

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA
KARIMNAGAR | THURSDAY | 1 OCTOBER 2020

WEATHER

Max: 30.8°C
Min: 22.2°C
RH: 73%
Rain: 1.7 mm

Forecast: Cloudy sky.
Thundershowers likely.
Max/Min temp. 31/22°C

COVID-19 C O U N T

CASES	DEATHS
(+86,419)	(+1,166)
63,05,643	98,616

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+2,103)	(+11)
TS: 1,91,386	1,127
(+6,133)	(+48)
AP: 6,93,484	5,828

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

3,40,56,467

DEATHS

10,15,999

COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES

213

worldometers.info/
coronavirus

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Dakshinayana
Tithi: Adhika Ashwayuja Shuddha Pournami till 2.35 am (Friday)
Star: Uttarabhadra till 5.56 am (Friday)
Varjyam: 1.55 pm to 3.42 pm
Durmuhurtam: 10.07 am to 10.54 am; 2.51 pm to 3.39 pm
Rahukalam: 1.30 pm to 3 pm
HJRI CALENDAR
Safar ul Muzaffar 13, 1442 AH
PRAYERS
Fajar: 5.06 am
Zohar: 12.16 pm
Asar: 4.25 pm
Maghrib: 6.12 pm
Isha: 7.19 pm
SUNSET TODAY 6.04 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.06 AM
MOONSET TODAY 5.31 AM
MOONRISE TOMORROW 6.02 PM

COUNTER POINT



Psst! Don't overreact... our sons are also facing rape charges!

IN BRIEF

Corporate look for state hosps: Jagan

Vijayawada: Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy will formally launch the works for construction of a medical college in Paderu and multi-specialty hospitals in ITDA regions on October 2. Mr Jagan Mohan Reddy has directed the officials to develop government hospitals on par with corporate hospitals and offer best services. He conducted a review meeting on Nadu-Nedu in government hospitals at the CM Camp office. He said the government hospitals in AP will now be developed in all aspects under Nadu-Nedu offering full fledged services with a corporate look.

I-T returns date extended to Nov

New Delhi: The Income-Tax department on Wednesday extended the deadline for filing income tax returns for 2018-19 by two months till November 30. The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) in an order said in view of the genuine difficulties being faced by the taxpayers due to the outbreak of pandemic, the date for furnishing the belated and revised return for Assessment Year 2019-20 is being further extended to November 30, 2020, from September 30, 2020. This is the fourth extension.



NATION | 5

Police summon Anurag Kashyap in rape case

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Pompeo urges Vatican to condemn China

SPORTS | 8

Injured Serena pulls out of French Open



Advani, Joshi, Uma acquitted

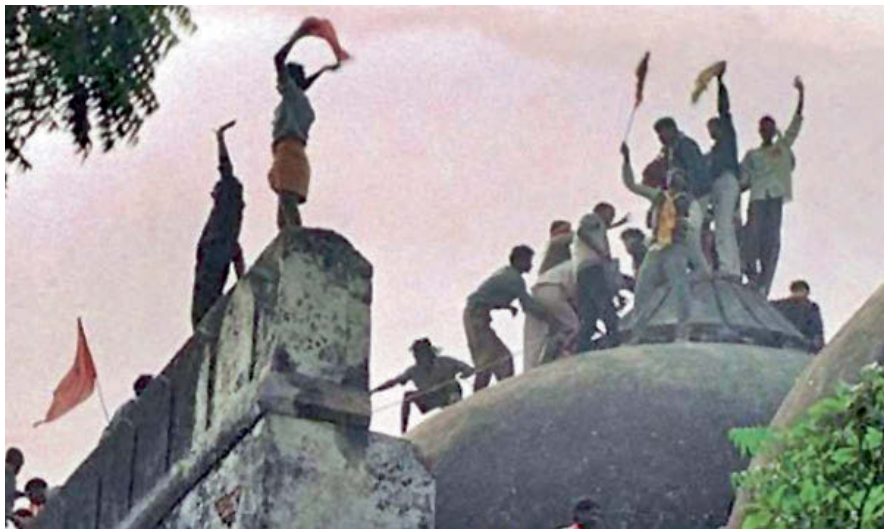
Special CBI court Judge says Babri mosque demolition was not pre-meditated; acquits all 32 accused

SANJAY KAW | DC
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 30

Nearly 28 years after the Babri Masjid was razed by a mob in Ayodhya, a special CBI court on Wednesday acquitted all 32 accused, including BJP veteran leaders L.K. Advani, Murli Manohar Joshi and Uma Bharati, citing lack of evidence. Special judge Surendra Kumar Yadav said the destruction of the 16th century structure, which had triggered some of the deadliest riots since Partition, leaving about 2,000 dead, was not pre-planned and the accused had tried to stop "anti-social" elements.

The judgment comes 11 years after the government-appointed Justice Liberhan Commission had said in its 2009 report that the demolition of the Babri masjid on December 6, 1992, was "neither spontaneous nor unplanned". Mr Advani (92), Mr Joshi (86), Ms Bharati (61), Mr Singh (88), Nriyaya Gopal Das and Satish Pradhan were six of the 32 accused who were not present in the courtroom.

Among those present were Sadhvi Rithambhara, Lallu Singh, Pawan Pandey, Vinay Katiyar and Champat Rai, the gen-



A file photo of a group of kar sevaks climbing atop one of the domes of Babri Masjid in Ayodhya ahead of the structure was demolished on December 6, 1992.

INSIDE

- JILANI: VERDICT WILL BE CHALLENGED
- SHIV SENA: CASE HAD LOST RELEVANCE

eral secretary of the trust in charge of constructing the Ram temple on the land where the masjid once stood. They faced charges of criminal conspiracy, rioting, promoting enmity between different groups, and unlawful assembly. The CBI had produced

351 witnesses and 600 documents as evidence during the course of the trial and the court had framed charges against 48 accused. Sixteen of the accused died during the course of the trial which began over a decade ago. On whether the CBI will appeal against the verdict

in the high court, prosecution counsel Lalit Singh told mediapersons that a copy of the judgment would be sent to CBI headquarters in Delhi and it would take a decision after perusal of the verdict.

In his 2,300-page verdict, special judge S.K. Yadav said the Central investigating agency could not produce any conclusive evidence against any accused in the case.

■ Page 4: Judge rejects photos as evidence

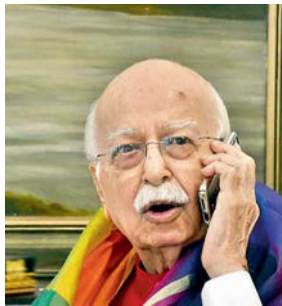
Order vindicates my belief: Advani

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 30

BJP veterans L.K. Advani and Murli Manohar Joshi, two of the 32 accused in the Babri masjid demolition case, welcomed the special court's verdict, claiming that it has been proved that no conspiracy was hatched to demolish the structure on December 6, 1992.

"I wholeheartedly welcome the significant judgement delivered today by the Special Court in the Babri Masjid demolition case. The judgement vindicates my personal and the Bharatiya Janata Party's belief and commitment towards the Ram Janmabhoomi Movement... Along with millions of my countrymen, I now look forward to the completion of the beautiful Ram Mandir at Ayodhya. May Lord Ram keep us blessed always," said he said.

He also greeted media persons who were waiting outside his residence and chanted 'Jai Shri Ram'



L.K. Advani

while his staff offered sweets to the media persons.

UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, whose guru and predecessor late Mahant Avaidyanath was one of the accused in the case, tweeted "Satyamev Jayate (truth alone triumphs)" and that the court's verdict has proved that the then Congress government played politics against saints, BJP and VHP leaders and social workers to frame cases against them.

■ Page 4: Verdict proved no conspiracy, says Joshi

JUSTICE HAS NOT BEEN DONE, SAYS OWAISI

ATHER MOIN I DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 30

AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi on Wednesday expressed unhappiness over the CBI court verdict in the Babri Masjid demolition conspiracy case, which acquitted all 32 accused and described it as a black day in the history of the Indian judiciary.

Speaking to the media persons in Hyderabad, Owaisi said "This judgement satisfies the collective consciousness of Hindutva and its followers and their ideology. I am feeling the same humiliation I felt on December 6, 1992. Justice has not been done in this case."

By exonerating those charged with the demolition of the Babri Masjid, "you give the message 'Go ahead and do whatever you want in Kashi and Mathura, we are with you.'"

■ Page 4: Was masjid demolished by magic: MIM

Verdict violates law: Congress

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 30

Expressing its displeasure over the Special CBI court's verdict in the Babri Masjid demolition case, the Congress on Wednesday said that the judgment runs counter to the Supreme Court's November 19 judgement. The opposition party urged the Centre and the Uttar Pradesh govern-

ment to file an appeal in the case and follow the letter of the law and the Constitution without any partiality and premeditated prejudice.

Speaking to reporters in Delhi, Congress's chief spokesperson Randeep Singh Surjewala said the five-judge bench of the Supreme Court in its judgement on November 9 last year held that the demolition of the Babri

Masjid was "clear illegality and egregious violation" of the rule of law.

He said, "The then BJP government of Uttar Pradesh was a co-conspirator in the designed attack on India's Constitutional ethos. So much so that the Supreme Court was misled by filing a wrong affidavit."

■ Page 4: Verdict has error, says Congress

CM to nail AP's claims on water

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, SEPT 30

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhara Rao is firm on taking the Central government to task on the issue of water-sharing with Andhra Pradesh.

Convening a high-level meeting with water resources department officials on Thursday at Pragathi Bhavan to discuss on the strategy to be adopted at the apex council meeting to be held on October 6, Rao instructed officials to come with complete data and information on the Telangana state water resources department and issues to be placed before the Central government.

The apex council meeting to be chaired by the Union minister for Jal Shakti, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, will be attended by Rao and his AP counterpart Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy. "We have to give a befitting reply to AP's arguments at the meeting. Give absolute clarity on issues so that the AP government will not raise the issues again in the future," said Rao.

■ Page 4: KCR to slam Centre at council

Cinemas set to open on Oct. 15

New Delhi, Sept. 30: The Union home ministry on Wednesday issued new guidelines for permitting more activities in areas outside the containment zones that include opening up cinemas, theatres and multiplexes with up to 50 per cent of their seating capacity from October 15.

States governments have been given the flexibility to decide on reopening schools and coaching institutions after October 15 in a graded manner, and permitting social, religious and political gatherings beyond the limit of 100 persons. However, the ministry said that restrictions on international travel, except those permitted by the Centre, will continue.

The standard operating procedure (SOP) will be issued by the ministry of information and broadcasting for cinemas, theatres and multiplexes. Business-to-business (B2B) exhibitions will be permitted, swimming pools being used for training of sportspersons and entertainment parks will also be permitted to open from October 15.

■ Page 4: States to take a call on schools

POLL | BRAWL

Biden loses patience as Trump interrupts him

Shut up man, Biden tells Trump

Cleveland, Sept. 30: Marked by angry interruptions and bitter accusations, the first debate between President Donald Trump and Democratic challenger Joe Biden erupted in contentious exchanges Tuesday night over the coronavirus pandemic, city violence, job losses and how the Supreme Court will shape the future of the nation's health care. In what was the most

chaotic presidential debate in recent years, somehow fitting for what has been an extraordinarily ugly campaign, the two men frequently talked over each other with Trump interrupting, nearly shouting, so often that Biden eventually snapped at him, "Will you shut up, man?"

"The fact is that everything he's said so far is simply a lie," Biden said. "I'm not here to call out his lies. Everybody knows he's

a liar." Trump and Biden arrived in Cleveland hoping the debate would energise their bases of support, even as they competed for the slim slice of undecided voters who could decide the election. Trump came out of the gate looking to challenge Biden at every turn — and the former vice president's patience was soon spent. "You are the worst president America has ever had," Biden said. Roughly 50 minutes into

the debate, moderator Chris Wallace's frustration came to a boil, as he tried to remain even-keeled and stop the rivals from talking over each other. "Gentlemen, I hate to raise my voice, but why should I be any different than the two of you?" Wallace said. Trump blamed Biden, but Wallace firmly pushed back to the president. "Frankly, you've been doing more interrupting." — AP

Rain drive in Vizag



Motorists have a tough time negotiating through the downpour near Maddilapalem in Visakhapatnam on Wednesday.

— DECCAN CHRONICLE

No kids, elderly at TB pushkarams

D. SIVA RAMI REDDI | DC
KURNOOL, SEPT. 30

The Kurnool district administration is organising Tungabhadra pushkaralu from November 12 to December 1 ignoring the Covid outbreak and lack of proof for herd immunity. The festival held for the

Tungabhadra river and observed for a period of 12 days, is celebrated when Jupiter enters the Makara Rasi (Capricorn). Makara is the zodiac sign associated with the Tungabhadra river. District Collector G. Veera Pandian, gave a powerpoint presentation online to ministers Buggana

Rajendranath Reddy and Gummanur Jayaram regarding the preparations for the festival. District in-charge minister Anil Kumar Yadav was present along with the ministers from Kurnool district at Amaravati on Wednesday. The collector further said that in view of the pandem-

ic, steps would be taken to restrict pilgrims from ghats. Chronic patients, old people and children are not to be allowed into ghats, he said.

Pilgrims from Raichur and Bellary would not be allowed to have a holy dip in bathing ghats in Kurnool.

Disha probe likely to be delayed

VIKRAM SHARMA | DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 30

The probe by a three-member commission into alleged encounter killing of four accused in Disha rape case is unlikely to begin anytime soon. The Supreme Court-appointed commission is unable to decide on the date of their return to Hyderabad in the wake of Covid-19 pandemic.

In less than two months from now, it will be one year since the brutal murder and gang rape of veterinary doctor Disha on

November 28 in Shadnagar. Just like the Hathras case, gang rape and murder of Disha shook the nation, which culminated with the 'encounter' of four accused on outskirts of Hyderabad.

Dismissing reports that the commission will conduct its proceedings through video-conference due to the pandemic, highly placed sources told *Deccan Chronicle* that for proceedings to move forward, presence of the three commission members is essential in

Hyderabad. "Witnesses have to appear before the commission and be examined. Several people, including police officials, have to be summoned and cross examined. It is like a regular court trial. Therefore, it cannot take place through video conferencing. The commission has to be physically present in Hyderabad to commence proceedings. But we do not know when that will happen," sources said.

