





## SHORT TAKES

VISHWAKARMA  
JAYANTI FETE TO  
BE HELD TODAYDC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 16

Vishwakarma Jayanti will be celebrated on Thursday as a tribute to Lord Vishwakarma, the divine architect, according to Rithambra, a registered trust which said it was organising an online event as part of the celebrations.

The event, according to the organisation, “is a day to remember and cherish the professional arts, skills and its practitioners who design and shape our world”. This annual event introduces, acknowledges, marvels and felicitates great craftsmen and artists carrying this ancient Indian wisdom, according to the organisation.

The online event scheduled to begin at 9 am on Thursday, will include talks on temple restoration, Vishwakarma tradition, and interviews with sculptors. More information on the event can be found at <https://ritambhara.org.in/vis-hwakarma-jayanti/>.

BRAOU DEGREE  
EXAMS FROM  
ON OCTOBER 5DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 16

Dr B. R. Ambedkar Open University (BRAOU) on Wednesday announced its schedule of examinations to be held in the months of October and November. The exams will start on October 5 with UG (CBCS) sixth semester examinations and go on till November 17.

According to a BRAOU communication, UG (CBCS) 6th semester examinations will be held from October 5 to October 10, 5th semester exams from October 11 to 16 and 1st semester exams from November 7 to 17. Degree 3rd year exams for old batches will be from October 18 to 23, 2nd year exams from October 27 to November 2, and 1st year exams from November 4 to 7.

Timings of these examinations will be from 2 pm to 5 pm. Students have been advised to visit the university portal [www.braouonline.in](http://www.braouonline.in) for detailed time table. They can get further details from BRAOU study centres or call help desk numbers 7382929570/580/590/600.

ABVP WANTS  
EXAMS UNDER  
UGC GUIDELINESDC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 16

The state unit of Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) has submitted a memorandum to Telangana State Council of Higher Education chairman Prof. Papi Reddy demanding that all UGC guidelines be followed for conducting exams in the state. The memorandum comes in the wake of safety guidelines being allegedly violated recently while holding the exams.

The parishad pointed out that it will be impossible for 2,50,000 students hailing from rural areas to write their exams in the absence of proper transport and accommodation facilities.

PROPERTY TAX  
PAYMENT LAST  
DATE EXTENDEDDC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 16

The state government on Wednesday extended the last date for payment of reduced property tax dues, by 90 per cent, in the all urban local bodies' limits to October 31. The government had earlier announced that it would waive 90 per cent of property tax dues provided the property owner clears the principal amount of tax dues for the year 2019-20 along with 10 per cent of interest on the accumulated arrears at one go in all urban local bodies including the GHMC.

The decision to extend the deadline for the reduced tax payment scheme was taken following a request from Commissioner, GHMC who requested that the One Time Scheme be extended for another 45 days as it will benefit tax payers. The extension, according to the orders issued on Wednesday, will also provide time to the deputy and zonal commissioners to settle issues and improve revenues as well as streamline records of arrears.

## Heavy rains claim 2 lives

10.9 cm rain inundates several parts of city, disrupts power supply

T.S.S. SIDDHARTH | DC  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 16

A sudden and ferocious downpour on Wednesday evening swamped Hyderabad city and its surrounding areas causing havoc and resulting in at least two deaths amidst reports of flooded roads, vehicles being carried away by rainfed, sudden floods that turned the city's roads into fast-moving rivers, and utter chaos on many of the main city road junctions with traffic either coming to a grinding halt or moving at a pace slower than that of a snail.

Two persons were killed when a wall of a house collapsed on them under the Medipally police station limits in Peerzadiguda municipality, just outside the Hyderabad city limits.

During the first three hours of Wednesday evening's downpour, several areas of the city received upwards of 10 cms of rain, officials at the Indian meteorological department (IMD) here said.

The weather on Wednesday witnessed thunder and lightning that accompanied the at times spells of very heavy rain, could be expected to continue over the next four days over much of the state, the IMD has warned.

“The city received an extremely intense spell of rainfall. This was due to an upper-air cyclonic circulation over the state. This is expected to bring rains for the next 48 hours, while the intensity might not be the same, we predict that there would rain,” K. Naga Ratna, director, IMD, told *Deccan Chronicle*.

As of 9 pm, the highest rainfall was recorded in Falaknuma at Chandulal Baradari, followed by Shaikpet, RDO Office Attapur and Film Nagar. These areas received 109.8 mm, 109.8 mm, 105 mm and, 97.5 mm of rainfall respectively. The highest rainfall in the state of 129 mm was registered at Satwar in Zaheerabad mandal.

The rains on Wednesday resulted in disruption of power supply in several areas and officials of the Telangana state southern power distribution company limited (TSSPDCL) said that they formed an



Motorists wade through flooded waters at VST crossroads on Wednesday.

— DEEPAK DESHPANDE



A man on a motorcycle rides through a flooded street at Bagh Lingampally on Wednesday.

— GANDHI

emergency team to tend to all issues pertaining to power supply.

“People should be vigilant about power poles, transformers and wires. If wires are cut on roads or buildings anywhere, the company should be notified immediately,”

said TSSPDCL chairman and managing director, G. Raghuma Reddy.

In case of voltage fluctuations or power outages, complaints can be made to the special control room on 7382072104, 7382072106,

7382072106, 7382071574 along with 1912, 100 or local fuse off call office, he said.

Similarly, the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) received a total of 95 rain-related complaints, which

included water-logging, building or wall collapse, tree fall, potholes and dilapidated building collapses.

The highest number of complaints were those pertaining to waterlogging at 52.

Inter admissions  
schedule outHARLEEN MINOCHA | DC  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 16

Telangana State Board of Intermediate Education (TSBIE) on Wednesday announced the schedule for admissions to academic year 2020-21. According to it, issue of application forms for first phase of admissions has started from Wednesday and will go on till September 30. The schedule for the second phase of admissions will be announced at a later date.

Admissions will be on the basis of Grade Point Average (GPA) and subject-wise grade point (GP). There will be no additional admission test. Candidates who want to seek admission on condonation of gap period have to obtain a local candidate / residential certificate

● **ADMISSIONS WILL be on the basis of Grade Point Average (GPA) and subject-wise grade point (GP).**

cate for the gap period from the local Tehsildar. TSBIE has informed students and parents that admissions must be taken only in affiliated colleges, whose list is available on the official website of the board.

The warning comes in view of complaints against several private junior colleges about violation of fire safety guidelines.

The board has suggested that even though there is uncertainty about operation of such colleges, there will not be a shortage of seats available during this year.

Govt unveils ₹140 crore  
Ambedkar statue projectDC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 16

Nearly four-and-a-half years after the state government announced that it would install a 125-foot Dr B.R. Ambedkar statue in Hyderabad, the design of the statue and the associated Ambedkar memorial were unveiled here on Wednesday.

Images of the proposed statue project were released by ministers Etala Rajendar, Koppula Easwar, Satyavathi Rathod, government whip Guvvala Balaraju, Rega Kantha Rao, S. Ravishankar, at a press meet in the Legislative Assembly complex.

Easwar said the government has issued orders for the ₹140 crore statue project that will be spread over 11 acres next to



The Ambedkar statue and memorial will be spread over 11 acres next to Hussainsagar.

Hussainsagar. The Ambedkar Park, he said, will also have a museum and a library.

The statue that will stand 125-foot tall, will be 45.5-feet wide and will use

791 tonnes of steel and 96 tonnes of brass, he added.

Minister Rajendar released the mock ups of the Ambedkar Park and the designs for the statue.

Gudur: Book  
TRS leader for  
assaulting girlDC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 16

Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee treasurer Guduru Narayana Reddy demanded stern action against TRS corporator from Serilingampally, Ragam Nagender Yadav who allegedly assaulted a young girl in Lingampalli.

Narayana Reddy, in a statement on Wednesday, said that Nagender Yadav assaulted the girl, Ananya Kurikala, when she objected to the corporator parking his vehicle in an incorrect manner. “It is clearly evident from the video, which has gone viral on social media, that the TRS corporator used offensive language and threatened her using his official position. He even

● **THE SENIOR** Congress leader demanded that DGP P. Mahender Reddy take stern action against Nagender Yadav.

assaulted her in full public view. This is nothing but utter misuse of power and wrong display of arrogance. He openly intimidated a young girl of dire consequences with criminal intent just because she opposed a wrong-doing by the ruling party corporator,”

Narayana Reddy said. The Congress leader demanded that DGP P. Mahender Reddy take stern action against Nagender Yadav, and charged the local police with reportedly presuring the girl and her family to ‘compromise’ with the TRS corporator.

12 more Covid  
deaths in stateBALU PULIPAKA | DC  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 16

Covid-19 deaths in Telangana neared the 1,000 mark with the state government on Wednesday announcing that 12 more persons had succumbed to coronavirus taking the toll to 996. The 2,273 new positive cases that have been registered have taken the overall total to 1,62,844.

Meanwhile, the government, in its Wednesday morning's Covid-19 bulletin for the 24-hour period between Monday and Tuesday evenings, said it added 253 beds in its hospitals designated as Covid-19 treatment centres in the state. This takes the total beds available in 42 Covid-19 government hospitals to 8,345.

However, simultaneously, the government appeared to have approved 10 more private hospitals to provide treatment to Covid-19 patients. The number of such private hospitals now stands at 214 and the bed strength rose by 555 to touch 11,288.

The state has 30,401 active cases. A total of 55,636 samples were collected for testing during the same period and results were awaited for 883 samples. Men continue to vastly outnumber women with 1,00,686 or 61.83 per cent of cases while 62,158 women have tested positive till date.

Fresh cases in Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation area were 325, the highest for any geographical area in the state. Ranga Reddy district saw 185 new cases, followed by Nalgonda with 175, Medchal-Malkajigiri 164, Karimnagar 122, and Warangal Urban 144 fresh

COP TESTS +VE  
AFTER B'DAY  
BASH, SUSPENDEDDC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 16

The Rachakonda police commissioner Mahesh Bhagwat on Wednesday suspended a police constable from the Keesara police station who organised his birthday party in violation of instructions, and was later found to have contracted Covid-19.

