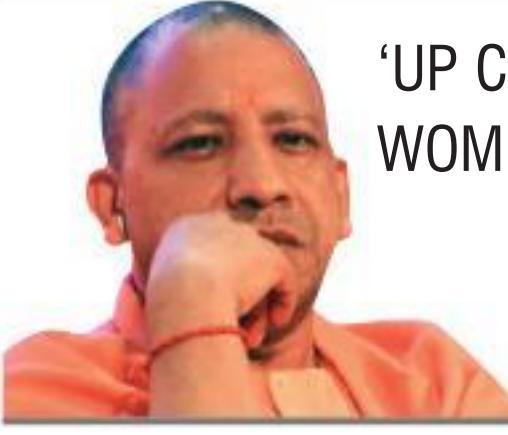
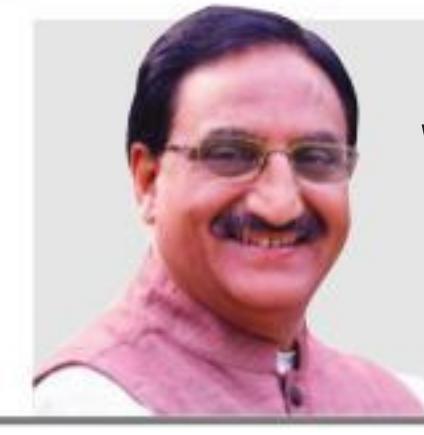




PEOPLE'S PARLIAMENT, ALWAYS IN SESSION



'UP COMMITTED TO  
WOMEN'S SAFETY'



'NO LANGUAGE  
WILL BE IMPOSED'



PAK ARMY IS  
KEEPING COUNTRY  
UNITED: IMRAN



KNIGHTS LET  
A LOT RIDE  
ON RUSSELL

P5

P7

P11

P12

## WEATHER

Mainly clear sky. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 36 and 20 degrees Celsius respectively.

RAINFALL: NIL

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 89% Min: 41%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 36.4°C (+3) Min: 20.6°C (-2)

SUN RISES

06:16 hrs SUN SETS

MOON RISES 18:05 hrs MOON SETS

19:09 hrs 08:08 hrs

## THUMBNAILS



A tiger swims in a pond as the Alipore Zoo in Kolkata reopened for visitors on Friday. ■ SNS

**Pentagon approval for India sale:** The Pentagon has approved India's request to buy USD 90 million worth of equipment, spare parts and logistical support for its fleet of C-130J Super Hercules cargo aircraft. In its notification to the Congress, the Defence Security Cooperation Agency said the proposed sale will support the foreign policy and national security of the US by helping to strengthen the US-India strategic relationship and improve the security of a major defence partner.

**Kashyap rape charge:** Vehemently denying actor Payal Ghosh's allegations of rape against him, filmmaker Anurag Kashyap on Friday described them as false and reckless and said he was out of the country during the period she has mentioned in her FIR. A statement issued by his lawyer a day after he was questioned in the case said Kashyap provided documentary proof to the police to establish the fact that he was in Sri Lanka shooting for a film in August 2013, the period during which Ghosh had alleged in a police FIR that he had raped her.



comprises 14.74 per cent of the total caseload, the data stated.

India is in the number one position in terms of the number of recovered coronavirus cases followed by Brazil and the US, according to the Johns Hopkins University, which has been compiling Covid-19 data from all over the world. India is the second worst hit nation in terms of Covid-19 cases after the US, while it is in the third spot in terms of fatalities globally after the US and Brazil, according to JHU data. The Union Health Ministry said a total of 53,52,078 people have recuperated from the coronavirus infection taking the national recovery rate to 83.70 percent, while the case fatality rate was recorded at 1.56 percent. There are 9,42,217 active cases of coronavirus infection in the country which

SEE PAGE 3

comprises 14.74 per cent of the total caseload, the data stated.

Delhi reports 2,920 fresh virus cases, 37 fatalities. There was a slight dip in the number of fresh Covid-19 patients in Delhi as 2,920 coronavirus positive cases were detected in the city today that took its caseload to 2,85,672, according to the Delhi government's latest health bulletin.

The total tests conducted in this regard were 56,258,

with a positivity rate of 5.19 per cent, the health bulletin said. The national capital today recorded 37 deaths due to coronavirus infection, which pushed its Covid toll to 5,438 so far. The city had reported 40 coronavirus fatalities yesterday. It had taken into account 41 such fatalities on 30 September.

SEE PAGE 3

comprises 14.74 per cent of the total caseload, the data stated.

Trump, wife test positive for coronavirus

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON, 2 OCTOBER

President Donald Trump is experiencing "mild symptoms" of Covid-19 after revealing Friday that he and first lady Melania Trump have tested positive for the coronavirus, a stunning announcement that plunged the country deeper into uncertainty just a month before the presidential election.

Trump, who has spent much of the year downplaying the threat of a virus that has killed more than 205,000 Americans, said he and Mrs. Trump were quarantining. The White House physician said the president was expected to continue carrying out his duties "without disruption" while recovering.

The Democratic presidential nominee, Joe Biden, who shared a debate stage with Trump for more than 90 minutes earlier in the week,



and his wife, have tested negative, his doctor said on Friday.

Trump's diagnosis was sure to have a destabilising effect in Washington and around the world, raising questions about how far the virus had spread through the highest levels of the US government.

Hours before Trump announced he had contracted the virus, the White House said

Hope Hicks, a top aide who had traveled with him during the week, had tested positive.

"Tonight, @FLOTUS and I tested positive for COVID-19. We will begin our quarantine and recovery process immediately," Trump tweeted just before 1 a.m. "We will get through this TOGETHER!"

Vice President Mike Pence tested negative for the virus

on Friday morning and "remains in good health," his spokesman said.

Trump was last seen by reporters returning to the White House on Thursday evening and did not appear ill. He is 74 years old and clinically obese, putting him at higher risk of serious complications from a virus that has infected more than 7 million people nationwide.

The president's physician said in a memo that Trump and the first lady, who is 50, "are both well at this time" and "plan to remain at home within the White House during their convalescence." Their son Barron, who lives at the White House, tested negative.

Trump has been trying all year to convince the American public that the worst of the pandemic is behind. In the best of cases, if the develops no symptoms, which can include fever, cough and breathing trouble, it will like-

ly force him off the campaign trail just weeks before the election and puts his participation in the second presidential debate, scheduled for 15 October in Miami, into doubt.

Trump's handling of the pandemic has already been a major flashpoint in his race against Democrat Joe Biden, who spent much of the summer off the campaign trail and at his home in Delaware citing concern about the virus.

Biden has since resumed a more active campaign schedule, but with small, socially distanced crowds. He also regularly wears a mask in public, something Trump mocked him for at Tuesday night's debate. "I don't wear masks like him," Trump said of Biden. "Every time you see him, he's got a mask. He could be speaking 200 feet away from me, and he shows up with the biggest mask I've ever seen."

Given positive coronavirus tests of footballers inside the second division I-League's assorted bio-secure bubbles, a very distinct pealing of the alarm bell precedes the 8 October kick-off of the competition, with a former senior scientific officer of the Sports Authority of India telling The Statesman today that complete safety was a self-delusion belief.

"I think I have said this before and I shall say it again: No bio-secure bubble is beyond springing a leak. If you are familiar with the story of Behula and Lakhindar, you know it. There are two other points that had

better not be bypassed. First, facilities made available to the top tier of the playing hierarchy will inevitably elude those below that level in our kind of set-ups. It should not be like this, of course, but that is just the way it is. The official attitude towards them will be somewhat different. Secondly, if a negative result is followed by a positive one, a goof-up

in the bio-secure bubbles will manifest itself later than apprehended," said Dr Laila Das, the erstwhile SAI specialist.

Two players were said to have tested positive on Thursday; a Mohammedan Sporting player had earlier been afflicted with the coronavirus

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## GANDHIAN THOUGHT



A man dressed as Mahatma Gandhi distributes face masks to people as part of an awareness campaign to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 coronavirus, on the occasion of the Gandhi Jayanti, at Connaught place, in New Delhi on Friday.

DEEPAK

## Dr Reddy's seeks DCGI nod for phase-3 trial of Russian vaccine

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 2 OCTOBER

The Hyderabad-based Dr Reddy's Laboratories has applied to the Drugs Controller General of India for permission to conduct phase-3 human clinical trials of the Russian vaccine Sputnik V against Covid-19 in India, sources said.

The Indian pharma giant has collaborated with The Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) to conduct clinical trials of Sputnik V as well as its distribution.

Upon regulatory approval in India, RDIF will supply to

drugmaker Dr Reddy's 100 million doses of the vaccine, the firm said last month.

The Dr Reddy's Laboratories has applied to the DCGI seeking permission to conduct phase-3 human clinical trials of the Sputnik V vaccine against Covid-19 developed by Russia. The DCGI will carry out a technical evaluation of the application before giving its approval," a source told PTI.

Sources said it would be multi-centre, observer-blind, randomised controlled study.

The phase-3 trial of Sputnik V is underway in Russia since September 1 on around

40,000 subjects. Sputnik V has been developed by Gamaleya National Research Centre of Epidemiology and Microbiology and RDIF.

Currently, two vaccine candidates, one indigenous developed by Bharat Biotech in collaboration with ICMR and another developed by Zydus Cadila Ltd, are in phase 2 of human clinical trials.

The Pune-based Serum Institute of India, which has partnered with AstraZeneca for manufacturing the Oxford Covid-19 vaccine candidate, is also conducting phase 2 and 3 human clinical trials in India.

## Of positive Covid-19 tests in bio-secure bubbles

PULAKESH MUKHOPADHYAY

KOLKATA, 2 OCTOBER

Given positive coronavirus tests of footballers inside the second division I-League's assorted bio-secure bubbles, a very distinct pealing of the alarm bell precedes the 8 October kick-off of the competition, with a former senior scientific officer of the Sports Authority of India telling The Statesman today that complete safety was a self-delusion belief.

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better not be bypassed. First, facilities made available to the top tier of the playing hierarchy will inevitably elude those below that level in our kind of set-ups. It should not be like this, of course, but that is just the way it is. The official attitude towards them will be somewhat different. Secondly, if a negative result is followed by a positive one, a goof-up

somewhere along the way should not be taken for granted. A positive test can manifest itself later than apprehended," said Dr Laila Das, the erstwhile SAI specialist.

Two players were said to have tested positive on Thursday; a Mohammedan Sporting player had earlier been afflicted with the coronavirus

better not be bypassed. First, facilities made available to the top tier of the playing hierarchy will inevitably elude those below that level in our kind of set-ups. It should not be like this, of course, but that is just the way it is. The official attitude towards them will be somewhat different. Secondly, if a negative result is followed by a positive one, a goof-up

Covid-19 pandemic.

Dr Das agreed that even financially strong competitions, like the Indian Premier League, could be similarly affected as the chances of a minor error playing havoc could never be ruled out. "Remember so many people testing positive when Chennai Super Kings rolled up in West Asia this time around for the Indian Premier League. Like I said, the coronavirus is death-dealing. It is a secret adversary you never met before and, consequently, an unfathomable phenomenon," Dr Das said.

Told that Tokyo's plans for the rescheduled 2021 Olympics included no bio-secure bubbles so far, she said: "Quite understandable, that. Maybe they think the coronavirus will have played itself out of the park by then. That apart, the sheer thought of a bio-secure bubble for an entire edition of the Olympic Games serves to dislodge you. You thereby bite much more than you can chew."

Wasim Akram, Mohammedi Sporting Club secretary, said that two negative tests ushered a player into the world of putative safety. How positive tests emerge from a bubble is much more than he can understand. But he thinks that Kromah is the only player to have suffered thus. "Tirthankar tested positive before going in," Akram said. Very little was revealed about yesterday's second victim, though.



*Farmers are the backbone of our society. In Bengal, the average annual income of our farmers has tripled from Rs 91,000 in 2011 to Rs 2.91 lakh in 2018. History stands testament to what we have done for their benefits. We will continue to raise our voices for them*

MAMATA BANERJEE  
WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER

# Hathras horror: Hundreds protest at Jantar Mantar

CM Kejriwal joins civil society members, Left activists, students, and women as they protest out-  
rages against women and Dalits in UP, demanding CM Yogi's resignation & justice for the victims



Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal joins activists and civil society members protesting against recent incidents of heinous crimes against Dalit women in UP, at Jantar Mantar in the Capital on Friday.

SNS & PTI  
NEW DELHI, 2 OCTOBER

A massive protest erupted in the national capital this evening as hundreds of civil society activists, students, women and political leaders gathered at Jantar Mantar against the gang-rape and killing of a 19-year-old Dalit girl in UP's Hathras district and the Yogi Adityanath-led BJP government's response to this outrage.

Wearing masks and raising slogans against the UP administration and police, they demanded justice for the Hathras victim and asked CM Adityanath to resign.

The protest was to be held at India Gate initially but had

to be shifted to Jantar Mantar due to the prohibitory orders in place in the Rajpath area. Several political leaders, including from the Aam Aadmi Party and the Left, joined the protest.

Most of them said they were outraged over the way the UP police cremated the body of the victim, who died in Delhi's Safdarjung Hospital earlier this week—a fortnight after she was allegedly gang-raped and brutalised by four upper caste men.

"What is happening in UP is gondaraj," lawyer-activist Prashant Bhushan said. "The police have surrounded the village, are not allowing Opposition leaders and mediapersons to enter it and have taken away the mobile phones of the

family members of the victim."

Left leaders, Sitaram Yechury, D Raja and Kanhaiya Kumar, Bhim Army chief Chandrasekhar Azad and activist-actor Swara Bhaskar also attended the protest among others.

Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal also joined the Jantar Mantar protest and demanded "strictest punishment" for the Hathras accused while asserting that politics should not be done over the issue.

Kejriwal, who joined the protest for the first time since he became the Delhi CM for the third time, said this is a fight for justice for the victim's family.

"There should be no politics over this issue. Such a

crime should not have happened in any state of the country. No matter where it happens, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, West Bengal, or any city, Bangalore, Kolkata, or Delhi, the victim will always be one of India's daughters," Kejriwal said while addressing the protesters.

He said the entire country wants that the accused should get the strictest punishment.

"Few people feel that attempts are being made to shield the accused. That should not happen. They should get strict punishment. The family needs help and sympathy. The family should not be troubled," he said.

Kejriwal was joined by party MLAs, Atishi and Somnath

Bharti, and AAP functionary Durgesh Pathak and minister Rajender Pal Gautam at the protest.

Swaraj India leader Yogen-  
dra Yadav said the Hathras incident "brings out the complete breakdown of anything called rule of law." It's not just that a rape happened, or that she was killed which is worse. There is a political patronage right from the beginning... The Uttar Pradesh administration is out there to ensure that this news doesn't come out."

Yadav alleged the family was denied even a decent cremation, which even criminals are entitled to.

Describing it as a "shut-  
down of democracy", he said, "The UP government has no basis to exist anymore."

There is no hope for justice for the Hathras victim girl unless Yogi resigns and the Supreme Court takes cognisance of the outrage, Bhim Army chief Azad said.

"The Hathras victim cannot get justice till UP CM resigns and the Supreme Court takes cognisance of the issue. These kind of culprits should be punished as soon as possible so that others get scared before committing such crimes," he said, addressing the protesters.

"We will go to Hathras and till the time the matter doesn't come to Delhi, there is no chance of getting justice," Azad added. Swara Bhaskar said it is time the country starts fighting the "rape epidemic".

"People from different groups are here, this shows how enraged people are against what happened in Hathras, Balrampur, Azamgarh... there is a rape epidemic which has spread in the country, especially the kind of news we are getting from Uttar Pradesh," Bhaskar said while addressing the protesters.

"It is time we start fighting against the rape epidemic... and today we are standing against it here and we have to win," she added.

Wearing masks and raising

slogans against the UP admin-  
istration, they demanded jus-  
tice for the 19-year-old victim

PTI  
NEW DELHI, 2 OCTOBER

Left leaders gathered at the Jantar Mantar here on Friday to take part in protests demanding justice for a 19-year-old Dalit woman of Uttar Pradesh's Hathras who died after being allegedly gang-raped and assaulted.

CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury, politburo member Brinda Karat and CPI general secretary D Raja were among the leaders present at the site. They questioned the silence of the central government over the issue.

"The silence of the central government and the top leadership of the BJP on such a heinous crime and the UP government's response thereafter speaks volumes about the authoritarian and anti-democratic 'chehra', 'chaal', 'charita' and 'chintan' of the ruling party," Yechury said.

"The Uttar Pradesh government has no right to stay in power. Our demand is that justice should be served," he said.

A massive protest erupted in the city on Friday evening as a number of civil society activists, students, women and political leaders gathered at the site against the Hathras incident and the UP government's response to it.

Wearing masks and raising

ing, and the UP government has no sensitivity towards these issues," he said.

"I urge the President of India who belongs to the state and knows more about anyone else about the terrible conditions of Dalits there to intervene. I quote Ambedkar here: 'Caste is a monster, wherever you go, the monster crosses your way. Caste is anti-national, and as long as it exists, India cannot be called a nation in social and psychological sense. We have to come together and fight against the brahminical patriarchy,'" Raja said.

The CPI leader claimed that the Modi government did not want to condemn what happened in Uttar Pradesh because "for them, Dalit lives do not matter".

The protest was to be held at India Gate initially but had to shift to Jantar Mantar owing to the prohibitory orders in place in the Rajpath area.

Most of the protesters said they were outraged over the way UP police cremated the body of the victim, who died in Delhi's Safdarjung Hospital, a fortnight after she was allegedly raped by four upper-caste men.

The woman's family has alleged that the police forced them to conduct the last rites in the dead of the night. But local police officers have said the cremation was carried out "as per the wishes of the family".

