before his arrest. The others arrested were Khurshid Alam, Waheed Para, Mohin Qayoom, Tahir Sayeed, Yasir Bhat, Rouf Bhat and Hamid Kohsheen.

"...A similar protest was allowed in Jammu so why was it thwarted here? Is this your definition of 'normalcy' that's being showcased in the world?" PDP president Mehbooba Mufti tweeted.

PARADIP PORT TRUST
e-TCN No. CE/HW-II-W-02/20/368, Dtd. 19.10.2020
Name of the work : "Developing the existing parking yard by providing & laying the concrete paver blocks at Sub-station Square near Gate No. 3" Estimated Cost : ₹ 1,73,52,921.62. Last date and time of submission of bid : 09.11.2020 upto 17.00 hrs. For details, please refer the website : <https://eprocurement.gov.in/eprocure/app>
Executive Engineer, Harbour Works Division No. II
PPT/PR/279/20-21 Dt : 29.10.2020

JODHPUR VIDYUT VITARAN NIGAM LTD.
NEW POWER HOUSE, INDUSTRIAL AREA, JODHPUR-342003
PHONE: (0291) 2742336 FAX: (0291) 2742529
SHORT TERM E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE
Short term Techno-commercial and Price e-Bids are invited for "Supply & Erection of 33 KV GSS (Generator Substation) Nos. of 33 KV feeder(44.79 km) from 13/23 KV GSS JERAN to Dhamanji Sub-Division and 03 Nos. of 33 KV feeder(15 km) from 13/23 KV GSS JERAN to Bhimani Sub-Division Circle Jalore on Turnkey basis" TNTW-519 (UBN No. JVJ/2021/WSBOP0162)
Details regarding Quantity, Tender cost, Earnest Money, Schedule date of tender opening etc are available on our website at www.energv.rajasthan.gov.in/dvnl and also at www.eproc.ra�asthan.gov.in. The bidders, in their own interest are requested to read very carefully the tender documents before submitting the bid only through on line on website www.energv.rajasthan.gov.in.
Note -- Interested bidders please note that in future any other notices /information regarding amendment/corrigendum/addendum/dates extension of bid submission etc for above tender will be available on website www.energv.rajasthan.gov.in and www.eproc.ra�asthan.gov.in.
Supt. Engg. (TW) SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER (TW)
राजस्थान संसदीय शिकायतों के लिए टॉल फ्री नम्बर 1800 180 6045

Government of Karnataka
MYSORA MEDICAL COLLEGE & RESEARCH INSTITUTE, MYSORE
(Government of Karnataka-Autonomous Institute)
Irwin Road, Mysore-570001, Karnataka, Telephone No.: +91-821-2520512 (Off), 2520803 (Fax), Email: [mmrcrims@yahoo.com](mailto:mmrcrims@ymail.com), website: www.karnataka.gov.in/mmcri
No.SUP(2)/31/2019-20 October 19, 2020
TENDER NOTIFICATION
Sub: Invitation of Tender for the supply of Medical/Nursing/Para Medical Textbooks to the Central Library of Mysore Medical College and Research Institute, Mysuru.
The Tender has been invited as per Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurements Act, 1999 for the supply of Medical/ Nursing/ Para Medical Textbooks to the Central Library of this Institution. The Tender documents may be downloaded from E-procurement website: <https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in>, from 28.10.2020 and last date for submission of Tenders through E-procurement website is on 30.11.2020. Those tenders which are not submitted with E.M.D. will be rejected.
If, the last date for submission of Tender treated as holiday, the next working day will be considered as last date. No Notification in this regard, will be announced.
Sdi/- Director and Dean
Mysore Medical College & Research Institute, Mysuru
DIPR/MYSORE/SSC/610/2020-21
COVID-19 - DON'T SPREAD RUMOURS. ACT RESPONSIBLY, AVOID INFECTION-NOT THE INFECTED.
Wear Mask | Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

OFFICE OF THE PROJECT DIRECTOR
MIZORAM HEALTH SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING PROJECT
DINTHAR, AIZAWL- 796009, MIZORAM
Date :
Procurement Notice for Various Services and Works
The Mizoram Health Systems Strengthening Project (MHSSP) to be implemented by Government of Mizoram financed by the World Bank invites proposals to provide the following consulting services and Works:
1. Individual consultants for State Project Management Unit (SPMU); last date for submission of application is Nov. 25, 2020 by 12 noon.
i. State Quality improvement manager, ii. Procurement Expert
iii. Accounting Specialist , iv. Community Mobilization Specialist
v. Human Resources for Health Specialists
vi. Public Health Engineer , vii. Division & Office Assistant
2. Consultancy firms to provide specialist services; last date for submission of Request for Proposal (RFP) is Dec. 5, 2020 by 12 noon.
i. Evaluation of Results based financing & project evaluation
ii. Improvement of clinical competencies in key medical staff including low dose high frequency training
iii. Assessment of Human Resources for Health (HRH) and related policies
3. Consultancy firms to provide Project Management Services including technical support; last date for submission of Expression of Interest (EOI) is Nov. 20, 2020 by 12 noon.
i. Works / Civil works; last date for submission of Bid documents is Dec 7, 2020 by 12 noon.
i. Construction of CMO office in Khawzawl
ii. Construction of CMO office in Hnaihthial
iii. Construction of CMO office in Saitual
Procedural requirements for responding to this invitation are provided in the EoI, RFP and Bid document and updates will be available at www.health.mizoram.gov.in from 4th November, 2020. For further enquiries, please contact at wb.mhssp@gmail.com : Mobile : +91-8415099133.
Project Director,
Mizoram Health Systems Strengthening Project
IPR NO. - 176

TAMIL NADU VETERINARY AND ANIMAL SCIENCES UNIVERSITY
e'- TENDER NOTICE (Two cover system)
e'- Tender Notice No.21 / E.O / DB / Tender / 2020-2021, dt.27.10.2020
For and on behalf of the Vice- Chancellor, Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University 'e'-tenders are invited by the Estate Officer, Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University, Madhavaram Milk Colony, Chennai-51 online for item wise rate bids are invited from the eligible contractors for the following work .

Sl. No.	Description of work	Approximate value of work (Including GST)	Eligibility class of Registered contractor	EMD (Rs.) (Including GST)	Opening date of tenders Cover-1	Form of contract	Starting and End date for downloading and uploading tender	Period of completion
(1)	Construction of additional block for Boys hostel, additional block for Girls hostel and Academic block in Veterinary College and Research Institute, Tirunelveli	Rs.11.13 Crores	Class - I (State level)	5,67,000/-	09.12.2020 at 11.00 AM	LS	06.11.2020 by 04.00 PM and 08.12.2020 at 10.00 AM	300 days including Monsoon

Last date for submission of bid 08.12.2020 by 10.00 A.M. For notice inviting tenders please log on to : www.tanuvas.ac.in / <http://tntenders.gov.in> The bid forms and other details can be obtained from the website: <http://tntenders.gov.in> Subsequent corrigendum / addendum if any shall only be available in website
State Officer i/c TANUVAS, Chennai.

PURI KONARK DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
V.I.ROAD, PURI, ODISHA - 752001
PHONE: (06752) 222635, 222655
Dated: 29.10.2020
Bid Identification No PKDA, Puri-5/2020-21
1. The Engineer Member, PKDA, Puri on behalf of Government of Odisha invites percentage rate of bids in Double cover system in ONLINE MODE only.
2. Name of work : Development of Park
3. No of Work : 1 (One)
4. Tender paper cost : Rs.10,00,000.00 to be submitted as mentioned in the DTCN
5. Class of Contractor : B & A
6. Availability of bid documents in the websites : From 11.00 Hrs of 03.11.2020 to 17.00 Hrs of 17.11.2020
7. Last date and time of Bidding on line : Up to 17.00 Hrs of 17.11.2020
8. Last date and time of submission of hard copy of the documents through Regd. Post / Speed Post : Before 17.00 Hrs of 18.11.2020
9. EMD / Bid Security : As specified in the DTCN
10. The bidders shall have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website <http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in> . Any addendum / Corrigendum / Cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website. The authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids

IN BRIEF



Former Gujarat CM Keshubhai Patel is dead

AHMEDABAD
Keshubhai Patel, former Gujarat Chief Minister and a stalwart who played a key role in building the BJP in the State, died of cardiac arrest on Thursday. He was 92. The nonagenarian had recently tested positive for COVID-19 but had recovered. The BJP veteran was Gujarat's chief minister in 1995 when the party came to power for the first time and again during 1998-2001.

Ensure flat rate power for weavers: Priyanka

NEW DELHI
Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Thursday wrote to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath about high electricity tariff being charged from the weavers of Varanasi and urged the State government to charge a "flat rate". In her letter to Mr. Adityanath, the Congress general secretary in-charge of U.P. said that Varanasi's weavers were in deep financial distress.

Ex-Unnao MP Annu Tandon quits Congress

LUCKNOW
Former Unnao MP Annu Tandon on Thursday resigned from the Congress, stating that there was a "misalignment" between her and the party's Uttar Pradesh unit. In her resignation letter to party Sonia Gandhi, Ms. Tandon said, "Unfortunately, there is a misalignment between the State leadership and me and I do not see their support in allowing me to work since the past several months."

Kolkata film festival moved to Jan. 2021

KOLKATA
The West Bengal government has rescheduled the Kolkata International Film Festival (KIFF) this year in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday said the 26th edition will be held from January 8 to 15, 2021. "This edition... has been designed in a smarter frame giving due importance to social distancing," the KIFF website stated.

CVC to take proposals for vigilance nod via email

NEW DELHI
The Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) has decided to receive through email, from November 1 onwards, all vigilance clearance proposals for the Board level, all-India and Central services officials for appointment, empanelment, promotion and other related issues. No hard copies of documents will be accepted.