The constable, identified as Shiva Kumar, at his birthday party, invited his colleagues and friends at the event held at the guest of the Tourism Department at Keesaragutta on Tuesday. He and two others who attended the party later tested positive for Covid-19, according to the Rachakonda police chief.

A charge memo was also issued to other police officers from Keesara police station as well as the Keesara inspector of police J. Narendar Goud following the party.

● **THE STATE** has 30,401 active cases. A total of 55,636 samples were collected for testing during the same period and results were awaited for 883 samples. Men continue to vastly outnumber women with 1,00,686 or 61.83 per cent of cases while 62,158 women have tested positive till date.

Coronavirus infections. Khammam district recorded 97 new cases, while Nizamabad and Siddipet districts recorded 91 new cases each.

Sravani death case:  
Ashok surrendersSANJAY SAMUEL PAUL  
| DC  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 16

The absconding accused in the police case relating to television actress Sravani Kondapalli's death by suicide, film producer Ashok Reddy, on Wednesday gave himself up to the assistant commissioner of police, Panjagutta. And after a medical examination at Osmania General Hospital, Reddy was grilled by the police for hours.

There have also been several questions as to how the status of Ashok Reddy, first listed as A1, or Accused No. 1 in the case, was changed to A3 in the chargesheet.

It may be recalled that 26-year-old Kondapalli died by suicide on the night of September 8 at her residence. On a complaint lodged by her mother, the police launched an investigation, with suspicions on

the roles that three of her friends, Devraj Reddy, Sai Krishna Reddy and producer of the movie RX100, Ashok Reddy, were involved with her and had caused her to take her own life.

While Devaraj Reddy, and Sai Krishna Reddy were picked up by the police and taken into custody, Ashok Reddy was absconding and his mobile phone was switched off.

According to the police, Kondapalli came into contact with Ashok Reddy in 2017 and then went on to play a role in one of his films. Subsequently, they had developed a close relationship. The police also discovered during their investigations that Kondapalli had in the past used Ashok Reddy's credit card for shopping.

The police also said that each of the three men had at one point of time or other promised to marry her but reneged on their promises.

## INFRA | WORKS Sewerage network in peripheral municipalities to be developed

## Will expedite Old City growth: KTR

S.A. ISHAQUI | DC  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 16

Municipal administration and urban development minister K. T. Rama Rao on Wednesday assured in the Legislative Assembly that he will convene a meeting of MLAs from Hyderabad Parliamentary constituency in a couple of days to discuss and chalk out an action plan for expediting development works in the Old City.

He further assured AIMIM floor leader Akbaruddin Owaisi that he would convene a meeting with L&T to devise a

strategy for extending Hyderabad Metro Rail to the Old City.

Replying to various issues raised by members during a short discussion on civic works and other infrastructure facilities in GHMC and other municipalities in the state, the minister said ₹2,020 crore is being spent for infrastructure development under the Strategic Road Development Project (SRDP) in Old City ₹4,030 crore expenditure is being incurred on storm water drainage construction and expansion.

Stating that 105 of 172

MGD of water being drawn from Krishna River is being supplied to the Old City, he announced that the government is considering another proposal to draw about 20 tmc from the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Scheme via Sunkesula reservoir,

besides exploring plans to integrate Godavari and Krishna drinking water supply systems for providing drinking water to peripheral areas of the twin cities. The minister said tenders have been finalised and work will commence for construction of a multi-storeyed

parking lot at Khilwath at a cost of ₹50 crore.

Following a request from MIM MLA Akbaruddin Owaisi to develop Gandipet, he said Chief Minister K.

Chandrashekar Rao is keen on linking Gandipet with Musi and Himayatsagar to supply water from Kaleshwaram project and ensure adequate water for both drinking water and irrigation purposes.

He said the state government is planning to develop a sewerage network in peripheral municipalities on the lines of drinking

water network. The government has engaged Shah Consultants and they have already submitted a report in this regard.

These works will be implemented in three phases with the project cost being estimated at ₹3,700 crore.

He said the state government is planning to increase the capacity of its Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) by about 1,200 MGD from current 800 MGD as part of Musi Riverfront Development Project for catering to the growing needs of peripheral areas of the twin cities.



## OTHER STORIES

MAN KILLED BY  
3 PERSONS TO  
SETTLE OLD ISSUESDC CORRESPONDENT  
KHAMMAM, SEPT. 16

A man was killed in Adavi Maddulapalli Gram Panchayat in Kamepalli mandal on Wednesday. Three persons attacked Madavi Laxmaiah, 56, and killed him to settle old scores and fled from the place. A case on filed and investigation is on.

RECORD 2 LAKH  
CUSECS INFLOWS  
INTO SRSPDC CORRESPONDENT  
NIZAMABAD, SEPT. 16

In a record level, Sriramsagar project received 2.21 lakh cusecs of water on Wednesday from Maharashtra. By lifting 40 radial crests gates, the officials released around 2 lakh cusecs of water into river Godavari in downstream areas of the project. Heavy rains in eastern Maharashtra improved water flow in river Godavari.

Maharashtra irrigation department officials released water from Gaikwad project and reaching downstream areas in Telangana state. Water inflows gradually decreased to 1.70 lakh cusecs and 1.24 lakh cusecs by Wednesday evening. The officials also opened 26 gates and later reduced it to 16 gates.

Nizamabad district collector C. Narayana Reddy directed revenue officials on the banks of river Godavari in the district to be alert on flood conditions. People should be alert on flood flow, he said. The district administration is ready to tackle flood conditions in the district, he said.

Nanded district administration in Maharashtra and Nizamabad district officials are coordinating on water flows in river Godavari.

2 tmc WATER TO  
NIZAMSAGAR  
AYACUT ASSUREDNARENDER PULLOOR | DC  
NIZAMABAD, SEPT. 16

In the backdrop of meagre availability of water in Nizamsagar project, Assembly Speaker Pocharam Srinivas Reddy has formulated alternative plans to irrigate agriculture lands under the project's ayacut in Nizamabad and Kamareddy districts.

The Speaker has also requested Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao to release at least 2 tmc of water from Nizamsagar project as and when required to which the CM has agreed, it is stated.

The decades-old project has not filled up for long, as there have been not been much inflows in River Manjeera. Water level at Nizamsagar is at 1387 feet as on Wednesday against its full reservoir level of 1405 ft. Compared to its gross storage capacity of 17,802 tmc, the water available is just 2.95 tmc. Though there have been heavy rains in most parts of the state, Nizamsagar is receiving mere 4,300 cusecs of water from upstream areas.

Nizamsagar project has an ayacut of 2.08 lakh acres in undivided Nizamabad district. Due to shortage of water, farmers have sown crops only on 1.20 lakh acres during this Vanakalam (Kharif) season. Singitham and Kalyani reservoirs have instead been releasing water into the Nizamsagar main canal due to shortage. There will be no need of water for crops under Nizamsagar ayacut till September end. Farmers may, however, require water in October.

Around 30,000 acres under Nizamsagar project are irrigated with reverse pumping of water from Alisagar project to Chandur village. For the benefit of farmers, the Assembly Speaker and Banswada MLA Pocharam Srinivas Reddy took the issue of water shortage to the notice of CM KCR seeking release of water from Nizamsagar.

Nizamabad district cooperative central bank chairman Pocharam Bhaskar Reddy said the state government is ready to protect the interests of farmers under Nizamsagar project ayacut. Farmers need not worry about water as the Chief Minister has given an assurance to help farmers of combined Nizamabad district, he stated.

Speaking to this correspondent, Nizamsagar project deputy executive engineer Dattatri said rains may yet change the scenario in the ayacut area. Inflows into River Manjeera from upstream areas are meagre and only 4,300 cusecs of water is reaching the project, he disclosed.

Students demand opening  
of private, govt hostels

Students from villages need accomadation during exams

ANUDEEP CEREMILLA |  
DC  
WARANGAL, SEPT 16

Because of the thoughtless decision of the state government, students hailing from remote villages are facing untold woes to appear for the year-end examinations being held from Thursday, said Akhila Bharata Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) state secretary Ambala Kiran Kumar.

Demanding the government and private hostels to be opened for the benefit of the students, the ABVP activists held a demonstration at the Hanamkonda Bus stand junction here on Wednesday.

The students wrote exams, slept and also shared meals on the road as part of the protest. Speaking on the occasion, Mr Kiran Kumar observed that the students across the state hailing from villages do not have a place to stay in the cities where they have their exam centres as all the private and government hostels were closed.

"When the state government released an order to conduct examinations,



ABVP activists stage demonstration at Hanamkonda bus station.

they were also supposed to pass an order to open the hostels. Where are the students supposed to stay while appearing for examinations for 15 days to one month?" Mr Kiran asked demanding the immediate opening of hostels in the state. He also said proper transport facilities need to be provided to the students.

This apart, the state government must follow the

UGC guidelines to conduct examinations in multiple choice question format. However, it is being conducted in normal format which is inconvenient to the students.

"In the normal format, the examinations for degree students would take one month but with multiple choice online exams, it can be completed within a week. This will reduce the number of

days the students spend in the cities where the spread of coronavirus is high and carry it to their villages," Mr Kiran explained.

State joint secretary Punnam Venu, Lawcet convenor Mallikarjun, Warangal Urban district convenor Ganesh, Pasha, Kumar, Balaram, Rajkumar, Balaraju and Kumar were present among others.

SOIL TESTING AT  
AIRDROME  
HALTEDDC CORRESPONDENT  
ADILABAD, SEPT. 16

The soil testing in the existing airdrome has been stopped by a private agency appointed by the Airport Authority of India two days ago due to no clearance from the Indian Air Force in the Adilabad district.