■ Page 4: Rising Covid cases delay arrival

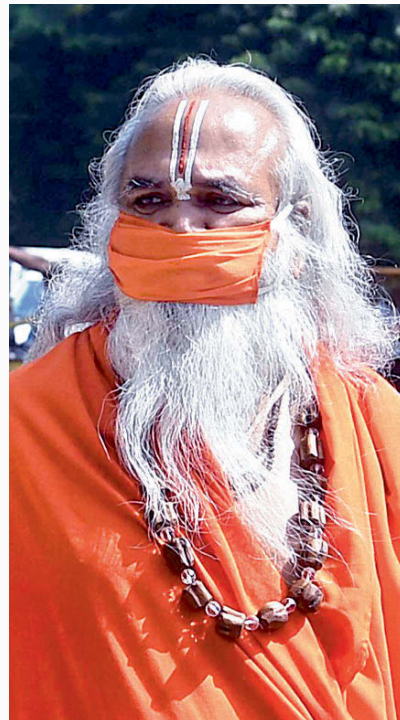
VERDICT TO ENSURE TEMPLE MOVEMENT LEAVES BEHIND A 'PROUD LEGACY' FOR BJP

Verdict absolves the BJP of any responsibility from the most controversial aspect of the Ram Temple movement



Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh welcomes the special CBI court's decision to acquit all the accused in the demolition of the controversial structure. After this decision, all sections of the society should come together in unity and harmony and work successfully to face the challenges before the country

Suresh 'Bhaiyyaji' Joshi, RSS general secretary



MAJOR RELIEF: Senior BJP leader Murli Manohar Joshi, BJP leader Vinay Katiyar, Sadhvi Ritambhara and Ram Vilash Vadanti, accused in Babri mosque demolition case, after the verdict was delivered in Lucknow on Wednesday.

- PTI



The (demolition) case in the special court lost its relevance after the Supreme Court's verdict on Ram temple and *bhoomipujan* of the temple performed by prime minister (in August). This verdict was expected. I, on behalf of Shiv Sena and party president Uddhav Thackeray, welcome this decision of the court

Sanjay Raut, Shiv Sena MP



@sanjukta | Breaking news. #BabriMasjid self exploded on a cold December day.

@frillfaze | Pragya Thakur: I had demolished the structure. UP courts: No you hadn't.

@imMAK02 | According to Indian system, Delhi riots were pre planned by Anti CAA protesters. But demolition of Babri was NOT pre planned, although L K Advani took out this bloody Rath Yatra across the Nation.

@vaish_murc | It was built against the will of the immortal gods, and so it did not last for long" - Homer, The Iliad. #BabriVerdict

@ARanganathan72 | There are only two kinds of people in a democratic nation. One, who respect the judiciary; and the other, who think they are the judiciary.

Former CBI director P.C. Sharma on Wednesday said the acquittal of all the 32 accused in the Babri Masjid demolition case was a vindication of his decision of dropping criminal conspiracy charge against the then deputy prime minister L.K. Advani.

New Delhi, Sept. 30: The acquittal of senior BJP leaders and Hindutva activists in the Babri mosque demolition case on Wednesday has come as a big boost to the saffron party, whose leaders have always insisted that the razing of the disputed structure in Ayodhya was a spontaneous act and not part of any conspiracy.

With the party set to intensify its campaign for the Bihar Assembly polls besides by-elections to one Lok Sabha and 56 Assembly seats, the court verdict has again brought the emotive issue, which has animated political

discourse for long, to the centre stage and given the BJP a handy plank.

The special CBI court's order effectively absolves the BJP of any responsibility from the most controversial aspect of the Ram Jannabhoomi movement and what the Supreme Court had described as an "egregious violation of the rule of law" in its last year verdict that handed over the disputed site in Ayodhya to pro-temple parties in that dispute.

All the 32 accused, including BJP veterans L.K. Advani, Murli Manohar Joshi and Kalyan Singh besides

Uma Bharti and Vinay Katiyar, were acquitted by the court in Lucknow almost 28 years after the FIR was filed following the mosque's demolition on December 6, 1992 by 'kar sevaks'.

The court said there was no conclusive proof against the accused, which also included Sadhvi Ritambhara, Champat Rai and Mahant Nitya Gopal Das, who were all part of the movement. The verdict will ensure that the BJP while owning up the movement's success in ensuring the construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya, can legitimately disasso-

ciate itself with the demolition. It has also snatched a potent weapon from opposition parties, most of whom have targeted the BJP for the mosque's fall while either refraining from criticising or even welcoming the temple's construction.

It was the Ram Jannabhoomi movement and Advani's 'Rath Yatra' in 1990 to mobilise the masses in favour of building a temple at the disputed site, where believers hold that Lord Ram was born, that brought the issue to the center stage of national politics and helped the BJP emerge as an alternative to the

Congress. As part of the movement, Hindutva organisations had brought a large number of 'kar sevaks' at the site when the mosque was taken down by the mob.

A BJP leader said the judgment has ensured that the Ram Jannabhoomi movement leaves behind a "proud legacy" for the party without having any dimension to it about which it might have felt defensive.

Though the CBI has the option to appeal in a higher court against the verdict, it remains far from clear if the central agency will do so.

Top BJP leaders hailed the special CBI court order acquitting all the accused and described it as a victory of truth and justice.

The acquittal of all the accused in the case "is a vindication of truth and justice", said the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP), which spearheaded the Ram Jannabhoomi movement. VHP international working president Alok Kumar said it took 28 years for courts to deliver justice.

The RSS welcomed the verdict and called for harmony in society to face challenges before the country.

— PTI

Jilani: Verdict will be challenged

Lucknow, Sept. 30: Senior lawyer and member of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) Zafaryab Jilani said the verdict would be challenged in the high court.

There were hundreds of statements by the witnesses and in criminal cases these are very important, Jilani said, adding that among those who gave their statements were IPS officers and journalists who had said that the accused persons were sitting on the dais and inflammatory speeches were being given.

The special CBI court has given its verdict

ignoring the evidence and so Muslims will challenge it in the high court, he said. He also indicated that the board might also be a party. Jilani claimed that when the structure fell down, there was celebration and sweets were distributed but the court was of the view that there was no conspiracy.

There were clear evidences under 153-A (promoting enmity, hatred between different communities), 153-B (assertion prejudicial to national integration) against Advani and others and yet they were acquitted, he claimed.

When pointed out that it

was the CBI which was fighting the case, Jilani said the victims and the witnesses also have the right to appeal but the agency too needs to do so.

"We are victims, several of our people were witnesses in the case. I too was among them," he said. He said that from the Muslims' side both the victims and the witnesses would file appeal.

For the victims, Haji Mehboob and Hafiz Akhlaq would file. Others who would also be filing appeals would be decided later, he said.

"If there is an agreement on this point, then Muslim personal law

board would also be a party," he said. When asked if a meeting of the board would be convened on this issue, he said that there is no need for it.

CBI yet to decide The CBI will decide on filing an appeal against the verdict in the Babri Masjid demolition case after consulting the legal department, its counsel said. "After a copy of verdict is received, it would be sent to the CBI headquarters where it would be studied by the legal department and a decision on filing an appeal would be taken as per its suggestion," CBI counsel Lalit Singh said.



Members of Muslim Mahila Foundation celebrate after the verdict in Varanasi on Wednesday.

— PTI

Video cassettes not sent to forensic labs: Court

Lucknow, Sept. 30: Video cassettes or footages, allegedly pertaining to the demolition of disputed Ram Jannabhoomi-Babri Masjid structure at Ayodhya, were neither sealed nor sent to forensic laboratories by the CBI to ascertain their veracity, a Special CBI court at Lucknow said on Wednesday.

Special CBI Judge S.K. Yadav, who acquitted all the 32 accused in the case, including BJP veterans L.K. Advani and M.M. Joshi, analyzed the video, audio evidence and the news reports of several newspapers to examine the charge of criminal conspiracy invoked by the CBI against the high-profile accused in the 28-year-old politically-sensitive case.

The judge lent credence to the testimonies of various wit-

nesses and said that journalists from all over the world wanted to get associated with the coverage of the December 6, 1992 incident. It noted that every news which is there in electronic and print media is not "necessarily correct" and said that whatever "video cassettes or footages" the CBI received during the investigation of the case were neither found in a sealed state by the probe agency nor sealed by the investigators.

Several video cassettes, audio evidence and news reports were used as evidence in the case to buttress the arguments that there was a deep-rooted conspiracy on the part of several leaders to bring the structures down.

However, the court recorded the finding that none of the video cassettes or footages were sent to forensic laboratories to ascertain whether they were tampered or not.

— PTI

Verdict should bring an end to issue: Joshi

DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs NEW DELHI, SEPT. 30

Acquitted in the almost three decades old Babri Masjid demolition case by a special CBI court, BJP veteran leader Murli Manohar Joshi said it has been proved that no conspiracy was hatched to demolish the structure on December 6, 1992.

"I will say only one thing *Jai Jai Shri Ram, Sab ko sanmatti de bhagwan* (May Lord, bestow wisdom on all)," he said, expressing happiness over the judgement.

He thanked the lawyers who appeared for

him in the matter. Joshi was the BJP chief during the period when *kar-sevaks* gathered in Ayodhya as part of the campaign for building a Ram temple, and the mosque was brought down.

He said, "I feel this controversy should come to end with the verdict. The entire country should be ready for the construction of a grand Ram temple."

Shiv Sena says case had lost relevance

SONU SHRIVASTAVA | DC MUMBAI, SEPT. 30

Ruling parties in Maharashtra on Wednesday reacted cautiously to the court verdict on Babri mosque demolition acquitting all accused persons. The principal ruling party Shiv Sena hailed the verdict, but also said that the trial had already "lost its relevance".

Shiv Sena chief

spokesperson Sanjay Raut said that Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray and the whole party welcome the verdict.

"The (demolition) case in the special court lost its relevance after the Supreme Court's verdict on Ram temple and bhoomi puja of the temple performed by the Prime Minister (in August)," Mr Raut said.

HOW THE CASE UNFOLDED

The verdict by a special court in the Babri Masjid demolition case comes 28 years after kar sevaks razed the 16th century mosque and almost a year after the Supreme Court settled the land case in favour of a Ram temple at the disputed Ayodhya site.

- **1528:** Babri Masjid built by Mir Baqi, commander of Mughal emperor Babur.
- **1885:** Mahant Raghubir Das files plea in Faizabad district court seeking permission to build a canopy outside the disputed structure. Court rejects the plea.
- **1949:** Idols of Ram Lalla placed under central dome outside the disputed structure.
- **1950:** Gopal Simla Visharad files suit in Faizabad district court for right to worship the idols of Ram Lalla. Paramahansa Ramachandra Das files suit for continuation of worship and keeping the idols.
- **1959:** Nirmohi Akhara files suit seeking possession of the site.
- **1961:** UP Sunni Central Waqf Board files suit for possession of the site.
- **FEB 1986:** Local court orders the government to open the site to Hindu worshippers.
- **AUG 1989:** Allahabad HC orders status quo in respect of the disputed structure.

DEC 6, 1992: BABRI MASJID DEMOLISHED

- **DEC 1992:** Two FIRs filed in the case. One against unknown kar sevaks for demolition of the mosque. The other names BJP leaders L.K. Advani, M.M. Joshi and others for allegedly giving communal speeches before the demolition.
- **OCT 1993:** CBI files composite charge sheet accusing Advani and others of conspiracy.
- **MAY 2001:** Special CBI court drops proceedings against Advani, Joshi, Uma Bharti, Bal Thackeray and others.
- **NOV 2004:** CBI challenges before the Lucknow bench of Allahabad High Court the dropping of proceedings against BJP leaders on technical grounds. Court issues notices.
- **MAY 2010:** High court dismisses plea. Says no merit in CBI's revision petition.
- **SEP 2010:** In a 2:1 majority, HC rules three-way division of disputed area between Sunni Waqf Board, Nirmohi Akhara and Ram Lalla.
- **MAY 2011:** SC stays HC verdict on Ayodhya land dispute.
- **FEB 2011:** CBI moves Supreme Court against high court order in the mosque demolition case.
- **MAR 2017:** SC indicates it may consider reviving conspiracy charge against the BJP leaders in Babri Masjid demolition case. SC suggests fresh attempts to resolve Ayodhya dispute.
- **APR:** SC favours time-bound completion of trial in the case and reserves order on CBI's plea.
- **SC RESTORES CRIMINAL** conspiracy charge against leaders including Advani, Joshi and Uma Bharti and clubs the trials in the matters pending against VIPs and kar sevaks.
- **NOV 2019:** SC grants entire disputed land in Ayodhya to deity Ram Lalla, directs govt to allot an alternative five-acre plot to Muslims to build mosque.
- **AUG 2020:** PM Narendra Modi performs *bhoomi puja* in Ayodhya, launches construction of Ram temple.
- **SUPREME COURT EXTENDS** by a month the deadline for completion of trial in the Babri Masjid demolition case.

SEP 30: Special Judge S.K. Yadav delivers judgment in the mosque demolition case, all accused acquitted.

SHORT TAKES

FREE COACHING AT KGC FOR M.SC ENTRANCE TEST

DC CORRESPONDENT
WARANGAL, SEPT. 30

The Department of Chemistry, Kakatiya Government College, Hanamkonda will conduct free coaching classes for M.Sc. (Chemistry) Entrance, CPGET-2020.

The classes will be held online from 9 October to 30, 2020. CPGET is the Telangana state-level Common Post Graduate Entrance Test (CPGET) – 2020 conducted by Osmania University for admissions into various P courses, P.G. Diploma courses offered by Osmania, Kakatiya, Telangana, Mahatma Gandhi, Palamuru, Satavahana and Jawaharlal Nehru Technological Universities for the Academic year 2020-2021.

Outgoing final year students of science stream of any college in the state can attend the programme.

In addition to the college faculty Dr B. Ramesh, Kandala Satyanarayana, Dr Vasam Sreenivas, A. Ashok, K. Suneetha, Dr R. Mogili, K. Jagadeesh Babu; are the resource persons drawn from the Government Degree Colleges across the state. For details, students may contact the programme coordinator and head, department of chemistry, Dr B. Ramesh over the phone (98669 62589). Students should register their names by October 2, 2020.

KHAMMAM DIST HQ HOSPITAL GETS OXYGEN PLANT

DC CORRESPONDENT
KHAMMAM, SEPT. 30

The District Headquarters hospital in Khammam has received the much needed Liquid Oxygen Plant (LOP) on Wednesday.

The LOP will provide oxygen not only Covid-19 patients but also other patients who are in critical condition.

The Liquid Oxygen Plant (LOP) is set up at the cost of ₹50 lakhs. The capacity of the plant is 13,000 litres oxygen which is equal to 1,400 cylinders.

The 256 beds in the hospital will receive oxygen without interruptions.

Meanwhile, doctors are conducting tests on those suspected to have Covid-19. The recovery rate of patients infected by the virus is said to be 99 per cent and 1 per cent of patients died.

Doctors are asking the people to take all measures to protect themselves against the virus. In case of any doubts, people should visit the hospital and get themselves tested.

Collector R.V. Karnan said that the Covid-19 tests are being done not only in the main hospitals but also in the primary health centres. People can undergo tests if they have symptoms of the virus.

Interestingly, people are no longer afraid of the virus and are moving freely. Moving around freely without taking precautions is risky. People should wear masks and maintain physical distance to keep the virus at bay.