## Classified

### CHANGE OF NAME

I, RAJDIP Mondal, S/o, Sushil Kumar Mondal, of Village and Post Office: Alampur, P.S.: Nodakhali, District: 24 Parganas (S), Pin Code-743318 and Rajdip Mondal, S/o: Sushil Kr. Mondal of Village and Post Office: Alampur, P.S.: Nodakhali, Dist: 24 Parg. (S), Pin-743318 is the same and identical person, vide affidavit before the 1st Class Judicial Magistrate at Alipore on 25.09.2020.

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The Police Families Welfare Society (PFWS), headed by Pratima Shrivastava, on Thursday celebrated Senior Citizen's Day and Gandhi Jayanti at Ahata Kidara Welfare Centre where Skill Centre VI was inaugurated, according to a press release issued by Delhi Police.

SNS

## NDMC launches pilot project to promote cycling

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 2 OCTOBER

In view of Covid-19 pandemic and to promote the cycling in New Delhi, the Chairperson of New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC), Dharmendra, on Friday flagged off 'NDMC Cycle4Change ~ a project to promote cycling on a dedicated six kilometres pilot corridor from Bikander House.

After flagging off the cycle ride tour, the chairperson said that at the time when the physical and sports activities have been drastically curtailed in view of the pandemic, NDMC has initiated a move toward normalcy and road safety by organising pilot cycle rides.

He further informed that to elevate the safety, convenience and experience of cyclists, NDMC has dedicated

this pilot corridor of 6 km for unique cycling experience around the playful recreational space surrounded by gorgeous wall paintings.

The cycle rides will continue till October 10th, three hours in the morning between 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. and two hours in the evening from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. every day in the dedicated pilot corridor from Bikander House to Humayun Road, Amritsar, Shergil Marg, Lodhi Garden Gate No.6, Lodhi Garden Gate No.11, Avenue Road-II, Lodhi Colony Block-17, Lodhi Colony Cycle Plaza and Jor Bagh Metro Station.

E-bike, Scooters and Motorcycles are not allowed on cycle tracks. To ensure safety of the participants especially for women and children, NDMC has deployed Marshals during the specified timings at nearby cycle track

locations.

The NDMC secretary Amit Singla invited citizens to take part in the cycle ride and bring their own cycle or they can hire one from the Smart Bike Stations in New Delhi area. Smart Bikes are already available in public bike sharing systems at 50 Smart Stations.

He also informed that the transformation of road stretches; intersections and roundabouts with temporary or permanent marking of cycle track have improved the cycling infrastructure to encourage people to opt cycling for their day-to-day physical activities as well as transport means.

"Based on the success of this pilot project, many more corridors will be dedicated in other areas under jurisdiction of NDMC in the coming winter seasons," he added.



Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi attends a prayer meet in the Capital on Friday for the 19-year-old girl who was gangraped and killed in UP's Hathras.

AMARJEET SINGH

of this country should raise her voice against what has happened to the woman in Hathras," she also said.

The 19-year-old woman was allegedly raped at a village in Hathras by four men on September 14.

After her condition deteriorated, she was referred to the Delhi's Safdarjung hospital where she

bre



*On this day last year, we invigorated Gandhiji's ideas of gram swaraj with the establishment of gram sachivalayams (secretariats) to make our villages self-reliant*

Y S JAGAN MOHAN REDDY  
ANDHRA PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER

The Statesman  
NEW DELHI, SATURDAY 03 OCTOBER 2020

03

## THUMBNAILS



Women protesting against the alleged gang-rape case in Hathras, UP. In Kolkata on Friday. SNS

PepsiCo India and United Way Delhi launch #WhyWaste Campaign: On the occasion of the 151st birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi and the 6th year of "Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan", PepsiCo India and United Way Delhi launched the #WhyWaste campaign, a waste management initiative that aims at reducing & reusing plastic and upcycling the non-biodegradable plastic waste generated at home and communities. SNS

Biker crushed to death by truck in Noida: A 21-year-old man riding a motorcycle died on Friday after allegedly getting crushed under the wheels of a truck in Uttar Pradesh's Noida, police said. The pillarion rider, who got injured in the accident that occurred at around 6.30 am near the ISKCON temple, under Sector 24 police station limits, is hospitalised, the police said. PTI

# PM to open crucial Atal Tunnel today

The tribals of Lahaul valley, which is snowbound during the winter months, are enthused as Atal Tunnel at Rohtang will give them all-weather connectivity to outside world

ARCHANA PHULL  
KEYLONG, 2 OCTOBER

**T**he all-weather Atal Tunnel, Rohtang will give us wings to fly and a reason to stick to our roots," said Chandresh, 22, a resident of Kuthbadi village in Lahaul valley of the tribal Lahaul Spiti district in Himachal Pradesh.

Chandresh is doing a graduate degree in Commerce in Government College Kullu. She echoes the feelings of Lahaul tribals from different walks of life, who are all looking forward to the inauguration of the all-weather 9-kilometre-long Atal Tunnel—which bypasses the Rohtang Pass — by Prime Minister Narendra Modi tomorrow.

The young tribals, who study outside their home turf for lack of facility also prefer to settle outside and many of them never return to the native land due to the hardships they have to face for five-six months, when they are landlocked owing to heavy snowfall on 13,058 feet high Rohtang Pass.

A large population from Lahaul has made Manali their second home during the winter to avoid the harsh living conditions back home.

Dubbed as a "marvel of engineering" in the tough terrain, the Rohtang Tunnel, as the locals said, was the dream project of former Prime Minister late Atal Bihari Vaj-



The South portal of Atal Tunnel near Sisso village in Lahaul valley. SNS

payee, who had friendship with a tribal, Tashi Dawa, who had sensitised Vajpayee on the issue. The two friends (Vajpayee and Tashi Dawa) are however no more to see their dream fulfilled.

The Atal Tunnel is the longest tunnel in the world at the altitude of 10,000 feet. It has been constructed by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) along with private agencies during a period of ten years and it involved a budget of Rs 3200 crore.

The Tunnel is stated to have strategic importance for the nation and has become more relevant in view of the ongoing border dispute with China. Lahaul and Spiti are two different valleys in Lahaul Spiti

district, which are separated by over 14,000 feet high Kunzum Pass. Spiti is connected to the rest of the state through the tribal district of Kinnaur.

The Atal Tunnel, which reduces the distance from Manali to Lahaul to half by bypassing Rohtang Pass, will make life easy for people in Lahaul valley, whose population is 23,000 out of total 33,000 population in Lahaul Spiti district.

Many locals however said they will still have to live outside Lahaul for a couple of months when the valley is under heavy snow due to absence of emergency medical facilities in the tribal belt, even as they feel that it will boost their development and econ-

omy. "The all weather connectivity to the rest of the state will ultimately open the valley to more education and health facilities. Tourism will flourish at an untouched destination. The farmers can now transport cash crops of vegetables through the tunnel without hassle and uncertainty and will get good prices," said a local in Keylong, Jagannath, 49, who runs a hotel. The Lahaul Spiti district had shown negative decadal growth rate of population (-5.0 per cent) from 2001 to 2011 for different reasons.

"The all-weather connectivity may help in reverse migration," said Principal Secretary to Chief Minister JC Sharma.

in today's protest against the Hathras outrage there.

Before leaving for Delhi, Chandrashekhar while interacting with mediapersons at his residence attacked the "insensitive" Yogi government. He said, "We do not want such an insensitive Chief Minister who had failed to provide safety to our daughters on their own."

Police had detained Chandrashekhar from Delhi last Tuesday from where he was taken to his home in Chhutmalpur in UP's Saharanpur district. Chandrashekhar was kept under the watch of police and PAC personnel. He left for Delhi on Thursday night as he had to participate

and murder of a Dalit girl in Hathras, the Bheem Army chief said that Dalits will not get justice in UP under the BJP rule and added that people of the state have lost faith in the UP police.

Chandrashekhar also attacked the police and the BJP over the cops' bid to forcibly ensure cremation of the Hathras victim in the dead of the night while keeping his family members and other relatives locked in their houses in the village. He charged that this was done with the sole purpose of destroying evidences.

"We had demanded a panel for the post mortem of the victim's body but instead they cremated her body dubiously," he said.

# Dalits will not get justice in UP under BJP rule: Azad



Chandrashekhar Azad at his home in Saharanpur district. SNS

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
MEERUT, 2 OCTOBER

Tearing into the Yogi Adityanath-led BJP government in Uttar Pradesh over horrors like recent Hathras and Balrampur gangrape-and-murder incidents, Bheem Army chief Chandrashekhar Azad said that Dalits will not get justice in the state and will have to ensure safety of their daughters on their own.

Police had detained Chandrashekhar from Delhi last Tuesday from where he was taken to his home in Chhutmalpur in UP's Saharanpur district. Chandrashekhar was kept under the watch of police and PAC personnel. He left for Delhi on Thursday night as he had to participate

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A police personnel walk past a mural of Mahatma Gandhi on the occasion of his 151st birth anniversary, in Chennai on Friday.

**Chh' garh MLA Mandavi murder case:** The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has filed its charge sheet in the killing of a BJP MLA and four policemen in a Naxal attack last year in Dantewada district of Chhattisgarh, in a special court in Jagdalpur, officials said. The charge-sheet, which names 33 accused, out of which six have been arrested and five others have died, was filed before the NIA court in Jagdalpur, headquarters of Bastar district. Bheema Mandavi, and four personnel of the Chhattisgarh Armed Force (CAF) were killed after Maoists blew up their vehicle with an IED

SNS

## AIADMK to announce CM candidate on 7 Oct

Party has asked all its legislators to be present in Chennai on Tuesday

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
CHENNAI, 2 OCTOBER

The ruling AIADMK on Friday asked all its MLAs to be in Chennai on 6 October as the party is all set to announce its chief minister candidate on 7 October.

The party is facing one of its worst internal crises with factions headed by chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami and deputy chief minister O Panneerselvam adamant on the next CM candidate.

It is said that the CM candidate of the ruling party would be decided after consulting with the legislators and other senior leaders.

In executive committee meeting held on 28 September, after almost five hours of discussions, the party could not decide who will be the next CM candidate.

Meanwhile some of the ministers openly supported Edappadi's candidature, which widened the rift in the party.

But deputy coordinator of AIADMK, K P Munusamy today said the Chief Minister candidate of the party will be announced on 7 October.

He said that the party's coordinator and deputy chief minister O Panneerselvam



Deputy chief minister O Panneerselvam (Left) and chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami (Right)

and joint coordinator chief minister K Palaniswami will make a joint announcement about the candidate. Multiple sources have confirmed that the AIADMK executive committee meeting saw heated arguments on who- Panneerselvam or Palaniswami is the most powerful in the party.

At one point of time, the two top leaders themselves were involved in a direct debate, reports said. It is said that during the meeting, Palaniswami shot down the idea of constituting an 11-member steering committee as sought by Panneerselvam, saying such an arrangement would not be suitable to the AIADMK.

According to AIADMK spokesperson V Pugazhendhi, there were lengthy discussions on the chief minister candidate during the exec-

utive committee meeting but a decision could not be taken.

Revenue minister RB Udhayakumar said, "Lengthy discussions took place in a democratic manner and whatever decision is announced will be accepted by the one and half crore cadre of the AIADMK." Finally, it was decided that the AIADMK-led alliance's chief minister candidate will be announced by Palaniswami and Panneerselvam on 7 October.

Meanwhile, some sources also revealed that Panneerselvam is ready to accept Edappadi's candidature if the control of the government could be given to his faction forming a steering committee dominated by his supporters.

**While Panneerselvam made a strong claim for being the AIADMK's CM nominee for polls next year, Palaniswami reportedly said that he has been providing good governance in Tamil Nadu which has won appreciation from even PM Narendra Modi.**

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## Row over renaming Kasturba College after YSRCP MLA's father

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD, 2 OCTOBER

The decision of Andhra Pradesh government to rename Kasturba Government Junior College after the father of the local YSRCP MLA has not gone well among the locals and alumni of the college.

Recently, the school education minister issued a government order dated 8 September, according permission to rename the Kasturba Government Junior College to Grandhi Venkateswara Rao Government Junior College. However, alumni members and the locals have petitioned to the government against the move.

The college at Bheemavaram in West Godavari district was set up in the 1960s by noted Gandhian and freedom fighter Chinthalapati Varaprasad Murthy Raju known for his philanthropic activities and had named it after Kasturba Gandhi.

The local YSRCP MLA Grandhi Srinivas has defended the decision of the administration in renaming the college after his father. His family had donated land for the college and ensured that it is not forced to shift elsewhere and hence govern-



ment rules permit the change of name of the institution after the benefactor. The alumni members and locals are however, planning a Gandhian movement against the change.

Meanwhile, chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy today applauded and appreciated the services of village and ward secretariat employees, particularly during the pandemic.

The village secretariat system conceived by the chief minister had been launched last year on the same date and the volunteers helped the administration by ensuring the schemes and other benefits extended by the state government reach the beneficiaries at their doorstep even during the lock down and other restrictions.

The YSRCP government is claiming that it has introduced Gram Swaraj as envisioned by the Father of the nation through the village and ward secretariat system.

T'gana: Vehicular traffic, huge crowd on Durgam Cheruvu pose safety issues

HYDERABAD, 2 OCTOBER

Even as the civic body has announced no vehicular traffic on the new cable stayed bridge over Durgam Cheruvu, during weekends in order to promote the iconic landmark it has turned out as both a health hazard as well dangerous as public defied basic safety rules in a bid to take selfies on the bridge.

On the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti the new bridge illuminated in colourful lights which drew flocks of people.

The Cyberabad police had also declared the bridge closed for vehicular traffic for the extended weekend to allow pedestrians to enjoy a walk. However, footage released by the traffic police show people failing to adhere to basic safety precautions in their bid to capture selfies and photographs. One of the videos show a woman standing on the middle of the road even as cars whizz past her for a better click. Another shows children crossing over the walkways ignoring vehicular traffic.

From posing for photographs people are crowding on the bridge on weekends throwing caution to the winds. Director of public health G Srinivasa Rao has cautioned the people against gatherings on the bridge due to the pandemic. SNS

## Self-Reliant India Mission includes vision for global welfare: PM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 2 OCTOBER



"India's clarion call of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat (Self-Reliant India) includes a vision of global welfare and sought support of the Indian diaspora to realise this dream.

He also underlined the need to amplify the rich history of Indian science and said many historical questions have been solved with the help of science over the last century.



Asserting that the world also takes a leap ahead when India prospers, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the clarion call for 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' includes a vision of global welfare and sought support of the Indian diaspora to realise this dream.

He also underlined the need to amplify the rich history of Indian science and said many historical questions have been solved with the help of science over the last century.

entists have worked hard to ramp up our production of pulses. Today we import only a very small fraction of our pulses. Our food-grain production has hit a record high," he said.

"Recently India introduced pioneering space reforms. These reforms provide opportunities for both industry and the academia," Modi said while listing numerous steps taken by his government to boost science, research and innovation. He further said the government wants top-class scientific research to help the farmers.

"Our agricultural research scien-

as from abroad, making it a confluence of great minds from across the world.

The aim of the summit is to bring Indian origin luminaries in academic institutes and R&D organisations across the world and resident counterparts on a single platform to debate upon our communication programme in 2014 including an indigenously developed Rotavirus vaccine," he said.

Modi said the VAIBHAV summit has brought together eminent people from India as well

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## Chennithala denies accepting iPhone from MD Unitac



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, 2 OCTOBER

attended the UAE Day's programme and also had taken part in the lucky draw competition.

Santhosh Eapen, MD of Unitac said that as per the advice of Swapna Suresh, the key accused in the gold smuggling case, he had bought five iPhones, one among them was gifted to Chennithala.

He said that the company handed over five iPhones to Swapna Suresh who wanted to hand it over to guests at the UAE Consulate's National Day celebration on 2 December, 2019.

Santhosh Eapen made the revelation in the petition filed by him in the Kerala High Court seeking to quash the FIR registered by CBI against him in the special CBI court in Kochi under Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA).

It was Santhosh Eapen's firm that bagged the contract of the housing project in Wadakkanchery. He has been accused of colluding with Swapna Suresh and other employees at the UAE consulate for getting the Life Mission project contract in exchange for commission.

## Former GPCC chief becomes longest survivor of Covid-19

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
AHMEDABAD, 2 OCTOBER

As he walked out of the hospital smiling on Thursday, former president of Gujarat Pradesh Congress Committee (GPCC) Bharatsinh Solanki became the longest surviving Covid-19 patient in Asia.

Recovering after 101 days, Solanki is the longest surviving Covid-19 patient in Asia, said a press release from the hospital where he was admitted since 30 June after an initial treatment for ten days in another hospital at Vadodara.

PM Narendra Modi spoke to Solanki over phone and greeted him for his remarkable recovery after 101 days.

Thereafter, he was shifted to a private hospital in Ahmedabad where he remained in the ICU for seven days and on ven-

tilator support for as long as 51 days.

Along with Covid-19, Solanki had also battled pneumonia, renal failure, coma, paralysis and sepsis during his 101-day hospitalisation.

Thanking the hospital's doctors, Solanki said "they have given me a second life".

"After a record hospitalization of 101 days (the longest in India and Asia), we are glad to see the patient going home", said Dr Keyur Parikh, Chairman of the CIMS Hospital.



Members of National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW) hold placards shouting slogans during a protest following accusations of police for forcibly cremating the body of a Hathras rape victim, of Uttar Pradesh state, in Hyderabad on Friday.

## Nirav Modi case: Fresh CBI charge sheet against retired PNB official for disproportionate assets

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 2 OCTOBER

The CBI has filed a fresh charge sheet against Gokulnath Shetty, the Punjab National Bank Deputy Manager who allegedly helped Nirav Modi and Mehul Choksi perpetrate Rs 13000-crore fraud, and his wife for amassing disproportionate assets worth Rs 2.63 crore, officials said Friday.