No rule of law in Bengal, Dhankar tells Amit Shah

His remarks trigger controversy

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA
West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankar meeting Union Home Minister Amit Shah and his subsequent remarks on the law and order situation in the State on Thursday once again triggered strong reactions from the West Bengal's ruling Trinamool Congress.

Interestingly, a section of the Left and Congress leaders also criticised the utterances of the Governor, saying such utterances did not go with the high office he occupied.

After meeting Mr. Shah, Mr. Dhankar said, "How can a constitutional head have a sound sleep when the State is sliding into lawlessness". His accusations included that the "police and administration were politicized" and the rule of law not being restored. "I am not a stakeholder in politics. It is not my concern who gets elected. But it is my concern how elections take place," he said.

The remarks prompted speculation about imposition of Article 356 in the

Maharashtra still has highest death toll

It is followed by West Bengal, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh and Delhi, according to Health Ministry data

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Union Health Ministry on Thursday said there had been 517 COVID-19 fatalities in the past 24 hours, and of these, nearly 81% was concentrated in 10 States and Union Territories (UTs).

Maharashtra reported 91 deaths, followed by West Bengal (60), Karnataka (55), Chhattisgarh (55) and Delhi (40).

Maharashtra also contributed the highest number of recoveries. It had more than 8,000 single-day recoveries, followed by Kerala with over 7,000 recoveries.

The Ministry said that 49,881 new confirmed cases were recorded in the past 24 hours. 79% of them was from 10 States and UTs.

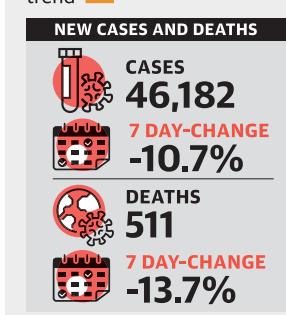
Kerala continued to report a very high number of new cases with more than 8,000 patients, followed by Maharashtra with over 6,000 cases.

Recovery figures

According to the data, 56,480 patients had recovered and discharged in the last 24 hours and 79% of the new recovered cases was ob-

Viral tracker

With 46,182 COVID-19 cases recorded on Thursday, India's tally stood at 80,85,433. As many as 511 new deaths were registered, taking the toll to 1,21,099. The graphs depict new cases and deaths in the last 14 days in select States. The States are classified based on where cases or deaths are rising (red); falling (green); or showing a mixed trend (orange).



served to be concentrated in 10 States/UTs.

A large number of tests were being conducted every day with one crore tests conducted in the last nine days, the Ministry stated.

The country had demonstrated a consistent increase in the testing infrastructure since January, resulting in an exponential increase in the testing numbers.

Its testing capacities have been ramped up multiple times, it noted.

With 10,75,760 tests conducted in the last 24 hours, the cumulative tests have crossed 10.65 crore (10,65,63,440).

"Nearly 11 lakh tests have

been conducted daily on an average during the past six weeks," it pointed out.

Widespread testing

"Evidence has revealed that comprehensive and widespread testing on a sustained basis has resulted in bringing down the positivity rate. The sharp decline in national

SC to alert govt on uncertified use of drugs

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday said it would alert the Centre and get a reply on a plea on the uncertified use of Remdesivir and Favipiravir as COVID-19 drugs. Appearing before a Bench led by Chief Justice Sharad A. Bobde, advocate M.L. Sharma drew the court's attention to a report issued by the World Health Organisation warning that the drugs have not been officially declared an antidote for the virus.

cumulative positivity rate has demonstrated that the rate of spread of infection is being effectively contained.

The cumulative positivity rate has been falling progressively and has touched 7.54% today," the Ministry added.

India had an active case-load of 6,03,687 on Thursday.

Ramp up testing, Centre tells Delhi, WB, Kerala

Health Secretary holds review

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Union Health Secretary Rakesh Bhushan, on Thursday, reviewed the status of COVID-19 in the States/UT of West Bengal, Kerala and Delhi and their public health response measures. He advised these States/UTs to gear up "testing, tracking & treatment" strategy during the festival season and also asked them to ensure that additional thrust be given to public awareness as well as enforcement of COVID-appropriate behaviours.

The video conference saw the participation of V.K. Paul, member (Health), NITI Aayog, and Director General of ICMR Balram Bhargava, health secretaries from the States/UT among others.

A release issued by the Ministry said Delhi has 29,378 active cases as of Thursday with a fatality rate of 1.76% and a positivity rate of 7.9%.

"5,673 new cases were recorded in the last 24 hours and there has been nearly 46% increase in the new cases over the past four weeks,

and the positivity rate over the past four weeks has escalated by nearly 9%. The rising cases were attributed by the Delhi team to social gatherings during the festivities, the deteriorating air quality, increasing incidences of respiratory disorders, and clusters of positive cases at work places," said the Ministry.

It added that the UT was advised to aggressively ramp up testing, increase RT-PCR tests, focus on contact tracing and effectively enforce isolation of the traced contacts within the first 72 hours.

Perimeter control
"Delhi has been advised to focus on containment zones, and strict perimeter control to be implemented as per MHA guidelines," said the Ministry. The Secretary said West Bengal has shown a 1% increase in the positivity rate over the last four weeks. In Kerala, Thrissur, Alappuzha, Kottayam, Pathanamthitta, Malappuram are the top districts showing increasing trend in COVID-19 cases.

Officials face action over RTI reply

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A day after it was slammed by the Central Information Commission over a "preposterous" and "evasive" response to an Right to Information query related to the Arogya Setu application, the Information Technology Ministry has issued directions to take action against the officers responsible.

"The Ministry has taken the lapses made in providing information on Arogya Setu app very strictly. We have issued directions to initiate suitable action against the officers responsible for this," an IT Ministry official, who did not want to be named, said.

The official added that the Ministry has also directed the National Informatics Centre (NIC) and National E-Governance Division (NeGD) to take suitable action against the officers dealing with the RTI query. "We are committed to furnishing all the information sought under the RTI Act to the applicant and comply with the directions of the Central Information Commission (CIC)," the official said.



Indian soldiers living in tents in sub-zero conditions, says Thupstan Chhewang

VIIJAITA SINGH
NEW DELHI

Chinese troops have further transgressed into Indian territory and occupied positions in Finger 2 and 3 of the north bank of Pangong Tso (lake), Thupstan Chhewang, former BJP MP from Ladakh, has said.

Mr. Chhewang said he had received information from local people living in forward areas along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh that Indian soldiers were living in tents and it was not adequate for them in sub-zero conditions.

Mr. Chhewang told *The Hindu*, "The border situation is critical. The Chinese troops have not only further transgressed into our areas but they have also occupied prominent positions in Finger 2 and 3 areas of Pangong Tso, even Hot Springs area they have not fully vacated... this is what we have come to know from locals."

"The soldiers are put up in tents; this is not acceptable. If despite several negotiations, the government is not able to convince the Chinese to withdraw, then adequate shelter should be provided to the soldiers," he said.

Confusion prevails

Mr. Chhewang said, "The gazette notification with regard to land in Jammu and Kashmir has created lot of confusion here in Ladakh. But we hope that the Home Ministry

will not issue such a notification for the Ladakh UT, as Amit Shah ji has categorically given an assurance to the Ladakh delegation headed by veteran leaders to provide all necessary constitutional safeguard during the course of our discussion in Delhi. We are confident that the Home Ministry will accept our demand for including UT of Ladakh under Sixth Schedule."

The Sixth Schedule protects tribal populations and provides autonomy to the communities through the creation of autonomous development councils that can frame laws on land, public health, agriculture etc. As of now, 10 autonomous councils exist in Assam, Megha-

laya, Tripura and Mizoram. Two months ago, People's Movement, a group comprising all political parties and the influential Buddhist association, was formed in Ladakh to strongly demand the inclusion in the Sixth Schedule and seek protection from outsiders.

The group had decided to call off a boycott of the recently concluded autonomous council elections in Leh after the delegation was assured that "all issues related to language, demography, ethnicity, land and jobs will be considered positively/ taken care of."

Mr. Chhewang said, "The BJP was able to get only a simple majority in the elections, we have a strong Opposition now. They should empower the nationalist forces. We are yet to get a call from the Centre for the proposed meeting."

The Ministry said in a statement on September 27 that a dialogue would commence after 15 days of the culmination of the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, Leh elections.

The election results were announced on October 26 and the BJP bagged 15 seats, down from 17 in 2015.

Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz leader Ayaz Sadiq

said Mr. Qureshi had urged the release of Wing Commander Varthaman. "Legs were shaking and foreheads perspiring, and the Foreign Minister told us, 'For God's sake, let him [Varthaman] go back now because India is attacking Pakistan at 9 p.m.' Mr. Sadiq said.

Govt. bans export of onion seeds

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The government banned the export of onion seeds with immediate effect as per a notification issued by the Director General of Foreign Trade on Thursday, in view of surging prices of the bulb in the domestic market and concerns about a seeds' shortage ahead of the next sowing season.

SC gives time on Permanent Commission

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday allowed the Union government time till December 31 to implement its March 17 judgment, which upheld the right of women naval officers to be considered for permanent commission.

The government said it needed more time for preparations owing to the pandemic.

Amid Shringla's France visit, India flays attacks in Nice

There is no justification for terrorism, says Ministry



SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla arrived in Paris on Thursday, just hours after another deadly suspected terror attack in France, in which three people were killed by a knife-wielding attacker inside a church in Nice.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi condemned the attack and expressed solidarity with the French people.

"Our deepest and heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims and the people of France. India stands with France in the fight against terrorism," Mr. Modi tweeted.

Ahead of Mr. Shringla's visit, the External Affairs Ministry had condemned a similar beheading of a schoolteacher in a Parisian suburb last week, and backed French President Emmanuel Macron against "personal attacks in unacceptable language" made by Turkey and Pakistan.