The Airport Authority of India has appointed a private agency to study the feasibility for setting up an airport or airstrip in the existing airdrome in the Adilabad.

The existing airdrome is under the control of the Indian Air Force.

The members of the private agency are waiting for the permission to conduct soil testing in the existing airdrome and submit a report to the Airport Authority of India.

● THE AIRDROME is under the control of the Indian Air Force.

## TRS forgetting history of land: BJP

DC CORRESPONDENT  
WARANGAL, SEPT. 16

It is high time the TRS government is taught a fitting lesson for reflecting the Nizam's feudal rule, said former MLA and BJP leader Revuri Prakash Reddy.

He flagged off a bike rally with the national flags at Nallabelli in Warangal Rural district on Wednesday demanding the official celebration of Telangana Liberation Day.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr Reddy asked the Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao why he is not celebrating the Telangana Liberation day even though he urged the previous governments to celebrate the same. He

● STUDENTS ACCUSE TRS government of ignoring youth after coming to power

● STUDENTS' LEADERS plan Chalo Assembly programme on Sept. 21

lakhs of youth have lost their jobs due to Covid-19 and lockdown. Hundreds of them have committed suicides. The suicide by Nagulu before the assembly is a start example of the state of affairs in the Telangana, he said. He protested that there has been no response from the government on these incidents.

Ramesh said their party has called for a 'Chalo Assembly' programme on September 21 and asked youth to attend it in large numbers.

"We should not despair but fight against the government and achieve our goals", he said.

Leaders and activists of the samithi also distributed pamphlets on the Chalo Assembly programme during the padayatra.



Activists of Telangana Vidyarthi Jana Samiti serve tea in Khammam on Wednesday as a symbolic protest on not filling up vacant posts in the government.

Vidyarthi Jana  
Samiti takes out  
padayatra for jobsDC CORRESPONDENT  
KHAMMAM, SEPT. 16

Telangana Vidyarthi Jana Samithi, the students' wing of Telangana Jana Samithi Party, staged a padayatra - Brathuku Theruvu Sadhana Yatra - in Khammam town on Wednesday to highlight the rising unemployment in the state.

Accusing the KCR government of not filling vacant posts in government jobs, the activists protested by selling tea at stalls, pushing carts, selling fruits and dispensing fuel at petrol bunks.

"KCR himself is advocating that we graze sheep and cattle, and sell fish. He has made no effort to provide jobs in the government though there are 2.86 lakh vacant posts at present," Vidyarthi Jana Samithi leader Ramesh said.

He pointed out that while finance minister T. Harish Rao has said that one lakh posts have been filled, TPSPC chairman Ghanta Chakrapani has put this figure at 37,000. "Whose figure is correct," Ramesh asked. He pointed out that

SEETHAKKA PLEA  
TO MINISTERS  
TO SOLVE ISSUES  
IN MULUGUDC CORRESPONDENT  
WARANGAL, SEPT. 16

Mulugu MLA Danasari Anasuya alias Seethakka on Thursday met the ministers for transport and roads and buildings during the Assembly sessions in Hyderabad and appealed to them to address several issues in Mulugu district.

She told the minister for transport Puvvada Ajay Kumar that though the Mulugu district was recently created, the RTC bus depot in Mulugu district headquarter is in a dilapidated condition causing severe inconvenience to the passengers. She appealed to him to take up the reconstruction works immediately.

"We have taken this issue to the notice of the government several times previously but no action was taken. At the same time, Mulugu is touted as the Tourism hub of Telangana. Accordingly, modern bus depots need to be set up and buses need to run on time to be available to the tourists," she told the minister.

She also pointed out that setting up a bus depot in Eturnagaram would be beneficial as a lot of movement is active between Eturnagaram and neighbouring states of Chhattisgarh and Odisha. It will also help in the development of tribal areas, she noted.



Forest staff found cattle killed in Hattighat forest in Bheempur mandal in the Adilabad district on Wednesday.

Tiger moving in  
Hattighat forest  
area, kills a cowDC CORRESPONDENT  
ADILABAD, SEPT. 16

A tiger moving in the forests near Hattighat in Bheempur mandal on the state borders killed a cow and the incident came to light on Wednesday morning.

The forest staff, led by the Deputy FRO of Tamsi, A. Geeraiah, visited the spot and found that it was a tiger kill. The cow belonged to farmer Dasari Ramesh of Pippalkoti.

Geeraiah said a tiger migrated from the Thippeshwar tiger reserve of Maharashtra and is moving in the area for some time. The incident marked the second tiger kill in the last 22 days.

He said the tiger is frequently coming to Bheempur forest area after crossing the river Penganga.

Geeraiah said nearly 15 forest staff are camped at Tamsi (K) forest area to see that there would be any untoward incident and put up camera traps to track the tiger's movement in the area.

Beat officer, Keshav, animal trackers Dayakar and Kirshna and Sonarao, Laxmikanth, Prabhakar are monitoring the movements of the tiger.

Forest officials said they will pay the compensation to the farmer for the cow and appealed to the people not to cause any harm to the tiger moving in the area.

BJP lashes out at KCR's  
criticism of power policyRAVINDRA SESHU | DC  
KHAMMAM, SEPT. 16

Bharatiya Janata Party has taken exception to Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao's contention that the National Electricity Policy was 'draconian'.

The party's state vice-president N.V.S.S. Prabhakar said that the TRS government is opposing the policy as it wants to keep receiving kickbacks from power purchase agreements being done through Discoms, which, he said, had to be thoroughly probed.

"The National Electricity Policy is very helpful to farmers and the Centre will give solar pump sets free of cost. The policy never asked the state governments to

● Under the new policy, electricity will be made available to all households in the next five years. It will promote a legal and administrative eco-system that accords attention to renewable energy.

stop free power to farmers. Rao has misconstrued the electricity policy just to cover up his wrongs in the state power purchase agreements," he said.

Many states, including Andhra Pradesh, are welcoming the new policy and there is no barrier to give free power to farmers. Under the new policy, electricity will be made available to all households in the next five years. It

will promote a legal and administrative eco-system that accords attention to renewable energy.

The Union government will prepare and notify a national renewable energy policy for promotion of power generation from renewable sources in consultation with state governments, he maintained.

The state government will have power to give subsidies and they can also promote solar energy, he said.

"The TRS government is finding fault with the policy for political reasons and is not considering its merits. There will be sufficient power in the country if the new policy is implemented and the share of power producing ecosystem plants will be more in the country," he said.



BJP Leader Revuri Prakash Reddy flagging off a bike rally in Nallabelli on Wednesday.

said forgetting the history of the region would result in the downfall of the TRS party.

"The Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao must explain what greatness he sees in the rule of the Nizams. Is it because he

made the women of Telangana play bathukamma naked? Is it because of the massacres in Bairanpally, Devunisanikisa, Parkal and Nirmal?" he asked.

Mr Reddy warned that if Telangana liberation day

is not celebrated officially in memory of the martyrs who laid down their lives, TRS will see its days end by the 2023 elections.

"When the BJP comes to power, the day would be officially celebrated in the state," he said.

## PEST | PROBLEM

## Cotton farmers seek scientific expertise to protect crops

## Farmers hope for research unit in Adilabad

DC CORRESPONDENT  
ADILABAD, SEPT. 16

It seems like only the establishment of a cotton research centre in Adilabad district headquarters can solve the problems of cotton farmers, particularly with regard to attacks by pests, reducing cost of investment cost on cultivation and use of pesticides and fertilisers.

The total cultivation area is around 4.85 lakh acres while cotton is cul-

tivated on 3.95 lakh acres in Adilabad district, which is the highest in Telangana.

Cotton farmers are continuously suffering losses because pests are destroying the crop. Sucking pests and pink bollworms are causing huge loss to the standing cotton crop. This has resulted in excessive use of pesticides that can get rid of pests. There is a feeling that regular research and finding ways and means to

resolve the issue are paramount.

Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao had promised to establish an agriculture university in Adilabad district headquarters but it has not materialised till date. Farmers from the district would have benefitted tremendously from the agriculture university. It is said that farmers can get suggestions from scientists of cotton research centres if it is established as they can suggest ways

to improve the yield and on how to avoid pest attacks.

Pink bollworms have become a major problem for the cotton farmers in the last three years and it is spreading fast in the fields. Some of the farmers even burnt their standing cotton that was attacked by pink bollworm in order to avoid spreading it to neighboring cotton fields. Some farmers removed standing cotton plants to avoid neighboring plants from

getting affected.

In the ongoing Assembly session, Adilabad MLA Jogu Ramanna appealed to the government to establish a cotton research centre, which is seconded by local farmers, who feel that cotton farmers will be benefitted from such scientific expertise. Moreover, the state government is encouraging commercial crops like cotton and soya under controlled cultivation in the state.

VIJAYAWADA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION (VMC)		
'E' Procurement Notice No.25/VMC/AE/2020-21, Dt.16-09-2020		
Sl. No.	Name of work	Estimate Amount Rs. in Lakhs
1	Proposed Re-Development of Gandhi Hill, Development of Food Street from Red Circle to M.G.Road, Providing Chain link Mesh Fencing MS Angulams, Improvements to Vinayaka Temple road to Flyover Providing BT Roads, Providing CC Roads Establishment of 500 KLD STPs in Governorpet and Punarni Ghat, O&M of 150 TPD Solid Waste Management, Re-development of Zymkhana Shopping Complex, Re-development of APSRMC School in Krishnalanka, Construction of RCC Retaining wall, Providing Piped Drains, Paver Blocks, UGD Lines, Foot Paths, Providing Street Name Boards and Road Name Boards in A and B Class Roads Procurement of 3 Nos BS-VI Model vehicle Mounting machines (All works are with Reverse Tendering Auction), Circle-1,2 & 3 areas in VMC (32 Works)	4661.89
Contact: Superintending Engineer (Works & Projects), VMC, Vijayawada-520 001 Further details can be seen @ 'e' procurement market place @ <a href="http://www.tender.aeprocurement.gov.in">www.tender.aeprocurement.gov.in</a>		
Download of bid documents starts from		- 19-09-2020 @ 04.00 P.M.
Last date / time for receipt of tenders from		- 03-10-2020 up to 4.30 P.M.
Reverse Tendering starts from		- 05-10-2020 from 2.00 P.M
Sd/- For COMMISSIONER		



SHORT TAKES

BANDI SLAMS TRS FOR OPPOSING POWER REFORMS

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 16

BJP state president Bandi Sanjay Kumar on Wednesday slammed Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao for opposing Prime Minister Narendra Modi government's proposal on power reforms even before it was introduced in Parliament.