The agency has registered a separate FIR in November, 2018 against Shetty and his wife to look into their assets.

It emerged that against a genuine income of Rs 72.52 lakh during a six-year period, Shetty couple had assets in their as well as family members' names primarily in the form of flats in Mumbai, the CBI alleged.

Of the total assets, the CBI alleged they could not provide satisfactory explanation for assets worth Rs 2.63 crore, which were 2.38 times disproportionate to their known sources of income.

The CBI looked into the relationship between Shetty and Modi-Choksi during

which it dug into the assets amassed by the retired deputy manager, they said.

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It emerged that against a genuine income of Rs 72.52 lakh during a six-year period, Shetty couple had assets in their as well as family members' names primarily in the form of flats in Mumbai, the CBI alleged.

Its charge sheet filed recently, the agency has said that they had purchased a flat worth Rs 46.62 lakh in Goregaon while paid advance booking amount for three more flats in various localities of Mumbai and neighbouring areas.

airport was 2,537 and departing 2,565.

The passenger footfall at the Kolkata airport that witnessed a decent take-off after flights resumed in end-May is now climbing to dizzying heights by crossing the one million-mark and 5,000 flights in September.

The Kolkata airport authorities today shared that the airport handled over 6.17 lakh passengers.

Sharing the statistics, an official said the total passenger departure count was 3,69,184 and for arrival was, 2,48,239. The numbers of flights arriving at the NSCBP

airport users on a 24x7 basis, the official added. Alongside, a transit facility was opened to ensure covid distancing

arrival section, reducing transit time for passengers.

Commenting on Covid protocols for international passengers since at present Air India has begun direct flights from Kolkata to London, the official said, "Covid-19 negative (RT-PCR) test is mandatory and it should be done within 96 hours prior to departure of flight."

The passengers need to carry authentic and original test reports along with approval letter of state government authority to be able to board the flight.

On arrival test reports and approval letter will be verified."



protocols are followed by decongesting the airport premises.

It will lead passengers directly into the departure area after security check in



UP govt 'conspiring' to prove Hathras woman a 'liar'

SENIOR CONGRESS LEADER RANDEEP SINGH SURJEWALA

AFTER A SENIOR UP POLICE OFFICER CLAIMED THAT THE HATHRAS DALIT WOMAN WAS NOT RAPED

The Statesman

05

NEW DELHI, SATURDAY 03 OCTOBER 2020

## THUMBNAILS



Rubi Rakshit works with a 'charkha' as she makes a hank of yarn at her workshop on the occasion of Mahatma Gandhi's 151st birth anniversary in Hyderabad on Friday.

AFP

**Six shops gutted in Thane fire:** A major fire destroyed at least half a dozen shops in a commercial complex on Friday morning at Thane in Maharashtra, but no casualty was reported, civic officials said. The shopping complex is part of a sprawling housing colony and located on the GB Road. PTI

**Assam witchcraft:** Two persons, including a woman, have been lynched, beheaded and set on fire by an angry mob over suspicion of practising witchcraft in Assam's Karbi Anglong district, a senior police officer said on Friday. The mob had accused the duo of performing 'black magic', causing the death of a teenaged girl in Rohimapur village in Dokmoka police station area, he said. A case has been registered and nine persons, including two women, have been arrested

**Cannabis worth ₹30 l seized:** Four suspected drug peddlers have been arrested by the Special Task Force (STF) of Uttar Pradesh Police for trying to smuggle 200 kg ganja into the state, police said here on Friday. The consignment was being carried in a truck from Odisha to Banda in Uttar Pradesh when it was intercepted by a joint team of STF and local police on Thursday evening. The market value of the seized consignment of ganja (cannabis) was stated to be about Rs 30 lakh.

**UP Police seize ₹ 25 lakh illicit whiskey:** Whiskey worth Rs 25 lakh being illegally transported from Haryana to West Bengal was seized in Greater Noida by the Uttar Pradesh police, officials said on Friday, adding two men who were injured in a gunfight with the security personnel were arrested. DCP, Greater Noida, Rajesh Kumar Singh said around 350 cartons of the liquor (Imperial Blue) were seized from a truck.

PTI

# 'UP is committed to women's safety'

UP CM Yogi Adityanath says, the culprits will get such a punishment that will set an example for future

SNS & PTI  
LUCKNOW/MEERUT,  
2 OCTOBER

Facing criticism in the wake of alleged rape incidents in Uttar Pradesh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday said those who even think of harming the women's self-respect will face total destruction. Stressing that his government is committed to women's safety, Adityanath said such people will get an exemplary punishment.

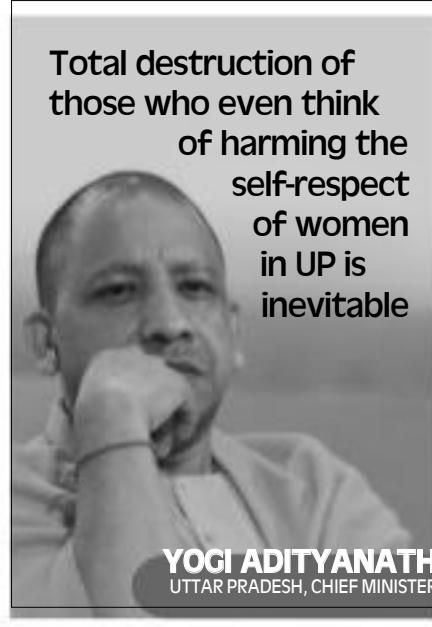
The warning has come days after a 19-year-old Dalit woman was allegedly gang-raped in UP's Hathras by four men. She died at Delhi's Safdarjung Hospital on Tuesday morning.

Similarly, another case of a Dalit woman's death after alleged rape surfaced in the state. The woman died in Balrampur on her way to hospital.

Taking to the Twitter on Friday, Adityanath said, "Total destruction of those who even think of harming the self-respect of women in UP is inevitable."

"They will get such a punishment that will set an example for future. The UP government is committed to the safety and development of mothers and daughters," he said, adding that this is his government's resolve and promise.

The Hathras woman had succumbed to severe injuries she suffered when she was allegedly assaulted by four upper caste men in the fields at her village in Hathras dis-



Dalits will not get justice in UP, Chandrashekhar

Calling Yogi Adityanath's Uttar Pradesh government is insensitive. Bheem Army chief Chandrashekhar said that Dalits will not get justice in this state and will have to ensure safety of their daughters on their own.

Police had detained Chandrashekhar from Delhi on Tuesday from where he was taken to his home in Chhutmalpur of Saharanpur district. Chandrashekhar was kept under vigil of police and PAC.

Before leaving for Delhi Chandrashekhar interacting with mediapersons at his residence attacked Yogi government and called it insensitive.

He said that we do not want such an insensitive chief minister, who had failed to provide safety to the daughters.

He appealed people particularly Dalits to ensure the safety of their daughters by themselves.

Daughters are being harassed in the BJP rule, he said accusing those in power including CM of patronizing criminals.

He also attacked the police and BJP on the issue of last rites of the Hathras victim in the dead of the night and in absence of her family members. He blamed that this was done with the sole purpose of destroying evidences.

"We had demanded to form a panel for post mortem but instead they cremated her body dubiously", he quipped.

## Girl raped in Bihar



PATNA, 2 OCTOBER

Even as the nation boils over the Hathras gang-rape case, a girl doing graduation was gang-raped in Bihar yesterday. The miscreants also tried to kill the victim.

As per reports, the girl with three of her friends had gone out to graze cattle in the field in the Champur police station areas of Kaimur district yesterday when five boys caught one of them. Subsequently, they administered sedative to the girl and allegedly gang-raped her. According to reports, the rapists later tied her hands and threw her into a muddy field in a bid to kill her.

Meanwhile, seeing their friend captive, the other girls fled from the scene and informed the local villagers. The villagers rushed to the spot and caught two youths, who were severely thrashed before being handed over to the police. The girl was found unconscious. Timely action by the villagers, saved the rape victim.

SNS

## Allow media, politicians to meet Hathras victim's family: Bharti

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 2 OCTOBER

Senior BJP leader Uma Bharti said Friday the "suspicious" action of UP police in the Hathras incident has "denied" the image of the BJP, the state government and chief minister Yogi Adityanath and requested him to allow mediapersons and politicians to meet the victim's family.

Bharti, who has been admitted to AIIMS-Rishikesh after testing positive for Covid-19, said had she been fine she would have herself visited the family in Hathras district, and added she will definitely visit the family after getting discharged from hospital.

"UP police's suspicious action has denied the image of BJP, UP government and CM Yogi Adityanath," the senior BJP leader said in a series of tweets in Hindi.

Bharti said she has been keeping a close watch on the Hathras incident and urged Adityanath to allow media and political leaders to meet the aggrieved family.

Describing the UP chief minister as an "administrator with a clean image", Bharti related herself as his elder sister but in a limited number of words indicated she was forced to speak after the police laid siege to the village

and the victim's family.

She said she was hesitant to speak as she thought the CM must have been taking appropriate action.

Appearing critical of the police action in handling the case, Bharti said the last rites of the Dalit victim was done in a hasty manner by the police. She further said that there is no rule that a family cannot be allowed to meet anyone during an investigation, in fact this brings the SIT investigation in this case under suspicion.

The 19-year-old Dalit woman was allegedly raped at a village in Hathras by four men on 14 September. After her condition deteriorated, she was referred to Delhi's Safdarjung hospital where she breathed her last on Tuesday.

She was cremated in the early hours of Wednesday, with her family alleging the local police forced them to conduct the last rites in the dead of the night.

India rejects Pak propaganda against its secular credentials

NEW DELHI, 2 OCTOBER

India has rejected the propaganda by Pakistan about alleged ill-treatment of Sikh soldiers in the Indian Army and said it was proud of the country's secular credentials. In a strong statement, the Indian army termed such a campaign as malicious since Pakistan had also claimed that the Sikh soldiers were discontented.

The statement came after some social media sites in Pakistan claimed that the Indian Sikh soldiers were discriminated against and especially targeted Lt General Tarun Singh. He is at present posted in the newly created Department of Military Affairs (DMA) after setting up of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) institution this year.

"Over the past few days, a state sponsored malicious social media disinformation campaign has been run by Pakistan against the Indian Army and in particular against Lt General Tarun Singh, a senior officer posted in the Department of Military Affairs (DMA). Having failed consistently to incite religion-based disaffection within the country, Pakistan, in a desperate attempt, is now trying to create a divide within the Indian Army," the statement said. "The Indian Army is a secular organisation and all officers and soldiers serve the nation with pride irrespective of their religion, caste, creed or gender," it added.

SNS

## Gandhi Jayanti: India gifts 41 ambulances, six school buses to Nepal



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 2 OCTOBER

life support and common life support ambulances.

In a statement, the embassy said the advanced life support category ambulances include equipment such as travelling ventilator, ECG and oxygen monitor, automated external defibrillator, nebuliser set, BP apparatus, stethoscope, Artificial manual breathing unit, various tubes and catheters, wheel-chair and stretcher, radio communication equipment and 4G mobile device.

"The basic life support ambulances have all these items, except for travelling ventilators. The common life support ambulances are 4 wheel drive vehicles which are best suited for hilly and mountainous terrains," the statement added.

According to the Embassy of India in Kathmandu, it has given three different categories of ambulances -- advanced life support, basic

life support and common life support ambulances.

In a statement, the embassy

## STAND STRONG



Students look on after getting their face painted to condemn the gang-rape of a 19-year-old woman by four men in Bhopal village of Uttar Pradesh, in Mumbai on Friday.

## Congress prepares draft model law to annual Central farm laws

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 2 OCTOBER

The Congress has prepared a draft model law that will be legislated by party-ruled states in order to annul the central farm laws.

Sources said on Friday that the model law has been drafted and will soon be sent to Congress-ruled states to replicate it in their state Assemblies.

The move comes days after Congress chief Sonia Gandhi asked states under Article 254(2) of the Constitution

which allows the state legislatures to pass a law to "negate anti-agriculture central laws" that "encroach" upon the state's jurisdiction.

legislations.

Parliament had passed The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020, The Farmers' Empowerment and Protection Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020 and The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill 2020 during the Monsoon Session and the president granted his assent for them.

The laws seek to liberalise the agriculture sector and allow farmers to sell their produce anywhere in the country they want at a better price. The model law brought by the Congress will be called the Protection of Farmers Interest and Farm Produce (Special Provisions) Bill that has been cleared by party MP and legal expert Abhishek Singhvi.

The model law shall declare "null, void and inoperative" anything that is inconsistent in the three central legislations with the state law. It will also include a provision to ensure that no farmer shall be paid below the minimum support price for the price of the produce. The draft model Bill seeks to ensure safeguards for farmers including the minimum support price regime and the framework under the APMC Act to protect their interests.

## UP cops heckle TMC MPs on way to Hathras

SNS & PTI  
KOLKATA, 2 OCTOBER



lodged an FIR with the local police station against senior SDM for allegedly manhandling and roughing-up Mondal on her way to the victim's house. A copy of the FIR will be sent to the Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla.

Mondal stated: When we were headed to meet the Dalit victim's family in Hathras to express our solidarity, Yogi Adityanath government has let loose a reign of terror and "crossed all limits of decency".

"Is it a democracy? MPs are being heckled and pushed to ground. How come police officers have this audacity to heckle members of Parliament? The state government, which has failed to protect a Dalit girl and is busy hushing up the matter, is now using brute force against opposition," he said.

She further said, "I was touched inappropriately by a male officer of the Uttar Pradesh police. They violated the respect of a Dalit woman today. Imagine the irony, it's 2 October today, Mahatma Gandhi's birthday. On

O'Brien, dressed in white, being pushed to the ground when he tried to move ahead, despite being told not to do so by the police.

"Those who tried to project themselves as champions of 'Beti Bachao' (campaign) are now trying to intimidate the family members of the girl. A jungle raj prevails in Uttar Pradesh. It's a shame," he said.

"The Yogi Adityanath government is trying to hide the truth, which is why it is stopping the media and the opposition party leaders from meeting the family members. Our MPs were unarmed and they just wanted to meet the family, what is wrong in it? They are so afraid that they had to issue prohibitory orders... We condemn it," Senior TMC leader Sougata Roy said.

Condemning the incident, TMC general secretary Partha Chatterjee claimed that Yogi Adityanath government has let loose a reign of terror and "crossed all limits of decency".

"It is a democracy? MPs are being heckled and pushed to ground. How come police officers have this audacity to heckle members of Parliament? The state government, which has failed to protect a Dalit girl and is busy hushing up the matter, is now using brute force against opposition," he said.

Television visuals showed

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## Decks cleared for J&K's 850 MW Ratle Hydro Project

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, 2 OCTOBER

Having remained in limbo for the past seven years, decks have finally been cleared for the construction of the 850 MW Ratle hydroelectric project in the Kishtwar district of Jammu through a joint venture company.

In a significant move, the Public Investment Board (PIB), in the Ministry of Finance, government of India has recommended that the project be developed through a Joint Venture company (JVC) between the JK Power Development Corporation (JKPDC) and the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC).

The PIB has also recommended an investment approval for Rs 528.14 crore for the project including an infusion of equity of Rs 808.14 crore by NHPC in the JVC. The equity contribution of JKPDC in the company pegged at Rs. 776.44 crore will be provided as grant by the government of India.

The recommendations of the PIB will pave the way for

## Judicial Underreach

Three and a half decades ago Chief Justice of India YV Chandrachud foresaw a greater threat to the independence of the judiciary from within than without. On Thursday a Bench of the Supreme Court headed by Justice L Nageswara Rao dismissed a plea by six retired bureaucrats seeking the appointment of an independent inquiry commission under the Commission of Inquiry Act, 1952, into the Union government's alleged "gross mismanagement" of the Covid-19 pandemic in India. Credibility in the functioning of the justice delivery system and reasonable satisfaction of the affected parties are relevant considerations to ensure public confidence in the impartiality of the judiciary. Of late, the Supreme Court has increasingly come under public gaze for not living up to its role as guardian of our constitutional rights. In the instant case the petitioners - KP Fabian, MG Devashayam, Meena Gupta, Somasundar Burra, Amit Bhaduri and Madhu Bhaduri - had filed their petition due to anxiety and concern over the respondent's mismanagement of the pandemic and the deleterious impact it had on the fundamental rights of citizens. Dismissing their petition, Justice Nageswara Rao noted that the situation had not been anticipated six months earlier and that "latitude had to be given to the government" for the lack of preparedness. Appearing for the petitioners, advocate Prashant Bhushan argued that the respondent had failed to consult the National Task Force appointed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 18 March comprising experts in the fields of epidemiology and public health prior to imposition of nationwide lockdown and its subsequent extensions. The respondent ignored the advice of these experts and went ahead with the lockdown "that has spawned a humanitarian and economic crisis of Biblical proportions while failing to contain the spread of Covid-19." The importance of the inquiry resided in the fact that the respondent had stalled an inquiry by the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee into responses to the pandemic. The petitioners' plea stated that the inquiry was essential as multiple lapses had taken place such as the failure to undertake timely and effective measures for containing the transmission and spread of the disease within India despite being notified by WHO in January and failure to adhere to statutory obligations under the Disaster Management Act, 2005, including drawing up a National Plan under Section 11 or issuing guidelines for providing minimum standards of relief to vulnerable sections of society under Section 12. Despite advisory and warning issued by the Home Ministry and experts, a gathering of 100,000 people was organised in Ahmedabad on 24 February 24. There had been a steep decline in the GDP as well as loss of jobs during the course of the lockdown. Imposition of the lockdown at four hours' notice had a devastating impact on jobs, livelihood and the overall economy. The commission of inquiry to be headed by a retired judge of the Supreme Court along with experts in the fields of epidemiology, medical science, public health and social sciences sought by the petitioners would have identified lapses as well as provided valuable lessons for dealing with future pandemics of this nature. The Supreme Court in its wisdom rejected the plea.