"We believe there is no justification for terrorism,"

tion in the development of a vaccine, diagnostics and testing, procuring medical equipment and ensuring safe treatment, and dealing with the post-COVID-19 impact on the economy were on the agenda for talks.

Boosting supply

In particular, the Ministry spokesperson said talks would include "enhancing supply chain resilience", indicating that concerns over an overdependence on Chinese manufacturing over the past few months, which has been shared in Europe, would also come up.

"This is part of our continuing outreach despite the COVID-19 pandemic. We share democratic values with them, they are our strategic partners. We have multidimensional relations with them," Mr. Srivastava said, referring to the three-nation visit, adding that the Foreign Secretary would discuss India's "commitment to a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific", as well.

The in-person consultations with European interlocutors are another step in India's pandemic-age diplomacy," Mr. Shringla tweeted. The Ministry said several aspects of dealing with COVID-19, including coopera-

India upset by Kashmir depiction on Saudi note

'Gross misrepresentation' of territory

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

India on Thursday described the map of Kashmir in a new currency note of Saudi Arabia as a "gross misrepresentation" of sovereign territory. External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said during the weekly briefing that Delhi has taken up the issue at the diplomatic level with Riyadh.

"We have conveyed our serious concern to Saudi Arabia, both through their Ambassador in New Delhi as well as in Riyadh, for this gross misrepresentation of India's external territorial boundaries on an official and legal banknote of Saudi Arabia and asked the Saudi side for taking urgent corrective steps in this regard,"

International cooperation will convene its next summit meeting on November 21 and 22 in virtual mode and the controversy has cast a shadow on the preparatory days for the summit.

The

Sturdy, sustainable sips

They last for hours in a drink, are compostable, and come in different sizes for bubble tea and coconut water. Straws made of fallen coconut leaves are making steady inroads into domestic and global markets

ANISHA MENEZES

October 3, 2017 was a special day for Professor Saji Varghese, who teaches English, Design Thinking, Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship at Christ University in Bengaluru. As he walked around his campus, he noticed a few fallen coconut leaves. What struck him was a unique curl to the withered leaf, almost resembling a drinking straw. That eureka moment led to three years of research and design, and birthed Sunbird Straws, the first multi-layered coconut straws to hit the market.

"We sent samples of these straws to 10 countries during the last one year and now have potential orders of 25 million straws. We have one operational centre in a village near Madurai, employing six women, but are looking to expand to eight centres in three months, employing 121 women across coastal India," explains Saji.

Meanwhile, at Bengaluru-based startup Evlogia Ecocare. Founder, Manigandan Kumarappan, says proudly, "We started production in January 2019 with three employees producing 150 straws a day. Now we have grown to produce more than 10,000 straws a day with 15 staff members." Raw materials are organised at centres in Madurai, Palani and Dindigul where women self-help groups are supported by the TVS Aranya Trust and other NGOs. Over 90% of their straws are exported to the US, Canada, the UK, Australia, and Germany.

Grounded in method

Both these startups make it a point to ensure that all their straws are made from fallen – not plucked – coconut leaves.

It is a meticulous, multi-step, mechanised process, supervised by the staff, explains Saji. First, the leaves undergo a three-stage cleaning process. They are then cut according to specific width – regular straws with 4 mm diameter; bubble tea straws 12 mm in diameter and so on. The leaves are scraped and rendered into spools, fed into long, spiral rolling devices to make the multi-layered straws, and then cut into standard and customised lengths. Then, they go through a sterilisation process and are packed for sale.

Adds Saji, "A wax bursting system preserves the natural wax of the straws, rendering them waterproof, and they have a natural outer and inner anti-fungal wall. This enhances shelf life to nine months and they stay steady in beverages for six hours."

Though these straws are not that



common a sight in the market yet, they are raking in laurels already. For both of them, 2020 has been a good year. Sunbird Straws has been selected under the PACE incubator programme, powered by the RKVY-RAFTAAR scheme, of the Ministry of Agriculture and Family Welfare, receiving a grant up to ₹25 lakh. It has also been chosen for the Shine programme by Swiss Re for 2020, which entails a six-month mentoring programme and a non-equity grant of ₹15 lakh. Evlogia emerged winner at the Circular Innovation Jam 2020 and won plaudits for Best Business plan at the Big Leap 2020 event as well.

Receiver's end
Evlogia is partnering with a Noida-based business to provide leafy straws to coconut vendors, making the thirst-quenching experience an environmentally-responsible



one as well. In Bengaluru, zero-waste juice shop Eat Raja offers most of its juices in fruit cups, with no straws. But founder Anand Raj says Evlogia's leafy straws won him over. "A friend supplies these single-layer coconut straws that most of our patrons love. They are good for tender coconuts and great for the planet."

Neena Gupta, founder of Karmic Seed, an online distributor of sustainable tableware, is happy that she found Sunbird Straws, "I fell in love with these straws when I first used them. They are durable and don't get



Tree to table (Clockwise from below) Sunbird straws on display and in a thick smoothie; the Sunbird team; straws by Evlogia Ecocare • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

soggy like paper straws. The fact that they are made from agri-waste makes me happy, since valuable resources are not being over utilised." Saji has also secured orders from five-star hotels within India and beverage chains with operations overseas. The next stop is retail, across e-commerce websites.

To Saji, the most important contribution of Sunbird Straws is the intersection of sustainability and rural development. "Using agri-waste, we prevent combustion of these dry leaves, that release harmful gases into the air, and once used, the straws are compostable. We employ people who live off the land, and impart technological and operational training, while incorporating soft skills, financial literacy, and engaging the employees in programmes of physical, mental and emotional well-being, through interventions from experts and interns from relevant departments of Christ University."

For Evlogia, the next stop is production of airtight take-away boxes fashioned out of areca sheets, and banana fibre cups, all with the two-pronged focus of replacing plastic and supporting the rural economy.

For details, visit <https://evlogiaeco.com> or send an email to info@sunbirdstraws.com.



Biryani and some cricket

Biryani is in the news again. The dish was the most sought-after on food delivery platforms during lockdown. And now that IPL has started, food delivery platform Swiggy reports that the dish is the most ordered one during the tournament, followed by paneer butter masala and chicken fried rice. But biryani and the IPL's relationship does not end there.

Earlier this month during the ongoing IPL, when Rajasthan Royals won a match against SunRisers Hyderabad, the former put out a cheeky tweet saying "...we'd like to place an order for one LAAAAARGE Hyderabad Biryani." Last week, however, Hyderabad won against Rajasthan, putting on a great show in Dubai.

The team wasted no time in giving it back to Rajasthan in the same vein, off the field too. On its official Twitter handle, the team tweeted, "Cancel the biryani order our friends can't handle the level of spice. P.S. Daal baati should do just fine." Rajasthan Royals, however, decided to end it with a mellow, "Not hungry tonight."



Throwing spooky shade

Multinational corporations have been making jokes at the expense of rival brands for decades now. It is a practice as old as marketing itself. Burger King outlets in Sweden, however, have taken it to new heights this Halloween. Their dig at McDonald's this time cannot be read in pamphlets, viewed as a television commercial or shared on social media. Instead, it can only be experienced in a classic horror movie setting: the bathroom mirror.

Everyone is aware of the urban legend of the spirit that can be summoned by saying "Bloody Mary" thrice before a mirror on certain haunted nights. At these Burger King bathrooms, customers have to repeat the phrase "cancelled clown" thrice instead. Once they do, they will see the lights dim abruptly and a vision of Ronald McDonald appear in the pitch-dark mirror. The prank, assisted by voice detection software, also comes with an urban legend of its own, scripted by Burger King, of course. It goes: "A few years ago, a particular clown got abruptly 'cancelled' from his long-standing job at a certain hamburger chain. But this Halloween he is back – at Burger King restaurants."

Delivered to your car

It is a shopping snack, but without the social distancing worries of a mall café. Fabcafe has introduced self-pickup, a meal tray option on its website (fabcafe.menu). When you choose a meal tray, your meal will be delivered to your car window in an eco-friendly disposable tray.

These trays are made of corrugated recycled paper and are environmentally friendly. The food is guilt-free too: sample jackfruit chapati and Tofu Coconut Curry, for instance. This Park n' Pickup facility is available at all 21 Fabcafes pan-India. At select locations like Aundh (Pune), Vasant Kunj (Delhi), Hazratganj (Lucknow), the brand also provides customers with an option to Park n' Dine. This allows the customer the comfort of parking their vehicles at Fabcafe's designated parking space and conveniently enjoy dining in their car. Designed to hold individual portions of two to three dishes and a beverage, apart from accompaniments, disposable cutlery, and scented and sanitised wet tissue, these trays come with an eco-friendly garbage liner to ensure proper disposal, too.



Halloween hunger pangs

Halloween is round the corner and bakers are gearing up to join the fun with spooky food arrangements. Willow Bake Shop in Hyderabad is making sure not to leave out any opportunity to be quirky. The team is elated at the orders for their Ogre's finger, DIY skeleton cookies, mummy pies and a lot more. There is also a mean-looking Jack Skelington pie, packed in a box like a puzzle.

Meanwhile, La Patisserie at Taj Coromandel, Chennai boasts of spooky spider cupcakes and Dracula pops. Also on the menu are witchcraft pies like Hogwarts pumpkin pie, and Jack O' Lantern apple pie. A Jack O' Lantern cake is also in the cards, thanks to Bengaluru's Magnolia Bakery, which also offers mini spider cupcakes.



A pal in need

Maharashtra-based FarmPal Technology has made agriculture beneficial to growers and consumers during lockdown

NAHLA NAINAR

Growing up in a farming family in Ahmednagar district, Maharashtra, Karan Hon has personally experienced the travails of Indian agriculture. "There was a lot of poverty in my village, because farmers used expensive traditional practices for cultivation, but never got the right price for their crop. There was no transparency in the wholesale market's pricing. I found that disappointing," says Hon over a phone call.