ADIVASIS STAGE PROTESTS AGAINST NON-TRIBALS

DC CORRESPONDENT
KUMARAMBHEEM
ASIFABAD, SEPT. 30

Adivasis led by Thudumdeba leaders staged a protest on Wednesday alleging that some non-tribals are enjoying Rythu Bandhu meant for the Adivasis on 24 acres in Baregudem in Bejjur mandal.

They appealed to the authorities to cancel such fake pattas created for Adivasi lands and fresh pattas be issued to the Adivasis who are the real owners of the lands.

Thudumdeba leaders alleged that the non-tribals encroached government lands violating the PESA and 1/70 Act in Chinthalamanepalli mandal headquarters. Local Adivasis led by the Thudumdeba leaders submitted memorandums to the respective tahsildars of Bejjur and Chinthalamanepalli.

They asked that the fake pattas created for the Adivasis lands be cancelled and to take steps for the effective implementation of the PESA and 1/70 Acts.

A team comprising of former Adilabad zilla parishad chairman Sidam Ganapathi, Asifabad and Adilabad Thudumdeba presidents Kotnak Vijay, Godam Ganesh and secretary Purka Bapurao, Adivasi Rythu Sangham president Salam Jangu Patel, members Vetti Manoj and other were present.

Sarpanch, secretary locked up over LRS

Residents were told regularisation could not be done of land

A. RAVINDRA
SESHU | DC
DAMMAPET (BHADRADRI),
SEPT. 30

A group of residents belonging to Mandalapalli in Dammapet mandal locked up the village sarpanch Madivi Durga and secretary N. Gopi in their office on Wednesday for not regularising the plots on which they had constructed their houses.

About 25 persons had occupied government land and built their houses. Following announcement of the Land Regularisation Scheme, they decided to regularise their lands by paying fees as per norms.

The sarpanch and secretary tried to convince them that it was a disputed land. A person had approached the court claiming ownership of the land and the court had

■ ABOUT 25 persons had occupied government land and built their houses.

■ FOLLOWING announcement of the Land Regularisation Scheme, they decided to regularise their lands by paying fees as per norms.

issued stay orders. The sarpanch told the persons that as a result, it would not be possible to regularise their lands because of stay orders by the court.

Not convinced by the stand taken by the sarpanch, the villagers locked them up in their office and raised slogans against them.

Later, police intervened and convinced them to withdraw their protest.



Sarpanch Durga and secretary Gopi locked in the office at Mandalapalli in Dammapet mandal in Bhadradi district on Wednesday.

— DECCAN CHRONICLE

Rally supporting Revenue Act taken out in Wardhannapet

DC CORRESPONDENT
WARANGAL, SEPT. 30

Farmers from Wardhannapet Assembly constituency took out a 12-km-long tractor and bullock cart rally in support of the state government's new Revenue law on Wednesday.

The rally began from the Mallikarjuna Swamy temple in Inavolu village.

The rally had a large number of farmers in attendance displaying placards and shouting slogans in support of the new Revenue Act and thanking Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao for the initiative.

Wardhannapet MLA Aroori Ramesh led the programme.

Panchayat raj minister Errabelli Dayakar Rao, Rythu Bandhu Samithi state president and MLC Palla Rajeshwar Reddy and Warangal MP Pasunuri Dayakar, Prakash, and others participated in the rally.

Addressing the people, minister Errabelli Dayakar Rao expressed gratitude to the Chief Minister for bringing out the new Revenue Act.

“The Chief Minister brought the new Revenue Act to resolve the problems faced by the people in regards to their lands and properties across the state. Farmers are happy

with the new Revenue Act as it is going to be beneficial to the farming community and reduce corruption,” Mr Dayakar Rao said.

He alleged that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was forcibly implementing the Agriculture Act to protect the corporate companies.

The farmers do not accept the new Agriculture Act.

He said that though the Central government has not allocated funds to Telangana state, we are happy with the announcement of the prestigious Swachh Bharat award for the third time for Telangana.



Farmers participate in the rally in support of the new Revenue Act at Wardhannapet on Wednesday.

— DECCAN CHRONICLE

GOVT RUSHES TO DO DAMAGE CONTROL OVER G.O. 135

DC CORRESPONDENT
KHAMMAM, SEPT. 30

Noting unrest among the people in Telangana over GO MS no. 135, to regularise residential plots the government has begun taking measures to undo the damage.

Minister for transport Puvvada Ajay Kumar explained the salient features of the GO 135 and how it would help the people. He said, “Many plots do not have security. The new GO provides security and plot owners will be given maroon colour passbooks like the farmers pattachar passbooks.”

Mr Ajay visited wards 39, 40 and 44 in the Khammam Municipal Corporation limits and asked the officials to clear the doubts of the people in regards to the maroon passbooks. Interacting with the dwellers, he said that the government wants to provide security to the people. The passbook has the security features. Every land and house, in the villages and towns, will be in the records. The books will give people confidence about their assets but also keep them secure.

“The programme will be implemented without any errors.

The government has no hidden agenda except providing security to their property. There is no need to give kickbacks to brokers. The online process will be done free of cost”, he said.

The Dharni portal will have the list of all the non-farming assets. Without the permission of the owner; transfer of assets, will not be allowed to another person.

Nearly, 68,000 house numbers given in Khammam town. Assets not regularised in 73 slums in Khammam and other areas will get maroon colour passbooks.



Minister for tribal welfare Satyavathi Rathod speaks at a review meeting in Mulugu on Wednesday.

— DC

Forest land rights protected by new revenue law: Min

DC CORRESPONDENT
WARANGAL, SEPT. 30

The new revenue law and the online property registration will resolve the existing disputes over the forest land, said minister for tribal welfare, Satyavathi Rathod.

She spoke on the new Revenue law, LRS, ORFR, 1/70 law, GO 58 and 59 with the district officials and TRS leaders at Mulugu on Wednesday. She assured that Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao is keen on protecting the forest land rights.

She said, “I have informed the Chief Minister about the forest land issues. The CM said that every inch of land in the state would be accounted for with the new revenue law. The digital registration will clear the land right and ownership disputes.”

“The state government intends to issue a green colour passbook for agricultural land and a maroon colour passbook for a non-agriculture land,” she said.

“Those houses that have not been issued a number

■ The minister spoke on the new Revenue law, LRS, ORFR, 1/70 law, GO 58 and 59 with the district officials and TRS leaders at Mulugu on Wednesday. She assured that the CM is keen on protecting the forest land rights.

will be given one and their house will be valued. There is clarity in the role of the officials also. The mandal magistrate, MRO would now act as the sub-registrar of agriculture lands. Apart from registration, the law has been updated so that mutation can be performed also,” she said.

Ms Rathod said the guidelines for the 1/70 Act are being scripted to provide rights to the tribal and non-tribal landowners. Those holding ROFR pattas would be eligible for government schemes.

The Dharani website will start functioning from the Dasara festival. The sale and purchase of land online will be enabled.

Testing for Covid up in Nizamabad

NARENDER
PULLLOOR | DC
NIZAMABAD/
KAMAREDDY, SEPT. 30

The medical and health department have intensified tracing of Coronavirus positive cases and their primary and secondary contacts in old Nizamabad district under all primary health centre limits. The officials are aiming to have zero Covid-19 cases in Nizamabad and Kamareddy districts.

Rapid Antigen Tests and RTPCR tests are being simultaneously conducted in Nizamabad and Kamareddy districts to identify the Covid-19 cases. As of now, 10,895 tested positive for Covid-19 in Nizamabad district, of which 6,474 persons got discharged after undergoing treatment, the number of active cases is 4,269. Deaths due to the virus in Nizamabad were 152.

On the same lines, of 10,222 Covid-19 positive cases in Kamareddy district of which 3,872 persons got discharged, 6,279 are undergoing treatment. Till date, 71 people have died of the virus. In the last few days, the infection rates due to the virus have

dropped in both the districts. In this context, the higher-ups have directed the district medical and health officers (DM&HOs) to intensify testing and tracing.

If all symptomatic cases and their primary, secondary contacts identified, the number of those infected might come down to zero in the respective districts. Because of this, officials have intensified tests under all PHCs in Nizamabad and Kamareddy districts. The Central and state governments are keenly monitoring the Covid-19 cases in the two districts.

Speaking to Deccan Chronicle, Kamareddy district medical and health officer Dr P. Chandrasekhar said that as we have intensified Covid-19 tests, there may be no cases in the rural and urban areas. Medical teams have reached the interior and remote places to trace the people infected, he added.

Replying to a question, he said, “Asymptomatic cases can be checked by wearing face masks and maintaining physical distancing. It is a welcome relief that the spread of the virus is decreasing.”

TS REPORTS 2,103 NEW COVID CASES

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 30

There have been 2,103 new cases of Covid-19 in Telangana, with districts continuing to record a high number of cases.

Karimnagar reported 103 cases, Medchal Malkajgiri 176, Nalgonda 141, Rangareddy 172 and Bhadradi Kothagudem 102 cases. Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation reported 298 cases, which is comparatively lower than what it recorded earlier.

With the city seeing a reprieve in cases, public transport has opened up involving movement of people. However, wearing masks and social distancing norms are not being followed strictly. Markets are the places where most of these violations have been noted.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice for claim against broadcasting / streaming of movie titled “Orey Bujiga” (“Movie”) directed by Vijay Kumar Konda and having the cast as Raj Tharun, Malvika Nair and Heba Patel.

NOTICE is hereby given that Arha Media and Broad Casting Private Limited (“Arha”) a company incorporated under the laws of India, with its registered office at Plot No.1265, Road No. 36, Jubilee Hills, Near Jubilee Hills Check Post, Hyderabad, 500033, operates an online video streaming platform/OTT Platform named “aha” (the “Platform”). “aha” has acquired the exclusive rights of the Movie and will be streaming the Movie on 1st October 2020 onwards. The said Movie is strictly for private viewing on the “aha” Platform, and to watch the same, one should subscribe to the Platform. In the event any person/entity and/or any user of the Platform broadcasts the Movie illegally and/or makes copy of it and further uploads and broadcasts the Movie anywhere, the same shall be deemed to be an infringement of copyright and a breach of Law, in such instance Arha shall reserve all the rights to serve Notice and to initiate all necessary civil and criminal legal action against such party.

GO'S | GOAL 2.0 He will be the bridge for the socially marginalised

KITSW student chosen as mentor

ANUDEEP
CEREMILLA | DC
WARANGAL, SEPT. 30

Prem Singh Padya a B. Tech final year student of the Department of Computer Science & Engineering (CSE) at the Kakatiya Institute of Technology & Science, Warangal (KITSW), has been recognised as ‘Mentor for Central Government Mission GOAL 2.0’ under the Ministry of tribal affairs, Government of India. The programme is a partnership with Facebook India.

The principal of the college, Prof. K. Ashoka

■ UNDER THIS mission, economically and socially marginalised youth get guidance using the latest technology they may otherwise have not had access to succeed.

Reddy said, “Being a mentor, he will act as a bridge for the socially marginalised youth.”

Under this mission, economically and socially marginalised youth get guidance using the latest technology they may otherwise have not



Prem Singh Padya

had access to succeed. Specifically, online training programmes will be conducted for the tribal youth under the ‘Going Online As

Leaders’ mission, named GOAL 2.0. Student communities in various engineering colleges across Telangana will also receive the same training.

KITSW Dean R&D Prof. P. Niranjan said that he had also achieved the ‘Global Young Leaders Fellowship and Karmaveer Chakra award from iCONGO (The Indian Confederation of NGOs) associated with United Nations (UN) on October 12, 2019, for his outstanding records.

Prem Singh said his father Amar Singh and mother Lakshmi Padma motivated him to pursue social work.

SHORT TAKES

VERDICT PROVED
NO CONSPIRACY,
SAYS JOSHI

From Page 1

Mr Advani had undertaken the Ram Rath Yatra as part of the RSS-affiliate Vishwa Hindu Parishad-led Ramjanambhoomi movement in the 1990, turning the religious movement into a political campaign.

Dr Joshi termed the judgment a “historic decision” which proved that “no conspiracy was hatched for the December 6 incident in Ayodhya” and that their “programme and rallies were not part of any conspiracy.”

Prominent BJP and VHP leaders including Mr Advani, Dr Joshi, Uma Bharti, Kalyan Singh, Vinay Katiyar, Mahant Nrityagopal Das, Sadhvi Ritambhara, Champat Rai, Jai Bhagwan Goyal, Lallu Singh were accused in the case.

Echoing the views of BJP veterans, the VHP said the verdict is a “vindication of truth and justice” and hoped that it will “draw the final curtains on an issue that had been agitating the Hindu psyche for some 472 years.”

Welcoming the decision, RSS general secretary Suresh ‘Bhaiyyaji’ Joshi said, “After this decision, all sections of the society should come together in unity and harmony and work successfully to face the challenges before the country, and work towards the progress of this country.”

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister and ‘mahant’ of Gorakhnath Math Yogi Adityanath, whose guru and predecessor late Mahant Avaidyanath was one of the accused in the case, tweeted “Satyamev Jayate (truth alone triumphs)” and that the court’s verdict has proved that the then Congress government played politics against saints, BJP and VHP leaders and social workers to frame cases against them.

I WAS ON
MOSQUE DOME,
SAYS KAR SEVAKSAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC
VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 30

Members of the Sangh Parivar from Andhra Pradesh stated that justice prevailed when welcoming the special CBI court verdict acquitting all 32 accused in Babri Masjid demolition case.

Former AP BJP president Kanna Lakshminarayana said, “We welcome the verdict as the hard work of our senior party leaders for ‘Dharma’ has been realised with their acquittal.”

Kar sevaks from the BJP, VHP and RSS who visited Ayodhya in 1992 based on a call given by the BJP are delighted at the verdict. They said that their leadership called to carry a fistful of soil and a bottle of water from Sarayu river to Ayodhya for construction of Ram temple and added that they were never asked to carry any tools demolish the mosque. They claimed that even as their senior leaders were trying to calm down the kar sevaks, but the mosque was demolished and ruled out any plot to demolish it.

A BJP leader from Bhimavaram who also took part in Kar Seva said, “I was on one of the domes of the mosque along with fellow kar sevaks and it collapsed suddenly. I fell on the ground but suffered no major injuries. The verdict is good as our leaders never plotted to demolish the mosque and it happened unexpectedly.”

Was masjid demolished by magic: Owaisi

From Page 1

“We will give you a clean chit. Whenever the issue of your faith comes, we will help you. Place an idol in the Idgah again.” Think what will be the fate of the rule of law,” said Owaisi.

Asserting that the Supreme Court in its judgment on November 9, 2019, in a civil dispute case pronounced by five judges, had clearly held that the demolition of the Babri Masjid was an egregious violation of the rule of law, a calculated act of the destruction of a public place of worship, Owaisi said “I am unable to understand whether the masjid was demolished by someone using magic on December 6. Were idols kept inside on the nights of December 28 and December 29, 1949 by magic? Were the locks

opened using magic when Rajiv Gandhi was prime minister? That’s why I am saying that this judgment was delivered against the stand of the Supreme Court.”