## Virus irony

The irony of President Donald Trump and his wife Melania testing positive for coronavirus will not be lost on those who have watched aghast as the occupant of the world's most powerful office has played ducks and drakes with a health crisis over the past eight months. Mr and Mrs Trump will quarantine themselves according to an announcement by the White House, which says they were tested after a close aide, Hope Hicks, was found to be infected. But there is another strand to this irony. The President's illness comes in the wake of a study by Cornell University that described him as the biggest spreader of misinformation on the disease. After evaluating 38 million articles in English-language, traditional media between January and May, the Cornell Alliance for Science concluded "that the president of the United States was likely the largest driver of the Covid-19 misinformation 'infodemic.' " The study, which covered news reports from the United States, Britain, India, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and other nations, showed that over half a million articles reproduced or amplified misinformation about the epidemic. Topics included various conspiracy theories, suggestions that the virus was a bioweapon unleashed by China, that it was caused by 5G networks and that it was linked to billionaire Bill Gates. But miracle cures were the most common topic, featuring in nearly 300,000 articles; surveyors found that comments by President Trump caused the sharpest spikes in such fake reports. His comment on the use of disinfectants inside the body caused one spike, while his endorsement of hydroxychloroquine caused another. A co-author of the survey noted: "One of the more interesting aspects of the data collection process was discovering the staggering amount of misinformation coverage directly linked to the public comments of a small number of individuals." Ms Hicks tested positive after travelling with Mr Trump to Cleveland for the first of his debates with Democratic contender Joe Biden and then to Minnesota for a campaign rally. While contact tracing has been completed to ascertain who else she may have infected, it will doubtless prove a daunting task as far as Mr Trump is concerned not the least because he has been less than cautious in public, often seen without a mask. The second debate is scheduled for 15 October in Miami, but it is uncertain if the President will be out of quarantine by then. What is certain though is that his affliction will sharpen criticism of his administration's response to the virus and put further strain on his re-election bid.

# Himalayan chinks

The bottomline of the entire charade in eastern Ladakh is that China apparently is very well aware of the contested regions, perhaps also that it is laying a siege on territories claimed by India as its own but is plainly intolerant or disdainful of Indian sensibilities. Through the Nehru years, China got used to the policy mode of appeasement as opposed to strategic confrontation. But effective conflict management sometimes requires force in lieu of compromise



For millennia, the Himalayas have not only been our protector but also a region touched by three of the major linguistic, racial, and cultural dividing lines of Asia. The valleys of this great mountain range have been inhabited by people speaking Indo-Aryan and Tibeto-Burman languages, by populations of Caucasian racial features meeting and coalescing with Mongoloid ethnic groups, not to speak of Hinduism and Buddhism coexisting and interacting in overlapping spheres. Of the vast 'Himalaya Sphere' - that broadly extends northwards to swathes of China, southwards to Myanmar, Bangladesh, and India, and westwards to Afghanistan and a part of the region historically known as 'Asia Minor' - the western part said to have birthed the 'quintessential' Indian civilisation is matched by its eastern part, that is known to embody 'quintessential' Chinese civilisation. It is a pity that the two Asian giants that share a long history of intellectual, cultural, and religious exchanges dating back two thousand years are now bitter rivals contesting over barren territories.

Ladakh, circumscribed by Tibet in the east, Kashmir and Baltistan in the west, Xinjiang in the north, and Lahoul, Spiti, Kulu, Bushahr and Chamba in the south, was an independent kingdom for many centuries until it was invaded by the Dogras in the 19th century. When the Dogras wrested Kashmir, the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir took Ladakh and neighbouring Baltistan under his wing. Following the Indo-Pakistan war of 1947, the Baltistan region fell on the Pakistani side of the ceasefire line, and the rest of Ladakh became part of the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. A little further away, the north-western frontier of China, otherwise known as Xinjiang, has been important from the geostrategic point of view besides being a region in which four civilisations - the Han Chinese, Tibetan, Mongolian, and Islamic - have met since the sixteenth century though Xinjiang's Chinese association dates back to more than 2,000 years. The range has stayed impaired or under control of majestic China discontinuously

for a little under five centuries until the Qing rulers usurped this region into the Chinese empire. What all these facts try to allude are the overlapping factors that combine nations and defy boundaries. In time of peace, such cultural and anthropological resources can be an asset. But when contesting nations live side by side, strategic imperatives get the better of abstract commonalities.

Now that the situation in LAC is simmering for months on end, it is clear that India paid little attention to safeguarding the territory of the trans-Himalayan frontier possibly because it trained its entire focus on the valley of Kashmir. Since a sizeable portion of Ladakh territory (Baltistan, Raskam, Aksai Chin) had been under the occupation of Pakistan and China since 1947, the strategic retrospective on the subject is that had India taken proper measures after independence to safeguard the Gilgit and Aksai Chin regions, Pakistan and China could not have occupied them and the Chinese could not have built the Tibet-Xinjiang link road across Aksai Chin, a region

provides an essential link with Pakistan and opens the Indian Ocean region to China. And Aksai Chin has opened the gates of Central Asia, Pakistan and Afghanistan to China and vitally connected Tibet with Xinjiang. Aksai Chin not only provides China with a link between Gilgit-Baltistan (formerly known as the Northern Areas) and Tibet through the Shyok valley, but also routes of entry into Ladakh. Thus, India's biggest failure and strategic threat has been the occupation of Gilgit-Baltistan by Pakistan and Aksai Chin by China. And Pakistan's exploitation of Gilgit-Baltistan to threaten the Zojila Pass and the national highway between Srinagar and Leh is well documented particularly since the Kargil war in 1999 when this area was used as a route for infiltration into Ladakh and Kargil. Pakistan, meanwhile, is mulling an upgrade of Gilgit-Baltistan to a full-fledged province.

Nehru seriously miscalculated. In his eagerness to play for India a global role in a new post-colonial world with China by his side, he compromised India's national and security imperatives. The Chinese incursion was in the words of B N Mullick, 'a betrayal of trust' ("My Years with Nehru: The Chinese Betrayal", 1971) that showed how trust between nation states should never be one-sided, but reciprocal, or else love becomes unrequited. It is ironical that the emergence of renewed attention on reviving the natural security qualities of India's Himalayan frontier, since the post-1757 period, happened more out of the imperative to protect British colonial dominance within the Indian subcontinent than to accomplish the security of the citizens of colonial India. Both personal ambition and colonial goals put a gloss on the security priorities of the Indian state.

China's hostile stance to India and its history of hostilities

- some of which are ongoing - with a host of other nations including the US is already beginning to be counter-productive. The Sino-Soviet border clashes in 1969 inspired Mao's strategic decision to break the deadlock in China's relationship with the United States. These policies resulted in the signing of the historic Shanghai Communiqué in 1972 and the normalisation of Sino-US relations seven years later. Japan and South Korea have had large-scale wars with China in the past, while India, Vietnam, and Russia have had serious border clashes with China. Some such as the Philippines, Vietnam have contested Beijing's territorial claims in the South China Sea, while a few others, such as Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Indonesia, at one time or another have had to fend off communist insurgencies backed by Beijing. Now China is encircled by a community of ill-will that might well bandwagon against it.

The bottomline of the entire charade in eastern Ladakh is that China apparently is very well aware of the contested regions, perhaps also that it is laying a siege on territories claimed by India as its own but is plainly intolerant or disdainful of Indian sensibilities. It is bent on showing force and wants India to blink first. The Chinese disavowal of the McMahon Line and claims on large sections of Indian territory in Ladakh as well as Arunachal Pradesh festering since the early 1950s have been allowed to metastasise for far too long. Through the Nehru years, China got used to the policy mode of appeasement as opposed to strategic confrontation. But as our subsequent brush with China has amply proved over the years, effective conflict management sometimes requires force in lieu of compromise.

The unilateral Indian decision to garrison the Siachen region in the late 1980s and the use of air and ground forces during the Kargil incursion in 1999 are two cases in point. It is time we revived the natural security qualities of India's Himalayan frontier armed with a combination of circumspect militarism and unblinking diplomacy.

A MEMBER OF THE **ANN**  
ASIAN VOICES

## Firm first steps

Three years after the Supreme Court issued an order to the government to regulate the sale and distribution of acid, the country finally has new laws to that effect. But the government needs to do more to end acid attacks in the country.

On Monday, President Bidya Devi Bhandari authenticated three ordinances - Acid and Other Fatal Chemicals (Regulation) Ordinance 2020, Ordinance to Revise some provisions in Criminal Codes and Criminal Procedure, and Nepal Police and Provincial Police (Operation, Coordination and Supervision) Act.

These are huge strides in deterring acid attacks as the new laws regulating the sale of acid and other fatal chemicals require sellers to maintain a database of buyers, including a copy of their identity documents, and stop the sale of acid in recycled bottles.

It would be wise of the government to take one more step and ban the sale of acid in the retail market altogether as research has shown that strict regulations on acid purchases have a positive correlation with fewer acid attacks. Acid should no longer be available over the counter.

The new revisions in the Criminal Code have also increased the penalty for acid attacks, but they will do little to deter such attacks if the government fails to deploy a mechanism to strictly monitor its implementation.

Additionally, these provisions need a careful review as acid attack survivors live in fear of future attacks once the perpetrators are released.

Acid attack is a horrendous crime that devastates the lives of survivors. The physical and psychological trauma of acid attack lasts for a lifetime. Medical treatment is also expensive and involves tedious surgeries and follow-ups.

Besides, survivors also need proper counselling to overcome their traumas.

**THE KATHMANDU POST**  
ma. The state, as a guardian, must ensure that the survivors have free and full medical support, either in government or private hospitals.

After all their horrific experiences, the survivors who are seriously maimed or disabled should not be struggling to receive medical attention.

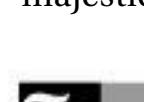
This is not something the government can shy away from, and authorities should immediately work out a compensation scheme for acid attack survivors, together with a useful rehabilitation programme, and provide them with employment support.

In the past few years, Nepal has witnessed an increase in the number of acid attacks, and a majority of the victims are women.

Activists who work to rehabilitate acid attack survivors say most of these attacks are over domestic disputes and rejected relationship proposals and sexual advances; and that a majority of such crimes are committed by men. Acid attack is, thus, a complex problem and symptom of a much larger gender problem in our society. Just introducing harsh laws to prevent these crimes is not a solution, and will not prevent future attacks.

We need to raise grassroots-level awareness of acid violence and the acute gender inequality that plagues our society. The government must engage with the communities at the local level and develop targeted policies and advocacy strategies to lead a social change.

According to the 2019 Human Development Report, Nepal ranks 115th out of 162 countries with a Gender Inequality Index value of 0.476. This is an enormous gap to fill when it comes to levelling the playing field for women.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

editor@thestatesman.com

## Need certainty of punishment

SIR, This refers to the editorial "UP shamed" (1 October). Despite the laws having been rewritten after the horrific Nirbhaya rape case, nothing seems to have changed when it comes to protecting women, especially low-caste women, from the hideously beastly rapists. The medieval barbarity with which the Hathras rape was committed betrays the deep-seated malady of society, driven by patriarchal prejudices against women. But what should be a social issue is turning out to be high-voltage politicking. The issue needs to be addressed beyond the blitzkrieg of politicking to ensure that henceforth no underprivileged, vulnerable woman becomes the victim of man's lust.

Urbanization and social mobility have not affected

the cloistered psyche of male-dominated society since 1995 when a judge observed on Bhanwari Devi's accusation that 'an upper caste man could not have defiled himself by raping a lower caste woman'. Even the rank and file of the judiciary and police administrations are not free from prejudices against women. They submit to the caprices of upper caste men. The police which had acted with great alacrity to capture a gangster suddenly developed cold

feet when it came to apprehending rapists from the upper caste. The UP administration's act of condoning a series of horrific rapes across the state is not just 'tacit acceptance of the worst', as you have observed, but kowtowing to the dictates of the influential. Unless basic policing is changed, unless the male perception towards women is changed, the fate of underprivileged, vulnerable women would be as horrific as in death. They suffer the same fate of generation-

al deprivation and persecution, both in life and death. It's not the severity of the punishment, with the chorus getting louder to hang the rapists, but the certainty of the punishment which could be a deterrent.

Yours, etc., Sudipta Ghosh,  
Jangipur, 1 October.

### REGULATE TOTOS

SIR, Coronavirus has severely affected the country and our state of West Bengal. State government is seriously thinking about the safety and security of citizens. It has been observed that in the towns of West Bengal, vehicles known as Totos and motor vans run recklessly without registration. They operate from dawn to dusk without paying any tax or registration charges to the government. They disobey traffic rules and operators often misbehave with passengers. Complaints cannot be lodg-

### QUESTIONABLE

SIR, Miss Mamata Banerjee's decision to give one-time financial assistance of Rs 50,000 each to 36,000 puja committees will cost the state exchequer Rs 180 crore, and its purpose is questionable. At a time when the state is hit by the twin disasters of Amphan and the corona pandemic, many Amphan-affected families are still without shelters and go to bed under the sky. Migrant workers are retreating from the state finding no job or scope of earnings here, and school children are leaving schools to join the child labour force to assist helpless parents. The colossal expenditure from tax payers' money should be viewed in this perspective. Question has already arisen whether such financial patronage by the state government to a religious festivity is advisable in a secular country. The move may brighten Miss Banerjee's poll prospects in 2021 but definitely at the cost of development.

Yours, etc., Dilip Kumar Sengupta, Kolkata, 1 October.

ed because they cannot be identified.

The movement and safety protocols of these vehicles should immediately be streamlined to ensure security of the citizens. The government should bring the

se vehicles under the purview of the Motor Vehicles Act. Not only will be regulated, this effort may contribute revenue to the State government.

Yours, etc., Krishna Ray,  
Chinsurah, 1 October.



BETI BACHAO

## No language will be imposed'

**S**enior BJP leader and Union education minister RAMESH POKHRIYAL started his career as a teacher in the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh-affiliated Saraswati Shishu Mandir. He is also a poet, and had published his first collection of poems in 1983. He is an MP from the Haridwar Lok Sabha constituency. In an interview with ABHIJEET ANAND, Pokhriyal shares his thoughts on various aspects of the new National Education Policy cleared by the Narendra Modi Cabinet. Excerpts:

**Q. What are the guiding principles of the New Education Policy, and how is it different from the old policy?**

A. The New Education Policy takes into account the significant changes that have taken place in our country, society, economy and the world at large. New technologies have transformed how we live, work, and communicate with each other with an easy flow of information and knowledge within the country and across the world. The corpus of knowledge has vastly expanded, and research has become multi-disciplinary, and far more collaborative. The education sector needs to gear itself towards the demands of the 21st century and the needs of the people and the country. Quality, innovation and research are the pillars on which India has to build its position in the global knowledge system while maintaining and developing its traditional knowledge systems. The National Education Policy lays particular emphasis on the development of the creative potential of each individual. It is based on the principle that education must develop not only cognitive capacities — both the foundational capacities of literacy and numeracy and higher-order cognitive capacities, such as critical thinking and problem-solving — but also social, ethical, and emotional capabilities and dispositions.

**Q. Some observers feel that higher education needs to be liberalised further. What's your opinion on this?**

A. The NEP fosters liberalisation on the critical aspects of regulation, academics and research. As Prime Minister Narendra Modi mentions, the New Education Policy has adopted a middle path between autonomy and regulations. At every stage autonomy and accountability will be there, with transparency. The change has already begun through the IIMs. Thus, the new regulatory system envisioned by this policy will foster this overall culture of empowerment and autonomy



to innovate, including by gradually phasing out the system of 'affiliated colleges' over fifteen years through a system of graded autonomy. Each existing affiliating university will be responsible for mentoring its affiliated colleges so that they can develop their capabilities and achieve minimum benchmarks in academic and curricular matters, teaching and assessment, governance reforms, financial robustness and administrative efficiency. All colleges currently affiliated to a university shall attain the required benchmarks over time to secure the prescribed accreditation benchmarks and eventually become autonomous degree-granting colleges. This will be achieved through a concerted national effort including suitable mentoring and governmental support for the same. Further, the NEP advocates that an imaginative and flexible curricular structure will be imbued in higher education which will enable creative combinations of disciplines for study, and would offer multiple entries and exit points, thus removing currently prevalent rigid boundaries and creating new possibilities for life-long learning. Similarly, to enable a culture of research to permeate through our universities, National Research Foundation will be established. This will help to develop a culture of research in the country through appropriate incentives for and recognition of outstanding research, and by undertaking significant initiatives to seed and grow research at state universities and other public institutions where research capability is currently limited.

**Q. How do you counter the argument that having an overarching body to regulate higher education will be undemocratic and may prevent the flow of new ideas?**

A. More than ever, the New Education Policy embellishes the principle of democracy through both letter and spirit. As mentioned in the policy, the regulatory system of higher education will ensure that the distinct functions of regulation, accreditation, funding and academic standard setting will be performed by different, independent, and empowered bodies. Not an overarching body but a body of four structures will be set up as four separate verticals within one umbrella institution, the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI). The first vertical of HECHI will be the National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC). It will function as the common, single point regulator for the

**Q. English may be a colonial legacy, but it is globally recognised as an international language. Shouldn't the education policy remember this?**

A. As Prime Minister Modi highlighted in the 'School education for 21st century' conclave that whatever language a child can learn easily, the same

should be the language of instruction. He emphasised that countries with top ranking in PISA 2018 such as Estonia, Ireland, Finland, Japan, South Korea, Poland impart primary education in their respective mother tongues. Young children learn and grasp non-trivial concepts more quickly in their home language/mother tongue. Home language is usually the same language as the mother tongue or that which is spoken by local communities. Aligned with the same, the New Education Policy states that wherever possible, the medium of instruction until at least Grade 5, but preferably till Grade 8 and beyond, will be the home language/mother-tongue/local language/regional language. The policy presents greater flexibility in the three-language formula, and thereby no language will be imposed on any State. The three languages learned by children will be the choices of States, regions, and of course, the students themselves, so long as at least two of the three languages are native to India. Further, teachers will be encouraged to use a bilingual approach, including bilingual teaching-learning materials, with those students whose home language may be different from the medium of instruction. All efforts will be made in preparing high-quality bilingual textbooks and teaching-learning materials. Thus, nowhere the policy talks about shedding the English language or its role; instead, it emphasises the importance of multilingualism which has a tremendous cognitive benefit for young children. Through the NEP, the children will be provided to learn international languages other than English while preserving their regional language, making learning an easy process.