Addressing a press teleconference from New Delhi, Sanjay Kumar criticised Chandrashekar Rao for saying that state power distribution companies were facing severe financial crisis as the government did not pay the arrears which were pending since long.

He pointed out that the Centre has sanctioned ₹9,000 crore from which the state has paid arrears to Discoms to some extent. Without having proper knowledge of the Central power reforms, the Chief Minister was making false allegations against the Modi government, he added.

CLP FAULTS TRS OVER SHORT CUTTING SESSION

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, SEPT 16

Congress Legislature party leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka and Congress MLAs on Wednesday charged the ruling TRS with running away by cutting short the ongoing monsoon session fearing the Opposition.

Vikramarka said that the TRS had convened the session only to pass the FRBM Bill which will facilitate the state government for more borrowings.

He questioned as to why the state government did not taken up the discussion on Krishna and Godavari water disputes between AP and Telangana, agriculture and crop losses and unemployment.

Former minister Mohammed Ali Shabbir also strongly condemned the abrupt end to monsoon session of the Legislative Assembly.

In a statement he said, "Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao is ridiculing the democratic institutions like the Legislative Assembly by reducing its functioning to a formality. It seems that the state government had convened the session only to pass 12 Bills and facilitate Chandrashekar Rao make a bunch of new promises and unveil a bundle of lies."

RESERVE POLICE DIES AS GUN MISFIRES

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KHAMMAM, SEPT. 16

A reserve police constable N. Aditya died after his gun misfired in Chennaram forest in Charla mandal on Wednesday.

Bhadradi-Kothagudem district superintendent of police Sunil Dutt said that the gun went off accidentally while the reserve policemen were involved in combing operations in Chennaram forests. The bullet went into his chest and he died while being shifted to hospital.

The police are conducting combing operations since long in the Chennaram forest, a border area of Chhattisgarh.

SWIGGY DELIVERY STAFF APPROACH KTR FOR HELP

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 16

Delivery executives working for Swiggy have approached IT and Industries Minister K.T. Rama Rao urging him to intervene and help them get a basic minimum pay of ₹35 for and up to four kilometers.

# AICC incharge turns Cong focus on 2023

## Tagore says party's sole aim must be to defeat TRS

S.A. ISHAQUI | DC  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 16

New AICC in-charge of Telangana Manickam Tagore exhorted TPCC leaders and cadres that the sole aim of Congress party should be to defeat KCR regime and win assembly elections in 2023.

In his maiden interaction with party representatives through video conferencing on Wednesday, Manickam Tagore said it was unfortunate that Congress could not win in Telangana, for forming which Congress president Sonia Gandhi sacrificed another state (Andhra Pradesh). He pointed out that united AP had a major share in the total number of seats in the Lok Sabha.

The new AICC in-charge advised Congress leaders and work-



Manickam Tagore

ers to evolve a winning combination in Telangana politics. "We have Sachins and Dhonis in our team. But we need to act as a team with discipline and mutual understanding. Our only target should be 2023 assembly elections." Stating that Congress would focus on strengthening its organisational network in Telangana, he underlined that the party would be tough on ensuring discipline and having zero-tolerance

towards indiscipline.

Manickam Tagore made it clear: "We will win the next elections in a unified and disciplined manner." He said he would again visit Hyderabad in the first week of October after getting a brief from AICC president Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi once they return from their foreign visit.

TPCC president Uttam Kumar Reddy, welcoming the new AICC in-charge, assured him full support on behalf of the entire TPCC.

Introducing TPCC leaders to Manickam Tagore, he pointed out that the main focus of day's meeting was membership drive, Dubbaka by-poll, elections to Hyderabad, Warangal and Khammam municipal corporations and MLC election from Nalgonda, Warangal

and Khammam graduate constituency.

Senior leaders, including CLP leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, MPs A. Revanth Reddy and Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, MLAs Sridhar Babu, Jagga Reddy and Seethakka, MLC T. Jeevan Reddy and members of TPCC core committee participated in the meeting.

All TS leaders who participated in the meeting hoped Manickam Tagore would bring a lot of positive energy into the party's organisation, as he had the experience of working with NSUI and Youth Congress before getting elected as Member of Parliament.

The new AICC in-charge advised leaders to frequently meet among themselves to boost trust factor and inculcate team spirit.

## Protest over pay



Private school teachers being taken away from the Assembly premises during the ongoing monsoon session on Wednesday in Hyderabad as they were not paid for six months. They demanded the state to take action against the management for not paying their salaries. Many were arrested.

— GANDHI

# KTR announces LRS fee to be collected based on land value

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 16

IT and municipal administration minister K. T. Rama Rao has announced in Assembly that under Land Regularisation Scheme (LRS), state government will collect fee based on value of the land at the time it is registered by the applicant, rather than current registration price for regularisation of plots. Orders in this regard will be issued by Thursday.

The state government recently issued notification for implementing LRS as one last time measure in all urban and rural areas of the state so as to put an end to unauthorised layouts in the state. It said only layouts and plots with registered sale deed / title deed existing as on August 26 this year will be considered for regularisation on payment of prescribed charges.

Applicants were asked to pay a registration fee of ₹1,000 in case of individuals and ₹10,000 in case of layout developers.

According to LRS notification, applicants should pay basic regularisation charges at the rate of ₹200 per sq metre for plot less than 100 sq metres, ₹400 per sq

metre for plot area between 101-300 sq metres, ₹600 per sq metre for plot area from 301-500 sq metres, and ₹750 per sq metre for plots above 500 sq metres.

Individuals and layout developers have to also pay regularisation charges amounting to 25 per cent of market value of lands valued up to ₹3,000 per sq yard, 50 per cent of market value of lands valued from ₹3,001 to ₹5,000 per sq yard, 75 per cent of market value of lands valued from ₹5,001 to ₹10,000 per sq yard, and 100 per cent of market value of lands valued more than ₹10,000 per sq yard. After getting approval under LRS, applicants should pay all stipulated charges before January 31, 2021.

The issue of LRS charges was raised by MIM floor leader Akbaruddin Owaisi, CLP leader Bhatti Vikramarka and TRS whip D. Pranay Bhaskar during a short discussion on civic works and other infrastructure facilities in GHMC and its surrounding areas as well as other municipalities.

They told the state government that fixing a fee based on current registration value of the plot will cause a huge burden on people.

## ₹67,000 cr to boost Hyd infra

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 16

Municipal Administration and Urban Development Minister K. T. Rama Rao on Wednesday said that considering the growing importance of Hyderabad and its crucial role in the state's economy, the state government has initiated a number of schemes and capital projects for upkeep of existing infrastructure and also to create new infrastructure.

Making a statement during a short discussion on 'Civic works and other infrastructure facilities in GHMC, its surrounding areas and also other municipalities' in the Assembly, he said that the government spent ₹67,000 crore for infrastructure development in areas under Greater Hyderabad since the formation of Telangana.

Further, about ₹78 crore are being released for Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation

(GHMC) every month and an equal amount for the rest of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) in the state, he said.

Rama Rao said "ever since the formation of the state in 2014, Telangana has been one of the fastest growing states in terms of urbanization in the country. At 42.6%, Telangana's urban population is well above the national average of 31.2%."

He explained that "in order to provide better citizen services to urban citizens, a number of legislative and administrative reforms have been undertaken by the government in the last six years. Because of growing urbanization and urban features, a total of 74 new municipalities and seven municipal corporations were formed in the last three years thus taking the total number of municipalities to 142. Additionally, 173 gram panchayats were merged with existing ULBs."

# Uttam seeks direct railway line from Hyd-Vijayawada

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 16

TPCC president and Nalgonda MP N. Uttam Kumar Reddy on Wednesday urged the Centre to build a direct railway line between Hyderabad and Vijayawada via Chityal, Narketpalli, Nakrekal, Suryapet and Kodad.

While making a written submission under Rule 377 in the Lok Sabha, the MP informed the Centre that the erstwhile State of Andhra Pradesh was divided into Andhra Pradesh and Telangana in 2014.

He brought to the notice of the House that "Hyderabad and Vijayawada are the principal cities in these two states and they are connect-

● **TPCC PRESIDENT** Uttam pointed out that a superfast train like a Shatabdi or even a bullet train from Hyderabad to Vijayawada on a direct line would reduce the travel time to less than two hours.

ed, presently, by a circuitous railway line and the journey takes over six hours. If a straight railway line is laid between Hyderabad and Vijayawada, the journey time can be reduced to less than two hours. The economies of both states would receive a huge boost."

The Congress member said that NH-65 between

Hyderabad and Vijayawada has land adjacent to it, which was acquired earlier. This can be used to construct the new railway line from Hyderabad to Vijayawada. He said connecting Jaggaiahpet and Chityal will be adequate for the purpose of increasing connectivity between these cities.

He pointed out that a superfast train like a Shatabdi or even a bullet train from Hyderabad to Vijayawada on a direct line would reduce the travel time to less than two hours.

He told the House that this would definitely boost the economy and traffic between the states of Odisha, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana and benefit the country's economy.

## OWAISI DEMANDS ₹10 CRORE TO DEVELOP OLD CITY

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 16

AIMIM floor leader in the state assembly, Akbaruddin Owaisi, demanded that the state government allocate ₹10,000 crore for the development of the old city on par with the new city.