So in 2017, Hon, who graduated in Mechanical Engineering, decided to quit his 20-year career in leading corporate companies and co-founded FarmPal Technology in Pimpri-Chinchwad, Maharashtra, with Puneet Sethi and Ganesh Hon. Their aim: making agriculture beneficial for both farmer and consumer.

Supplying fruits and vegetables to Pune and Mumbai, besides supermarkets in Karnataka, FarmPal wants to bring a more level playing field for growers, sellers and consumers.

"In the traditional market and supply chain model, middlemen are taking away all the benefits. Farmers don't get even one-third of what the consumer is actually paying for the produce. This is where agri-tech startups can help," says Hon.

Besides fulfilling orders in Pune and Mumbai, FarmPal also managed to export fresh produce to West Asian countries during critical periods of the lockdown. "Before COVID, we used to sell 15 to 20 tonnes of fruits and vegetables daily. In the early stages of lockdown, it dropped to 10-12 tonnes. Now we are returning to our earlier range," says Hon.

Changing ethos

Hon says the pandemic has brought about a sea change in the attitudes of both growers and consumers. "Consumers are now accustomed to expecting high levels of hygiene and nutrition in their food. This means that the amount of chemical fertilisers and pesticides used in agriculture should be controlled," he says.

Technology will help track the life cycle of crops, from planting to harvest, hopefully making it easier to gauge its safety, says Hon. "We are working on collecting the data and explaining it to the consumer. The pandemic has taught us that we have to change the way we eat."

On the ground With Farmpal, Hon (in green) has built a network of 2,000 farmers • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



France raises threat level to highest

President Emmanuel Macron visits the attack site, says security will be stepped up at key places

REUTERS

PARIS

France has raised the security alert for French territory to the highest level after the knife attack in the city of Nice, Prime Minister Jean Castex said on Thursday.

Mr. Castex also told French National Assembly that the government's response to the attack would be firm and implacable.

In Paris, lawmakers in the National Assembly observed a minute's silence in solidarity with the victims of the terror attack. The Mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo, said the people of Nice "can count on the support of the city of Paris and of Parisians".

French President Emmanuel Macron, who visited the church on Thursday, said he would be stepping up the deployment of soldiers to protect key sites, such as places of worship and schools.

'Won't give any ground'
He said France had been attacked "over our values, for our taste for freedom, for the ability on our soil to have freedom of belief".

"And I say it with lots of clarity again today: we will not give any ground."

The police said three people were confirmed to have



On alert: Police officers standing guard near Notre Dame church in Nice on Thursday. **AP**

died in the attack and several were injured. The French anti-terrorist prosecutor's department said it had been asked to investigate.

A man armed with a knife entered the church and slit the throat of the sexton, beheaded an elderly woman, and badly wounded a third woman, according to a police source.

A police source told Reuters the assailant was believed by law enforcement to be a 21-year-old Tunisian national who had recently entered France from Italy.

A representative of the French Council for the Muslim Faith strongly condemned the attack. "As a

sign of mourning and solidarity with the victims and their loved ones, I call on all Muslims in France to cancel all the celebrations of the holiday of Mawlid." The holiday is the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad, celebrated on Thursday.

Egypt's al-Azhar, the 1,000-year-old seat of Sunni Muslim learning, condemned the incident as a "hateful terrorist attack" and warned against "violent and hate speech", in a reference to the display of images in France of the Prophet.

The city's Mayor Christine Estrosi said the victims had been killed in a "horrible way".

Saudi man stabs guard at French consulate

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

JEDDAH

A Saudi citizen wounded a guard in a knife attack on Thursday at the French consulate in the Red Sea city of Jeddah, officials said, as France faces growing anger over satirical cartoons of the Prophet Muhammed.

The assault came the same day as knifings at a church in the French city of Nice that left three people dead and several others wounded.

"The assailant was apprehended by Saudi security forces immediately after the attack. The guard was taken to hospital and his life is not in danger," the French Embassy said in a statement.

The police in the western province of Mecca, where Jeddah is situated, said the attacker was a Saudi, but it did not give the nationality of the guard, who they said had sustained minor injuries.

The French Embassy in Riyadh urged its nationals in Saudi Arabia to exercise "extreme vigilance".

Security around the Jeddah consulate later appeared to be tightened, with Saudi police cars seen patrolling around the complex.

In Riyadh, an AFP correspondent saw two police cars stationed outside the Embassy, located in the city's high-security Diplomatic Quarter, as Saudi policemen prevented passers-by from taking photographs.

Neither the Saudi authorities nor the French Embassy gave a possible motive for the attack.

But it comes after France's President Emmanuel Macron vigorously defended the publication of cartoons of the Prophet Muhammed by the French satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* on free speech grounds.

Trump, Biden to take campaign battle to Florida

REUTERS

WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump and Democratic rival Joe Biden will rally supporters on Thursday in the battleground of Florida, visiting the same city hours apart and putting on full display their contrasting approaches to the resurgent coronavirus pandemic.

Opinion polls show Mr. Bi-

den with a significant edge nationally, but his lead is tighter in battleground States. A Reuters/Ipsos poll released on Wednesday showed Mr. Trump had essentially moved into a tie with Mr. Biden in Florida, with 49% saying they would vote for Biden and 47% for the President.

With its 29 electoral votes, the State is a major prize in

next Tuesday's election. Mr. Trump will stage an outdoor rally in Tampa. Thousands of people have crowded together at recent Trump rallies, many eschewing masks despite public health recommendations.

Mr. Biden, in contrast, will hold a drive-in rally later in Tampa where attendees will remain in their cars. He will host a similar event earlier in

the day in Broward County in South Florida.

In the days leading up to the election, the pandemic has suspended life across the U.S. this year, killing more than 27,000 people and causing millions of job losses, is roaring back.

Handling the pandemic
Mr. Trump this week has repeatedly dismissed the

threat of the pandemic, claiming that his rivals and the news media would cease paying attention to it after the election.

In the poll, 48% of voters said Mr. Biden would be better at handling the pandemic, while 42% said Mr. Trump would be better. Some 52% said Mr. Trump would be better at managing the economy, against 41% for Biden.



Juwairiya Mohideen

* SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Development Trust (MWDT), which she founded in 2010.

Bureaucratic hurdles

Some 70,000 people had no choice but to build their lives from scratch in Puttalam or elsewhere. "When some original residents of Puttalam, including Muslims, refer to us, they call us refugees," Ms. Mohideen notes. "They fear we are after all their natural resources."

From education and employment to housing and toilets,

everything has proved a struggle for the northern Muslims trying to make Puttalam their home. A majority work for a daily wage in small vegetable farms or at the salterns in the coastal district. While a few hundred families have returned to Jaffna with great difficulty, others have chosen to remain in Puttalam, where their families have grown. "But getting an official document or attestation is a big challenge. The officers at the local authorities invariably direct these families to Jaffna or Mannar, where we are from. And when they go there, they are told their records don't exist," says Ms. Mohideen, of the many bureaucratic challenges faced by a community seen to be "neither here nor there".

Rather critical of the Muslim parties and its leaders, she says those in Parliament are "more prone to opportunistic politics" than any long-term vision for the community, based on rights

and freedoms. "Even when Muslims were attacked [by Sinhala Buddhist chauvinist groups] in the recent past, they would turn up for a media sound bite, and then never care to follow up," she says. Further, Muslim leaders, in her view, have shown little interest in appreciating Muslim women's calls to reform personal law.

Emphasising the "huge task of pending reconciliation," she says strengthening relations between the country's Tamil and Sinhalese communities, as well as Tamils and Muslims, needs a host of initiatives, including addressing the "language barrier". Barring a handful, most politicians from all our communities are so disconnected from their own constituencies, that they are unable to do anything meaningful."

All the same, women's networks built by her and fellow activists are intact and offer hope, she says.

UK's Labour Party suspends Corbyn after scathing anti-Semitism report

Complaints by Jewish members 'underplayed or belittled'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

LONDON

Britain's main opposition Labour Party on Thursday suspended its former leader Jeremy Corbyn, after a government watchdog found his office broke equality law through its "inexcusable" handling of anti-Semitism complaints.

The shock development came after Mr. Corbyn said he refused to accept all the findings of the Equality and Human Rights Commission report, in defiance of the party's new leadership under Keir Starmer.

In the light of his comments made today and his failure to retract them subsequently, the Labour party has suspended Jeremy Corbyn pending investigation," a spokesman said.

He said that Mr. Corbyn,



Jeremy Corbyn

who has continued to sit as a member of Parliament after stepping down as leader, will also no longer count in the ranks of Labour MPs.

Mr. Corbyn vowed to "strongly contest" his suspension, potentially reopening the party's civil war between left- and right-wingers just as it makes inroads in opinion polls over the Conservative government's han-

dling of the pandemic.

The EHRC found damning instances where Mr. Corbyn's leadership team underplayed, belittled or ignored complaints by Jewish members, and sometimes actively interfered to support favoured allies, after a deluge of anti-Semitic abuse online and in party meetings.

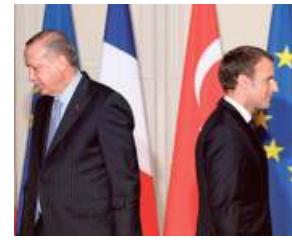
Luciana Berger, a former MP and Jewish member to quit the party under Mr. Corbyn, said the report was vindication as she described being threatened by his supporters with acid attack, stabbing and rape.

"The party facilitated a culture of bullying, bigotry and intimidation against Jewish people from within its ranks. At every step of the way, Jeremy Corbyn enabled this to happen," she wrote in a blog.

What is behind the spat between Turkey and France?

Ties hit a new low after Paris defended Prophet's cartoons

STANLY JOHNY



NEWS ANALYSIS

Relations between France and Turkey, two NATO members, hit a new low this month after Recep Tayyip Erdogan launched a personal attack on his French counterpart Emmanuel Macron following the latter's call for reforming Islam. Last week, France recalled its Ambassador from Turkey, for the first time, and Ankara called for a boycott of French goods.