**Q. There are over two dozen Boards apart from the CBSE. Some Boards are considered more lenient. Don't you feel that having more than one Board is not good for school education?**

A. To reverse the harmful effects of the current assessment system and the adversities of multiple Boards, the New Education Policy proposes to set up a National Assessment Centre, PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development), as a standard-setting body under MHRD that fulfils the primary objectives of setting norms, standards, and guidelines for student assessment and evaluation for all recognised school Boards of India, guiding the State Achievement

Survey (SAS) and undertaking the National Achievement Survey (NAS), monitoring achievement of learning outcomes in the country, and encouraging and helping School Boards to shift their assessment patterns towards meeting the skill requirements of the 21st century. This Centre will also advise school Boards regarding new assessment patterns and latest researches and promote collaborations between school Boards. It will also become an instrument for the sharing of best practices among school Boards, and for ensuring equivalence of academic standards among learners across all school Boards.

**Q. What mechanism will be adopted to make college faculty accountable?**

A. The New Education Policy epitomises that the most critical factor in the success of higher education institutions is the quality and engagement of its faculty. Acknowledging the criticality of faculty in achieving the goals of higher education, various initiatives have been introduced in the past several years to systemise recruitment and career progression, and to ensure equitable representation from multiple groups in the hiring of faculty. Through the NEP, excellence will be further incentivised through appropriate rewards, promotions, recognitions, and movement into institutional leadership. Faculty not delivering on basic norms will be held accountable.

**Q. How will the new policy improve the quality of government and government-aided schools?**

A. The public education system is the foundation of a vibrant democratic society, and the way it is run must be transformed and invigorated to achieve the highest levels of educational outcomes for the nation, as stated in the New Education Policy. Stating that the main thrust of the policy is on improving the quality of school education, many curricular, pedagogical, assessment and learning outcome-based reforms have been proposed. There will be greater emphasis on early childhood care and education, the 10+2 structure of school curricula is to be replaced by a 5+3+3+4 curricular design. The curricula will aim for the holistic development of learners, equipping them with the critical 21st-century skills, reduction in curricular content to enhance essential learning and critical thinking and a greater focus on experiential learning.

## Why today's world needs namaste

JEREMY DAVID ENGELS

**H**ands over the heart in prayer pose. A little bow of the head. A gesture of respect. An acknowledgment of our shared humanity. And no touching.

As people the world over are choosing to ditch the handshakes and hugs for fear of contracting the coronavirus, namaste is becoming the perfect pandemic greeting.

As a scholar whose research focuses on the ethics of communication and as a yoga teacher, I'm interested in how people use rituals and rhetoric to affirm their interconnectedness with one another – and with the world.

Namaste is one such ritual.

Originally a Sanskrit word, namaste is composed of two parts – "namas" means "bend to," "bow to" or "honour to," and "te" means "to you." So namaste means "I bow to you." This meaning is often reinforced by a small bow of the head.

In Hindi and a number of other languages derived from Sanskrit, namaste is basically a respectful way of saying hello and also goodbye.

Today, namaste has been adopted into the English language, along with other words from non-English sources. Many words, when borrowed, keep their spelling but acquire new meanings. This is the case with namaste – it has shifted from meaning "I bow to you" to "I bow to the divine in you."

For many American yoga teachers, beginning most likely with Ram Dass in the 1960s and 1970s, namaste means something like "the divine light in me bows to the divine light within you." This is the definition of namaste I first learned and have often repeated to my students.

In the words of the popular American yoga teacher Shiva Rea, namaste is "the consummate Indian greeting," a "sacred hello," that means "I bow to the divinity within you from the divinity within me."

Deepak Chopra repeats a similar definition on his podcast "The Daily Breath with Deepak Chopra": namaste means "the spirit in me honours the spirit in you" and "the divine in me honours the divine in you."

Namaste has a sacred connotation. When you bow to another, you

are honouring something sacred in them. When you bow to another, you are acknowledging that they are worthy of respect and dignity.

However, there are critics who say that global yogis have taken namaste out of its context. Some claim that the greeting has been infused with a religious meaning that doesn't exist in Indian culture.

I see things differently. Many common salutations have religious roots, including adios, or "a Dios," to God, and goodbye – a contraction of "God be with you."

Most Indian religions agree that there is something divine in all individuals, whether it's a soul, called the "atman" or "purusha" in Hinduism, or the capacity for awakening in Buddhism.

As I argue in my forthcoming book, "The Ethics of Oneness: Emerson, Whitman, and the Bhagavad Gita," this idea, of bowing to the divine in others, also resonates with a deep spiritual inclination in American culture.

Beginning in the 1830s and 1840s,

the influential philosopher and essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson, in dialogue

with a number of other thinkers, invented a form of spiritual practice that encouraged Americans to actively address the divine soul in others every time they spoke.

Of particular note is that Emerson often used the metaphor of light to imagine this inner divinity, likely because of his great admiration for the Quakers, whose Christian denomination holds that God lives inside of us all in the form of an "inner light."

The definition of namaste as "the divine light in me bows to the divine light in you" is very much in the spirit of both Indian religions and 19th-century traditions of American spirituality.

In today's global yoga culture, namaste is typically said at the end of class. As I understand, for yogis, saying namaste is a moment of contemplating the virtues associated with yoga – including peacefulness, compassion, and gratitude and how to bring those into one's daily life.

I asked Swami Tattwamayananda, the head of the Vedanta Society of Northern California in San Francisco and one of the world's leading authorities on Hindu ritual and scripture,

how he felt about Americans like me saying namaste.

He responded: "It is perfectly appropriate for everyone, including Westerners like yourself to say namaste at the end of your yoga classes." He also reiterated that namaste means "I bow down to you" – in the sense that I bow down to the divine presence in you.

One need not be a Hindu, or a Buddhist, or a yoga teacher to say namaste. Namaste can be as religious or secular as the speaker desires.

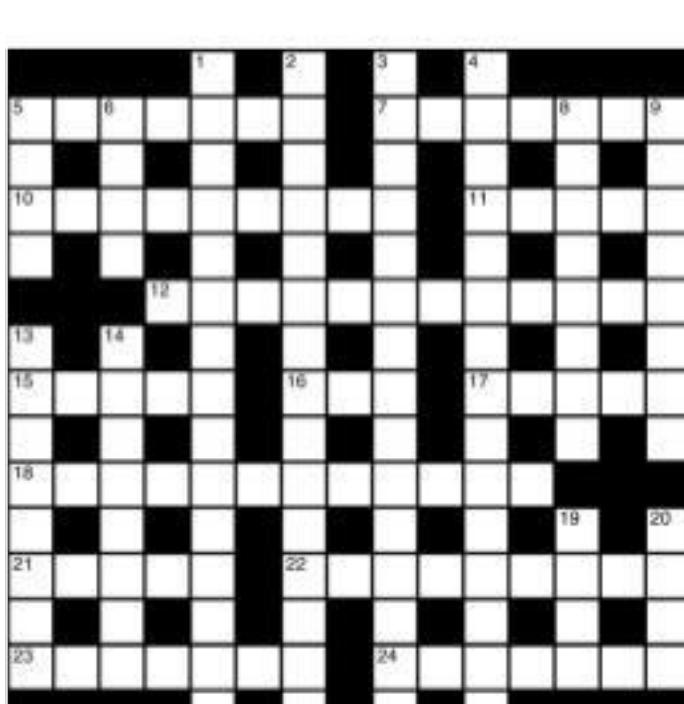
What matters most, I believe, is the intention behind the word namaste. When you bow to another, the question to consider is this: Do you truly recognize them as a fellow human being worthy of dignity, bonded in shared suffering and a shared capacity for transcendence?

This recognition of our interconnectedness is what namaste is all about – and exactly what we need during the pandemic.

The writer is Professor of Communication Arts and Sciences, University of Pennsylvania. This article was published on www.theconversation.com

NO 28092

CROSSWORD



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION



SOLUTION FOR  
26 SEPTEMBER

ACROSS

- 5 Spare let? You'll have to book (7)
- 7 Over in pound you see Number One Son going about with pride? (4,3)
- 10 Texan city well in which Gabriel is trapped? (3,6)
- 11 Flat B from the rear? (5)
- 12/15 Q: Is it Beer Monday or Wine Tuesday that is unsatisfactory? (3,6,2,1,5)
- 16 What successful European banks? (3)
- 17/18 Bob says misfortune is catastrophic – and you can't argue (2,3,4,2,6)
- 21 Parse clues, highlighting every other cell (5)
- 22 Film director breaking into a frenzied bombast? (9)
- 23 Neurotic returned set on bedside table? (7)
- 24 Irritated, flying three sheets to the wind? (7)
- 25 Done by trains with "unlimited" return after
- 26 unplanned departure in USA (6,9)
- 27 5/20 Enigmatic trio admitting Nimrod made puzzles bite (4,2,2)
- 28 See 19
- 29 Small thin dog nearly holds relations up? (8)
- 30 Bed shortly – sleep will be fitful having eaten a cheese (3,5)
- 31 Hit London's West End, not forgetting Soho? (8)
- 32 Going upstairs I think I have a sad face? (8)
- 33 19/6 Crossings on grand overpasses going up and down, we hear? (8)
- 34 See 5

DOWN

- 1 Starter #2 from menu missing in order: phone inn, of course! (6,5,4)
- 2 Bring round supporter of piping casserole; in turn, no meat remains! (9,6)
- 3 Tavern hosting sex-party and massages, low life's beginning to upset local modernists (10,5)
- 4 Done by trains with "unlimited" return after

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

OCCASIONAL NOTE

The official American intervention in the politics of the Middle East with a view to securing a share of contingent oil-profits for citizens of the United States represents the climax of that country's magnificent disinterestedness. Armenians were butchered by the thousand, three Republicans were overthrown by the Bolsheviks and Russia's whole future was menaced, but the Government of the United States made no sign. Baring the undertaking of the President to demarcate Armenia's frontiers - which, destitute as it was of any guarantee of those frontiers, was a work of supererogation on Mr. Wilson's part - the American Government has not lifted a hand to take up the white man's burden in the vast area of misery and distress extending from Constantinople to Teheran. Oil, however, has drawn the President at last and he has shown conclusively that, while liberty may include freedom to enslave distressed peoples struggling to be free, it does not include liberty to peg out unlimited concessions and construct unlimited pipe-lines. There the American nation must be co-opted as co-arbitrator. Even this move would have its good points - if only the new definition of liberty did not imply the payment of its American price.

NEWS ITEMS

INDIAN RAILWAYMEN

To use the words of the energetic local president, Mr. C.F. Woodhouse, Sunday was a great day for the railwaymen of Khargpur. It was the occasion of a mass meeting of employees representative of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway, the East Indian Railway and the Eastern Bengal Railway. The object of the gathering was to promote the interests of the Railway Workmen's Association of India and the President of the Association, Mr. E. Jones, who presided, urged the importance of railwaymen being represented in the Imperial Legislative Council. There was a very large attendance, and the utmost unity and enthusiasm were evinced. This meeting is unanimously of opinion that nothing short of an increase of 75 per cent on the salaries paid on March 31st, 1919, with retrospective effect from April 1st, 1919, in addition to periodical increments.

AMERICAN TRADE WITH RUSSIA

While British arrangements for trade with Russia are still undecided, America has succeeded in getting trade touch with Russia. The State Department announces that all restrictions on Russo-American trading are removed except those regarding war materials capable of use in war for which special licenses must be obtained. Railway cars, locomotives and rails, are included in war materials; otherwise, all goods can be sent from America to Russia without the necessity of permission. However, the State Department warns intending traders that trading will be at the owner's risk, and that the present concession must not be interpreted as a recognition of the Soviet regime, nor will a postal convention be negotiated with the Soviet Government. The question of how Russia will pay is to be a matter of private negotiation and America will not help shippers to collect bad debts.

TRAFFIC COMBINE FAILURE

The London Traffic Combine of underground tramway and omnibus is in a position of acute financial distress. Although the cost of carrying London does not quite involve a loss, the profit is a bare pound 42 for the half-year. This is the statement which is made by the directors of the Underground Electric Railways Company, the dividend on the six per cent income bonds is passed over, and in the case of practically all the stocks on which dividends are being paid the percentage is very much smaller than last year. In addition, the Directors of the London General Omnibus Company, which is also part of the Combine, announce that the financial position of their company does not justify them in declaring a dividend at all.

IMPERIAL PRESS CONFERENCE

In the course of a speech at the Imperial Press Conference luncheon, Sir Robert Bruce, of the Glasgow Herald, emphasised the importance of the conference, which would discuss, inter alia, better and cheaper cable facilities for the press, also the question of circulating news throughout the Empire. Mr. Nayler, President of the Printing Trades Federation, said that the time was approaching when Labour would govern England, but this would not make any difference in the attitude of the Motherland to the Dominions. He expressed the hope that the conference would result in promoting the best feelings between the industrial elements and the newspaper profession throughout the Empire.

## THUMBNAILS

**Route Mobile purchase:** Route Mobile, a cloud communications service provider, has completed the acquisition of intellectual property and its associated contracts from TeleDNA for over Rs 12 crore. Route Mobile, which was listed on the BSE last month, said it had entered into a business transfer agreement (BTA) with TeleDNA Communications in June for acquisition of intellectual property and its associated identified customer contracts on a slum sale basis. PTI

**Forex reserves fall:** After touching a lifetime high in the previous week, the country's foreign exchange reserves declined by \$3.017 billion to \$542.021 billion in the week ended 25 September, Reserve Bank data showed on Friday. In the week ended 18 September, the reserves had increased by \$3.378 billion to a record \$545.038 billion. During the reporting week, the decline in the forex kitty was mainly due to a fall in foreign currency assets (FCAs), a major component of the overall reserves. PTI

**Nabard assistance:** Nabard on Friday said it has disbursed Rs 12,298 crore so far under the Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin (SBM-G) for construction of 3.29 crore household toilets. To mark the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, the development finance institution has launched a nationwide sanitation literacy campaign. The campaign is aimed at creating awareness among rural populace towards adopting good hygiene and sanitation practices, a release said. PTI

**Dollar power plant:** Leading apparel brand Dollar Industries Limited has commissioned a 4 MW solar power plant at its manufacturing facility in Tirupur. The solar plant is a part of Dollar's "green mission" initiative and has a capacity of generating 75 lakh power units annually, according to a Press release from the company. SNS

**PhonePe MF:** Digital payments platform PhonePe has announced the launch of seven new mutual fund categories for customers to invest in. The categories are large cap, mid and small cap, diversified funds, index funds, hybrid ~ aggressive & dynamic asset allocation, debt, liquid and tax saving funds, according to a Press release from the company. SNS

**Ford service:** Ford India has introduced "doorstep service" empowering owners to get their Ford vehicle serviced wherever they want ~ home or office ~ at no additional charge. This latest offering expands Ford's bouquet of consumer-focused initiatives launched under Dial-A-Ford where all sales & service queries get addressed via the helpline, said a Press release. SNS

# Exports show positive growth after 6 months

Exports grow by 5.27 per cent year-on-year to \$27.4 billion in September

SNS & PTI  
NEW DELHI/KOLKATA, 2 OCTOBER

**A**fter contracting for six months in a row, the country's exports grew by 5.27 per cent year-on-year to \$27.4 billion in September, while imports slipped by 19.6 per cent to \$30.31 billion, according to the commerce ministry data released today.

The trade deficit during the month under review narrowed to \$2.91 billion as against \$11.67 billion in the same period of 2019. The exports in September last year stood at \$26.02 billion.

Exports during April-September period of this financial year dipped by 21.43 per cent to \$125.06 billion. Imports during the period stood at \$148.69 billion, recording a negative growth of 40.06 per cent.

Commodities that registered positive growth in exports in September include iron ore (109.52 per cent), rice (92.44 per cent), oil meals (43.9 per cent), carpet (42.89 per cent), pharmaceuticals (24.36 per cent), meat, dairy and poultry products (19.96 per cent), cotton yarn/fabrics/made-ups, handloom products (14.82 per cent), tobacco (11.09 per cent), spices (10.07 per cent), petrochemicals (4.17 per cent), engineering goods (3.73 per cent), chemicals (2.87 per cent), and coffee (0.79 per cent).

The ministry said that in September this year, oil imports fell by 35.92 per cent to \$5.82 billion. During April-September period of fiscal 2020-21, it contracted by 51.14 per cent to \$31.85 billion.

Non-oil imports in September also declined by 14.41

billion as against \$11.67 billion in the same period of 2019.

► Exports during April-September period of this financial year dipped by 21.43 per cent to \$125.06 billion. Imports during the period stood at \$148.69 billion, recording a negative growth of 40.06 per cent.

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per cent to \$24.48 billion. The imports during the first half of the current fiscal declined by 36.12 per cent to \$116.83 billion, the preliminary data showed.

Gold imports dipped by 52.85 per cent during September this year.

Since March, the exports were recording negative growth due to Covid-19 pandemic and sluggish global demand.

Speaking on the trade data, EEPIC India chairman Mahesh Desai said: "While the reversal in trend for merchandise exports turning into positive territory in September 2020 is a matter of relief, the challenges in the external trade would continue given the present state of global health emergency and its economic impact on the major economies."