While taking part in the short discussion 'Civic works and other infrastructure facilities in GHMC, its surrounding areas and also other municipalities,' he said no one was looking at the pain and agony of the 400-year-old city of Hyderabad as it is deprived of development on all fronts.

Stating that it was he who fought for the metro-rail project for Hyderabad, he said during the erstwhile AP government rule, he and former minister, late P. Janardhan Reddy, use to fight over monorail-metrorail projects to the city and ultimately metrorail turned into a reality. However, it is painful that the metrorail project is not completed in the old city, he said.

While raising the issue of drinking water, Owaisi reminded the house that he, once again along with P.Janardhan Reddy, also fought on the issue of Krishna and Godavari river waters being brought to the residents of the city. Though Krishna and Godavari waters came to the city with his fight, the old city is reeling under acute drinking water problems, he added.



Wardhannapet MLA Aroori Ramesh's camp office being demolished on Wednesday.

# MLA's camp office demolished for blocking nala

ANUDEEP CEREMILLA | DC  
WARANGAL, SEPT. 16

The Greater Warangal Municipal Corporation on Wednesday demolished the camp office of the Wardhannapet MLA Aroori Ramesh after it was found to be blocking the storm water drain on Hunter Road.

The special task force committee, entrusted with the task of removing encroachments on nalas, pointed out that the structure of MLA camp office was obstructing the flow of the nala.

With the instruction of district collector Rajeev Gandhi Hanumanthu the Greater Warangal Municipal Corporation (GWMC) City Planning authorities demolished the camp office with earth movers. The illegal structures dem-

olition drive is continuing on the storm water drains in the city.

As many as 324 structures were identified as encroachments on nala's and 67 structures are demolished by engineering teams so far.

Greater Warangal Municipal Corporation city planning officer, M. Narsimha Ramulu said, "We informed the MLA during the GWMC council meeting about the camp office obstructing the nala. The engineering teams surveyed the camp office land and informed the Urban district collector."

"The MLA himself came forward and asked for the demolition of his camp office. The Disaster Response Force (DRF) teams demolished the camp office," said Mr Ramulu.

# Shopkeepers on RTC premises get HC relief

VUJINI  
VAMSHIDHARA | DC  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 16

The Telangana High Court has come to the rescue the hundreds of lessees and license holders being permitted to the run commercial trades in the premises of RTC bus stands and properties belonging to RTC who were about to be terminated for not paying the lease and license amounts for the lockdown and subsequent period.

Justice Annireddy Abhishek Reddy directed the RTC authorities to not be hasty in terminating the traders as the situation of businesses in the lockdown period was dire and even in the subsequent period, business has been dull as the fleets of RTC buses were not 100 per cent operational.

The judge also cautioned traders not to make things suit their convenience and evade the payment of rents claiming there was no business activity.

Justice Reddy was dealing with a batch of petitions of traders and license holders

- Don't be hasty in terminating licences, HC tells officials
- The judge also cautioned traders not to make things suit their convenience and evade the payment of rents claiming there was no business activity.

who alleged that the RTC authorities have been threatening to terminate their licenses for not paying the rents to the leased properties. The petitioners said that business was completely closed for nearly two months as the RTC was shutdown and, thereafter, their businesses was not up to the mark as the footfall of passengers has drastically decreased.

Even in the unprecedented situation of the pandemic, the RTC authorities were forcing them to pay rents and they were issued termination notices, the petitioners submitted.

The counsel for RTC said that traders were not paying the rents both prior to the

lockdown and after it was lifted. They also submitted that the petitioners came to court, without giving any representation to them on their difficulties.

Trying to resolve the issue in an amicable way, justice Reddy passed interim orders, directing RTC authorities not to insist that traders to pay the rent and lease amounts for the months of April, May and June, 2020. However, the lessees are directed to pay 50 per cent of the lease amounts and license fees for the months of July and August, 2020, within a period of three weeks.

Any amounts which were due prior to April 2020, shall also be paid within a period of three weeks.

However, the court made clear that in case the traders do not pay the amounts as directed by the court, the interim direction granted shall automatically stands vacated and the officials are free to take necessary steps following the law.

The case was adjourned to November 6.

# 2 held for damaging leader's car

SANJAY SAMUEL PAUL | DC  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 16

Police on Wednesday arrested two persons for damaging an Innova car belonging to CPI state secretary Chada Venkat Reddy while it was parked on Sunday at Makdoom Bhavan, the party's office in Himayathnagar.

The arrested are Praveen

Prasad Shukla, 28, resident of Chatrinaka in old city, and a juvenile. An enraged Shukla, along with the juvenile, had reached Makdoom Bhavan on Sunday to damage the car of his friend, who is the son of an office bearer of CPI party. Shukla had developed some differences with his friend.

Assuming that the Innova Car parked at the CPI office

premises belonged to his friend, he damaged it and left. Following his arrest, Shukla confessed he is not associated with any political party and he had no malice against the CPI leader.

Narayanguda SHO P. Ramesh Kumar said Shukla had earlier been admitted to Ashjayothi Hospital in Shamshabad for five months owing to mental instability.

# Bhatti's remarks on TRS creates ruckus

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 16

The remarks of Congress legislature party leader, Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, over the development of Greater Hyderabad created an uproar in the assembly on Wednesday.

While participating in a short discussion on 'Civic works and other infrastructure facilities in GHMC, its surrounding areas and also other municipalities,' Vikramarka alleged that the rul-

ing TRS has made huge statements and announcements on the development of Greater Hyderabad but nothing has been done so far in its six and a half years of rule.

Enlisting the various public sector undertakings and academic institutions in Hyderabad including BHEL, DRDL, ECIL, DRDO, IIT, IITand NIFT, he said that all these premier institutions were established during the Congress regime. Questioning the ruling

TRS party members to name one such institution they have set up in their rule so far, Vikramarka said that only such institutions will give scope for job and employment opportunities to aspirants and with the institutions and industries established and the ancillaries that have come up, have given ample scope and opportunity to the people to look at Hyderabad.

Claiming that it is the Congress which had brought the Krishna,

Godavari and Manjeera waters to Hyderabad city and several housing colonies including KPHB, Baghlingampally, Vanasthalipuram have developed under Congress rule, Vikramarka added that Congress government also provided house sites to journalists in the city.

He also accused the ruling party of insulting Dr. B. R. Ambedkar by dumping the statue of Ambedkar in a garbage van. Several unemployed peo-

ple are making a hue and cry for the notification to fill up Group 1 and Group II vacancies, said Vikramarka.

The ruling party members took strong exception to Vikramarka's remarks and shouted at him for making false claims. Refuting his remarks, municipal and urban development minister, K.T. Rama Rao, asked that if the TRS did nothing why the people of the state and the city gave consecutive victories to them in elections.





## SHORT TAKES

### 1ST PHASE OF CENSUS POSTPONED

**New Delhi, Sept. 16:** The first phase of the Census operations, which was supposed to be held from April 1 to September 30, has been postponed due to the coronavirus outbreak, Parliament was informed on Wednesday.

In a written reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha, Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai also said a multiple-layered security approach has been adopted for the security and safety of the Census data.

The first phase of the Census operations (Census 2021) and other related field activities have been postponed due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, he said.

The minister said a multiple-layered security approach has been adopted for the security and safety of the Census data and the data collection will be done on registered devices of the enumerators appointed by the states and Union territories.

"Data is encrypted at the device, during the transmission and at servers/storage. The services of System Integrators have been hired for developing the Mobile Apps, management of Census portal and related activities," he said.

Rai said the publicity campaigns are part of the Census operations and all the enumerators are to be registered on the portal before undertaking the enumeration work.

### 14 RS MPs SEEK LEAVE FROM ONGOING SESSION

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 16

Atleast 14 Rajya Sabha MPs, also including former prime minister Manmohan Singh, former Union minister P. Chidambaram, senior Congress leader Oscar Fernandes and AIADMK's A. Navaneethakrishnan have sought leave of absence from the ongoing monsoon session of Parliament on medical grounds.

Chairman M. Venkaiah Naidu, who informed this on Wednesday, said that he had received letters from Dr Singh and 13 other MPs seeking leave of absence on medical grounds.

As the Upper House took up Zero Hour submissions, two members - Congress' Divyijay Singh and BJP's Bhagwat Karad - raised the issue of scarcity and black marketing of oxygen cylinders which are used by Covid-19 patients when their oxygen level plummets.

Later, nominated member Swapan Das Gupta, while referring to recent violence at Vishva Bharti over building of a wall at the traditional Poush Mela site, demanded deployment of central paramilitary force at the university to ensure the safety of the heritage buildings and also urged that the Centre should take responsibility for the Mela.

### 13 BANGLADESHIS ARRESTED IN BENGAL

**Kolkata, Sept. 16:** Thirteen Bangladeshi nationals, including five women and three children, were apprehended from West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district, while trying to cross over to the neighbouring country illegally, a BSF spokesperson said on Wednesday.

They were caught by a special patrolling team of the Panchberia outpost of the Border Security Force on Tuesday, he said.

During interrogation, five men of the 13 Bangladeshi nationals claimed that they had entered India several years back illegally, he said, adding that they were working as masons in Mumbai and living in the Nalasopara area there.

"The Bangladeshis claimed they were going back to Bangladesh to visit their native place and relatives. They were helped by a tout based in Kolkata," the spokesperson said.

The tout got them in touch with an agent in Bagdah area of North 24 Parganas district, who allegedly took Rs 1 lakh to help them cross the border, he said. "Over Rs 1.27 lakh cash, some gold and silver ornaments, an LCD screen and other items were seized from them. The Bangladeshis and recovered items were handed over to Bagdah police station for further legal action," the BSF official added.