Saying that he was forced to say that violence pays politically, Owaisi said that you can estimate that wherever Advani’s Rath Yatra went, there was bloodshed. Innocent people were murdered, properties were burnt, families were uprooted and destroyed.

Wondering how the CBI Court says that the demolition of the masjid was spontaneous, how many years and months were needed to believe that the act of demolition was spontaneous, Owaisi asked. Is it not true that Uma Bharati had said ‘Ek dhakka aur do, Babri Masjid tod do’ (Give it another push, bring

down the Babri masjid)? Had the world had not seen that when the Babri Masjid was demolished, sweets were distributed? he asked. L.K. Advani, Murli Manohar Joshi, Bharati and all were eating sweets and celebrating the demolition. Justice has not been done to the Muslim since 1950, said Owaisi. If the masjid was not demolished, then the verdict of the apex court in November is travestied. “Is it not true that in the CBI’s chargesheet, a witness has revealed that Kalyan Singh had said that there was a stay on construction not on destruction. Is it not in the charge sheet that Advani had hatched a conspiracy in the residence of Vinay Katiyar on December 5 to demolish the Masjid?” he asked.

The highest civilian award was conferred upon Advani by the BJP government. He was an accused. At that time, I had raised objections. Now we are seeing the result. Bhagwan Goel has said outside the court before the pronouncement of judgment ‘Yes, I admit that I had participated in the demolition.’ “I don’t know whether the CBI will appeal against this judgment to uphold its autonomy, but it should appeal. Even if it appeals, how much time will be consumed to hear the plea? In case the CBI opts not to appeal, I would like to appeal the All India Muslim personal law board to appeal in the High Court,” said an outraged Owaisi.

Asserting that the main root for the demolition was the Congress party as the idols were kept in their regime, Owaisi said Rajiv

Gandhi had opened the doors and allowed the shilanyas. The Congress was in rule when the masjid was demolished.

Contending that Advani, Joshi, Bharati, Bal Thackeray and Gandhi got popularity in politics and power due to this act, Owaisi said “they have raised their political palace ruining us. Now they get a clean chit.” Immediately after the delivery of the judgment, the law minister reached Advani’s residence, Owaisi pointed out. “What kind of message do they want to send to those who believe in diversity and to those media persons who depose before the court, taking great risks. Security personnel who were deployed for the security of Advani also testified,” said Owaisi.

Judge rejects photos, clips as evidence

351 witnesses deposed in the court; their statements were found to be contradictory, says judge

From Page 1



Veteran BJP leader L.K. Advani with his daughter Pratibha Advani on his way to address reporters after the verdict by the Special CBI court on Babri mosque demolition case, outside his residence, in New Delhi on Wednesday.

— D. KAMRAJ

him.”

The judgment said: “Evidence also suggests that RSS and VHP volunteers were taking care of arrangements and regularly making announcements. Seating arrangements for women, the elderly, the media and parking was being handled by them. This points to the fact that there was no scheme of the named accused to bring down the disputed structure on December 6, 1992.”

The judge said: “The group that created a ruckus was from a section of the kar sevaks, but they were definitely hooligans because if they were actual believers of Lord Ram they would have paid heed to

Ashok Singhal’s statement that the disputed structure is also a temple and you have to protect it.”

“That the named accused got together in common cause with anti-social kar sevaks to bring down the disputed structure, there is no evidence in the chargesheet to prove this. The leaders seated on stage and those near the Ram chabutara — Ashok Singhal, Vijaya Rajee Scindia — did not suspect that a section of the kar sevaks will get agitated and climb the disputed structure.”

“Which accused person gave what speech on December 6, 1992, the prosecution has not managed to

prove this with evidence. The video cassettes that have been presented, their related witnesses have themselves accepted these are edited and tampered... The prosecution has to prove that which accused gave what specific speech that led to enmity between two groups and led to a breakdown in communal harmony. If the accused have merely given an inciting speech only on that basis the person cannot be pronounced guilty,” the judgment said.

On Wednesday, judge S.K. Yadav occupied his chair in the courtroom at 12.10 pm, and within five minutes he had read out the operative part of the judgment pro-

nouncing acquittal of all the accused. He, however, directed all the accused to furnish a surety and personal bond of ₹50,000 each in the court as a procedural requirement under Section 437 (A) of CrPc.

Wednesday was Judge Yadav’s last working day in judicial service. He had retired on September 30, 2019, but the Supreme Court extended his service till delivery of the judgment in the case by September 30, 2020.

The trial court’s verdict came months after the Supreme Court in November 2019 ruled in favour of building a temple on the 2.77-acre site in Ayodhya where the Babri

TPCC ridicules acquittal of accused

S.A. ISHAQUI | DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 30

The Telangana Congress on Wednesday demanded that the Centre and Uttar Pradesh government must file an appeal against the judgement of CBI Special Court in the Babri Masjid demolition case, which acquitted all accused for lack of evidence.

Senior party leader Mohammed Ali Shabbir described the verdict as ‘highly unfortunate’.

He pointed out that the Supreme Court, in its judgment on November

● **SENIOR PARTY** leader Mohammed Ali Shabbir pointed out that the Supreme Court, in its judgment on November 9, 2019, held that the demolition of Babri Masjid was “clear illegality and egregious violation” of the rule of law.

9, 2019, held that the demolition of Babri Masjid was “clear illegality and egregious violation” of the rule of law. He pointed out that the verdict of the CBI Special Court contradicts the apex court’s judgement.

He said it was strange that the CBI Court took only photographs and videos into consideration and later described them as not credible. Pointing out that there will not be a video or picture of every crime that occurs, he said that courts give judgments based on circumstantial evidence, eye-witness accounts and other factors, unfortunately, those factors and evidence were not taken into consideration by the CBI court while pronouncing the verdict.

Shabbir Ali said it was

strange that the BJP leaders who openly took credit for demolition of Babri Masjid on December 6, 1992, are now claiming that they had tried to protect the disputed structure.

Stating that the acquittal of all accused in the case does not mean that justice is done, he pointed out that “A crime has been committed and those involved in it must be punished. Else, this will set a wrong precedent. All parties in the case must approach the High Court against the verdict.”

Ram Mandir kar sevaks
welcome court orderSANJAY SAMUEL PAUL
| DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 30

The acquittal of the 32 persons, including top BJP leaders, L.K. Advani, Uma Bharati and Murli Manohar Joshi by the CBI special court in Lucknow on Wednesday in the case pertaining to demolition of Babri masjid in Ayodhya on December 6, 1992, has been welcomed by those who took part in kar seva at Ayodhya in the run up to the December 6, 1992 demolition of the mosque.

S.B. Narsingh Rao, who

was a kar sevak, said that he recalls how he, along with BJP leaders A. Narendra, V. Rama Rao, Dr K. Laxman, Baddam Bal Reddy and Venkaiah Naidu, were detained by the police here in the city on December 6, 1992 when they were taking out a rally in support of kar sevaks in Ayodhya. “We were taken to the Amberpet police grounds and kept there under preventive custody. Today’s verdict has provided justice for all the innocent people who were blamed for what happened in Ayodhya that day. The judiciary

executed its responsibility without any bias,” he said.

Hemanth Kumar Gohil, who went to Ayodhya in 1990 as a kar sevak, said, “We, along with a few other sevaks, went to protest in front of the Babri masjid. We got down from the train at Faizabad and walked till the mosque. We had nothing to eat, walked through the jungle but people from some villages along the route encouraged us, giving us food and shariat. However, we were caught by the police and sent back.”

Rising Covid cases delay arrival

FROM PAGE 1

What is further delaying their arrival is increasing cases of Coronavirus in Hyderabad, particularly among legal fraternity.

The commission, comprising former Supreme Court judge V.S. Sirpurkar, Bombay High Court retired judge Rekha Baldota and former CBI director D.R. Karthikeyan have been allotted an office in C block of Telangana High court premises. The commission had visited Hyderabad in February this year and had

met Telangana High Court Chief Justice Raghavendra Singh Chauhan.

“The commission will decide on the date of its return to Hyderabad after the situation (Covid-19) normalises. Office and other logistics have already been provided by the state government while CRPF extends security,” sources said. All three members of the commission have been in constant touch with each other. They are said to be gathering more details about the ‘encounter’ before commencing their

KCR plans to slam
Centre at council

From Page 1

He also decided to take the opportunity to expose the six-year delay caused by the Centre and its inactive role on the matter and also oppose and reject the attempts made to undermine Telangana’s rights.

Sources in the state government disclosed that Rao is firm about utilising the apex council meeting to put forward the facts. Rao, who has been finding fault with the Centre for its alleged delay in allocation of water share to the states, reiterated that the states’ bifurcation act mandates the allocation of water share whenever a new state is formed.

“Telangana state was formed on June 2, 2014, and we wrote a letter to the Prime Minister on June 14, 2014. In the letter, we requested the allocation of water to Telangana. We also stated that water could be allocated by constituting a special tribunal, under section (3) of the inter-state river water di-

● **RAO, WHO** has been finding fault with the Centre for its alleged delay in allocation of water share to the states, reiterated that the states’ bifurcation act mandates the allocation of water share whenever a new state is formed.

sputes act, 1956 or through the existing tribunal. We also wanted the allocation of water should be done between Telangana and AP or among the river basin states,” said Rao, pointing out that even after six years, there was no response and the Centre kept mum on the issue.

Saying that the Centre is giving the impression that they were doing something by convening apex council meetings but in reality, the Centre is not doing anything, Rao told officials that “at the apex council meeting, we need to take the Centre to task. Put forward all the facts and be firm in demanding that there should be absolute clarity on the allocation of water to Telangana.”

WILLING TO PAY AGRIGOLD VICTIMS: AP

VUJJINI
VAMSHIDHARA | DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 30

Informing its earnest efforts in helping Agrigold depositors from Andhra Pradesh State, who have been left in the lurch, the Andhra Pradesh Government on Wednesday urged Telangana High Court to allow it to pay those who have deposited less than ₹20,000 in Agrigold company from the State exchequer.

Sriram, Advocate General of Andhra Pradesh, requested the division bench headed by Chief Justice Raghavendra Singh Chauhan and Justice B.Vijaysen Reddy to allow

● **THE BENCH** said that it would prefer physical hearing rather than virtual mode and adjourned the case to November 4.

them to disburse funds.

He said that it would follow the modalities if the court wishes to frame them.

The bench said that it would prefer physical hearing rather than virtual mode and adjourned the case to November 4.

JAC of Agrigold victims had earlier said that the state was gearing up to clear payments to Agrigold depositors.

STATES TO TAKE
A CALL ON
SCHOOLS

From Page 1

For the re-opening of schools and coaching institutions, State and UT governments can decide to do so after October 15, in a graded manner.

The decision shall be taken in consultation with the respective school and institution management, based on their assessment of the situation, and subject to conditions, it said. Online or distance learning shall continue to be the preferred mode of teaching and shall be encouraged, the ministry said. Students may attend schools and institutions only with the written consent of parents. Attendance must not be enforced, and must depend entirely on parental consent, the ministry said.

— PTI

SHORT TAKES

INDIA, CHINA
MUST REMAIN
RATIONAL: ENVOY

SRIDHAR
KUMARASWAMI | DC
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 30

Holding out the olive branch to India in his latest remarks on Sino-Indian ties, Chinese Ambassador Sun Weidong has said that China is committed to seeking a solution through “dialogue and negotiation, and restoring peace and tranquillity in the border areas at an early date”, adding that the “current situation in the border areas serves no one’s interests”. Pointing out that the two nations are “neighbours that cannot be moved away” and that therefore “living in harmony is the only correct choice”, he added that “as long as the two sides adhere to this common goal and move in the right direction, China-India relations will eventually disperse the clouds and get back on the right track”.

The Chinese envoy also said the two neighbours “need to remain rational and calm, and resist the talk of ‘confrontation’ and ‘decoupling’, so that we will not lose our way due to any individual incident or issue”, a veiled reference to the bloody clash at the Galwan valley in June this year between troops of both sides.

POLICE SUMMON
ANURAG KASHYAP
IN RAPE CASE

SAURABH JOSHI | DC
MUMBAI, SEPT. 30

The Mumbai police on Wednesday issued summons to film-maker Anurag Kashyap in connection with a rape case filed against him by actor Payal Ghosh. The Versova police said that they have asked Kashyap to join the probe on Thursday and will record his statement in connection with the allegations in the case.

After filing the police complaint against Kashyap on September 22, Ghosh has been raising questions over the police’s inaction against the film-maker. She had even met Union minister Ramdas Athawale seeking his support to get the Union government intervene in the case.

The summons came after Athawale and Ghosh met state governor Bhagatsinh Koshyari on Tuesday seeking action in the case filed against Kashyap. The governor reportedly assured them that he would speak with the state home minister on the issue. Ghosh and Athawale also met senior Mumbai police officials seeking action in the case.

The police filed case against Kashyap on September 22 soon after the actor approached the police along with her lawyer Nitin Satpute. Kashyap has been summoned to record his statement and verify facts before initiating further action against him, a police official said. Ghosh went to the police station on multiple occasions and also claimed that despite being a complainant, she was summoned several times.

CORONA TOLL
NEARS 98K
NATIONWIDE

New Delhi, Sept. 30: India’s Covid-19 caseload raced past 62 lakh on Wednesday with 80,472 infections being reported in a day, while the number of recoveries surged to 51,87,825 pushing the recovery rate to 83.33 per cent, according to the Union Health Ministry data.

The total number of coronavirus cases mounted to 62,25,763, while the death toll climbed to 97,497 with 1,179 people succumbing to the disease in a day, the data updated at 8 am showed.

There are 9,40,441 active cases of coronavirus infection in the country which comprises 15.11 per cent of the total caseload.

The Covid-19 case fatality rate due to the coronavirus infection stands at 1.57 per cent, the data stated.

India’s Covid-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, on August 23 it crossed 30 lakh, and 40 lakh on September 5.

The tally went past 50 lakh on September 16 and crossed 60 lakh on September 28.

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), cumulatively 7,41,96,729 samples have been tested for detection of coronavirus infection up to September 29 with 10,86,688 samples being tested on Tuesday.

Hathras teen cremated in dead of night

Oppn leaders lash out at UP govt over cremation of 19-year-old Dalit woman against family’s wish

Hathras/Lucknow, Sept 30: The 19-year-old Dalit woman, whose death in a Delhi hospital two weeks after she was brutally gangraped led to nationwide outrage, was cremated in the dead of the night early Wednesday with family members alleging they were forced by police to hurriedly conduct the last rites.

The cremation was done around 2.30-3 in the morning,” her father said, a day after his daughter, who suffered critical injuries when she was allegedly gangraped and tortured by four upper caste men, gave up the battle for life.

As political leaders and activists voiced their protest on social media and other platforms over the manner in which the funeral was conducted near the woman’s home in Hathras, a local police officer said it was carried out as per the wishes of the family.