The engineering exports too have shown a positive trend of 3.73 per cent for September, although the major turnaround has come about, thanks to a sharp increase in pharma exports, for understandable reasons, Desai said.

Tesla CEO Elon Musk said today that the electric car maker is finally ready to enter the India market in 2021.

Musk revealed his plans to bring Tesla cars to India in his response to a Twitter post that asked about the progress on Tesla's planned entry into India. "Next year for sure," Musk said in response to the tweet that posted pictures of T-shirts with "India wants Tesla" and "India loves Tesla" printed on them. "Thanks for waiting," he added.

On several occasions earlier, Musk had revealed that he would like to bring Tesla to India, but in a 2018 Twitter post he cited "some challenging government regulations" as a hurdle. He also criticised the foreign direct investment norms for the delay in the electric car maker's entry into the Indian market.

"Would love to be in India. Some challenging government regulations, unfortunately," Musk had tweeted in response to a Twitter user who wrote "No Tesla in India" on his Twitter handle.

In response to a query by a follower, Musk replied that the "launch should hopefully happen soon". IANS

# Mobile phones to get dearer as govt imposes 10% duty on displays

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 2 OCTOBER



19 and NGT embargo. We continue to be fully committed to domestic manufacturing of sub-assemblies and components. However, now, the focus is to take a lion's share of global markets and not just import substitution," Mohindroo said.

Vedanta Group chairman Anil Agarwal-promoted Volcan Investments had proposed to set up the country's first LCD manufacturing unit in 2016 with investment of around Rs 68,000 crore in the name of Twin-star Display Technologies.

India Cellular and Electronics Association (ICEA) members include Apple, Huawei, Xiaomi, Vivo and Winstron.

The objective of the PMP

was to facilitate manufacturing of components indigenously and discourage imports thereafter.

"In a rare miss, the industry could not ramp up display assembly production adequately because of Covid-19," Mohindroo said.

ICEA will soon come up with a report on the display ecosystem which would focus on not merely assembly but complete display fabs.

## Anti-dumping probe against two Chinese products

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 2 OCTOBER

tigation concerning imports of "decor paper" from the neighbouring country.

Both the companies have alleged that dumping of these products has impacted respective industries.

On the basis of the duly substantiated written application by or on behalf of the domestic industry, and having satisfied itself, on the basis of the prima facie evidence submitted by the domestic industry, the DGTR has initiated the investigations, according to two separate notifications of the directorate.

"The applicant has alleged that material injury is being caused to the domestic industry due to dumped imports from the subject countries and has requested for the imposition of the anti-dumping duties on the imports," according to a separate notification of the DGTR.

An investigation is also started against alleged dumping of "elastomeric filament yarn" exported from Singapore following a complaint by Indorama Industries Ltd.

The finance ministry takes

the final decision to impose the duties. The directorate is also probing alleged dumping of "caprolactam", used in nylon making, from European Union, Korea, Russia and Thailand.

Gujarat State Fertilizers and Chemicals Ltd has filed the application for the same.

"The applicant has alleged that material injury is being caused to the domestic industry due to dumped imports from the subject countries and has requested for the imposition of the anti-dumping duties on the imports," according to a separate notification of the DGTR.

An investigation is also started against alleged dumping of "elastomeric filament yarn" exported from Singapore following a complaint by Indorama Industries Ltd.

The finance ministry takes

## Warburg Pincus invests ₹700 cr to buy 25% stake in Home First

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
MUMBAI, 2 OCTOBER

Home First Finance, True North-backed affordable housing finance firm, today said it has entered into an agreement with Warburg Pincus-affiliate Orange Clove Investments BV for an investment of about Rs 700 crore.

The investment is a combination of primary fund raise and secondary sales by existing shareholders, it said.

Global private equity firm Warburg Pincus has bought a 25 per cent stake in the housing finance company, according to a source.

As per the agreement, all the existing shareholders, including True North Fund V LLP, Aether (Mauritius) Ltd, Bessemer India Capital Holdings, and Bank of Baroda for-

mer managing director and CEO P S Jayakumar, have sold their 25 per cent stake on a proportional basis, the source said. Prior to this transaction, while True North was holding 45.97 per cent, Aether (Mauritius) and Bessemer India owned 30.65 per cent and 16.28 per cent, respectively.

The primary investment by Warburg Pincus is of Rs 75 crore and the balance is through the secondary route, the source said.

processes and payment mechanisms have netted excellent dividends through multiple disruptive events.

Warburg Pincus managing director Narendra Ostwald said: "Warburg Pincus looks forward to the partnership with True North and towards backing Manoj and the management team in its next phase of expansion."

He added that the company's strong focus on the salaried customer segment, its investments in technology and deep belief in digital

presence in the urbanised regions of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. It targets first-time homebuyers who are typically salaried customers working in small firms or self-employed customers who run small businesses.

As of 31 March 2020, Home First had an asset under management (AUM) of Rs 3,618 crore with net worth of Rs 933 crore and a gross non-performing asset of 0.87 per cent.

It reported a profit after tax of Rs 79.55 crore during the financial year ended 31 March 2020, against Rs 45.72 crore in the previous year.

The New York-based Warburg has over \$3 billion in private equity assets under management invested across 185 companies across sectors and geographies.

## Vedanta faces do or die battle if delisting fails, say analysts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 2 OCTOBER



with pressure on oil prices and subdued metal prices," an analyst said. Further, two key businesses of Vedanta ~ its 4,00,000-ton-per annum copper capacity at Tuticorin in Tamil Nadu and the iron ore business in Goa ~ remain shut with little visibility on when they would resume operations. This has also denting the group's overall revenues, he said.

When contacted, Vedanta spokesperson refused to comment on the debt position or impact on revenues due to the shutdown of copper and iron ore businesses.

The spokesperson also refused to comment on the likely delisting price or if the group could raise more money to fund this exercise, calling it speculative.

Sources, however, said that the lenders have put a cap

on any further fund mobilisation. The maximum Vedanta can offer in the buyout exercise is Rs 125-127 per share against the book value of Rs 89 a share.

Vedanta closed at Rs 137.45, up 0.4 percent, on BSE on Thursday.

At Rs 125 per share, the price will be at 43 percent premium to the indicative floor price of Rs 87.5 a share.

While Vedanta has been able to mobilise \$3.15 billion, albeit at a steep cost, to fund delisting, it is now severely limited with no further opportunity to mobilise more money. Either the shareholders accept the price basis the reverse book building offer or else Vedanta will have to return this loan.

The bid opening date has been fixed on 5 October and it concludes on 9 October.

Trade unions call for nationwide strike on 26 Nov

NEW DELHI, 2 OCTOBER

Trade unions today gave a call for a nationwide strike on 26 November to protest against the government policies.

The decision to go on strike was taken during an online or virtual national convention of workers today, as per a declaration adopted by ten central unions and their associates.

"The convention calls upon all the working people, whether unionised or not, affiliated or independent, whether from organised sector or unorganised sector, to intensify the united struggle against the anti-people, anti-worker, anti-farmer and anti-national policies of the government and make the call for a nationwide general strike on 26 November 2020 a total success," it said.

M&M drives in new Thar, price starts at ₹9.8 lakh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 2 OCTOBER

automatic diesel variants are tagged at Rs 13.65 lakh and Rs 13.75 lakh.

The petrol trims come with a 2-litre powertrain that generates 150 bhp of power, while the 2.2-litre diesel variants churn out 130 BHP of power.

All the variants of new Thar come with a four-wheel drive setup. The company said it has opened the booking of the model from Friday and the deliveries would begin from next month.

"Over the years, the Thar has been a part of Mahindra's rich history and has found its way into the hearts of many as an object of desire," M&M managing director Pawan Goenka said.

In its all-new avatar, Thar is a notch higher in its appeal, owing to its ability to be as comfortable on paved roads, as it has always been off-road, he added.

## RailTel files papers for ₹700-crore IPO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 2 OCTOBER

State-owned RailTel Corporation of India Ltd has filed draft papers with capital markets regulator the Securities and Exchange Board of India to raise Rs 700 crore through an initial share sale.

The initial public offer (IPO) is entirely an offer for sale through which the government will offload 8,66 crore equity shares, draft papers filed with the Sebi said.

According to merchant banking sources, the IPO is estimated to fetch Rs 700 crore.

The mini-ratna PSU is one of the largest neutral telecom

## Bank credit growth may fall to 1% in FY21

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
MUMBAI, 2 OCTOBER

CRISIL FORECASTS

Given the grim economic outlook, the banking system's credit growth will come between 0 and 1 per cent in FY21. This will be a multi-decade low.

For NBFCs, credit growth will be in negative zone and assets under man-

agement will decline by 1-3 per cent in the fiscal year.

From an asset quality perspective as well, NBFCs will be more impacted than the banks.

"Given the grim economic outlook, the banking system's credit growth will come between 0 and 1 per cent in FY21. This will be a multi-

decade low," the agency's senior director Somasekhar Venuri told reporters on a call.

From an asset quality perspective as well, NBFCs will be more impacted than the banks, he added.

NBFCs are likely to witness a 0.50 to 2.50 per cent surge in delinquencies this fiscal, driven largely by the small business and wholesale segments, the agency said



*This training would instil a sense of confidence in women when they are faced with any form of physical threat*

WEST BENGAL BJP MAHILA MORCHA PRESIDENT AGNIMITRA PAUL  
AT THE LAUNCH OF INITIATIVE 'UMA' TO IMPART SELF-DEFENCE TECHNIQUES TO WOMEN

# Four hotspot districts account for 40 pc Covid cases in Odisha

Odisha ranks 8th in the country's Covid graph

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
BHUABANESWAR, 2 OCTOBER

Four districts in Odisha are fast emerging as epicentres of Coronavirus accounting for 40 per cent of total confirmed cases even as the State's COVID-19 tally today rose to 2,26,334 reporting yet another single day spike of 3,600 new cases from all the 30 districts.

With 16 more patients dying of coronavirus on Friday, the contagion's death toll has soared to 875, the health department officials said.

Khurda, Cuttack, Ganjam and Puri districts with a combined tally of 90,796 positive cases have reported 40.11 percent of Odisha's total COVID count.

While Ganjam district has recorded sharp fall in cases over the last fortnight, Khurda and Cuttack has witnessed rapid increase in cases.

The COVID graph has flattened over the last month in Ganjam district and it continues to report less than 100 new cases for the past 16 days.

Khurda and Cuttack dis-

tricts, the current hotspots of the disease, have reported a whopping 60,246 positive cases, accounting for nearly 27 per cent of total positive cases of the state.

Of the 3,600 new cases detected today, 2,109 were reported from various quarantine centres and the rest 1,491 were detected during contact tracing. The local contact cases detected during the past 24 hours amount to almost 42 per cent of the total confirmed cases.

Khurda district, of which state capital Bhubaneswar is

a part, reported the maximum number of new cases at 766, followed by Cuttack at 358 and Mayurbhanj at 156. Thirteen districts reported over 100 cases.

Of the 16 fatalities, six were registered in Khurda, three in Nayagarh, two each in Balasore and Cuttack, and one each in Bargarh, Jagatsinghpur, and Kalahandi.

Despite the spike in deaths, the case fatality of 0.38 per cent in Odisha is considerably on a lower side in comparison to national average of 1.56 per cent case fatality rate. Odisha's

recovery rate (83.98%) is marginally higher than the country's 83.70 percent recovery rate.

Odisha currently has 36,326 active cases.

The state's share is 3.54% in the country's confirmed virus caseload while the active cases are 3.75 per cent of India's total active cases.

Odisha is currently placed at the 8th spot in confirmed COVID cases with states like Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and West Bengal reporting more cases.

handi district via the Kesinga grid on a 132 KV line.

With the commissioning of the 220/322 KV grid substation at Banner, for the first time areas which are close to the hydel project will get power directly. This will ensure uninterrupted power supply to the district which will boost Mega Lift irrigation projects and industrialization in Kalahandi district.

It will benefit over 30,000 people and issues like low voltage, breakdowns or load shedding will be overcome.

CM Naveen Patnaik highlighted the initiatives taken by his government for development of Kalahandi district. Several mega irrigation projects to increase agriculture production, construction work

for the medical college project is on, he said.

He said that the Biju Express Highway work is in progress in the district.

Energy Minister Dibya Shankar Mishra said that energy is the road map of development and by this project long dream of Kalahandi to get direct benefit of power supply from Indravati has been fulfilled. He said that the work is in progress to extend the power line to Junagarh from Baner.

Indravati multi purpose project has 4 units of 150 MW each. The first two units were commissioned in 1999 while the third and fourth units were operational in 2000-01. It is the largest hydro power project in the state.

# Odisha CM inaugurates grid substations in Kalahandi

20 yrs after Indravati project, villagers will get direct power

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
BHUABANESWAR, 2 OCTOBER

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated a 220/132/33 KV grid substation and two 33 KV feeders at Banner in Kalahandi district through video-conferencing today.

Twenty years after operation of the Indravati hydro power project in the district, 121 villages of Jaipatna, Kokarsa and Kalampur blocks of Kalahandi district will get direct power supply from the project.

Hitherto power generated from the Indravati project was directly supplied to four circuits of Odisha in Bhubaneswar, Bhanjigarh, Narendrapur and Thirivali through power grid. From the Thirivali grid the power was supplied to Kala-

# Farmers in western Odisha protest new law

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
SAMBALPUR, 2 OCTOBER

The Paschim Odisha Krushak Sangathan Samanwaya Samiti (POKSS), a farmer outfit of western Odisha staged dharnas across the region protesting against the farm laws.

"Our main demand is 'legal right' for Minimum Support Price (MSP) for farmers. We fail to understand why the PM is speaking about it but not inserting it in the bill," said Saro, a prominent peasant leader.

The new farm acts will sabotage the age old institutions including Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC), FCI and State Mandi Board. Since MSP is not a legal right in the new act, there is every possibility that the farmers will not get it (MSP) in private mandis. This apart, in con-

foreexploiting the farmers has been opened by the government in a very cunning way, he added.

POKSS warned that they will organise meetings at village level across the region and sensitise people about the anti-farmer act. And taking the opinion of people, they will launch a mass movement against these acts in the days to come, Pradhan said.

He further said, there is nothing called essential commodities under the new acts. And hence, the business will resort to unlimited hoarding and create artificial scarcity and as a result the consumer will suffer, he added.

The farmers also staged dharnas in Balangir, Jharsuguda, Deogarh, Bargarh and Sonepur districts to show their protest against the new act.

## Nalco power plant trips again

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
ANGUL, 2 OCTOBER

For the second day running, the captive power plant of Nalco tripped today disrupting operations at its smelter plant.

According to an informed source 64 pots out of the 870 pots in the smelter plant remained dead due to disruption of power supply. The plant has a total 960 pots but runs about 870 pots.

Nalco smelter plant which produces aluminium depends on its captive power plant for uninterrupted power supply. Any disruption of power supply has a serious impact on the smelter and its pots.

On Wednesday night there was a disruption in the supply

of power, it was restored but after a few hours on Thursday the power supply snapped affecting the smelter and the colony area.

This is rare and unusual in Nalco observed, sources requesting anonymity. The supplies were normalized yesterday but the flow to the smelter continued to be erratic.

Today at about 4 pm the power plant failed again. It is being restored gradually. It had an adverse impact on the smelter plant.

A top Nalco official said "It happened due to some technical problem with the state grid. However we are in control of the situation and both the plants are normal and safe now".

## More recoveries than fresh cases in Bhubaneswar

BHUABANESWAR, 2 OCTOBER

another single day steep spike of coronavirus infections.

Apart from the steep spike of infection, the detection of almost 81 percent cases from local contacts was the disturbing feature of the day. Of the fresh infections, 254 were local contact infections while the remaining 59 cases were sourced from quarantine centres, said Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) officials.

Of the total tally of positive cases, 3,514 were active cases while 18,914 have recovered from the contagion till date. A total of 100 patients from the city have succumbed to the disease. **SNS**

## Drug peddlers arrested

BHUABANESWAR, 2 OCTOBER

seized huge quantity of adulterated tobacco products and its manufacturing materials and equipment. Three persons have been detained and two separate cases have been registered.

The raids were on a tip-off regarding illegal storage, manufacture and sale of adulterated tobacco products like zarda and gutka. A total of 1,400 quintal fake products were seized.

While the BJC had won the Balasore seat, the Tirtol seat was held by the BJD. The vacancies were created following the death of the sitting legislators.

As has been the 'practice', sons of the two deceased 'mlas' are in the race for the ticket. But veteran local level leaders are not very enthusiastic over

## BJD padayatra triggers political mudslinging

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
BHUBANESWAR, 2 OCTOBER

The BJD launched its annual padayatra or people's contact programme here today by distributing face masks with the party symbol imprinted on it in slums and building awareness.

Every year the ruling BJD carries out its people's contact programme from 2 October to 11 October (from Gandhi Jayanti to Jayaprakash Jayanti) highlighting achievements of the government and alleging central neglect.

But this year it was different in the sense that the party could not be seen violating COVID 19 norms. Instead, it chose to commence the padayatra stating it would build awareness among people on the guidelines relating to COVID.

Party workers including Ministers went around slums distributing face masks.

The Opposition Congress and BJD were quick to denounce

the move and alleged that the BJD was trying to cover-up the failures of the state government in dealing with the COVID situation.

The ruling party is distributing face masks seven months after the pandemic hit the state, ridiculing Congress MLA Taraprasad Bahinipati.

BJP general secretary Pridhivraj Harichandan said the Central Government has allocated funds and ventilators to the state for COVID-19. But patients are not getting adequate service and have to wait to get ventilators and ICU beds.

Ruling BJD leaders however rubbed off all the charges and said distributing face masks and creating awareness has nothing to do with politics. It is the duty of everyone and every organization to contribute to the ongoing battle against COVID 19 said the BJD.

Besides, Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan who is the face of the BJD in Odisha is expected to mobilize resources to retain the seat.