## Back to work



Guest workers from various states wait in queues to give their samples for Covid-19 test after they arrive at Thane Railway Station to reach their workplaces, amid the coronavirus pandemic in Thane on Wednesday. Meanwhile, Congress' Anand Sharma on Wednesday sought compensation for families of guest workers who died while walking thousands of kilometers to their native places after the lockdown was imposed. - PTI

# J&K parties contradict MHA claim on house arrests

Kishan Reddy told House that 223 people in J&K are under detention

**YUSUF JAMEEL | DC**  
SRINAGAR, SEPT. 16

Various mainstream and separatist parties in Jammu and Kashmir have ridiculed the Home Ministry's claim that no leader in the Union Territory (UT) is currently under house arrest.

While former minister and senior People's Democratic Party (PDP) leader, Naeem Akhtar, claimed that he and as many as 35 other mainstream leaders stayed under house arrest till Wednesday morning, a statement issued by separatist All Parties Hurriyat Conference here said that its chairman and Kashmir's chief Muslim cleric Mirwaiz Umar Farooq continued to be under house detention since August 5 last year.

"On that day, police vehicles were parked on both the gates of his house compound and since he is not being allowed to move out and even go to Jama Masjid (Grand Mosque) where he would deliver customary sermons on Fridays," the amalgam faction said.

Minister of State (Home) G. Kishan Reddy, in a written reply to a question raised by Trinamool Congress MP Saugata Ray said in Lok Sabha on Tuesday that no leader in J&K is currently under house arrest. He, however, admitted that 223 people in J&K are under detention.

He said, "As on the 11 September, 223 persons are under detention. No person is under house arrest in the UT of Jammu and Kashmir."

"The situation on the ground is contrary to what the Home Ministry has claimed. After the authorities revoked my detention under the Public Safety Act (PSA) in the third week of June, I was

placed under house arrest. I'm not being allowed to go out," said Mr. Akhtar.

Soon after ending his ten and half month long detention under the PSA, he was asked to vacate his government accommodation or face forcible eviction.

He said, "I've just travelled one distance from that house to this new rented one and that too under police escort. However, I was allowed some days ago to go out to get an ultrasonography test done on the advice of my doctor and again policemen accompanied me." Mr. Akhtar said that the policemen continued to be deployed at the gate of his house who did not allow him even to attend a PDP leaders' meeting called by its general secretary Ghulam Nabi Lone Hanjura at the party headquarters here on September 3.

"We have to see it in the larger construct of the situation in Kashmir. This is part of the entire new system which has been introduced here that the politicians should be at the mercy of the security establishment. They have to apply for and inform them (police) of their every activity," Mr. Akhtar who also served as the chief spokesman of the PDP-BJP coalition government in the erstwhile state told this newspaper.

He said that earlier the J&K politicians categorized as "protected persons" and provided security cover would only inform the concerned authorities before visiting places and not seeking permission for it as such. "But now you have to apply for even holding indoor party meetings three days in advance. The overall atmosphere is full of fear. They have unleashed all the agencies

## Anger as youth dies in police custody

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
SRINAGAR, SEPT. 16

Jammu and Kashmir's northwestern town Sopore and its neighbourhood are tense in the aftermath of alleged extrajudicial killing of a local youth.

Internet services were early Wednesday withdrawn from the area and police and paramilitary reinforcements fanned out "as a precautionary measure".

The police, however, claimed the youth Ifran Ahmed Dar was an 'Over Ground Worker' (OGW) of a separatist militant outfit who tried to escape from their custody and that later his corpse was found in a neighbouring village.

They, however, didn't say on Kashmir. Everybody is directly under the scanner and people are scared. That's where we have reached".

He added, "There's no account of the people they (police) claim everyday in the official bulletins having been arrested - some in the name of being OGWs (Over Ground Workers) and some militants. There's no account ultimately where they go and if you relate it with unending protests by mothers and other relatives of the missing persons you can join the dots".

Mr. Hanjura termed Mr. Reddy's claim on the floor of Parliament as a "blatant lie".

He said, "I could go out of my house for the first time

● The police, however, have claimed that the youth, Ifran Ahmed Dar, was an 'Over Ground Worker' of a separatist militant outfit.

how he was killed.

The family of the youth termed it as 'cock and bull story' and also denied Dar was involved in any unlawful activity.

"The police are lying. My brother was killed in cold-blood. He would work with me at our family shop from 7 am to 9 pm. He had nothing to do with militancy or militants," said his elder brother Javaid Ahmed.

A statement by the J&K police here said that 23-year-old Dar was found dead after he escaped from police custody.

in past 13 months today (Wednesday) to address a meeting of the youth wing of the PDP at the party headquarters, the first such engagement since August 5, 2019. Some others also joined me but our 20 party leaders continue to be under house arrest whereas the party president Mehbooba Mufti remains in detention under the notorious PSA," he said.

PDP youth president Waheed-ur-Rehman Parra said that he too was, for the first time on Wednesday, allowed to walk out of his home and attend the meeting at which threadbare deliberations were held on the prevailing political, social and economic situation in J&K.

## PDP ACCUSES CENTRE OF 'BRAZEN DUPLICITY'

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
SRINAGAR, SEPT. 16

People's Democratic Party (PDP) on Wednesday accused the Central government of 'brazen duplicity' over Jammu and Kashmir and said that such behaviour will not be tolerated. It also said that its "fight" against "bulldozing J&K's identity and rights will continue uncompromisingly".

A statement issued after a meeting of the party's youth wing, the first since August 5 last year, the PDP said, "On one hand, BJP government is participating in dialogue with Taliban, talking reconciliation with PLA who have invaded Ladakh and discussing with Nagaland insurgents desperate constitution and Flag, but at the same time, it is using anything but dialogue to deal with the mess created by them after illegal scrapping of special status if J&K. This is unacceptable."

The statement also said, "The party has reaffirmed its pledge to continue fighting for the aspirations and rights of people of J&K and resist by all democratic ways the onslaught by the Central government".

"In the first ever meeting of its youth wing after August 5, 2019, the party emphasized that the constitutional fraud perpetrated on the people of J&K and the subsequent bulldozing of constitutional rights will always remain unacceptable."

# Sangma bats for Gorkhaland in North Bengal

**MANOJ ANAND | DC**  
GUWAHATI, SEPT. 16

In what is said to be an attempt to spread the reach of National Peoples' Party to West Bengal, its president and Meghalaya chief minister Conrad K. Sangma has advocated the formation of Gorkhaland in North Bengal.

Reminding the Centre that the Gorkhas too are rightful Indian citizens who deserve to have their own identity and Bas Bhoomi (homeland) Mr Sangma, in a letter written to union home minister Amit Shah on September 4, said, "Sir, you are aware of the long pending constitutional demand of the Gorkhas for a separate state of Gorkhaland."

Flagging and justifying the demand of separate state, Mr Sangma said, "The Gorkhas have made India their home for a very long period. The contribution of Gorkhas towards India and their motherland has been immeasurable and they have made supreme sacrifices in protecting this beloved country."

He also highlighted the contributions of Gorkha freedom fighter Durga Malla, members of constituent assembly Damber Singh and Ari Bahadur Gurung and Captain Ram Singh Thakuria, a prominent Gorkha freedom fighter and musician who composed the music of the inspiring National Anthem.

Pleading the Centre to

offer an honourable and lasting political solution to the Gorkhas, the chief minister said, "As stated the Gorkhas have contributed immensely to the fabric of Indian society and as with other citizens of India, the Gorkhas too are rightful Indian citizens who deserve to have their own identity and Bas Bhoomi (homeland)."

He said, "The NDA government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has passed several landmark decisions in the interest of people of this country. I urge your good office to kindly give a patient hearing to the legitimate demand of Gorkhas of North Bengal and offer an honourable and lasting political solution at the earliest."

The letter was made public when the monsoon session of Parliament was in progress and there were growing demands by NDA allies in Darjeeling for finding a permanent political solution.

Meanwhile, Akhil Bharatiya Gorkha League (Pratap Khati camp) has thanked Mr Sangma for extending his support to their long pending demands. Mr Sangma is the second chief minister to lend support to the Gorkhaland demand. When Mr Pawan Chamling was the Sikkim chief minister, he got a resolution adopted in the state Assembly on March 29, 2011, terming Gorkhaland as a genuine and legitimate demand of the people of the hills.

# President to visit Srinagar on Sunday

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
SRINAGAR, SEPT. 16

President Ram Nath Kovind will visit Srinagar on Sunday to address a one-day session on the implementation of the new national educational policy in the country.

It would be his first visit to Jammu and Kashmir after the state was stripped of its special status and split up into two union territories on August 5, 2019.

The President had on August 7 last year signed the Article 370 gazette, revoking the special status to J&K. The move came after both Houses of Parliament passed a resolution in this regard.

According to a statement issued here, the University of Kashmir in collaboration with the J&K government is organizing the one-day "brainstorming session" on the implementation of the National Education Policy at Srinagar's Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre September 20.

The NEP-2020 was approved by the Union cabinet on July 29, and, as per the government, it is meant to provide an overarching vision and comprehensive framework for higher education across the country.

● IT WOULD BE his first visit to Jammu and Kashmir after the state was stripped of its special status and split up into two union territories on August 5, 2019.

The statement said that President and Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, have suggested that the universities and higher education ministries across the country shall hold brainstorming sessions involving all the stakeholders for deliberating upon the strategies regarding the smooth implementation of the NEP-2020 in the country. "It is in this context, that the University of Kashmir is organizing a brainstorming session on Sunday here which shall be addressed to by the President and also J&K Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Kumar Sinha," the statement said.

The session will have three technical sitting with presentations scheduled on various themes of the national education policy by K. K. Sharma, advisor to J&K Lt. Governor of JK UT, Prof. Ved Prakash, former UGC-Chairman, all the five vice-chancellors of the universities in the Kashmir Valley, Director, NIT, Srinagar and a few college principals.