In the moments preceding the cremation of his sister, the teen’s brother said from his home, “Police have forcibly taken the body and my father along with them for cremation. When my father reached Hathras (from New Delhi), he was immediately taken (to the crematorium) by the police.”

Recalling the horrors of the Nirbhaya case, the Dalit teen was allegedly sexually assaulted by four men on September 14 and referred on Monday to the Safdarjung Hospital in Delhi with spinal injuries, paralysis and cuts in her tongue. She died around 3 am on Tuesday.

The men alleged to be involved in the crime are under arrest and will now face charges under Section 302 (murder) of the Indian Penal Code, according to Hathras Superintendent of Police Vikrant Vir.

The family left Safdarjung Hospital in Delhi on Tuesday night amid heavy police deployment and reached their village in Hathras, about 180 km from the national capital, after the body of the young woman, claimed a family member.

Another relative said 30 to 40 people accompanied the woman’s father to the crematorium.

Senior police and administration officials were also present at the crematorium in the middle of



Police personnel cremate the body of a 19-year-old rape victim, in the wee hours on Wednesday in Hathras district.

— PTI

the night, an official said. Purported visuals from the site showed flames from what appeared to be a pyre lighting up the sky and heavy police presence with some personnel in anti-riot gear keeping the media at bay. Anguished cries from family members broke the silence of the night.

“We are unable to understand, what they want... what kind of politics is this. They are giving random statements like the woman has not been raped! We don’t know what they want,” said a relative who was at home with the grieving family. “They are doing all this to hush up the case.”

While scores of Left and Congress leaders were detained when they staged protests against the Yogi Adityanath government near the UP Bhawan in Delhi, opposition leaders questioned the circumstances and the timing of the funeral.

“I was on the phone with the Hathras victim’s

father when he was informed that his daughter had passed away. I heard him cry out in despair,” said Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra.

Tagging Adityanath in a tweet, she added, “RESIGN. Instead of protecting the victim and her family, your government became complicit in depriving her of every single human right, even in death. You have no moral right to continue as chief minister.”

Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati said her party strongly condemns the wrong attitude of the police.

“The cremation of Hathras gangrape victim by the Uttar Pradesh Police without handing over the body to the family or without their consent and in their absence in the dead of night is raising doubts and resentment, she said, asking for the Supreme Court to take cognisance of the case. Samajwadi Party chief

Akhilesh Yadav alleged that the cremation was done in the middle of the night to erase evidence.

“In the rape-murder of Hathras daughter, conducting her last rites by police in the middle of the night without the consent of the family is against rituals. It is the most condemnable act The BJP government has committed a sin and crime by doing so,” he said on Twitter.

In a press statement, the Politburo of the CPI(M) said the “barbaric case based rape” is “reflective of the utter lawlessness” in the northern state.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said the young woman was first raped by some beasts and then the entire system.

Maha-rashtra NCP chief Jayant Patil termed the “behaviour” of the UP Police “inhuman and unfortunate”. Women’s rights activists added their voice to the chorus of condemnation and said the teen was robbed of dignity even in death. —PTI

Bhim Army chief ‘detained’ by cops

Noida/Aligarh, Sept. 30: Bhim Army chief Chandrashekhar Azad and its Delhi unit head, Himanshu Balmiki, have been detained by the Uttar Pradesh police while they were on their way to Hathras, accompanying the family of a 19-year-old Dalit gangrape victim, Azad’s associates alleged on Wednesday.

Senior Aligarh police officials denied knowledge about the matter.

According to functionaries of the Azad Samaj Party, which was launched by the Bhim Army chief in March, Azad and Balmiki went missing after 10 pm on Tuesday while they were on their way to Hathras, accompanying the family of the gangrape victim. The Azad Samaj Party and

affiliates of the pro-Dalit Bhim Army, among others, had joined the protests outside the Safdarjung hospital on Tuesday to demand justice for the gangrape victim and her family.

“There is no clue about the location of Azad and Balmiki after they reached the Jewar toll plaza to get on the lane to Tappal, Aligarh,” Azad Samaj Party’s core committee member Ravindra Bhati said. He alleged that Azad and Balmiki were detained during the intervening night of Tuesday and Wednesday.

Around 12.30pm on Wednesday, Azad Samaj Party and Bhim Army activists reached the Tappal police station in Aligarh and staged a demonstration. —PTI

Maharashtra govt stays its own order to implement farm laws

BHAGWAN PARAB | DC
MUMBAI, SEPT. 30

The contentious Farmers Produce Trade and Commerce Ordinance will not be implemented in Maharashtra, at least for the time being.

The Maharashtra Government, facing flak from all quarters, on Wednesday stayed its own order of implementing the three farm laws.

Marketing Minister Balasaheb Shamra Patil of the NCP said, “The ordinance needs to be studied in detail due to its impact on the farmers and Agriculture Produce Market Committees (APMCs) in the state. We have sought legal opinion on it. Till then, the ordi-

● **ACCORDING TO SOURCES,** the decision was taken due to the aggressive stand of Congress leaders, who threatened to boycott the cabinet meeting.

nances are being stayed.” Even before the new farm Bills were passed by the Parliament, Maharashtra government’s Directorate of Marketing on August 10 had issued an order to implement Farmers Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion & Facilitation) Ordinance 2020, The Farmers (Empowerment & Protection) Assurance and Farm Service Ordinance 2020, and The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Ordinance 2020. The order said that the ordinances were to be “strictly implemented”,

thus making Maharashtra the first state to implement them before they became a law last week. After the farm Bills were passed in the Parliament, Maharashtra’s ruling parties started questioning them and indicated that the new laws will not be implemented in the state. However, after the government’s August 10 order came to light, it left the Uddhav Thackeray-led government red-faced.

The NCP MLC Shashikant Shinde had challenged the Directorate of Marketing, Pune’s order saying it was issued without taking any of the

stakeholders into confidence. He argued that the ordinance will badly affect various sectors including farmers, traders, agents, labourers and others, rendering some of them jobless.

The hearing was held on Wednesday morning, in which Mr Patil stayed the August 10 notification and postponed the matter for further hearing on October 27.

According to sources, the decision was taken due to the aggressive stand of Congress leaders, who threatened to boycott the cabinet meeting if the ordinance was not stayed. The Congress has also decided to launch an all-India agitation against the new farm laws.

SC refuses to defer UPSC examination

PARMOD KUMAR | DC
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 30

The Supreme Court on Wednesday refused to postpone the Civil Services (Prelims) Examination, 2020, of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) slated on Sunday (October 4) as it turned down a batch of petitions seeking deferment citing Covid-19 pandemic.

A bench comprising Justice A.M. Khanwilkar and Justice Sanjiv Khanna declined the petitions seeking postponement as UPSC told the court that it has already spent ₹50 crore for conduct of the exam and any disruption at this stage will upset the entire exam cycle not only once but

with a cascading effect on the future exams as well.

Refusing to stall the exam, the court asked the UPSC to issue directions to the states to ensure that the candidates with admit cards are admitted in local hotels near the sub-centres.

The court also asked the UPSC to consider a concession of giving one more chance to appear for civil services examination to the candidates who are making a last attempt for the civil services entrance examination.

Additional Solicitor General S.V. Raju while assuring the court to give concession in age to only those who are on their last attempt, said that it cannot be made available to others. —PTI

Over 8.5 L workers returned to Odisha

AKSHAYA KUMAR
SAHOO | DC
BHUBANESWAR, SEPT. 30

After the Covid-19 pandemic set in, about 8,53,777 guest workers have returned to Odisha till date, this was informed by state labour minister Susanta Singh in the ongoing monsoon session of Odisha Assembly.

Replying to a written question from Congress lawmaker Santosh Singh Saluja, the minister stated that maximum Odia guest workers have returned from states like Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Kerala on 277 special trains.

“The state government

has paid ₹9 crore to the East Coast Railway (ECoR) towards the transport cost of the workers,” he said.

The minister, however, said that the state government did not have any concrete details about the number of daily wage-earners among the returnees. “We are trying to trace the number of daily wage-earners block wise,” he added.

Singh also informed that two guest workers have lost their lives on their way to the state during the lockdown. “The concerned department is collecting the fact about the ex gratia amount paid to them,” he added.

India test fires new version of BrahMos supersonic cruise missile

AKSYHAYA KUMAR
SAHOO | DC
BHUBANESWAR, SEPT. 30

India on Wednesday successfully test-fired an extended range version of surface-to-surface supersonic cruise missile BrahMos off Odisha coast.

The missile was tested from Chandipur Integrated Test Range (ITR) at 10.30am in Balasore district, nearly 250 km from here.

The missile is capable of hitting targets at more than 400-km range. Source said that the airframe and booster of the missile have been developed

indigenously.

The test was conducted with an indigenous booster and airframe under PJ-10 project of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

BrahMos Aerospace is a joint venture between DRDO and Federal State Unitary Enterprise NPO Mashinostroyeniya of Russia.

The missile can be launched from submarines, ships, aircrafts, as well as from land platforms. BrahMos is regarded as the fastest supersonic cruise missile in the world. It is operational with Indian Army, Navy and Air Force.

ISRO TO LAUNCH ITS VENUS MISSION IN 2025, FRANCE TO TAKE PART

New Delhi, Sept. 30: ISRO is scheduled to launch its Venus mission in 2025 and France will participate in it, French space agency CNES said on Wednesday.

The VIRAL (Venus Infrared Atmospheric Gases Linker) instrument co-developed with the Russian federal space agency Roscosmos and the LATMOS atmospheres, environments and space observations laboratory attached to the French national scientific

research centre CNRS has been selected by the ISRO after a request for proposals, it said in a statement.

ISRO chairman K. Sivan and CNES president Jean-Yves Le Gall held talks and reviewed the areas driving cooperation between France and India in space.

“In the domain of space exploration, France will be taking part in ISRO’s mission to Venus, scheduled to launch in 2025,” CNES said in a statement. —PTI

DECCAN Chronicle

1 OCTOBER 2020

In Hathras, don't lose sight of justice goal

Amid the Coronavirus pandemic, rapes have continued to take place in Uttar Pradesh. Throughout the lockdown, imposed in March, rape cases have mounted. In most, the accused was not arrested, even after being identified, as in Hapur, where the six-year-old sufferer had to undergo surgery to repair her wounds but still managed to spot the culprit.

The three features that distinguished the Hathras gangrape from countless other crimes involving gendered violence against women were (a) its particularly gruesome nature, (b) the fact that it was a caste crime, and (c) the fact that the victim also belonged to a rural background and a low income family. It was the perfect opportunity for a progressive media to create opinion and influence change.

In this case, too, the dalit teenager had named her four rapists from the hospital bed in the national capital where she was brought and admitted by activists of Bhim Army. But the big media continued its prurient speculations on the drug habits of Rhea Chakraborty. It was only her death followed by a hasty midnight cremation that her immediate relatives were reportedly barred from attending that brought the case under spotlight.

The UP police had quickly disposed of the body, pre-empting a second autopsy. It was in keeping with a trend seen whenever a lower caste woman is the victim. In India, that is sadly most often the case. The perpetrators have the social and financial support that the victim and her family hasn't. So it raised suspicions of shielding the accused.

Now the Aligarh IG has come out with a statement saying that rape had not taken place at all; the medical examination report did not confirm it. Earlier, the police had tied the crime to an old family quarrel. These are attempts to dilute the gravity of the offence. The fact remains that had she survived the girl would have been disabled for life. Desexualising rape does not lessen its immorality.

Was the victim targeted because she was bright and she stood out, as most liberal, young women do and are made to suffer for, and more so in rural India, where the churning is at its strongest? It belies the comfortable and contradictory middle class notions of the heartlands being a regressive idyll, but is a distinct possibility.

Following the media furore, the Uttar Pradesh government has constituted a three-member Special Investigation Team to probe the case. It inspires little confidence, given the record of impunity of the government and the state police force.

Which brings us to another controversy, freshly brewing. Some people have named the victim on the social media without the express sanction in writing through a recognised organisation of the next of kin of the victim, as required by Section 228A(c) of the Indian Penal Code, the law governing the disclosure of identity of rape sufferers. It is the duty of citizens and the media to educate the people about this law and proactively seek consent because there should be no stigma or shame attached to victims of sexual assault. Removal of the stigma will, in fact, deter conspiracies to commit the crime. However, in bypassing the law just for the sake of virtue-signalling, if of a less obvious kind and especially in case of poor or dalit victims, as in the Jisha case of 2016, publishers are not only committing a crime in the eyes of the law but also stand to trivialise the cause.

First among equals

The current stand-off in Tamil Nadu's ruling party, the AIADMK, over the chief ministerial candidate for the 2021 Assembly elections smacks of nothing but gross political imprudence on the part of the entire set of dramatis personae. Though deputy chief minister, O Panneerselvam, who wants his dispute with Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami sorted out now itself has a point to make as elections are just about eight months away, the whole exercise seems to be a farce, only providing a comic interlude to the people caught in the vagaries of the lockdown.

In fact, the acrimony with which Mr Panneerselvam and his bete noire fought it out at the executive meeting on Monday led to a dark party secret tumbling out, raising a stink. Their differences apart, they agreed that both were chosen for the prized chief minister's job at different points of time by V.K. Sasikala, the confidante of late chief minister J. Jayalalithaa. So, was Ms Sasikala, who never ever stood for an election or held any official or party position when Jayalalitha was alive, functioning as a de facto chief minister?

Besides confirming that through their exchanges, the quarrelling chief ministerial aspirants also came across as immature politicians more obsessed over the post they coveted and least concerned about the interests of the party or the people or the state. Also cheering them was the bunch of party leaders, who were split down the middle. While Mr Palaniswami says that it's not wise to rock the boat when the sailing has been smooth in the past four years, Mr Panneerselvam is just seeking his pound of flesh.

Well, one of them will blink and the first among equals will be known on Wednesday, October 7. But for the AIADMK, particularly the winner of the ongoing tussle, it could be a pyrrhic victory. For at the end of it all, it will be the people who will be picking the party that would rule them.

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Subhani



How to deal with Covid: Some S-E Asian lessons

Patralekha Chatterjee

Dev 360

The Covid-19 pandemic has dealt a body blow to societies and economies across the world. India's Covid-19 death tally has crossed 96,000; stories of doom, gloom and heart-breaks abound. There is a flicker of hope with the number of daily cases coming down a little. However, we are certainly not out of the woods. No one knows what the future holds.

Can the coronavirus pandemic be a teachable moment? Can we step back from our immediate contexts and preoccupations and learn from other countries in the neighbourhood which were better prepared and better-equipped to deal with the new virus?

Here are a few things I picked up while looking at country responses around the world. We all know how well and swiftly countries like New Zealand, Iceland or Germany responded. The political leadership in these countries deserve all the praise they are getting. But these nations also have the advantage of affluence and relatively small populations.