The trigger

Turkey and France have clashed over a number of geopolitical issues in recent years. The trigger for the latest clash was the French government's support for *Charlie Hebdo*, the satirical magazine whose office was attacked by al-Qaeda-linked jihadists in January 2015 over its publication of caricatures of Prophet Muhammed, to republish the cartoons. Ankara, under Mr. Erdogan's AK Party, has projected itself as a defender of (selective) Muslims causes worldwide, and had slammed Mr. Macron earlier over his push to "reform" Islam in France.

On October 16, Samuel Paty, a middle school history teacher in Conflans-Sainte-Honorine, a suburb of Paris, was beheaded by an 18-year-old Chechen after he showed his students caricatures of the Prophet. Following Paty's murder, the French government started an operation to crack down on Islamist organisations, and President Macron stated that Islam was in need of an "enlightenment". While paying homage to Paty, government buildings in several cities displayed the

caricatures of the Prophet. While the French response triggered criticism in Muslim countries, Mr. Erdogan launched the sharpest attack on Mr. Macron, saying he "needs mental treatment". In response, France recalled its Ambassador from Turkey.

Macron's reform plan?

In early October, Mr. Macron outlined the substance of a long-awaited law which his government is planning to introduce to regulate the practice of Islam in France. In September, after *Charlie Hebdo* republished the cartoons, Ankara, under Mr. Erdogan's AK Party, has projected itself as a defender of (selective) Muslims causes worldwide, and had slammed Mr. Macron earlier over his push to "reform" Islam in France.

On October 3, while un-

veiling the essence of the Bill, which the government plans to formally present in December, the President said the law was being brought in to fight "Islamist separatism", which is a "conscious, theorised, politico-religious project that materialises through repeated deviations from the values of the republic and which often result in the creation of a counter-society". It will crack down on foreign in-

In all these cases, France and Turkey emerged as two opposing poles in the West and the East, respectively. While France, the EU's most powerful military, is trying to assert itself under Mr. Macron, Mr. Erdogan's neo-Ottoman foreign policy is ready to pick up fights wherever it sees an opening. It was against this background, the cartoon controversy sent tensions soaring.

'China is a threat to religious freedom' +

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

JAKARTA

China is the "gravest threat" to the future of religious freedom, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Thursday.

Mr. Pompeo has made attacks against China the focus of his trip this week which kicked off in India and included visits to Sri Lanka, the

Maldives, Indonesia and, later Friday, Vietnam.

In Indonesia – which has the world's biggest Muslim population – Mr. Pompeo took aim at China's treatment of its Uighur Muslim minority. "The gravest threat to the future of religious freedom is the Chinese Communist Party's war against people of all faiths..." he said.

Tender Call Notice					
No. IDCO/HO/MIS/A-10040/01/2020/V-1/ 14412 Date : 27.10.2020					
IDCO invites tenders from eligible Cloud Service Provider (CSP) listed under Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Govt. of India for Govt. Community Cloud or their authorized reseller/channel partner to participate in the tendering process for "Setting-up of IDCO Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Site on Cloud".					
The interested bidders can download the Tender document from IDCO website www.idco.in from 04.11.2020 to 18.11.2020 up to 5.00 P.M. Response to ToR should be sent by Registered Post/Speed Post only so as to reach the Dy.General Manager (MIS), IDCO, IDCO Towers, Janpath, Bhubaneswar-22 on or before 24.11.2020 up to 5.00 P.M.					
CAD-657: Dy. General Manager (MIS) OPR-14003/11/0069/2021					

STATEMENT OF STANDALONE & CONSOLIDATED UNAUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND HALF YEAR ENDED 30 TH SEPTEMBER 2020 (Rs. in Crores)						
S. No	Particulars	Standalone			Consolidated	
		Quarter ended 30.09.2020	Half Year ended 30.09.2019	Quarter ended 30.09.2019	Quarter ended 30.09.2020	Half Year ended 30.09.2019
1	Total Income	4,616.58				

MARKET WATCH

	29-10-2020	% CHANGE
Sensex	39,750	-0.43
US Dollar	74.10	-0.31
Gold	50,630	-1.15
Brent oil	37.81	-3.45

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	342.70	-10.95
Asian Paints	2225.45	65.90
Axis Bank	493.85	-10.85
Bajaj Auto	2925.35	-18.70
Bajaj Finserv	5623.95	-18.40
Bajaj Finance	3380.05	-9.25
Bharti Airtel	450.80	-1.05
BPCL	341.80	-3.65
Britannia Ind	3532.65	-9.05
Cipla	762.30	-2.95
Coal India	110.85	-1.85
Divis Lab	3107.60	-23.85
Dr Reddys Lab	4941.95	-9.05
Eicher Motors	2136.85	1.85
GAIL (India)	83.45	0.35
Grasim Ind	770.20	-7.05
HCL Tech.	840.05	10.45
HDFC	1934.30	-34.60
HDFC Bank	1187.20	-22.40
HDFC Life	586.10	-0.05
Hero MotoCorp	2894.00	-52.20
Hindalco	167.90	-2.55
Hind Unilever	2122.10	-42.25
ICICI Bank	339.90	3.85
IndusInd Bank	588.70	-4.15
Infosys	1074.85	-1.70
Indian Oil Corp	78.40	0.35
ITC	163.85	-1.65
JSW Steel	306.80	0.95
Kotak Bank	1570.90	19.55
L&T	934.50	-48.35
M&M	591.95	-12.20
Maruti Suzuki	7117.70	-68.35
Nestle India Ltd.	16870.60	-248.55
NTPC	86.50	-1.60
ONGC	64.40	-1.95
PowerGrid Corp	171.60	-1.25
Reliance Ind	2026.90	15.45
SBF Life	761.50	-9.50
State Bank	188.70	-1.75
Shree Cement	21677.00	315.80
Sun Pharma	456.35	-7.05
Tata Motors	131.90	-2.90
Tata Steel	401.40	-0.90
TCS	2632.65	10.45
Tech Mahindra	804.25	-0.05
Titan	1178.70	-38.80
UltraTech Cement	4576.80	107.50
UPL	450.25	-0.50
Wipro	337.45	-1.80

EXCHANGE RATES		
Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on October 29		
CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	73.90	74.22
Euro	86.74	87.11
British Pound	96.11	96.53
Japanese Yen (100)	70.88	71.21
Chinese Yuan	11.02	11.07
Swiss Franc	81.12	81.48
Singapore Dollar	54.20	54.44
Canadian Dollar	55.54	55.78
Malaysian Ringgit	17.79	17.87
Australian Dollar	52.15	52.37

Source: Indian Bank

IN BRIEF



BPCL Q2 profit jumps 58% on inventory gains
NEW DELHI
BPCL on Thursday reported a 58% jump in Q2 net profit on the back of inventory gains and rise in refining margin. Consolidated net profit was at ₹2,589.52 crore in July-September compared with ₹1,502.63 crore the year earlier. "Our strategy of buying crude at low prices in May and June has resulted in substantial refinery margin," BPCL Director (Finance) N. Vijayagopal said. PTI

Vodafone Idea revenue dips on subscriber exits
BENGALURU
Vodafone Idea Ltd. on Thursday reported a marginal fall in second-quarter revenue, as subscriber losses to rivals overshadowed benefits from a move to hike tariffs last year. Subscriber base slipped to 271.8 million as of September-end from 311.1 million a year ago, indicating a decline in market share for the JV between Vodafone Group and Idea Cellular. REUTERS

Pidilite in ₹2,100-cr. deal to buy HAMSPL

MUMBAI
Pidilite Industries Ltd. has entered into a definitive agreement with the U.S.-based Huntsman Group to acquire 100% stake in one of its subsidiaries in India namely, Huntsman Advanced Materials Solutions Private Ltd. (HAMSPL). The company's board on Wednesday approved the deal. The deal is for a cash consideration of approximately ₹2,100 crore, as per Pidilite.

Bank of Baroda Q2 net doubles to ₹1,679 crore

MUMBAI
Bank of Baroda (BoB) said second-quarter net profit increased 128% to ₹1,679 crore on a standalone basis compared with ₹737 crore in the year-earlier period on the back of lower provisions. Operating profit at ₹5,552 crore represented an increase of 4% YoY while net interest income rose 6.8% YoY to ₹7,508 crore. Gross NPA ratio stood at 9.14% (10.25%) and net NPA ratio at 2.51% (3.91%).

Mistrys file exit plan in SC, peg stake in Tatas at ₹1.75 lakh cr.

SP Group moots a pro-rata split of listed assets, brand to eliminate disputes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI
The Shaporji Pallonji Group on Thursday said it had submitted a plan to the Supreme Court to end its seven-decades-old association with the Tata Group.

The Mistrys have valued their holding in the Tatas at ₹1.75 lakh crore, it informed the apex court, which is hearing the legal battle between the two groups that began after the Tatas sacked Cyrus Mistry as the Chairman in October 2016.

"Tata Sons is effectively a two-group company, with the Tata Group comprising Tata Trusts, Tata family members and Tata companies holding 81.6% of the equity share capital, and the



Third umpire: The SP Group mooted a neutral third-party valuation for the unlisted assets adjusted for net debt. ■PTI

Mistry family owning the balance 18.37%", the SP Group said in a statement, citing its submission to the court.

Tata Sons is the holding company for the Tata Group and its value arises from its stake in listed equities, non-listed equities, the brand,

cash balances and immovable assets. The value of the SP Group's 18.37% stake in Tata Sons is more than ₹1,75,000 crore, it said.