## VITAL | SUPPORT

The ruling CPM has stood solidly behind Jaleel even as Oppn is seeking his resignation

# Jaleel: From a firebrand leader of SIMI to poster boy of CPM

**GILVESTER ASSARY | DC**  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, SEPT. 16

Even in the face of state wide protests by opposition parties seeking Kerala higher education minister K.T. Jaleel's resignation, the ruling CPM has stood solidly behind him. The protests which turned violent in many parts of the state have not been able to force the government or the ruling party to change its position.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and CPM state secretary Kodyeri Balakrishnan have repeatedly defended Jaleel terming Opposition charges as

"totally baseless."

"Quit Jaleel" demand had gained momentum after the Enforcement Directorate questioned him five days ago on the allegations of violating Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010 (accepting foreign aid without Centre's permission) and accepting consignments of Holy Quran brought from UAE through diplomatic channels.

To understand Jaleel's importance in Kerala politics, one has to trace his journey thus far. From a firebrand leader of SIMI to a poster boy of ruling CPM, the 53-year-old's political journey has been remarkable in many ways.

After his sting with SIMI, Jaleel joined the Muslim League and went on to become the state president of Muslim Youth League in 2004. But he was thrown out of the League in 2005 for questioning leadership on misuse of Tsunami funds. The CPM which was waiting for a popular face in Malappuram district to take on the League, seized the opportunity and fielded Jaleel as LDF backed independent in 2006 Assembly polls. As they say the rest is history.

Riding on the popularity of his anti-corruption crusade, Jaleel trounced Muslim League general secretary P.K. Kunhalikutty scripting one of

the stunning victories in state's electoral history.

The LDF too gained winning five of the 12 seats marking its strong presence in the Muslim heartland.

Jaleel who has a PhD on the topic related to 1921 Malabar rebellion and is known for his fiery speeches and clean image, has remained loyal to LDF since then. He won back to back elections in 2011 and 2016.

Though his induction as a minister in Pinarayi Cabinet in 2016 came as a surprise for many, the ruling LDF had its plans in place. He was given local bodies ministry, a portfolio usually reserved for top

CPM leaders, along with welfare of minorities, wakf and Hajj.

Later the local bodies portfolio was taken away from him and given to CPM's A.C. Moideen. However, Jaleel was given the high-profile higher education portfolio.

While most part of Jaleel's 14 years in parliamentary politics has remained free of controversies, the minister faced a series of charges in the last two years.

Responding to the allegations, the minister said in a recent Facebook post: "Only truth will prevail. Nothing, but the truth, Even if the whole world goes against you, nothing



Police personnel detain Kerala Students Union activists during a protest, demanding the resignation of Kerala Minister K.T. Jaleel. - PTI

else would prevail." With the allegations still pend-

ing probe by central agencies, the jury is still out.



## DECCAN Chronicle

17 SEPTEMBER 2020

### Rajnath disappoints: A lot left unanswered

Defence minister Rajnath Singh's much-awaited statement in both Houses of Parliament on Tuesday on the situation in eastern Ladakh was disappointing on several counts, as the country sought clarity from the highest quarters on one of its biggest crises. The minister, however, told us very little we didn't already know, and though he put the current confrontation between the two sides in the historical context of the fractured India-China relationship, beyond acknowledging the obvious fact that this standoff was qualitatively different from earlier ones, in the scale of the troops involved and the number of friction points, and that India was "facing a challenge", we were none the wiser. He told us due to the two sides' differing perceptions of the Line of Actual Control, India and China needed a common perception of the LAC to avoid emergence of new friction points, a process China has been stalling since 2003 as it sees advantage in the continuing ambiguity. All this is well known. There were expressions of hope. If the Moscow agreement between external affairs minister S. Jaishankar and Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi was "sincerely implemented" by the Chinese, peace would return! Did we not know that already? Mr Singh offered a timeline of the border standoff since early May but left out one crucial bit: the September 7 incident in which shots were fired at the LAC for the first time in 45 years.

Unlike many of his Cabinet colleagues, Mr Singh enjoys a well-deserved reputation for plain speaking, of telling it like it is, as he demonstrated earlier during this crisis while visiting the troops in Ladakh. Therefore, while speaking at Parliament's first meeting after the crisis broke, more was expected of him: that he would share with the country the real story of what was happening, of what had gone wrong. No one expected him to share operational details of ongoing or future Army operations. Despite Prime Minister Narendra Modi's truly puzzling declaration at the virtual all-party meeting on June 19 — days after the Galwan incident in which 20 Indian soldiers, including a commanding officer, and an unknown number of Chinese troops were killed — that no Chinese forces were on Indian soil, the Indian Army and others have acknowledged, before and afterwards, that all-out efforts were on to ensure that the People's Liberation Army goes back to its side of the de facto border. Mr Singh could have shed more light on this. His statement made no mention of the 20-km-deep intrusion by the PLA in the Depsang Plains at all. Many such questions, on which the country was hoping for clarity, remain unanswered.

Mr Singh urged MPs to pass a resolution expressing confidence in the armed forces in these difficult times. There is no doubt that all sections of the nation are united on that issue. But in not responding to questions raised by the Congress and others, the government may inadvertently have missed a great opportunity. It has often been said that the India-China competition will define our "Asian century". Here was a chance to show the huge difference between democratic India and the Communist Party oligarchy that runs the People's Republic. An endorsement by a legislature that asks searching, critical questions of the executive would have sent out a message to the world that Xi Jinping's rubber-stamp National People's Congress simply cannot.

### A welcome ruling

The Supreme Court order on Wednesday prohibiting Sudarshan TV from telecasting the future episodes of a TV show portraying the entry of Muslims into the civil service as an attempt to infiltrate it is welcome for more than one reason. First, the apex court thought it fit that an early intervention to stop the programme which it found "insidious" was warranted and waiting for the statutory authorities to consider the complaints against it would make "irreversible damage". Second, it showed there are existing legal ways to confront such programmes that make use of the fundamental right to speech and expression and create animosity among sections of society. Third, the existing constitutional institutions are still able to assert their independence and decide the fine line between the use and abuse of the right to free speech, thereby obviating the creation of another government mechanism to regulate the media.

The bench while hearing the petition read out Clause 6 (c) of the programme code the ministry of information and broadcasting framed under the Cable TV Network (Regulation) Act, 1994, which prohibited the transmission of programmes that contain attack on religions or communities or visuals or words contemptuous of religious groups or which promote communal attitudes. This clause makes it incumbent on the part of the government to act and ensure that peace and harmony prevailed in the country and people with vested interests are stopped in their course before weakening the nation's social fabric through such TV programmes. It is curious that the Union government was seen in the court fighting for media freedom. The court's insistence that "no freedom is absolute, not even journalistic freedom" was met with a comment by the solicitor-general that the freedom of a journalist is supreme and any regulation of the same would need extensive debates. Debates are fine, the government must remember, but insidious programmes are not.

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Subhani



## Freedom and bias: How Facebook comes of age



Shashidhar Nanjundaiah

What a year it is turning out to be for Facebook!

Its sway over voters has made incumbent governments in several countries seek to exact their pound of flesh. As a self-proclaimed proponent of free speech with limited control over content, the social media company now finds itself stuck in both legal and moral conflicts in many countries such as Thailand, the Philippines, Australia and elsewhere.

The ongoing deposition before India's parliamentary standing committee on information technology was always going to be a perfunctory but important attempt to raise questions of Facebook's influence over societies and their behaviour. The committee is multi-partisan, but the original agenda — whether Facebook has systematically favoured the BJP — was so politically divisive that such a panel could have never found a consensus unless the agenda was broadened to a generalisation.

Potentially, the deadlock in the deposition heralds some independence for Facebook. The Congress Party and the Trinamul Congress say Facebook has displayed a pro-BJP stance, while the government claims the contrary, even accusing Facebook's employees of abusing the Prime Minister. In the end, Facebook can claim that since both sides are claiming bias, they cancel each other out and that there is no real bias. That is why it was important that the parliamentary committee work pragmatically towards a united, non-partisan and achievable public goal — helping to independently curb hate.

#### WHO IS 'WE'?

Economic and political power makes great nego-

tiators. But for Facebook, this is a battle of identity. Three recent episodes are of relevance:

1. Facebook will soon add additional text to its terms of use to consolidate its position. In effect, Facebook has emerged from the shadows to stake its claim as a private company with full authority to tweak its rules, not as the public service that it can be mistaken for.

2. Union minister Ravi Shankar Prasad shot off a strategically timed letter — coinciding with the parliamentary committee deposition — accusing Facebook's staff in India of colluding to discredit the government.

3. Following Facebook India MD Ajit Mohan's deposition, its global leaders Neil Potts and Mark Zuckerberg have issued statements that assure the world that Facebook is a neutral carrier and that hate speech will not be tolerated on it.

On September 1, Facebook forewarned its users of an impending addition of a self-protective clause to its section (3.2): "We also can remove or restrict access to your content, services or information if we determine that doing so is reasonably necessary to avoid or mitigate adverse legal or regulatory impacts to Facebook." As many digital business experts point out, this is an overdue survival clause. But it underlines the arrival of a more proactive approach to censorship — with larger implications on who gets to influence it.

On the face of it, the additional clause should provide comfort to those who may view it as a sort of social media garbage disposal. But if there is one word that's ambiguous in the otherwise crystal-clear message, it is "we". As much as its use in legalese is well-understood, who is this unseen

This year, and not 2016, when Facebook was first accused of gerrymandering, marks its growth from innocence to experience

hand in digital practice that restricts access, service, information or content? It could be the content desk, fact check desk, and standards-and-practices desk. However, given that algorithms are partly in control, is Facebook telling us that it will take more responsibility to rein them in?

Communicating on social sites like Facebook is both public and permanent. In the absence of proper (self-)regulation, it is at once a personally empowering and socially debilitating tool. Unlike edited content on the mainstream media, the free-flowing content on social media had accepted little accountability. That may be changing.