Another region that seems to have done fairly well in these trying times is Southeast Asia. There is a good reason why — most countries in this region learnt from past epidemics — the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2003 and to a lesser extent the H1N1 avian flu in 2009-10.

A recent essay — “An Asian Pandemic Success Story: What SARS Taught Governments About Fighting Infectious Disease”, by Swee Kheng Khor and David Heymann in *Foreign Affairs* — points out that as the world struggles with the coronavirus pandemic, Southeast Asian countries lead the way in both control and recovery.

Many countries in this region have consistently reported lower death rates from Covid-19 than coun-

tries in Europe and North America.

“At the root of the efficacy of this response lie the hard-won lessons of the region's experience with SARS,” write Khor and Heymann.

Some people who are aware of the different responses to the pandemic point out the cultural differences between Southeast Asia and South Asia and India's humongous heterogeneity. Arguably, these are factors. But there is no getting away from the fact that doing relatively well in the time of a pandemic has a lot to do with being better prepared. And being better prepared is a function of learning the hard lessons from one's past.

“Asian governments spent the 17 ‘peacetime’ years between SARS and Covid-19 addressing the very problems that now plague other countries. They built public health infrastructure and did the hard political work of clarifying the roles and power structures that would take hold during a crisis,” point out Khor and Heymann.

What does this mean on the ground? As the writers point out, it means building systems and institutions that can marshal the full power of government to confront the next epidemic. It means designing and building new infrastructure for disease surveillance, case reporting and contact tracing, and developing decentralised networks of laboratories. And it means prioritising human resources — investing in the personnel that would be needed to run these new systems.

Take two examples, Thailand and Vietnam. Thailand, which has about 69 million people, has around 3,500 confirmed Covid-19 cases and 59 deaths. Vietnam, with a population of almost 100 million, has just over 1,000 confirmed cases and 35 deaths.

Vietnam, once one of the poorest countries in the world, has increased its

per capita spending on public health by an average of nine per cent every year between 2000 and 2016. In 2009, it set up a central database for reporting disease cases in real time. This required public health physicians, information technology specialists and a vast network of field-based epidemiologists.

The Mekong countries never thought they were immune from a problem in China. And they have vivid memories of the 2003 SARS epidemic. They took the Covid-19 threat seriously from early on and responded with a SARS strategy, not a seasonal flu strategy, points out an essay by Dominic Meagher in *The Interpreter*, published by The Lowy Institute, a Sydney-based independent think tank.

Thailand has a well-developed public health infrastructure and began screening all airport arrivals for fever on January 3, two days before China confirmed to the World Health Organisation that it had identified a “pneumonia of unknown cause”.

From the start, the Thai government strongly encouraged people to avoid crowds and confined spaces, and to always wear cloth masks when they left home. Masks are a familiar accessory in the region, often worn to reduce pollution inhalation, and people remember SARS and other coronavirus epidemics. So, the public was quick to respond, says Meagher.

Countries like Thailand and Vietnam went early and hard, prioritising health over other concerns. South Korea, which had one of the largest initial outbreaks outside China, is another success story. It has managed to slow down the spread of new coronavirus cases without lockdowns. This

country, of around 51 million, tests more than 20,000 people every day at designated testing sites and uses widespread contact tracing and isolation to break virus transmission.

The essay in *Foreign Affairs* makes a fundamental point which goes to the heart of the political economy of what we now see as resilience. The countries that suffered through SARS learned that to fight a pandemic requires not only top-down systems but also attention to the broader health of the populace. “Partly for this reason, and partly for political purposes, many of the SARS-affected countries — including Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Thailand — have worked since the early 2000s to finance universal health coverage or to enhance existing coverage. Thailand has extended health insurance coverage to documented and undocumented migrants,” it notes.

Universal health coverage is a key part of this resilience story. It has helped countries fight epidemics by bringing the population to a healthier baseline, reducing barriers to treatment. It is not just about spending money. An extremely important takeaway is the need to build trust in government services. Today, 95 per cent of Thais and 94 per cent of Vietnamese are likely to wear a mask.

This doesn't happen overnight or by magic. It needs social cohesion and solidarity. Government directives are harder to implement in hyper-polarised societies where trust has broken down.

There is a fundamental lesson for India here — bottom-up approaches that guarantee high quality universal healthcare and where empowered and equipped frontline professional healthcare workers take the decisions on how to confront Covid-19 are the ones that work. That is also the way to foster trust in the government healthcare system. It is still not too late to follow that path.

The writer focuses on development issues in India and emerging economies. She can be reached at patralekha.chatterjee@gmail.com

LETTERS

HELP TEACHERS

The plight of teachers, especially in private schools, has become worse. Most of them are teaching online. Many of them didn't have a smartphone. They bought gadgets so that students do not get neglected in their studies and made a lot of sacrifices. The government has supported parents not to pay fees without thinking about teachers. They are not getting salaries or getting truncated salaries. Teachers are feeling insecure and bearing the pain. I request the government to give relief.

Trevor Alvares
Hyderabad

Kudos to the High Court (HC to colleges: Immediately pay BE teachers 50% salary, DC, Sept. 30). It is a matter of concern that teachers had to run from pillar to post for salaries during lockdown. Though the government knows that teachers are indispensable in shaping the future of students and also uses their services for election duties, they failed to help them in these pandemic times.

Wasim Ahmed Khan
Secunderabad

REAL HERO

It's heartening to know that a reel villain Sonu Sood has turned into a real hero and been conferred with the prestigious ‘Humanitarian award’ by UNDP along with Angelina Jolie, Nicole Kidman, De Caprio and Priyanka for helping pandemic victims and daily wage labourers. He has made reel heroes look like zeroes. Long live Sood.

E.J. Kumar
Hyderabad

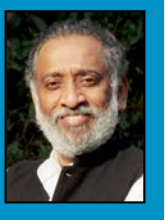
50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

Scope for fortifying Indo-Soviet ties

KIEV, September 30
A Soviet Government statement today summing up the results of President V.V. Giri's visit noted the existence of favourable prospects for the strengthening and broadening of close Indo-Soviet relations.

Such a development, the statement said, corresponded not merely to national interests, but would contribute to consolidation of peace in Asia and in the rest of the world. The statement released after President Giri's ten-day visit surveyed topics of bilateral and international interests covered in Mr Giri's talks with Soviet leaders and said they had reaffirmed the relevance of principles on of the two countries.

Dilip Cherian
Dilli Ka Babu



2 yrs after retiring, culture secy back in the same post

While senior bureaucrats often get re-employed with the government after they retire, it is certainly rare for a retired babu to be reappointed as secretary to the government to the same post he retired from two years earlier. But the Modi sarkar has many firsts (and in this instance, seconds) to its credit.

So, there were some puzzled faces when former bureaucrat Raghvendra Singh was recently appointed as culture secretary, replacing Anand Kumar, who was shifted as secretary of the National Commission for Backward Classes as part of a high-level reshuffle. Mr Singh, who belongs to the 1983-batch of the West Bengal cadre, is CEO of the Development of Museums and Cultural Spaces under the ministry of culture and will continue to hold that post as well. Mr Singh has been appointed

on a contract basis for one year. Interestingly, Mr Singh was the culture secretary from December 2017 till August 2018. So, the new culture secretary is the old culture secretary!

Before Mr Singh's (re)appointment, there was Parameswaran Iyer, who returned as secretary, drinking water and sanitation, in 2016 on contract although he had resigned from the IAS in 2010 to join the UN and then the World Bank. Interestingly, he did not complete his term but resigned last month for “personal reasons”.

A DIVIDED FORCE

If Delhi Police was feeling cornered and unloved after several retired top cops criticised its investigation of the riots in northeast Delhi in February this year, it has now found support in 26 retired IPS officers who have come out in defence of their Delhi brethren.

Delhi Police Commissioner S.N. Shrivastava was left scrambling for allies when the widely respected retired IPS officer Julio Ribeiro, a former Mumbai police commissioner and former DGP of Gujarat and Punjab, and former envoy to Romania, questioned the Delhi Police's handling of the probe into the riot cases. He accused the Delhi cops of taking action against “peaceful protestors” while ignoring the actual perpetrators of the riots and also noted that Mr Shrivastava was not addressing the issues that he had raised in his letter to the Delhi Police Commissioner.

Mr Ribeiro's broadside found resonance in many minds who see the police investigation as vilification of peaceful protesters and a politically motivated campaign. But it has also brought the venerated top cop in the line of fire of those who see this as an attempt to “demor-

alise the Indian Police Service”. However, Mr Ribeiro's detractors come across as attempting a rear-guard action that will do little to change the public perception about Delhi Police. And by pitting cop against cop, the force in khaki is split right down the middle.

IRS OFFICERS FEAR LOSS OF STATURE

Last month, the Modi sarkar announced reforms in the taxation system with the aim of making the system seamless, painless and faceless. The faceless assessment scheme will eliminate human interface between the taxpayer and the tax officials and has been largely welcomed by all. But not every IT babu is happy with the development.

According to sources, the IRS association of the Northeast region views the decision as one that will reduce the stature of the service.

The association members have reportedly proposed a complete makeover of the IRS including cadre restructuring, a new transfer and deputation policy, and creation of cadre posts in other ministries and departments. Apparently, the resentment among the IRS officers is due to their belief that faceless taxation will reduce the service to “cyber policing”.

Under faceless assessment, AI and data analytics-based systems will be used to identify taxpayers and send notices in a transparent manner.

This will inevitably require a change in how IT officials will function. The NE IRS officers are perhaps jittery about this change from the “normal”.

Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@Twitter.com. Let's multiply the effect.

IN BRIEF

'I am a woman' singer Reddy dies

Los Angeles: Helen Reddy, who shot to stardom in the 1970s with her feminist anthem "I Am Woman" and recorded a string of other hits, has died. She was 78. Reddy's children Traci and Jordan announced that the actress-singer died Tuesday in Los Angeles. "She was a wonderful Mother, Grandmother and a truly formidable woman," they said in a statement. "Our hearts are broken. But we take comfort in the knowledge that her voice will live on forever." The Australian-born singer enjoyed a prolific career, appearing in "Airport 1975" as a singing nun and scoring several hits, including "I Don't Know How To Love Him" from "Jesus Christ Superstar," "Ain't No Way To Treat a Lady," "Delta Dawn," "Angie Baby" and "You and Me Against the World".

7 parties to form Belgian govt

Brussels: Almost 500 days after Belgian parliamentary elections, seven parties from both sides of the linguistic aisle agreed early Wednesday on forming a fully functioning majority government that will centre on dealing with the pandemic and its economic impact.

A final negotiating session that lasted almost 24 hours found agreement on a common budget and had only one issue left to decide: Who would succeed Sophie Wilmes as prime minister. The seven parties consist of Liberals, Socialists and Greens, divided into separate linguistic entities, and the Dutch-speaking Christian Democrats. "The big political hurdles are behind us and I am happy we were able to forge a program with seven partners," said Christian Democrat negotiator Servais Verherstraeten.

Led by Dutch-speaking Liberal Alexander De Croo and francophone Socialist Paul Magnette, the parties found money to fund new initiatives.

Justice Ginsburg laid to rest

Arlington (US): Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg was buried Tuesday in a private ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery, laid to rest beside her husband and near some of her former colleagues on the court. Washington last week honoured the 87-year-old Ginsburg, who died Sept. 18, with two days where the public could view her casket at the top of the Supreme Court's steps and pay their respects. On Friday, the women's rights trailblazer and second woman to join the high court lay in state at the US Capitol, the first woman to do so. Already the capital is looking ahead to confirmation hearings expected to begin Oct. 12 for Amy Coney Barrett, whom President Donald Trump announced Saturday as his nominee for Ginsburg's seat. Barrett was meeting with senators on Tuesday. Arlington is best known as the resting place of approximately 400,000 service members, veterans and family members.

ISS AIR LEAK FORCES CREW WAKEUP

Cape Canaveral, Sept. 30: A small air leak at the International Space Station finally has been traced to the Russian side, following a middle-of-the-night search by astronauts.

Nasa said Tuesday that the two Russians and one American on board were awakened late Monday to hurriedly seal hatches between compartments and search for the ongoing leak, which appeared to be getting worse. It was the third time in just over a month that the crew had to isolate themselves on the Russian side, in an attempt to find the growing leak. It turns out instead of the leak getting bigger this time, a temporary temperature change caused the erroneous cabin air pressure reading, according to Nasa. The leak was first spotted a year ago.

Nasa officials stress that the leak remains small and poses no danger. The astronauts will now use leak detectors to try to pinpoint the leak in Russia's main living and working compartment, called Zvezda, Russian for Star. Space station deputy programme manager Kenny Todd said the good news is that "instead of a bunch of haystacks, we're down to maybe one haystack". But he added: "It's still a needle we're looking for." Nasa is sending up extra air supply tanks on its next space station delivery, scheduled for a Thursday departure from Virginia.

Don won't condemn white supremacists

Washington, Sept. 30: US President Donald Trump and his Democratic rival Joe Biden clashed over the issue of race in America in the first presidential debate wherein the Republican leader hesitated to condemn white supremacists. During the debate in Cleveland, Ohio on Tuesday, moderator Chris Wallace asked Trump, "Are you willing, tonight, to condemn white supremacists and militia groups and to say that they need to stand down?" "I would say almost everything I see is from the left wing, not the right wing," Trump replied.