After the '120 Mission' flop

show of Amit Shah in Odisha in 2019, the party will strive hard to retain the seat and lend some amount of credence that it has established a foothold in Odisha.

Bereft of a leader of standing in Tirtol, the BJD has adopted its usual tactic of poaching from the Congress ranks and inducted Rajkumar Behera who is likely to be its candidate.

Yet the fight in Tirtol seems to be loaded in favour of the BJD as its veteran late Bishnu Das

Charan Das had a vice-like grip over the entire district. Jagatsinghpur district politics has all along been dominated by heavyweights Damodar Rout (former BJD leader), late Basanta Biswal of the Congress and late Bishnu Das (BJD).

Rout is the lone stalwart who is there, but he is sulking after being removed from the BJD and health wise, is not keeping well.

The BJD has deputed another powerful former mla Debasish Samantaray to mobilize public opinion while it has Raghunandan Das, the minister from the area.

The Biswal brothers (Chiranjeev and Ranjib) as well as

veteran Suresh Routray are said to be looking to somehow revive the prospects of the Congress.

The biggest worry for the Congress is desertions. Quite a few leaders of Tirtol have joined the BJD recently.

Congress circles say that Himansu Mallick will contest for the Tirtol seat.

District Congress unit President Natabar Barik admitted that Mallick's candidature is almost final. It will be announced soon, he added.

District BJD unit president Satyabrata Mohapatra said BJD party has not yet decided the name of candidate till date but party will have to pick the best

candidate from this seat among these aspirant candidates. He exuded confidence that the differences over the induction of Rajkishore Behera would be sorted out.

The BJD is sharply divided in Tirtol. Late Bishnu Das's son Bijay Sankar and local MP Rajshree Mallick's husband Asutosh Mallick as well as chairperson for Mahila Commission Minati Behera, former MP Kulamani Samal are all lobbying hard for the tick-

et. They are camping at Bhubaneswar to impress the 'boss'. The problem for the party is that none of them tolerates the other.

## LEISURE

### 10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



ACROSS  
1 Of the moon (5)  
4 Body of salt water (3)  
8 Vegetable (7)  
9 Russian country house (10)  
10 Caribbean citrus fruit (4)  
12 Brief (7)  
13 Cowardly (4-7)  
15 Wake later than normal (5)  
17 Ceremony (4)  
19 Japanese city (5)  
20 Revenue (7)  
22 Shallow (3)  
23 Subduced (5)

DOWN  
1 Fortune (4)  
2 Arrest (informal) (3)  
3 That which exists (7)  
4 Carrying chair (5)  
5 Building designer (9)  
6 Opposed to reform (11)  
7 Support (4)  
8 Tidy (5)  
14 Printout (or) (7)  
15 Benefit (4)  
16 Fine (5)  
18 Second-hand (4)  
21 Rodent (3)

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD  
ACROSS  
1 Tester, 15 Sanitise, 20 Load, 21 Cohere, 22 Dett.  
DOWN  
1 Diet, 2 Venison, 3 Habitat, 4 Audio, 5 Scuttled, 6 Free, 10 Colorado, 11 Cognac,  
12 Cuisine, 14 Sky-blue, 16 Shine, 17 Apex, 18 Fact.

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

### BEETLE BAILEY/Mort Walker

ARE YOU EVER GOING TO RETIRE, SARGE?  
I SUPPOSE, IF I EVER HAD A GOOD REASON  
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### RED EYE/Bill Yates & Mel Casson

DO YOU REALIZE WHAT THE CONSEQUENCES ARE IF SOMEONE COMES ALONG AND STEPS IN THAT GOPHER HOLE OF YOURS?  
© 2000 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. All rights reserved.



### DADDY DAZE/John Kovaleski

HEY!  
WE'VE BEEN OVER THIS BEFORE...  
© 2000 by John Kovaleski



### NEED TO KNOW

#### HOSPITALS

2258626, 22585007

#### RAILWAY INQUIRY

General Inquiry 139

Toll Free Nos. 1800112511



*She had a huge presence, and she raised us, me and my sister. She raised us with certain principles and one was that it is your duty. My mother was a fighter for women her entire life.*

KAMALA HARRIS, DEMOCRATIC PARTY'S VICE-PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

ATTRIBUTING HER ENTIRE LIFE'S SUCCESS TO HER MOTHER SHYAMALA GOPALAN

## WEATHER

CITY	MAX	MIN
SINGAPORE	29°C	25°C
HONG KONG	26°C	20°C
TOKYO	18°C	12°C
LONDON	13°C	9°C
DUBAI	30°C	25°C
SAN FRANCISCO	13°C	04°C
NEW YORK	10°C	07°C
MOSCOW	15°C	09°C

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

## THUMBNAILS



A woman wearing a face mask and gloves walks past a museum building in Moscow on Friday. ■ AFP

**Amazon's 20,000 workers tested positive:** Amazon said on Thursday that nearly 20,000 of its front-line US workers have tested positive or been presumed positive for Covid. But the online retail behemoth, revealing the data for the first time, said that the infection rate of its employees was well below that seen in the general US population. ■ AP

**EU leaders overcome Cyprus veto, agree to Belarus sanctions**

BRUSSELS, 2 OCTOBER

European Union leaders agreed early Friday to impose sanctions on senior officials in Belarus accused of falsifying presidential election results and leading a crackdown on peaceful protesters, after unblocking a veto against the move by one of the EU's smallest member countries.

In an embarrassing stand-off, Cyprus had insisted that its EU partners take action against Turkey for its energy exploration work in disputed waters of the Mediterranean island nation's coast before it would agree to the Belarus sanctions.

But after several hours of talks into the night, the leaders agreed on a strong statement of support for Cyprus, as well as for Greece, and a stern warning to Turkey that it could face punitive measures if it continues the undersea drilling work.

"We have decided today to implement the sanctions," European Council President Charles Michel told reporters after chairing the summit in Brussels.

It's very important to do what we decided a few weeks ago, and to send a signal that we are credible."

Michel said that a special written procedure would be launched on Friday to impose sanctions on about 40 Belarus officials.

The political row has tarnished the EU's image. ■ AP

# Trump's diagnosis rocks final stage of presidential campaign

Democratic Party challenger Joe Biden awaiting his test results; uncertainty over how campaigns will go forward

## TIMELINE OF TRUMP'S ACTIVITIES IN WEEK CORONAVIRUS HIT HOME



**MONDAY:** Trump surveys a truck produced by Lordstown Motors on the White House South Lawn at an event attended by two members of Congress and three representatives from the Lordstown, Ohio, manufacturer. Trump holds a Rose Garden event to announce an administration effort to distribute millions of coronavirus test kits to states. The event is attended by administration officials including Vice President Mike Pence, members of Congress and state officials.

**TUESDAY:** Trump travels to Cleveland for a 90-minute presidential debate against Democratic rival Joe Biden. The two men are both tested ahead of the debate and stand behind lecterns positioned a good distance from one another. They do not wear masks during the faceoff. White House aide Hope Hicks is part of a large entourage that travels to Ohio with Trump aboard Air Force One for the debate, including members of the Trump family. Trump's adult children and senior staff do not wear masks during the debate, violating his host rules.

**WEDNESDAY:** Trump travels to Minnesota for a fundraiser at a private home in suburban Minneapolis and an outdoor rally in Duluth.

Hicks is among the White House aides who accompany Trump on the trip. She feels unwell on the return trip and isolates herself aboard Air Force One.

**THURSDAY:** Hicks tests positive for the coronavirus.

Trump flies to his Bedminster resort in New Jersey for a private fundraiser. Several aides who were in proximity to Hicks scrap plans to accompany Trump.

Trump announces in an evening interview on Fox News that he and the first lady are being tested for the coronavirus. He later tweets that they will begin our quarantine process!

**FRIDAY:** Trump tweets shortly before 1 a.m. that he and the first lady have tested positive for the virus and will begin our quarantine and recovery process immediately.

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**  
WASHINGTON, 2 OCTOBER

**A**n election year already defined by a cascade of national crises descended further into chaos Friday with President Donald Trump declaring that he's tested positive for the coronavirus after consis-

tently playing down the threat.

Democratic challenger Joe Biden, who spent 90 minutes on stage with Trump in their Tuesday debate, is awaiting his own test results.

No one knows exactly what comes next.

At the least, the development focuses the campaign right where Biden has put his emphasis

## Trump joins growing list of coronavirus-infected world leaders

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**  
JOHANNESBURG, 2 OCTOBER

Here's a look at other leaders who have been infected.

### BORIS JOHNSON

The British prime minister was the first major world leader confirmed to have Covid. He was moved to intensive care in April after his virus symptoms dramatically worsened a day after he was hospitalised for what were called routine tests.

He was given oxygen but did not need a ventilator, officials said. He later expressed his gratitude to National Health Service staff for saving his life.

### JAIR BOLSONARO

The Brazilian president announced his illness in July and used it to publicly extol hydroxychloroquine, the unproven malaria drug that

sis for months: on Trump's response to a pandemic that has killed more than 200,000 people in the US. And for the short term, it's grounded Trump in a quarantine, denying him the large public rallies that fuel his campaign. It's unclear if Biden may alter his travel plans as well.

Karen Finney, a Democratic consultant and adviser to Hillary Clinton's 2016 campaign, said the immediate focus should be on the Trumps' health. But she added the development proves that not even Trump, no matter his talents for dictating headlines and framing events, can control a

pandemic.

Trump tweeted Friday that he'd begin quarantining and recovery. White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows said Friday that the president is resting, with mild symptoms.

The president has cancelled at least part of his weekend itinerary in Wisconsin, which is one of the three Great Lakes states Trump won by less than 1 percentage point in 2016 on his way to the presidency.

Americans have already begun voting in several states, and tens of millions will receive absentee mail-in ballots or be eligible for in-person early voting in the coming weeks.

I have body aches, it hurt more yesterday than today, like a bad cold, the president said during a televised address. I don't have a fever, I have a bit of a cough. He said he'd be working from home.

**JEANINE ANEZ** The virus drove the Bolivian interim president into isolation in July, but she said she was feeling well.

**LUIS ABINADER** The newly elected president of the Dominican Republic contracted and recovered from Covid during his campaign.

**IRANIAN LEADERS**

Iran, the epicentre of the Mideast's initial coronavirus outbreak, has seen several top officials test positive. Among them are senior Vice President Eshaq Jahangiri and Vice President Massoumeh Ebtekar. Cabinet members have tested positive too.

**Pompeo says he has tested negative:** US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo says he and his wife have tested negative for the coronavirus after they were examined on their airplane 20 minutes prior to landing in Dubrovnik, Croatia, on Friday. He said it was the fourth time in two weeks he has been tested. ■ AP

**Pompeo says he has tested negative:** US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo says he and his wife have tested negative for the coronavirus after they were examined on their airplane 20 minutes prior to landing in Dubrovnik, Croatia, on Friday. He said it was the fourth time in two weeks he has been tested. ■ AP

A top Trump adviser did not immediately respond to a request for comment on how the president might adjust his strategy or tactics going forward.

But the president now faces pressure to adjust after declaring many times that the virus would "disappear." The president has repeatedly ridiculed Biden for his approach.

Throughout the spring and summer, when Biden wasn't traveling regularly, the president said his challenger was "hiding in his basement." At the rivals' first debate Tuesday, Trump renewed his mockery over Biden wearing a mask.

"I put a mask on when I think I need it," Trump said. "I don't wear masks like him. Everytime you see him he's got a mask. He could be speaking 200 feet away and he shows up with the biggest mask I've ever seen."

Biden laughed in response. "Makes a big difference" in preventing Covid-19 spread, Biden said, adding that "no serious person" argues otherwise.

Trump and Biden did not shake hands during the debate but stood without masks about 3 metres apart for the 90-minute event. Two additional debates are scheduled for Oct. 15 and Oct. 22. The Commission on Presidential Debates has not yet commented on any changes in the debate schedule or health protocols.

UK, EU leaders to discuss Brexit, free trade talks

LONDON, 2 OCTOBER

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen on Saturday will take stock of negotiations on a post-Brexit free trade deal and to discuss next steps, officials said.

The announcement by both sides came as they were winding up another weeklong session of detailed negotiations on a rudimentary free trade agreement that should come in force once a Brexit transition period ends Dec. 31. Little progress has been made on such a deal since the U.K. left the bloc at the end of January.

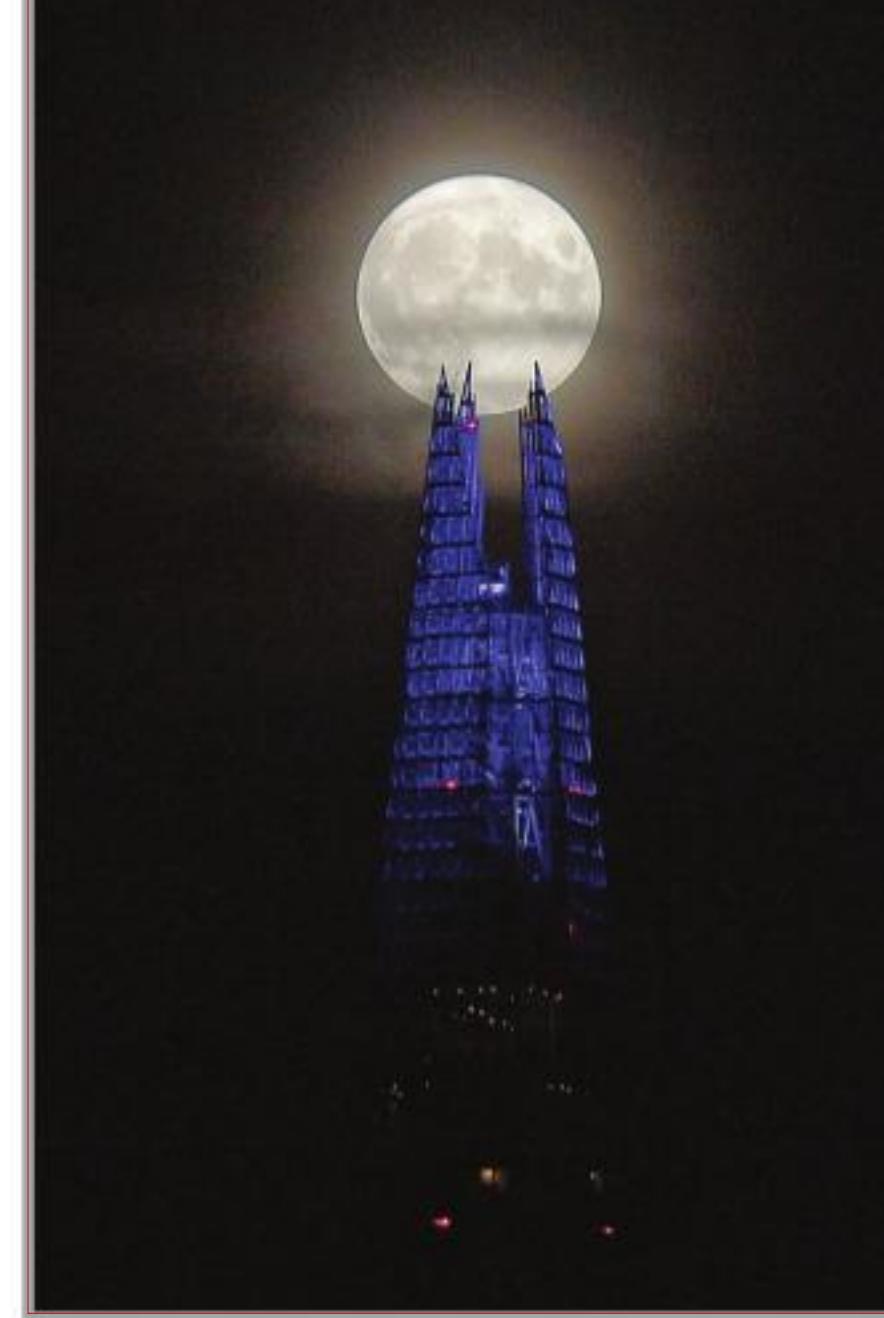
Both sides have acknowledged that time is running out if they are to achieve an agreement before the current Brexit transition period comes to an end at the year's end.

Johnson has said he is prepared to walk away from the negotiations if there is no agreement by the time of the next EU summit on Oct. 15. The EU sees a deadline at the end of the month, allowing for two months to get any deal through legislative approval. Complicating the trade talks further are Britain's plans to breach an international agreement it signed with the EU to regulate trade on the island of Ireland, where both sides have their only land border separating the U.K.'s Northern Ireland from EU member Ireland.

UK Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick said there were still some very significant issues which needed to be resolved if they were to get an agreement.

There isn't very much time now so we are urging the EU to show flexibility and pragmatism in these final stages of the talks, he told the BBC.

## RISING STAR



A full moon rises beyond The Shard in London on Friday. ■ AP

## US judge blocks H-1B visa ban, major relief to IT professionals

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**  
WASHINGTON, 2 OCTOBER

In a major relief to thousands of Indian IT professionals, a federal judge in the US on Thursday blocked the enforcement of a temporary visa ban by the Trump administration on a large number of work permits, including the most sought after H-1B visas, ruling that the president exceeded his constitutional authority.

The order issued by US District Judge Jeffrey White of Northern District of California applies to members of organisations that filed a lawsuit against the Department of Commerce and Department of Homeland Security -- the US

Chamber of Commerce, National Association of Manufacturers, National Retail Federation, TechNet, a technology industry group, and IntraX Inc., which sponsors cultural exchanges.

The ruling places an immediate hold on a series of damaging visa restrictions that prevent manufacturers from filling crucial, hard-to-fill jobs to support economic recovery, growth

Indian technology companies, H-2B visas for nonagricultural seasonal workers, J visas for cultural exchanges and L visas for managers and other key employees of multinational corporations till the end of the year. The president had argued that the US needs to save and protect jobs for its domestic

work force at a time when millions of them lost their jobs due to the coronavirus pandemic.