The SP Group said disputes over valuation can be eliminated by doing a pro-rata split of listed assets and

U.S. GDP grew 33%, recovery incomplete

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON

The U.S. economy grew at a record 33.1% annual rate in the July-September quarter but has yet to fully rebound from its plunge in the first half, and the recovery is slowing as COVID-19 cases surge and government aid dries up.

The Commerce Department's estimate on Thursday of third-quarter growth showed that the nation had regained only about two-thirds of the output lost early this year when virus closed businesses, threw millions out of work and caused the deepest recession since the Great Depression.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will soon issue fresh guidelines on credit default swaps (CDS), a financial derivative instrument to hedge risks in bond investments, a senior Finance Ministry official said on Thursday.

The development of CDS is considered critical for deepening India's bond markets and the government believes that the enactment of the Bilateral Netting of Qualified Financial Contracts law this month should pave the way for an active CDS market.

Talks with regulators

"The government is working with financial sector regulators, SEBI, RBI, IRDA and

PFRDA to build a robust and vibrant bond market," said Anand Bajaj, Additional Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs.

"The traded volumes in our bond markets in 2019-20 were not much at ₹19-₹20 lakh crore, while 98% of debt issuances were made

through private placements," Mr. Bajaj added. Stressing that fair valuation of bonds is a challenge when trading is limited, he said that to facilitate the development of the CDS market, the central bank would issue revised guidelines soon.

"We think that enhancing the bond markets is very important for the requirement of infrastructure financing, particularly the projects lined up in the National Infrastructure Pipeline," he said at an Assocham event.

NBFCs cautioned
Earlier in the day, Chief Economic Adviser Krishnamurthy Subramanian also made a pitch for CDS to make India's financial markets more

Fiscal deficit widens to ₹9.1 lakh crore

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The fiscal deficit continued to soar in September to reach ₹9.1 lakh crore, or almost 11.5% of the budget target of ₹7.96 lakh crore for 2020-21, as per data from the Comptroller General of Accounts.

The revenue deficit hit 125.2% in the first half of the year, with revenue receipts continuing to suffer in view of lower economic activity due to COVID-19.

"The monthly expenditure trends revealed a discordant sharp contraction in both revenue and capital expenditure in September 2020, suggesting that the expenditure management restrictions are outweighing the fiscal support measures announced so far," said Aditi Nayar, principal economist at ICRA.



and dimming hopes of a stimulus plan from the U.S. administration in near term have led to the recent rise in Dollar Index from a multi-week low," said Sugandha Sachdeva VP-Metals, Energy & Currency Research, Reliagare Broking.

Besides, uncertainty due to the second wave of COVID-19 cases hitting the U.S. and Europe had also dented investor sentiment. Ms. Sachdeva said, adding that "amid a shaky landscape, the rupee still looks to find some breather around 74.50 mark. However, if that is also taken out, 75 mark also looks likely on the cards".

Going ahead, investors would track an ECB policy meeting as well U.S. GDP data for further cues.

"Rupee depreciated as fresh lockdowns in Europe spooked investor appetite for risk assets," said Devarsh Vakil, Deputy Head Retail Research, HDFC Securities.

Mr. Vakil further noted that the expectation of a fiscal stimulus package to support the economy before Diwali also weighed on the rupee.

"The fear that economic conditions are going to get worse before they get better, is keeping the dollar strong against emerging market currencies," said Rahul Gupta, Head of Research-Currency, Emkay Global Financial Services.

RBI to issue fresh CDS norms soon: Bajaj

Hedging instrument crucial for boosting bond investments in infrastructure'



PFRDA to build a robust and vibrant bond market," said Anand Bajaj, Additional Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs.

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Maruti Q2 net inches up as sales rise almost 10%

No need for any tax cut now: Bhargava

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Maruti Suzuki on Thursday reported second-quarter profit inched up 1% ₹1,371.6 crore, helped by a near 10% increase in sales. Pointing to the improvement in sales, Chairman R.C. Bhargava asserted there was no immediate need for a reduction in tax rates for the auto sector. He also said he expected steady demand for vehicles at least till December.

However, he cautioned that any drop in urban income levels on account of the economic slowdown could impact demand.

"Compared with the second quarter of last year, Maruti has performed better because last year was the time when Maruti went down 16%, the industry went down 18% [in volumes]. If you take that as the

Pandemic, high prices hit gold demand

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

Demand for gold in India declined 30% to 86.6 tonnes in the July-September quarter as compared with 123.9 tonnes a year earlier due to COVID-19 disruptions and record high prices, data released by the World Gold Council showed.

Total jewellery demand during the quarter decreased by 48% to 52.8 tonnes. In terms of value, jewellery demand fell 29% to ₹24,100 crore from the year-earlier period. However, the demand for gold coins, bars and ETF had seen a surge. "Total investment demand increased 52% to 33.8 tonnes during the quarter," Somasundaram PR, MD India, World Gold Council said. In terms of value, gold investment demand was ₹15,4

Classy Gaikwad, nerveless Jadeja dent KKR's playoff chances in thriller

Opener sets the chase up with 72 before all-rounder smashes sixes off the last two balls to take CSK past the finish line; Rana's 87 not enough for Morgan's side

IPL 2020

SPORTS BUREAU

With nine balls left and 27 to defend, Kolkata Knight Riders would have fancied its chances. But Ravindra Jadeja produced some mighty hits in an unbeaten 31 off just 11 balls (2x4, 3x6) to help Chennai Super Kings win by six wickets at the Dubai International Stadium on Thursday.

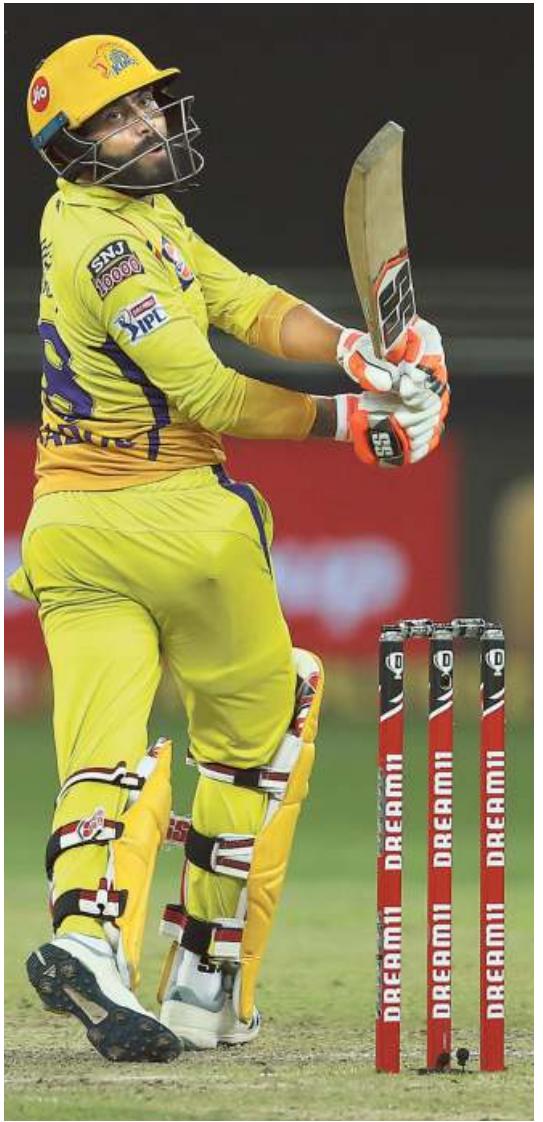
The momentum shift
Lockie Ferguson lost control of proceedings during the final three legal deliveries of the 19th over against Jadeja, conceding 17 runs, including a no-ball and a free-hit six, leaving CSK needing only 10 runs off the final over.

Despite Kamlesh Nagarkoti's best efforts in changing the equation to seven off the last two balls, Jadeja's experience ensured he sent them over the deep mid-wicket and wide long-on fence to seal the match.

The defeat leaves KKR's playoff chances in jeopardy. It also confirms Mumbai Indians' place in the last four.

Exquisite shots

Chasing 173 for victory, Gaikwad set it up for CSK with a classy 72 off 53 balls (6x4, 2x6). The youngster played some exquisite shots against the likes of Ferguson and Pat Cummins. Gaikwad was particularly severe on Ferguson, pulling and lifting him over the in-field with courage and



In smashing form: Ruturaj Gaikwad and Ravindra Jadeja excelled for Chennai Super Kings while Nitish Rana came good for Kolkata Knight Riders. ■ BCCI/IPL

conviction. Ambati Rayudu gave the innings tempo with a 20-ball 38 (5x4, 1x6), as he added 68 for the second wicket with Gaikwad in just 6.1 overs. Varun Chakravarthy bowled a fine spell (4-0-20-2) for KKR.

Earlier, KKR made 172 for five after being put in, thanks to Nitish Rana's scintillating 87 off 61 balls (10x4, 4x6).

Shubman Gill and Rana provided KKR with a solid start, putting on 53 runs for

the opening wicket.

Rana, after a cautious start, cut loose against Mitchell Santner in the sixth over, sweeping the left-arm spinner for two boundaries and following it up with a six over mid-wicket.

Fighting back

CSK fought back in the next few overs through its spinners Santner, Karn Sharma and Jadeja. However, Rana then went after Karn in the

16th over, hitting the leggie for three consecutive sixes on the leg-side to give KKR the final push.

The southpaw seemed on course for a big hundred before he was deceived by a slower one from Lungi Ngidi.

Dinesh Karthik helped KKR finish strongly as he came up with a 10-ball 21 that contained three boundaries. However, Gaikwad and Jadeja ensured that CSK had the last laugh.