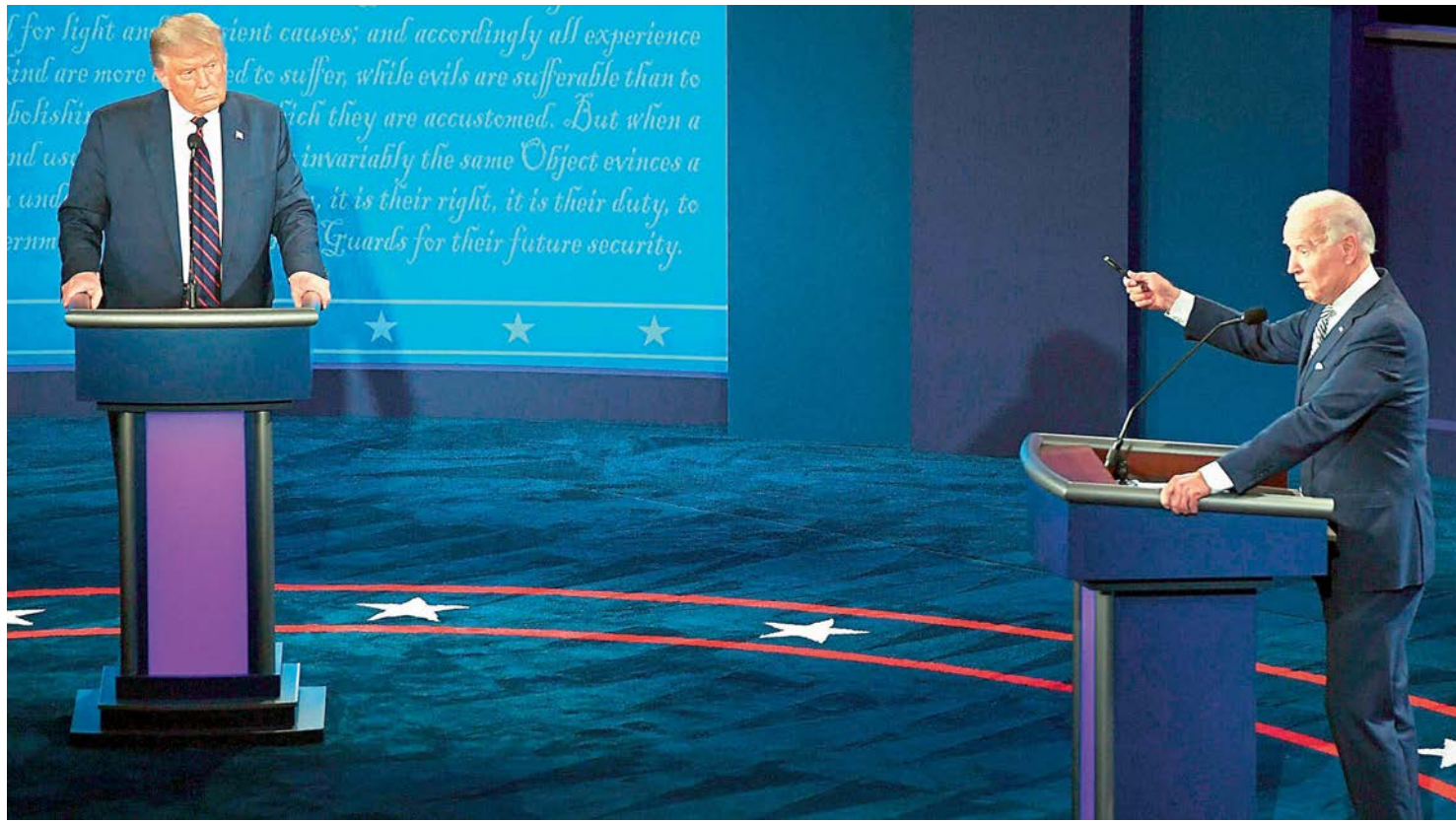
"I'm willing to do anything. I want to see peace." When pressed further, he said, "Give me a name", to which Biden chimed in, "Proud Boys", referring to a far-right outfit that has been designated as a hate group by the nonprofit legal advocacy organisation, Southern Poverty Law Centre. "Proud Boys — Stand back, stand by," Trump responded and then moved attention to the left-wing anti-fascist movement known as Antifa. "Somebody has got to do something about Antifa and the left because this isn't a right-wing problem, this is a left-wing problem," he said.

Biden alleged that Trump has used everything as a "dog whistle" to try to generate racist hatred and division. "This is a president who has used everything as a dog whistle to try to generate racist hatred, racist division. This is a man who in fact — you talk about helping African Americans, one in one thousand African Americans has been killed because of the coronavirus. And if he doesn't do something quickly, by the end of the year one in 500 will have been killed, one in 500 African Americans," he said.

"This man is the saviour of African Americans? This man care at all? This man's done virtually nothing...You have to look at what he did. And what he did has been disastrous for the African-American community," Biden charged. Defending his record as president, Trump attacked Biden for his role in crafting the 1994 crime bill.

"I'm letting people out of jail now," Trump said to Biden. "You've treated the black community as bad as anyone in the country. You called them superpredators and you've called them worse than that." "I never said that," Biden responded. Biden and Trump were responding to questions on why voters should trust them rather than their opponents to deal with the race issues facing the US.

"It's about equity and equality. It's about decency. It's



US President Donald Trump and Democratic Presidential candidate and former US Vice-President Joe Biden take part in the first presidential debate at Case Western Reserve University and Cleveland Clinic in Cleveland, Ohio, on Tuesday.

— AFP

Trump won't say when he'll make taxes public

Washington, Sept. 30: President Donald Trump won't say when he will finally make his personal taxes public as he has long promised. During the first presidential debate Tuesday, Trump was asked specifically about a report in *The New York Times* that revealed he paid only \$750 in personal income taxes each of those years.

All presidents except Trump have publicly released their taxes since the presidency of Richard Nixon. Trump has said since 2016 that he would eventually release them. But when asked by moderator Chris Wallace when,

he said only: "You'll get to see it." Democratic nominee Joe Biden quickly used that as a point of attack, saying Trump "does take advantage of the tax code" and "pays less tax than a schoolteacher." Trump shrugged off the attack, saying that all business leaders do the same "unless they are stupid."

Trump has asserted that he paid millions of dollars in income taxes and dubbed a recent media report that he paid just \$750 in income tax in the year he was elected US president as "wrong". "And let me just tell you, there was a story in one of

the papers," Trump said. Biden interrupted, asking Trump to show his tax papers. "I paid \$38 million one year. I paid \$27 million one year. You'll see it as soon as it's finished. You'll see it," Trump said, with Biden insisting on him showing his tax papers.

"You know if you wanted to, go to the Board of Elections. There's a 118 page or so report that says everything I have, every bank I have I'm totally underleveraged because the assets are extremely good and we have built a great company..." he said.

— Agencies

DON DENIGRATES OFFICE OF US PREZ: HARRIS

Washington, Sept. 30: US Senator Kamala Harris has criticised President Donald Trump's conduct during the first night of the presidential debates as one that "denigrates the office", as she extended support to the Democratic Party's presidential nominee, saying Joe Biden understands who are important — the American families. "I think the American people deserve to have an ability to compare and contrast the candidates," Harris said.

— PTI

A hot mess of a debate: Goodwin

Washington, Sep 30: A hot mess does not make for a great debate. Or an interesting one or even an entertaining one, said political columnist Michael Goodwin who added that America was mistreated Tuesday. A highly anticipated showdown in a closely fought presidential election in a deeply divided country had the potential to be a clarifying moment.

Instead, it was a sweaty, formless flop. Worse, it was annoying. Neither the candidates nor moderator

Chris Wallace acquitted themselves well.

Joe Biden was sharp and coherent enough, though he relied heavily on notes in front of him. He didn't exactly raise the bar of decorum with his name-calling, alternately labeling President Trump a clown, a liar and a racist. Ho hum.

Yet the bulk of the blame falls on Trump, who came with a clear plan and executed it flawlessly. Unfortunately, it was a very bad plan.

— Agencies

Indian-American supporters in US Prez election divided

Washington, Sept. 30: Indian-American supporters of President Donald Trump said the Republican leader "sealed the deal" at the first presidential election debate while the community members supporting his Democratic challenger Joe Biden asserted that the former vice president made a "successful case" to occupy the White House for the next four years.

Indian Americans, who account for one per cent of the country's population,

but are increasingly getting active in domestic politics, organised watch parties, mostly virtual, to watch the first of the three presidential debates between Trump and Biden. President Trump and Biden began the first presidential debate in Cleveland, Ohio on Tuesday with heated exchanges over health care, the Coronavirus and the future of the Supreme Court.

"President Trump seals the deal for his re-election, crushing Biden at the

debate. Game over," said Al Mason, co-chair of the Trump Victory Indian American Finance Committee. Indian American attorney from California Harmet K. Dhillon slammed debate moderator Chris Wallace, a popular Fox news anchor, for allegedly taking sides. "Chris Wallace is a disgrace. Republicans need to stop allowing the slanted media to have any role in debates in future years," tweeted Dhillon, co-chair of Sikhs for Trump.

— PTI

Over 50 women in DRC allege abuse by WHO workers

Kinshasa, Sept. 30: More than 50 women have accused aid workers from the World Health Organisation and leading NGOs of sexual exploitation and abuse during efforts to fight Ebola in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In interviews, 51 women — many of whose accounts were backed up by aid agency drivers and local NGO workers — recounted multiple incidents of abuse, mainly by men who said they were international workers, during the 2018 to 2020 Ebola crisis, according to an investigation by the New Humanitarian and the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

The majority of the women said numerous men had either propositioned them, forced them to have sex in exchange for a job or terminated contracts when they refused. The number and similarity of many of the accounts from women in the eastern city of Beni suggests the practice was widespread, with three organisations vowing to investigate the accusations uncovered. UN secretary-general António Guterres called for the allegations to be "investigated fully".

Some women said they were plied with drinks, others said they were

ambushed in offices and hospitals, and some said they were locked in rooms by men who promised jobs or threatened to fire them if they did not comply. "So many women were affected by this," said one 44-year-old, who told reporters that to get a job she had sex with a man who said he was a WHO worker.

She and the other women spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals. Some identifying details have been removed to protect their identities. "I can't think of someone who worked in the response who didn't have to offer something," she added.

Some women were cooks, cleaners and community outreach workers hired on short-term contracts, earning \$50 to \$100 (£40 to £80) a month — more than twice the normal wage. One woman was an Ebola survivor seeking psychological help. At least two women said they became pregnant.

Many women said they had not until now reported the incidents for fear of reprisals or losing their jobs. Most also said they were ashamed.

Some women said abuse occurred as recently as March. The WHO said it was investigating the allegations.

— Agencies

UNDECIDED VOTERS DESCRIBE TRUMP AS A 'CRACKHEAD', 'ARROGANT'

Washington, Sept. 30: The first presidential debate left undecided American voters in agreement about at least one thing: President Trump's negativity. Republican consultant and pollster Frank Luntz asked his focus group to use one word to describe the president and basically "every single word was negative," observed *Politico's* Tim Alberta.

One respondent from Wisconsin called Trump

obnoxious and un-presidential, while a Pennsylvania voter said he behaved like a "crackhead." Others described the president as being "un-American" and "arrogant."

In all, from 17 voters in swing states, 15 used negative words and just two used positive words or phrases to describe the president (that is, if you consider "an ass but a confident ass" to be a compliment).

— Agencies

Pakistan government to push for Nawaz's deportation from the UK

Islamabad, Sept. 30: Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan has asked relevant authorities to take steps to bring back PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif from London and to ensure that he faces the corruption cases pending against him in the courts, according to a media report on Wednesday. The decision was taken at a Cabinet meeting on Tuesday.

Khan asked the authorities to pursue the matter vigorously, the paper said. According to the Cabinet member, the government had earlier sent a request to the British government for the Pakistan Muslim

League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader's repatriation.

However, it would again send a fresh application now. Besides a normal application, a formal request for his extradition would also be made.

"Although we have no extradition treaty with the United Kingdom, wanted people can be repatriated under special arrangements as we had also handed over some people to the UK," the member said. On Wednesday, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) said that it needs to be determined if 70-year-old Sharif was evading court proceedings on purpose.

— PTI

PAK OPPOSITION PARTIES TO LAUNCH FIRST ANTI-GOVT RALLY ON OCT 11

Islamabad, Sept. 30: The newly-launched alliance of the major Opposition parties in Pakistan on Tuesday announced that it will hold its first public rally against the Imran Khan-led government on October 11, according to media reports.

The country's main Opposition parties last week launched the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), an alliance to hold a countrywide protest movement to oust the ruling government.

"On October 11, PDM will hold (its) first public rally and then the movement will spread all over Pakistan and rid Pakistan of this unconstitutional system," former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi was quoted as saying by the *Geo TV*.

According to a report in the *Dawn*, Abbasi said the anti-government movement will be launched across the country after the "historic" rally in Quetta.

— PTI

Armenia, Azerbaijan fight for 4th day, UN council calls for halt to hostilities

Yerevan (Armenia), Sept. 30: Heavy fighting between Armenian and Azerbaijan forces over the separatist region of Nagorno-Karabakh continued for a fourth straight day on Wednesday, in the biggest escalation of a decades-old conflict in years that has killed dozens and left scores of others wounded. The UN Security Council called on Armenia and Azerbaijan Tuesday to immediately halt fighting

over the separatist territory of Nagorno-Karabakh and urgently resume talks without preconditions.

The UN's most powerful body strongly condemned the use of force and backed Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' earlier call to immediately stop fighting, deescalate tensions and return to meaningful negotiations without delay. The two neighbors have been locked in conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, a region of

Azerbaijan that has been under the control of ethnic Armenian forces backed by Armenia since a war there ended in 1994.

International efforts to settle the conflict have stalled, and clashes have been frequent. The council expressed full support for "the central role" of the Organisation of Security and Cooperation in Europe, which has been trying to mediate peace talks, and urged the sides "to work closely with

them for an urgent resumption of dialogue without preconditions."

Azerbaijan's Defence Ministry said Armenian forces started shelling the town of Tartar on Wednesday morning, damaging "civilian infrastructure" and wounding people, while Armenian military officials reported that Azerbaijani forces were bombing positions of the Nagorno-Karabakh army in the north of the war-torn region.

— AP

FOR MODERATOR DEBATE WAS RUNAWAY TRAIN

New York, Sept. 30: For much of the opening presidential debate, moderator Chris Wallace looked like a man trying to stop a runaway train with his bare hands. The contest between President Donald Trump and ex-Vice-President Joe Biden was chaotic from start to finish. With interruptions and interjections, Trump tried to throw his Democratic opponent off stride. Pleas, increasingly frustrated and loud, were the only tools Wallace had at his disposal to try to maintain control. "Please let him speak, Mr President," Wallace tried more than once. The host pointed out he was the moderator, that he was the one to ask questions, that he hated to raise his voice but would. He reminded the president that his campaign had agreed to the ground rules.

— AP



Mike Pompeo

POMPEO ASKS VATICAN TO FLAY CHINA HR ABUSES

Rome, Sept. 30: US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo urged the Vatican on Wednesday to join the United States in denouncing violations of religious freedom in China, saying the Catholic Church should be at the forefront in the fight to insist on basic human rights there.

Pompeo made the appeal at a conference on religious freedom organised by the US Embassy to the Holy See, with top Vatican officials in the audience. It took place at the same time the Vatican is entering into delicate negotiations with Beijing on extending their controversial agreement on nominating bishops for China. Pompeo has strongly criticised the accord, penning an essay earlier this month suggesting that the Vatican had compromised its moral authority by signing it. His article greatly irritated the Vatican, which saw it as interference in the church's internal affairs.

— AP

SHORT TAKES

Mustafizur rues missing IPL

Dhaka: Bangladesh pacer Mustafizur Rahman rues missing out on playing in the IPL and the perks that come with it after the postponement of his national team's tour of Sri Lanka amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

On Monday, Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) President Nazmul Hasan had asked Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) to reschedule the three-match Test series next month, as the board wasn't willing to comply with the 14-day quarantine rule proposed by the host nation in view of the pandemic.

"It would have been great to play the Test series. Sri Lanka's proposal to have us quarantined for 14 days didn't seem possible for us," Mustafizur was quoted saying by *Cricbuzz*.

The pacer was not given the NOC to take part in the IPL due to national commitments after Mumbai Indians and Kolkata Knight Riders contemplated signing him. — *PTI*

Bairstow loses grip on Test deal

London: England wicketkeeper-batsman Jonny Bairstow lost his Test central contract on Thursday but Ollie Pope, Zak Crawley and Dom Sibley have been rewarded for impressive performances by being added to the red-ball retainer list.