A number of IT companies and other US companies and those representing them had voiced their opposition to it.

Manufacturers went to court to challenge the administration's ban on certain visas because the restrictions both undermined the industry at a critical time and conflicted with the law, said NAM senior vice president and general counsel Linda Kelly.

We are competing with the rest of the world to find and develop top talent to support innovation in our industry. Today's decision is a tempo-

rary win for manufacturers committed to building that innovation in the United States, he said.

A long-term win for manufacturers requires policymakers to support meaningful reforms to our immigration laws that recognize the critical link between smart immigration policy and America's competitive advantage, Kelly said. In his order, the federal judge said that the president exceeded his authority.

Congress's delegation of authority in the immigration context does not afford the president unbridled authority to set domestic policy regarding employment of nonimmigrant foreigners.

Australia, New Zealand to partially open borders

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**  
CANBERRA, 2 OCTOBER

Australia and New Zealand on Friday announced a partial opening of their borders to travel between the neighboring countries.

Passengers will be able to fly to the Australian cities of Sydney and Darwin without going into quarantine from Oct. 16 if they have spent at least two weeks in parts of New Zealand that are not considered to be a COVID-19 hot spot,

Transport Minister Michael McCormack said. But New Zealand will continue to insist on travelers from Australia going into hotel quarantine for two weeks on arrival. We want to open up Australia to the world, McCormack said.

This is the first part of it. The two countries separated by the Tasman Sea have long said the return of international travel would begin with a so-called Trans-Tasman Bubble.

Australian authorities have concluded that New Zealand posed a low risk of COVID-19 transmission to Australia, McCormack said.

But travelers who have visited a New Zealand hot spot defined as a region that has reported three new infections a day over three days would not be exempt from quarantine.

## Covid vaccine rollout unlikely before fall 2021, say experts

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**

NEW DELHI, 2 OCTOBER

An effective vaccine is not likely to be available for the general public before the fall of 2021, according to experts working in the field of vaccine development. Researchers at McGill University in Canada carried out a survey of 28 experts working in vaccinology in late June 2020.

The majority of those surveyed were mostly Canadian or American academics with an average of 25 years of experience working in the field.

"Experts in our survey offered forecasts on vaccine development that were generally less optimistic than the timeline of early 2021 offered by US public officials," Jonathan Kimmelman, a professor at McGill University, said in a statement.

"In general they seem to believe that a publicly avail-

able vaccine next summer is the best-case scenario with the possibility that it may take until 2022," said Kimmelman, the senior author on the paper published in the Journal of General Internal Medicine.

Many experts also believe that there may be some false starts before an effective vaccine is available.

The first vaccine widely deployed in the US and/or Canada will receive a boxed warning from the FDA to highlight serious or life-threatening adverse reactions, the researchers said.

Also, the first large field trial in the US and/or Canada will report a null or negative result in terms of efficacy, they said.

"Our study finds that experts are largely in agreement about the timeline for a SARS-CoV-2 vaccine," said Stephen Broomell, an associate professor at Carnegie Mellon University in the US.

"While this does not track with many overly optimistic government projections, it reflects a belief that researchers are indeed on a faster pace to development compared to previous vaccines," Broomell said in a statement.

Their algorithm worked to radicalise people and really gave this conspiracy theory a megaphone with which to expand, Sophie Bjork-James, an anthropologist at Vanderbilt University who studies QAnon, said of social platforms. They are responsible for shutting down that megaphone. And time and time again they are proving unwilling.



*Among the goals of the proposed law is strengthening public services, better controlling local associations and bringing clarity to the financing of religious organisations*

FRENCH PRESIDENT EMANUEL MACRON

LAYING OUT A PLAN TARGETING ISLAMIST 'SEPARATISM'

The Statesman

11

NEW DELHI, SATURDAY 03 OCTOBER 2020

## THUMBNAILS



A pole with signs indicating directions to different cities is pictured in the south of the Lebanese city of Tyre, on the border with Israel, on Friday.

AFP

**Pak restaurants:** Pakistan authorities have closed more than 100 restaurants and six wedding halls in the financial capital of Karachi over violations of social distancing rules amid a sudden increase in deaths. The government has also imposed a lockdown in some of the city's high-risk areas to contain the spread of the virus.

AP

**China park fire:** A fire at a tourist site in China killed 13 people on the first day of an eight-day national holiday, authorities said. The fire engulfed an exhibition hall of ice lanterns and snow sculptures Thursday at the Taitaishan theme park in Taiyuan city, the Ministry of Emergency Management said.

AP

**German widow:** The widow of a German-born rapper who joined the IS group in Syria and was killed in an airstrike was herself convicted Friday of membership in a terrorist organisation. The Hamburg state court sentenced Omaima A., 36, to three years in prison, the dpa news agency reported.

AP

**Taliban: Doha talks need patience, not mediators**

KABUL, 2 OCTOBER

The Taliban has said that it does not feel the need for a mediator for the Afghan peace negotiations, adding that resolving a 40-year conflict requires patience instead, the media reported. The statement on Thursday by Taliban spokesman Mohammad Naeem came as US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad arrived in Doha, where the talks are taking place, to "meet with partners on Afghan-owned, Afghan-led peace negotiations", TOLO News reported.

In a statement, Naeem said that the Afghan conflict requires important, ongoing discussions, and stated that both sides of the negotiations should demonstrate patience for a positive outcome. "If we hurry and expect to resolve all the issues in 20 days or a month, I think this will not bring us to our objectives."

"We will not allow anyone to interfere in our internal affairs," the spokesman added. Contact groups comprising Taliban and Afghan government delegates have failed to fully agree on the procedural rules.

This delay has prolonged the time before an official face-to-face talk between both negotiation teams is inadequate.

# Armenia ready to talk truce after clashes

Dozens have died in fighting between Armenian and Azerbaijani forces in Nagorno-Karabakh

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
YEREVAN, 2 OCTOBER

Officials in Armenia said Friday the country is ready to discuss a cease-fire in the separatist region of Nagorno-Karabakh, where heavy fighting between Armenian and Azerbaijani forces has continued for six straight days, killing dozens and leaving scores wounded.

This week's fighting is the biggest escalation in years in the decades-long dispute over the region, which lies within Azerbaijan but is controlled by local ethnic Armenian forces backed by Armenia. It prompted calls for a cease-fire from all around the globe.

On Thursday, leaders of Russia, France and the United States co-chairs of the so-called Minsk Group, which was set up by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in 1992 to resolve the conflict issued a joint statement calling for immediate cessation of hostilities and resuming substantive negotiations... under the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs.

Armenia's Foreign Ministry said in a statement Friday that the country stands



ready to engage with the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group to reestablish a cease-fire regime based on the 1994-1995 agreements.

Armenia remains committed to the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the statement read. The deadly clashes in the region resumed Friday, with Armenian military officials reporting Azerbaijan carrying out strikes on Nagorno-Karabakh's capital Stepanakert, and Azerbaijan's Defense Ministry accusing Armenian forces of shelling the Agdam region.

The region's officials said more than 150 servicemen on

their side have been killed so far. Azerbaijani authorities haven't provided details on its military casualties, but said 19 civilians have been killed and 55 more have been wounded. Several journalists were wounded in shelling of the Martuni town on Thursday. Two of them were French citizens working with Le Monde newspaper.

Reporter Allan Kaval and photographer Rafael Yaghobzadeh were taken to the Stepanakert hospital and operated on there, and were being evacuated Friday morning to Yerevan. The two will be then taken to Paris, Le Monde reported.

In an article published Friday, Le Monde said they had traveled to Martuni on Thursday morning to state for themselves the extent of the damage from this week's fighting. They were with several French, Armenian and other journalists when the town was attacked.

The report quotes regional human rights ombudsman Artak Beglaryan as saying four civilians were killed and 11 other people wounded in the shelling. Armenia and Azerbaijan have been locked for decades in a conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, where a separate war was fought in the early 1990s, ending in 1994 three years after the breakup of the Soviet Union.

The 4,400-square-kilometer enclave in the Caucasus Mountains, roughly the size of the U.S. state of Delaware, lies 50 km from the Armenian border.

Azerbaijan's president said Armenia's withdrawal from Nagorno-Karabakh was the sole condition to end the fighting. Armenian officials claim Turkey is involved in the conflict, allegedly sending fighters from Syria to the region and deploying Turkish F-16 fighter jets to assist Azerbaijani forces.

## SEEKING MORE FREEDOM



Student leaders show the three-fingered sign from a truck with a banner featuring Thailand's Education Minister Nataphol Teep-suwann being chased by protesting schoolchildren during a protest in front of Samsen school demanding for less strict school rules, more tolerance and respect in Bangkok on Friday.

AFP

# Activists seek justice on Jamal Khashoggi's death anniversary

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
ISTANBUL, 2 OCTOBER

Journalists and human rights activists called for justice for Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi on Friday, the second anniversary of The Washington Post columnist's brutal killing inside his country's consulate in Istanbul.

Dozens of activists gathered at a memorial honor near the Saudi Consulate building in the Turkish city. The activists denounced the journalist's slaying, which cast a shadow over the reputation of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, and criminal proceedings in Saudi Arabia as inadequate.

Justice has still not mate-

rialized, journalist Turan Kislik, who was a friend of Khashoggi's, said. A theatrical court has been in session for two years. However, no details on this subject has been given to the world. Last month, a court in Saudi Arabia issued final verdicts convicting eight unnamed Saudi nationals in Khashoggi's 2018 killing.

The verdicts by the Riyadh Criminal Court came after Khashoggi's son, who still resides in the kingdom, announced pardons that spared five of the convicted individuals from execution.

Last month, it also indicted six other Saudi nationals, including two former consulate employees.

A team of 15 Saudi agents had flown to Turkey to meet Khashoggi inside the consulate for his appointment on 2 October, 2018 to pickup documents that would allow him to marry his Turkish fiancee, who waited outside.

The maritime agreement, which would allow them to lay claim to large areas of the Mediterranean Sea and potential energy deposits, was denounced by Greece, Cyprus and other nations.

UN registers maritime deal reached with Tripoli: Turkey

ANKARA, 2 OCTOBER

What happened to Jamal Khashoggi's body? If a court has been in session for two years, we want an explanation, Kislik said.

Turkey, which had insisted that the suspects be extradited and put on trial in the country, is now trying two of the Saudi crown prince's former aides other Saudi nationals in absentia.

Last year, Turkey and the Government of National Accord, or GNA, which is based in Tripoli, reached a memorandum of understanding demarcating their maritime boundaries.

The maritime agreement, which would allow them to lay claim to large areas of the Mediterranean Sea and potential energy deposits, was denounced by Greece, Cyprus and other nations.

AP

# Ethiopian migrants held in Saudi call it 'hellish'; govt reluctant to bring them home

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
ADDIS ABABA, 2 OCTOBER



From a filthy cell in Saudi Arabia, the Ethiopian migrant spoke on a smuggled phone, fearing to give his name. Some 300 countrymen are detained with him, he said. And no one knows when Ethiopia's government might bring them home.

We are detained in a very inhumane condition, sleeping on waste overflowing from a nearby toilet. We really want to go back home but no one is assisting us, including Ethiopian officials, he told The Associated Press from a detention center outside the Saudi capital, Riyadh.

We are beaten every day,

and our only crime was seeking a better life in a foreign land. New details are emerging of the squalid detention conditions facing thousands of

migrants from Ethiopia men, women and children some who were chased across the border from Yemen into Saudi Arabia this year amid gunfire

because of virus fears.

A new report released Friday by Amnesty International describes widespread abuses in Saudi detention facilities, including beatings and electrocutions. Detainees described being chained together in pairs and being forced to use cell floors as toilets. Surrounded by death and disease, the situation is so dire that at least two people have attempted to take their own lives, Amnesty researcher Marie Forestier says in the report. Pregnant women, babies and small children are held in these same appalling conditions, and three detainees said they knew of children who had died.

The abuses highlight one

of the most popular, and most dangerous, migrant routes in the world.

The Saudi government did not immediately comment. Thousands of Ethiopians cross into Saudi Arabia every year after a journey across the Red Sea or Gulf of Aden from Somalia or Djibouti and through conflict-torn Yemen, looking for better lives. Amnesty International said thousands of Ethiopian migrants had been working in northern Yemen, earning money to pay for their passage to Saudi Arabia. When the pandemic escalated, Houthi authorities began ordering migrant workers to go to the border, where they reportedly became caught in crossfire between Saudi and Houthi

forces, the new report says.

The International Organization for Migration says some 2,000 Ethiopians are stranded on the Yemeni side of the border without food, water or health care.

Now migrants say they are held in life-threatening conditions.

I wouldn't have left my country had I known this hellish condition would await me, another detained migrant told the AP. I had some suicidal thoughts in the past. It is just unbearable, especially during those very hot days, since we don't have an air conditioner. And they beat us with electric cords whenever we complain. And they took all our money and cell phones.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
ISLAMABAD, 2 OCTOBER

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan has said that he would have sacked the army chief had the Kargil war with India been started without informing him.

Nawaz Sharif, who was the prime minister during the Kargil war, has long maintained that he was not aware of what was happening when the conflict broke out in 1999. He says the army chief Gen Pervez Musharraf had removed him from power in 1999, then military ruler Pervez Musharraf in 1999.

A court in 2017 ousted him from power over corruption allegations. Khan, a former cricketer, came to power in 2018. Sharif spoke from London, where he has been since last November when he was released on bail to seek medical treatment abroad.

"I would have sacked the army chief if Kargil operation was conducted without informing me," Khan said in an interview to private news channel Samaa TV on Thursday.

Khan also said that he would sack the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) chief if the latter asked him to resign.

The comment was made in the context of three-time prime minister Sharif's claim that the ISI chief asked him to step

down

in 2014 when Khan had unleashed a big protest sit-in the national capital.

Hesaid the army was

uniting and slamming Sharif for targeting the military establishment.

"Look at Libya, Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen; the entire Muslim world is ablaze [so]

why are we safe? If it weren't for our army, our country would've been in three pieces," Khan said. Sharif recently made two speeches from London, where he has been staying since November 2019 on medical grounds, directly attacking the army for interference in politics and claimed that Khan came to power through its support.

He also claimed that the army was standing by the government in all matters including relations with India, opening of the Kartarpur Corridor and the coronavirus pandemic. He has lashed out at the fiery speeches made by Sharif, stating that he was playing a dangerous game by targeting Islamabad's powerful military establishment at the behest of India.

The powerful Army, which has ruled Pakistan for more than half of its 70 plus years of existence, has hitherto wielded considerable power in the matters of security and foreign policy.

Khan also said that it was not the army's job to run the government and failure of a democratically elected government should not be used to impose a martial law.

"If a judge gives a wrong decision it means the judiciary has to evolve. The army has evolved as well. Contemporary civil-military relations are the best in history because they are all working in their spheres," he said.

He also claimed that the army was standing by the government in all matters including relations with India, opening of the Kartarpur Corridor and the coronavirus pandemic. He has lashed out at the fiery speeches made by Sharif, stating that he was playing a dangerous game by targeting Islamabad's powerful military establishment at the behest of India.

He said he was detained nine months ago because his Saudi residence card had expired. The only thing I want now is to return to Ethiopia, but that's just a dream for now, he said. The detainees spoke on condition of anonymity out of fear for their safety.

The pandemic has complicated their repatriation, with Ethiopian authorities saying they don't have the quarantine capacity to handle the return of so many people at once. Ethiopia's state minister at the foreign ministry, Tsion Teklu, told the AP that up to 16,000 Ethiopians are estimated to be held in Saudi prisons. She said some 4,000 have been repatriated since April.

Pak's media watchdog bans speeches of 'proclaimed offenders'

ISLAMABAD, 2 OCTOBER

Pakistan's electronic media watchdog has banned the broadcast and rebroadcast of any speech, interview or public address of absconders or proclaimed offenders, days after ailing former prime minister Nawaz Sharif made blistering speeches from exile in London targeting the powerful Pakistani Army.

The move by Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) came as it took cognizance of 70-year-old Sharif's repeated attack on the Pakistan Army, with the latest being on Thursday during which he in a televised speech said that the military had rigged the 2018 vote that brought the country's current prime minister to power.

PEMRA has received a complaint against several news channels airing speech of that of an absconder and a proclaimed offender. It has banned broadcast and rebroadcast of any speech, interview or public address of such absconders or proclaimed offender, the media watchdog said in a statement on Thursday with a clear reference to Sharif.

The media body also warned that anyone who fails to comply with the order would face action.

"If licensee fails to comply with the aforementioned directives, the authority shall take action under Section 29 and 30 of PEMRA Ordinance which may result in imposition of fine and suspension/revocation of licence," it warned. Sharif served as Pakistan's prime minister three times, first removed by a president in 1993, then by military ruler Pervez Musharraf in 1999.

A court in 2017 ousted him from power over corruption allegations. Khan, a former cricketer, came to power in 2018. Sharif spoke from London, where he has been since last November 2019 on medical grounds, directly attacking the army for interference in politics and claimed that Khan came to power through its support.

Lebanon, Israel agree to US-mediated talks over sea border

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
BEIRUT, 2 OCTOBER

Lebanon and Israel have reached an agreement on a framework of indirect, US-mediated talks over a long-standing disputed maritime border between the two countries, the parties announced Thursday.

The talks will be held at the headquarters of the UN peacekeeping force in the southern Lebanese border town of Naqoura under the banner of the United Nations.

The talks are expected to begin on 14 October, according to US Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs David Schenker, the top US diplomat for the Middle East. The agreement will allow both countries to begin discussions, which have the potential to yield greater stability, security, and prosperity for Lebanese and Israeli citizens alike.

and US officials. Schenker said he will lead the US mediation team for at least the first round. He would not specify exactly who would be representing the Israelis or the Lebanese adding that the talks are strictly about maritime issues and delineating a border.