MI enters playoffs

- KKR's loss against CSK meant that MI became the first team to qualify for the playoffs
- Rayudu plays a crucial role in CSK's chase against KKR, hammering a 20-ball 38
- Varun turns in another fine performance for the Kolkata side, but his effort goes in vain

Points table

Team	M	W	L	PTS	NRR
Mumbai Indians (Q)	12	8	4	16	1.186
Royal Challengers	12	7	5	14	0.048
Delhi Capitals	12	7	5	14	0.030
Kings XI Punjab	12	6	6	12	-0.049
Kolkata Knight Riders	13	6	7	12	-0.467
Sunrisers Hyderabad	12	5	7	10	0.396
Rajasthan Royals	12	5	7	10	-0.505
Chennai Super Kings	13	5	8	10	-0.532

After the CSK-KKR match on Oct. 29

Q: Qualified

Innings scan

KKR	CSK
42 Dots	38
20 Fours	15
5 Sixes	7
48/0 PP	44/0
8.60 RR	8.90

Race for the caps

ORANGE CAP	MATCHES	RUNS	HS	SR
K.L. Rahul (KKR)	12	595	132*	132.22
Shikhar Dhawan (DC)	12	471	106*	147.64
David Warner (SRH)	12	436	66	134.56

PURPLE CAP	MATCHES	WKT	BBI	ECON.
Kagiso Rabada (DC)	12	23	4/24	8.13
Jasprit Bumrah (MI)	12	20	4/20	7.18
Mohammed Shami (KKR)	12	20	3/15	8.46

AFTER THE CSK-KKR MATCH ON OCT. 29

Morris and Hardik reprimanded

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ABU DHABI

Royal Challengers Bangalore all-rounder Chris Morris and Mumbai Indians' Hardik Pandya have been reprimanded for a verbal altercation during their teams' IPL clash here on Wednesday.

The incident happened in the 19th over of MI's chase when Hardik struck Morris for a massive six and gestured towards the South African. Morris got his revenge when he dismissed Hardik off the fifth ball of the over and gave him a send-off.

A press release from the IPL said both had admitted to a breach of the Code of Conduct.

Philippe-Padikkal combo a big positive: Katich

SPORTS REPORTER
BENGALURU

The emergence of Australia's Josh Philippe as a promising opening partner for Devdutt Padikkal was the biggest positive from Royal Challengers Bangalore's five-wicket loss to Mumbai Indians on Wednesday, Head Coach Simon Katich said.

The 23-year-old Philippe, who had come in for an out-of-form Aaron Finch, scored a 24-ball 33 and combined with Padikkal for 71 runs.

Great start

"The two youngsters at the top were a big positive. They got us off to a great start. At one stage it looked like we were going to get well on top with the bat, but unfortunately young Josh was stumped and it sort of

Siraj did get us wickets later but unfortunately it wasn't meant to be

SIMON KATICH
Head coach, RCB

slowed [us] down."

Mohammed Siraj, who had wreaked havoc with the new ball the last time RCB played in Abu Dhabi, did not open the bowling. But Katich said the presence of two left-handers in Quinton de Kock and Ishan Kishan played a part.

"Sometimes it is because of the conditions and sometimes the match-ups. With two left-handers the skipper felt we had to get [Washington] Sundar into the game and he did a very good job. Siraj did get us wickets later but unfortunately it wasn't meant to be."

Rampaging KXIP meets desperate RR

Defeat will mean the end of the road for Smith's Royals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ABU DHABI

A rampaging Kings XI Punjab will look to extend its exceptional run and inch closer to a playoff berth while Rajasthan Royals will be desperate to stay alive in the tournament when the two sides clash

TODAY'S MATCH



HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played: 20

KXIP 9 | RR 11

FORM GUIDE

(last five matches, latest game first)

KXIP W | W | W | W | W

RR W | L | W | L | L

STAR SPORTS 1 & SELECT 1 (SD & HD)



Chris Gayle. ■ BCCI/IPL



Ben Stokes. ■ BCCI/IPL

here on Friday.

In a dramatic turnaround, KXIP has chalked up five consecutive wins, infusing life into its campaign.

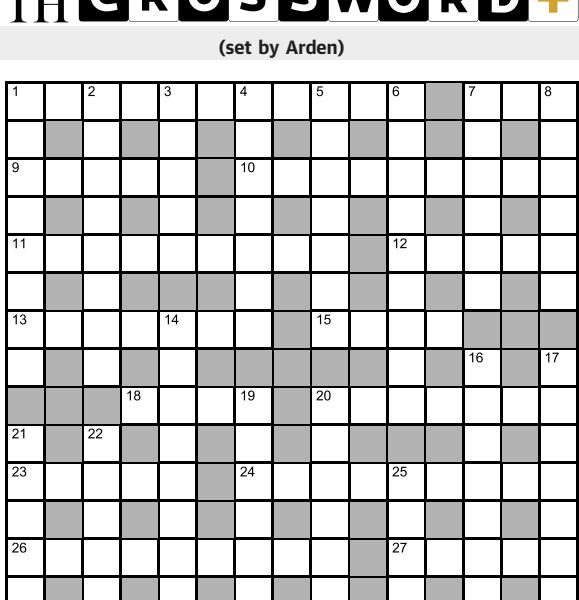
It's a mad scramble for the playoffs. With Mumbai Indians through, six teams remain in the hunt for three slots. If Royals lose on Friday they will be out of the reckoning, while a defeat for Kings will dent their chances of a top-four finish.

CROSSWORD

13080

(set by Arden)

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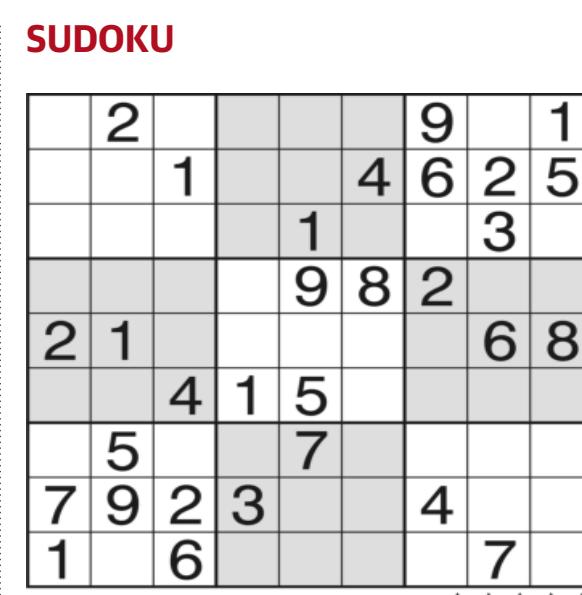


ACROSS

- Singer lacking note, goes off (3,4,4)
- Bird protected by her monkey (3)
- Fit into an epic tussle (5)
- Band will repair the damage (9)
- Went over, have to make it smaller (5,4)
- Regularly goes into battle, you bet (5)
- Managed to do work outside – it warns you of a gas leak (7)

- 15 Christmas for Japanese drama student (4)
18 Boast about habit (4)
20 Mindless pursuit for artist to follow (3,4)
23 Top accommodation by a lake for 19 (5)
24 Nurtured and dyed outside America (9)
26 City is flat and cold in the beginning (9)
27 Melancholy in the air (5)
28 Can return the egg (3)
29 Arrest enemy soldier in battle, the German will run away (4,1,6)
- DOWN
- Material found in corner, as in order... (8)
 - ... not great shape (8)
 - Paper without heading is a problem (5)
 - A dish to be promoted as Wellington, perhaps (7)
 - Set one's heart, say, on a material (7)
 - Women tend to develop talent (9)
 - Nothing called the ultimate fruit (6)
 - Stories about a hard place in our neighbourhood (6)
 - A wave involving people for the accord (9)
 - Collected fish, need to pick up recipe (8)
 - Bowler – fellow maybe a grade lower (8)
 - My god! A programming language for a hunter in the sky! (7)
 - After short stay next to central square, they're left behind (7)
 - Reiterating one's ability to perform dance (6)
 - Taken separately – it could be passionate (6)
 - Sound only under the car (5)

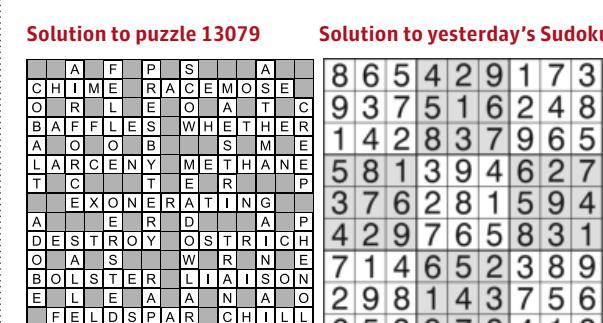
SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

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Solution to puzzle 13079 Solution to yesterday's Sudoku



FAITH

Wisdom to dispel delusion

From the accounts in the puranas there emerges some kind of explanation on issues such as the cause of creation, cosmology, multi universe theory, galaxy, and so on. In the third Skanda of the Devi Bhagavata purana, Janamejaya confesses to Vyasa that his mind is confused about these matters.

Vyasa tells him that earlier he too had such doubts and that he had approached Narada for clarification. Then Narada had told him that in former times he too had pondered on these matters and then went to Brahma for explanation. In a discourse, Sri K. Srinivasan drew attention to the significance of these weighty questions that have baffled even rishis and realised souls. Janamejaya wants to know about Devi, and how she was born and what is her nature.