The move by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) was not unexpected as Bairstow, 31, has played just one of the past 12 Test matches since the 2019 Ashes. The World Cup winner has been handed a specialist limited-overs deal, with Pope, Crawley and Sibley all promoted after scoring their maiden Test centuries over the past year. Mark Wood, thought to be a key part of England's plans to retain the Ashes, has also been named in the white-ball only list. There are a dozen names in each group, with just five — Joe Root, Ben Stokes, Jos Buttler, Jofra Archer and Chris Woakes — appearing in both. — *AFP*

Easy openers for Srikanth, Saina

Odense: Olympic hopefuls Kidambi Srikanth and Saina Nehwal were on Wednesday handed decent draws at the Denmark Open Super 750 tournament which will mark the restart of the adjusted international calendar after a coronavirus-forced hiatus of seven months.

Former world number one Saina and Srikanth will resume their hunt for valuable ranking points to inch closer to their Tokyo Olympics dreams when the \$750,000 tournament, the only event to take place since the All England Championship, begins on October 13.

Srikanth, a Rio Olympics quarterfinalist, will open against England's Toby Pentty and may face fellow Indian Subhankar Dey in the second round.

For world number 20 Saina, France's Yaelle Hoyaoux awaits her in the women's singles opener and she is likely to meet local favourite Mia Blüchfeldt, seventh seed, next. — *PTI*

Spurs beat Blues with last penalty

London: Tottenham staged a second-half comeback before eliminating Chelsea on penalties to reach the quarterfinals of the League Cup. The first nine penalties were all successfully converted before Chelsea's Mason Mount missed the target to ensure Tottenham advanced 5-4 in the shootout after the game ended 1-1.

Timo Werner scored his first goal for Chelsea in the 19th minute as Sergio Reguilón gave the ball away on his Tottenham debut at left back. Reguilón made amends in the second half when he chipped the ball over for Erik Lamela, who got ahead of Emerson Palmieri to net the equaliser in the 83rd minute. — *AP*

Live on TV

CRICKET

IPL: Kings XI Punjab vs Mumbai Indians from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

TENNIS

French Open: Matches from 2.30 pm on Star Sports, Select 2

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KNIGHTS' DAY

Kolkata clip Rajasthan wings with clinical performance

Dubai, Sept. 30: Kolkata Knight Riders beat Rajasthan Royals by 37 runs in their IPL match here on Wednesday.

Batting first, the Knights made 174 for 6 and then restricted the Royals to 137 for 9, Tom Curran being the top scorer with an unbeaten 54.

Earlier, Jofra Archer (2/18) hit the deck hard and clocked the fastest delivery of the tournament (152.1 kph) in a fiery spell, taking two key wickets of KKR — in-form opener Shubman Gill (47 from 34 balls) and skipper Dinesh Karthik (1) — after the Royals opted to field.

With Archer triggering a mid-innings collapse, the big-hitting Andre Russell (24 from 14) too was dismissed cheaply and it was left to England World Cup-winning skipper Eoin Morgan (23-ball 34 not out) to stay till the end.

Archer bowled the first over of the match and there was full pace in display in the range of 145-150kph mark and it needed Gill's brilliance to see him off with just one run from it.

With Gill looking well set for a second successive fifty, Archer was reintroduced in the 12th over and he dismissed the set opener straightway with a leading edge.

In his next over, Archer dismissed Karthik with a beauty, full of pace that went straight with a bit of inswing and the KKR skipper was forced to play, edging straight to Jos Buttler.

— *PTI*



Kamlesh Nagarkoti (centre) of the Kolkata Knight Riders celebrates taking the wicket of Riyan Parag of Rajasthan Royals in their IPL match at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium on Wednesday. — *BCCI*

IPL POINTS TABLE

Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
Delhi Capitals	3	2	1	0	4	+0.483
Kolkata Knight Riders	3	2	1	0	4	+0.017
Rajasthan Royals	3	2	1	0	4	-0.219
Royal Challengers Bangalore	3	2	1	0	4	-1.450
Kings XI Punjab	3	1	2	0	2	+1.498
Mumbai Indians	3	1	2	0	2	+0.654
Sunrisers Hyderabad	3	1	2	0	2	-0.228
Chennai Super Kings	3	1	2	0	2	-0.840

Tabulated as Played, Won, Lost, No Result, Points, Net Run Rate

SCORECARD

Kolkata Knight Riders: Shubman Gill c & b Archer 47, S. Narine b Unadkat 15, N. Rana c Riyan Parag b Rahul Tewatia 22, Andre Russell c Unadkat b Rajpoot 24, Dinesh Karthik c Buttler b Archer 13, Eoin Morgan (not out) 34, Pat Cummins c Samson b Tom Curran 12, Kamlesh Nagarkoti (not out) 8. **Extras:** (LB-3, W-8) 11. **Total:** (for 6 wickets, in 20 overs) 174. **FoW:** 1-36, 2-82, 3-89, 4-106, 5-115, 6-149. **Bowling:** Jofra Archer 4-0-18-2, Ankit Rajpoot 4-0-39-1, Jaydev Unadkat 2-0-14-1, Tom Curran 4-0-37-1, Gopal 4-0-43-0, Riyan Parag 1-0-14-0, Rahul Tewatia 1-0-6-1. **Rajasthan Royals:** Jos Buttler c Varun b Shivam Mavi 21, Steve Smith c Karthik b Cummins 3, Sanju Samson c Narine b Shivam Mavi 8, Robin Uthappa c Shivam Mavi b Nagarkoti 2, Riyan Parag c Shubman Gill b Nagarkoti 1, Rahul Tewatia b Varun 14, Tom Curran (not out) 54, Shreyas Gopal c Karthik b Narine 5, Jofra Archer c Nagarkoti b Varun 6, Jaydev Unadkat c Nagarkoti b Kuldeep Yadav 9, Ankit Rajpoot (not out) 7. **Extras:** (LB-6, W-1) 7; **Total:** (for 9 wickets, in 20 overs) 137. **FoW:** 1-15, 2-30, 3-39, 4-41, 5-42, 6-66, 7-81, 8-88, 9-106. **Bowling:** Sunil Narine 4-0-40-1, Pat Cummins 3-0-13-1, Shivam Mavi 4-0-20-2, Kamlesh Nagarkoti 2-0-13-2, C. Varun 4-0-25-2, Kuldeep Yadav 3-0-20-1.

DELHI CAPITALS CAPTAIN FINED FOR SLOW RATE

Abu Dhabi, Sept. 30: Delhi Capitals skipper Shreyas Iyer has been slapped with a fine of ₹12 lakh after his team maintained a slow over-rate against Sunrisers Hyderabad in their IPL match here.

"Delhi Capitals Captain Shreyas Iyer has been fined after his team maintained a slow over-rate during their Indian Premier League match match against Sunrisers Hyderabad on 29 September 2020. As it was his team's first offence of the season under the IPL's Code of Conduct relating to minimum over-rate offences, Mr. Iyer was fined ₹12 lakh," an IPL release stated.

Last week, RCB captain Virat Kohli was found guilty of his team maintaining a slow-over rate against Kings XI Punjab and was also fined ₹12 lakh. — *PTI*

Rashid pays tribute to late mom after top class show

Abu Dhabi, Sept. 30: Sunrisers Hyderabad's strike bowler Rashid Khan struggled to hold back tears, dedicating his Man of the Match performance against Delhi Capitals in the IPL to his mother and biggest fan who died earlier this year.

Rashid's triple strike made all the difference, allowing Sunrisers to defend 162 for their first win of the IPL season, on Tuesday.

"It has been a tough one and a half year for me, first my dad expired and then my mom (in June this year). And it took a bit of time for me to come back."

"My mom was my biggest fan, especially in the IPL and when I was the MoM, she would always talk to me through the night," recalled an emotional Rashid at the post-match presentation. Rashid said he did not



It has been a tough one-and-a-half year for me, first my dad expired and then my mom (in June this year). And it took a bit of time for me to come back. My mom was my biggest fan, especially in the IPL and when I was the MoM, she would always talk to me through the night.

— **RASHID KHAN**
Sunrisers Hyderabad player

feel the pressure going into the field and reaped the benefits of bowling quicker than usual on a slow surface.

"I bowled quicker today, when I started and bowled my first ball, I realised it. You need two three balls to know what the right pace is. In these conditions you need to bowl back of a length to the

batsmen. Warner always backs me and tells me that you know what's best for the team. Only when things aren't going my way I go and ask the captain what to do," Rashid added.

Delhi Capitals skipper Shreyas Iyer said his team did not read the conditions well in their first game here. — *PTI*

HYDERABAD OUTPLAYED US: COACH RICKY

Abu Dhabi, Sept. 30: Delhi Capitals coach Ricky Ponting had no qualms in admitting that they were "outplayed" in all departments in the IPL game against Sunrisers Hyderabad and refused to blame the pitch, saying it played better when his team batted.

"This was Delhi Capitals' first loss of the season. Chasing 163 for win and to maintain a clean slate, DC were restricted to 147 for seven at the Shaikh Zayed Stadium on Tuesday night. Asked if the conditions made the difference in the game, Ponting insisted that SRH executed their plans better than his team.

"I don't think the conditions were that different. The grounds are bigger, there are bigger square boundaries here. (But) At the end of the day, we were just outplayed by SRH," Ponting said. — *PTI*

Wounded KXIP face gutted MI

Abu Dhabi, Sept. 30: Coming off heartbreaking losses, the Indian Premier League game between Mumbai Indians and Kings XI Punjab will be a test of character for both sides as they look to regain momentum here on Thursday.

KXIP were at the receiving end of the highest successful run-chase in the tournament history as Rajasthan Royals overhauled a target of 224 with three balls to spare on Sunday.

While Kieron Pollard and Ishan Kishan led a remarkable fight-back, chasing 202, before Mumbai went down to Royal Challengers Bangalore in a Super Over.

KXIP have failed to tighten the screws when it mattered most. In their two losses, they were in a good position but could not grab the moments.

Their bowling looked out of sorts against Rajasthan as they failed to defend a big total with Rahul Tewatia hitting pacer Sheldan Cottrell for five sixes in an over to win the match for his team.

Mumbai Indians are blessed with a splendid batting firepower with the likes of Rohit,

NUMBERS GAME

HEAD TO HEAD

OVERALL:

- Matches: 24
- Mumbai won: 13
- Punjab won: 11

MEETING IN 2019

- Kings XI Punjab beat Mumbai Indians by 8 wickets at Mohali
- Mumbai Indians beat Kings XI Punjab by 3 wickets at Mumbai

FOR THE RECORD

- Rohit Sharma who scored 4998 runs at an average of 31.63 and a strike rate of 130.97 in 186 innings of 191 matches, needs just two runs to become the third batsman to score 5000 or more runs in IPL.
- Lokesh Rahul with 222 runs at an average of 111.00 and a strike rate of 156.33 in three innings is the highest run-getter in this IPL.

— *S. PERVEZ KAISER*

Suryakumar Yadav and Ishan Kishan at the top-order, followed by the big-hitting Pollard and Hardik Pandya. A major cause of concern for them will be pace ace Jasprit Bumrah's inconsistency. So far he has picked up only three wickets for his team. — *PTI*

A diamond in the rough, Natarajan

Chennai, Sept. 30: Breaking through the shackles of poverty by bowling pinpoint yorkers at will, Thangarasu Natarajan has done almost everything he could for his family, except for convincing his mother to give up selling chicken on the roadside.

That she wouldn't as she feels it had helped the family survive the tough times, said Jayaprakash, Natarajan's mentor.

The birth of Natarajan as a death bowling specialist had taken place a few years before the ongoing IPL, where he is rattling the best of batsmen with his yorkers, ball after ball.

In the intervening period, he has managed to build his parents a house, give his sisters education, open an academy in his Chinnappampatti village in Tamil Nadu's Salem district and convince a teammate to not give up the game.

All this while perfecting the art of bowling yorkers and carrying much of Tamil Nadu's pace bowling hopes on his shoulders.

"I am not surprised as he has worked very hard. He has gone through a lot. He has overcome injury prob-



Thangarasu Natarajan

lems, worked his way back into the state team and is now doing well when given an opportunity by SRH," Jayaprakash said.

First picked by Kings XI Punjab for ₹3 crore in 2017, Natarajan took three years to come of his age at the big stage, having proved expensive in the six games that he had played in the past. He was picked by Sunrisers Hyderabad in 2018 but played his first game for them only this season. In SRH's win over Delhi Capitals on Tuesday, Natarajan played his part by hurling a series of yorkers in the innings 14th and 18th over.

His spell of 4-0-21-1 included the prize wicket of Marcus Stoinis. — *PTI*

BOLSTERING THE MIDDLE ORDER IS WARNER TRICK

Abu Dhabi, Sept. 30: Bolstered by the inclusion of Kane Williamson, Sunrisers Hyderabad skipper David Warner is focussed on adding depth and power to his team's fragile middle-order as it moves forward in the Indian Premier League.

Opener Jonny Bairstow's sublime fifty was complemented by Williamson's 26-ball 41 and a stellar bowling effort from Rashid Khan as SRH outplayed Delhi Capitals by 15 runs in the IPL match here on Tuesday.

"We were on track to get 170-180, there is talk of our middle order not being that good, but we put our game together against Delhi and we backed ourselves, we played fluently and we got ourselves a good total," Warner said.

"It was a big call but, at the end of the day, if we get our top four batting right and back our bowlers, we will come good. For us, it is important to establish in the middle," he added. — *PTI*

Djokovic, Nadal on a roll in Paris

Paris, Sept. 30: Defending champion Rafael Nadal took another step closer to a 13th Roland Garros title on Wednesday with a 6-1, 6-0, 6-3 win over Mackenzie McDonald of the United States.

Second seed Nadal claimed his 95th career win at the tournament and next faces either Kei Nishikori of Japan or Italy's Stefano Travaglia for a place in the last 16.

Meanwhile, Novak Djokovic's bid to become the first man in half a century to win all four Grand Slam titles twice got off to a convincing start. Djokovic eased to a 6-0, 6-

2, 6-3 victory, reaching the second round in Paris for a record-equaling 16th time.

It was also his 32nd win in 33 matches in 2020, his only loss coming when he was defaulted from the US Open.

Tuesday's demolition was the not the first time Ymer, the World No. 80 had faced Djokovic who is chasing a second French Open title and 18th career major.

In the immediate aftermath of his US Open retreat, he went to Rome where he captured a record 36th Masters title. Djokovic will meet Lithuania's Ricardas Berankis for a place in the last 32. — *AFP*



Novak Djokovic serves against Mikael Ymer of Sweden in the first round match of the French Open tennis tournament at the Roland Garros stadium in Paris on Tuesday. Djokovic won in straight sets 6-0, 6-2, 6-3. — *AP*