How did this entire Brahmanda, not merely the world where we live, come about? Who is the root cause of all this? Who created the Trimurti, Brahma, Vishnu and Siva? Do they function independently? Who created the celestial beings such as Indra, Agni, Varuna, etc? These deities seem to be bound by Prakriti and gunas and experience joy and sorrow. They seem to be subject to a higher authority when they perform their respective duties. Brahma, Indra and other celestial beings are also bound by time; for, they reign for a specific period that may appear longer in the view of human beings but nevertheless is limited. Janamejaya is also confused about dharma. He wants to know the true characteristics of dharma and what differentiates it from adharma. For, if the devas are inherently endowed with satva guna and aligned to dharma, why is it that they have to fight when attacked by the sinful rakshasas. He hopes the sage will impart wisdom. He hopes to clear the delusion in his

IN BRIEF



Next year's Boston marathon postponed

NEW YORK
The 2021 Boston Marathon will be moved from its traditional slot in April until later in the year because of the coronavirus pandemic, organisers said on Wednesday. The prestigious event – cancelled this year for the first time in its 124-year history – is usually held on the third Monday of April. The Boston Athletic Association said next year's event would now be postponed. No date was given. AFP

SAI to bear shuttlers' expenses in Germany

NEW DELHI
The Sports Authority of India (SAI) has decided to bear the hotel and food expenses of shuttlers Ajay Jayaram and Shubhakar Dey who are forced to undergo a period of quarantine after teammate Lakshya Sen's father tested positive ahead of the Saarlorlux Open, at Saarbrucken, in Germany. A SAI statement on Thursday stated, "SAI will be paying a total of ₹1.46 lakh and will release 90% of the amount immediately". Lakshya and his father are already covered under the TOP scheme.

Smith to buy Utah Jazz from Miller family

WASHINGTON
Ryan Smith, co-founder of software developer Qualtrics, has agreed to purchase the NBA's Utah Jazz from the Miller family, which has owned the club for 35 years, the team announced on Wednesday. The deal, worth a reported \$1.66 billion, must be approved by NBA owners before being finalised, a move expected to come before the end of the year. Forbes magazine ranked the Jazz at 21st in value among the 30 NBA 30 clubs earlier this year at \$1.55 billion. AFP

Barcelona eases past Juventus

Chelsea and Manchester United hit the cruise button

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

AGENCIES

TURIN

An early goal from Ousmane Dembele and a late Lionel Messi penalty gave Barcelona a 2-0 win away to Juventus in the Champions League on Wednesday after Alvaro Morata had three goals disallowed for offside for the Serie A side.

Dembele struck with a deflected shot in the 14th minute for a Barcelona side smarting from Saturday's home defeat by Real Madrid. Juventus, still missing Cristiano Ronaldo after he tested positive for COVID-19 two weeks ago, was frustrated as Morata had two goals disallowed in the first half and a third after halftime.

Juve's frustration was complete as defender Merih Demiral was sent off on the 85th minute and Messi settled the match with a stoppage-time penalty to leave



Complete performance: Lionel Messi sends Juve's keeper the wrong way to score Barca's second goal from the spot. ■REUTERS

Barcelona top of Group G with six points and Juventus on three.

Marcus Rashford scored a hat trick as Manchester United beat Leipzig 5-0 at home, while Chelsea brushed aside Krasnodar 4-0 in Russia

A wave of second-half goals also earned wins for Paris Saint-Germain – after losing Neymar early to injury

– Borussia Dortmund and Sevilla.

The results:

Group E: Krasnodar 0 lost to Chelsea 4 (Hudson-Odoi 37, Werner 76-pen, Ziyech 79, Pusic 90); Sevilla 1 (De Jong 55) drew with Rennes 0.

Group F: Club Brugge 1 (Vanaken 42-pen) drew with Lazio 1 (Correa 14); Borussia Dortmund 2 (Sancho 78-pen, Haaland

90+1) bt Zenit St. Petersburg 0. **Group G:** Ferencvaros 2 (Nguen 59, Boli 90) drew with Dynamo Kiev 2 (Tsygankov 28-pen, De Pena 41); Juventus 0 lost to Barcelona 2 (Dembele 14, Messi 90-pen).

Group H: Istanbul Basaksehir 0 lost to Paris St.-Germain 2 (Kean 64, 79); Manchester United 5 (Greenwood 21, Rashford 74, 78, 90+, Martial 87-pen) bt RB Leipzig 0.

Bindra launches sports medicine institute

KAMESH SRINIVASAN
NEW DELHI

growing in India, something most evident in the Odisha sporting ecosystem," said Bindra. "The next 10 years will create a demand for professionals that channel an athlete's potential, and provide support in making World champions.

"With ABSMARI, we hope to empower Indian physiotherapists and sports scientists to learn from the best and be a part of this movement," said Bindra.

"Through visual learning and state of the art labs in place, students can hope to fast-track their learning," said Dr. Joseph Oliver, dean of the institute.

Further details can be had from www.absmari.com.

Divij loses in quarters

INDIANS ABROAD

SPORTS BUREAU

NUR SULTAN (KAZAKHSTAN)

Divij Sharan and Luke Bambridge lost 6-3, 7-5 to second-seeded Max Purcell and Luke Saville in the doubles quarterfinals of the \$337,000 ATP tennis tournament here on Thursday.

Divij and partner collected 45 ATP points and \$3,230.

The results:

\$337,000 ATP, Nur Sultan, Kazakhstan: Doubles (quarterfinals): Max Purcell & Luke Saville (Aus) bt Luke Bambridge (GBR) & Divij Sharan 6-3, 7-5.

Pre-quarterfinals: Marcelo Arevalo (Esa) & Tomislav Brkic (Bih) bt Frederik Nielsen (Den) & Rohan Bopanna 6-7(5), 7-6(3), [10-5].

€ 44,820 Challenger, Hamburg: Doubles (quarterfinals):

Dustin Brown (Ger) & Jamie Cerretani (US) bt Luca Margheri (Sui) & Sriram Balaji 6-4, 6-4.

€44,820 Challenger, Marbella, Spain: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals):

Carlos Taberner & Benabe Zapata Miralles (Esp) bt Purav Raja & Ramkumar Ramamathan 6-2, 6-2.

\$15,000 ITF women, Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt: First round:

Rutuja Bhosale bt Bianca Jolie Fernandez (Can) 7-6(6), 6-1.

\$15,000 ITF men, Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt: First round:

Francesco Vilardo (Ita) bt Arjun Kadhe 6-4, 6-4; Oleksii Krutiykh (Ukr) bt Sidharth Rawat 6-7(5), 6-3, 6-2.

Doubles (quarterfinals):

Vladyslav Manafov (Ukr) & Arjun Kadhe bt Alexander Donski (Buł) & Max Houkes (Ned) 6-3, 3-6, [10-4].

Feeling very good: Kapil

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

A week after undergoing angioplasty, the legendary Kapil Dev, on Thursday, greeted his former India teammates from the 1983 World Cup, saying he is "feeling very good" and eager to meet everyone soon. The 61-year-old underwent the procedure after suffering a heart attack.

"My family 83. The weather is very pleasant and I am very eager to



meet you all. I am feeling very good. Thanks to all for your wishes and concern," an enthusiastic Kapil said in a video which he shared with his 1983 teammates.

Uday Bhan Academy claims Turf Youth Cup

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Half-centuries by Vansh Vedi (60) and Suab Gani (58) and four wickets by left-arm spinner Manan Bhardwaj helped Uday Bhan Academy beat Rohtak Road Gymkhana by 59 runs and win the Turf Youth Cup under-17 cricket tournament.

Vedi was declared Man of the Match while Bhardwaj was Man of the Tournament.

The scores:

UBA 217 in 38.5 overs (Vansh Vedi 60, Suab Gani 58, Ashish Kumar 38; Anshul Sehrawat 4/47) bt RRG 158 in 39.2 overs (Shreshth Yadav 51; Manan Bhardwaj 4/39).

Simran's six goals highlight Jindal Panther's win

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Simran Shergill scored six goals in helping Jindal Panther to a 7-1/2 goals to 7 victory over Sona Polo in a league match of the Indian Masters 14-goal polo tournament at the Jindal Farm in Noida.

In another match at the Jaipur Polo ground, Rajnigandha Achievers outplayed Cavalry-Velocity-48 9 goals to 1-1/2.

The results (league):

Jindal Panther 7 1/2 (Simran Shergill 6, Phil Seller, handicap 1/2) bt Sona Polo 7 (Jack Richardson 4, Siddhant Sharma, Angad Kalaan, Sunjay Kapur). Rajnigandha Achievers 9 (Padmanabh Singh 3, Daniel Otamendi 3, Kuldeep Singh Rathore 2, Gaurav Sahgal) bt Cavalry-Velocity-48 1 1/2 (Arjun Patil, handicap 1/2).

MARUTI SUZUKI

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NEXA KALKAJI COMPETENT AUTOMOBILES PH: 9810916000	NEXA KAROL BAGH DI MOTORS PH: 9860019800	NEXA SECTOR 1 FAIR DEAL CARS PH: 011-29000000, 706507531	NEXA SECTOR 29, GURGRAM TR SAWHNEY AUTOMOBILES PH: 9999525740	NEXA SOHNA COMPETENT AUTOMOBILES PH: 0124-2877000, 729002353	NEXA SECTOR 62 VIPUL MOTORS PH: 9205899706	NEXA INC SEC 14 PREM MOTORS PH: 9599046001	NEXA MEERUT ROAD DINAMIC WHEELS LLP PH: 7082100301	NEXA MATHURA ROAD DINAMIC WHEELS LLP PH: 9999120572	NEXA MEERUT ROAD DINAMIC WHEELS LLP PH: 7082100301
NEXA KALKAJI COMPETENT AUTOMOBILES PH: 9810916000	NEXA BATA CHOWK VIPUL MOTORS PH: 9599814771	NEXA SECTOR 1 FAIR DEAL CARS PH: 971290001	NEXA KALKAJI PASCO AUTOMOBILES PH: 9599591111	NEXA SECTOR 29, GURGRAM TR SAWHNEY AUTOMOBILES PH: 9999525740	NEXA SOHNA COMPETENT AUTOMOBILES PH: 0124-2877000, 729002353	NEXA SECTOR 62 VIPUL MOTORS PH: 9205899706	NEXA MEERUT ROAD DINAMIC WHEELS LLP PH: 7082100301	NEXA MATHURA ROAD DINAMIC WHEELS LLP PH: 9999120572	NEXA MEERUT ROAD DINAMIC WHEELS LLP PH: 7082100301

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