To prove the point, on the heels of the first day of the deposition, Facebook barred a known hate monger, BJP's T. Raja Singh. If that is supposed to be exemplary somehow, it does not make the cut. Many people in our circles have abandoned the platform to avoid the mentally draining intensity and abuse. Removing the hundreds and thousands of trolls and others who indulge in hate speech alone can bring back public confidence in social media and in humanity in general.

#### ACCOUNTABILITY GAME

Facebook has turned its attention over the past two years to issues pertaining to privacy and complications arising from its business-to-government deals. While governments seek a piece of the content action, is Facebook's government business jeopardising its founding principles?

It is clear that many, even quasi-democratic, governments want more control over social media content and content in general. In Thailand, a constitutional monarchy, the government asked

that access to a group of voices against the government be blocked, and Facebook is suing the government to dispute such a restriction. Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte's supporters are known to have peddled fake news on the platform. The country's largest news network had to shut shop recently, thanks to governmental machinations. In Australia, the battle is to make social media accountable for borrowed content. Facebook has threatened to block news from Australian newspapers in retaliation over an impending pay-per-use law that seeks to shield its news media and requires Facebook to share revenues for news items taken from the newspapers.

Platforms such as Facebook face the consequences of not having thought through risks and challenges and pay the price of democratising processes. As a free marketplace of relationships and ideas — "the digital equivalent of a town square", as co-founder Mark Zuckerberg wrote in 2019 — Facebook needs better control over credibility. A growing number of people with Facebook accounts have chosen to stay away because they are dismayed at what they see in that ecosystem. Facebook can help by making its users media literate. As the social media grows and as we become more social media literate, the distinction between satire and fake news, between claims and opinions, and between facts and myths grows on us. Organically, media literacy is a longitudinal process. But intervention can accelerate the education.

This year, and not 2016, when Facebook was first accused of gerrymandering, marks its growth from innocence to experience. How the company pivots this experience will determine its future.

*The writer has led reputed institutes of higher education and is the founder of "Being Responsible", which does media literacy programmes for schools*

#### LETTERS

##### NEPAL BRIBING

Nepal bribing some villages in disputed areas is highly doubtful (*Nepal offers ₹2 cr, house to villagers in Uttarakhand, DC, Sept. 15*). The report is a damaging blow to the Nepalese.

Sonam Sherpa  
Hyderabad

##### DONOR CRISIS

It's the poor who suffered a lot both financially and physically (*Poor sell plasma for survival, DC, Sept. 16*). People are short of money to survive and in such cases, we can't expect them to donate plasma for ₹5,000 or less. This is not a racket but people are trying to fulfil their personal needs as well. Likewise, they can maintain health and cover the financial crisis. In these difficult times only the poor comes for the rescue irrespective of their needs. People are paying in lakhs for hospital bill but are not ready to spend for the poor.

Dr Syed Ataulah Hussaini  
Secunderabad

##### WILDFIRES

It is really alarming to see wildfires in the US, Canada, Australia, South Africa and most recently in Brazil (*Race against wildfires in world's tropical wetlands, DC, Sept. 16*). This has resulted in deterioration of the world's biggest tropical wetland, Pantanal. While causes of wildfires vary across the world, that in Pantanal is mainly the drought which is not normal and is another alarming sign of climate change due to human activity. It is high time we wake up and be considerate about the environment.

Jitesh Mathur  
Hyderabad

## 50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

### Asif Jahi flag comes down

HYDERABAD, SEPT. 16.

The Asif Jahi Flag, which had been flying over the palaces the Nizam in the city for about 225 years, was lowered yesterday.

The Flag on the Nizam's car and the red number plates were removed.

The State Government had communicated the instructions received from the Union Home Ministry in this connection to the Nizam, Mir Barkat Ali Khan, on Friday.

The police guard at the King Koti Palace in the heart of the city would, however, continue as the Nizam had been paying for them. He was not enjoying his privilege of having a free guard, a police spokesman said. — PTI.

Dilip Cherian  
Dilli Ka Babu



## PM Modi plugs 'Karmayogi' in pep talk to IPS probationers

A total of 131 IPS probationers, including 28 women, who completed 42 weeks of basic course phase-1 training at the prestigious Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Police Academy in Hyderabad had a rare opportunity to interact with Prime Minister Narendra Modi through a video conference. He is known to do this infrequently, but it thrills those who chance into one.

During the basic course training at SVP NPA over two segments, probationers are imparted training in various indoor and outdoor subjects like law, investigation, forensics, leadership and management, criminology, public order and internal security, ethics & human rights, modern Indian policing, fieldcraft and tactics, weapons training and firing. This was their final training before field postings in their respective state cadres.

In his address to the 2018-batch of IPS probationers, the Prime

Minister urged them to excel in their careers. He also used the opportunity to plug the government's new theme "Mission Karmayogi", a scheme for capacity building of civil servants, a task which the National Police Academy has been performing quite ably since its inception back in 1948. The theme immediately got national attention, way beyond police lines, as expected. The academy director, Atul Karwal, a 1988-batch IPS officer from Gujarat cadre, presided over the Dikshant (convocation) Parade and addressed the probationers.

#### MESSAGE TO J&K BASUS

The message is loud and clear from the Modi sarkar that no anti-national rhetoric, especially by government employees shall be tolerated at any cost. One year after the abrogation of Article 370 and 35A, the Jammu and Kashmir administration has constituted a six-member committee, headed by

J&K chief secretary B.V.R. Subrahmanyam, to look into cases related to government officials allegedly indulging in anti-national activities.

The high-level committee has been empowered to scrutinise cases and recommend action against those officials involved in anti-national activities under Article 311(2)(c). Apart from the J&K chief secretary, the others members of the high-level committee include administrative secretary of the Home department, J&K DGP, administrative secretary of the general administration department, additional DGP, CID and administrative secretary of the department of law, justice.

Experts say any government official, including IAS and IPS officers if found guilty by the committee for "anti-national" activity can be dismissed from service without an inquiry.

According to sources, it is rumoured that many government

officers are under the scanner in Jammu and Kashmir for their involvement in 'anti-national' activities.

#### MEDIA AND MUMBAI POLICE

What made seven former DGPs and a police commissioner approach the Bombay high court in the Sushant Singh Rajput case?

The media's obsession with the Sushant Singh Rajput death case has overridden the raging corona pandemic, our stalled economy and the Chinese threat on the border. After the CBI, Enforcement Directorate and sundry agencies have been brought in by the Centre, the Mumbai Police has been forced into a corner. It has been accused of political bias and for botching up the investigation, though in the freestyle mud wrestling that the nation has seen, it is hard to determine who is cleaner.

Now, the former IPS officers have urged the court to put an end to the

"media trial" and the "unfair, malicious and false media campaign" against the Mumbai police in the case. The petitioners include former Maharashtra DGPs M.N. Singh, P.S. Pasricha, D.K. Sivanandan, Sanjiv Dayal, Satish Mathur, K. Subramanyam and former additional DGP K.P. Raghuvanshi, and former Mumbai police commissioner D.N. Jadhav. According to the petition, the adverse media campaign "appears to have been designed with sinister motives to tarnish the fair image of the Mumbai police".

Significantly, the petition urges courts to frame rules or guidelines which would help media cover investigations that are sub-judice. But, for now, it is a no-holds-barred approach as far as some sections of the media are concerned.

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multiply the effect.



## IN BRIEF

**Wartime killings:  
7 held in Bosnia**

**Sarajevo:** Authorities in Bosnia on Wednesday arrested seven Bosnian Serb former military officers and troops suspected in the killing of 44 Bosniak civilians during the 1992-95 war. In all, nine people are suspected of the September 1992 crime in the area of Sokolac, in southeastern Bosnia, Bosnia's prosecutor's office said in a statement. Bosnian Serbs separated men from women in the Bosniak village of Novoseoci before taking the men away to a nearby waste dump where they were killed.

**Philippine copter  
crash kills four**

**Zamboanga:** A Philippine air force helicopter on its way to airlift troops wounded in a recent suicide bombing crashed on a southern island Wednesday, killing all four crew members on board, officials said. The Sikorsky S-76A took off from southern Zamboanga city for a flight to nearby Sulu province and crashed midway in rainy weather in the hilly village of Upper Manggas on Basilan island. The two pilots and two other crew members were killed. They were bound for Jolo town to airlift troops who were wounded in two Aug. 24 bombings.

**Quake shakes  
Kathmandu**

**Kathmandu:** A strong earthquake of 6 magnitude shook Nepal's capital Kathmandu and surrounding areas on Wednesday, forcing people to rush out of their houses. According to the National Seismological Center, the 6 magnitude quake occurred in the country's Sindhupalchowk district near Tibet border at 5.19 am. The epicentre of the earthquake was Ramche village in the district, 120 km east of Kathmandu. A mild tremor of 3.8 magnitude was also felt at the same place at 6.10 am, it said.

**Greek camp fire:  
13 detained**

**Athens:** Thirteen people have been detained on the Greek island of Samos after a fire threatened the local migrant camp, police said Wednesday, days after another blaze destroyed Europe's largest migrant camp on Lesbos. "We are examining the possible participation of these suspects in the incident," a Samos police source said. The officer declined to identify the nationalities of the suspects. It broke out in a forested area near the Samos camp late on Tuesday, but firefighters were able to place it under control. The Lesbos fire at Moria camp on September 8 left over 12,000 asylum seekers homeless.

**3 FATF-RELATED  
BILLS PASSED IN  
PAK, 1 BLOCKED**

**Islamabad, Sept. 16:** A joint sitting of Pakistan's Parliament on Wednesday passed three crucial Financial Action Task Force-related legislations, as part of the government's efforts to escape from being black-listed by the global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog.

President Arif Alvi called the joint sitting of both houses of Parliament on Wednesday evening after Senate earlier in the day rejected the Anti-Terrorism Act (amendment) Bill, 2020, making it the third FATF-related legislation to have been blocked by the Opposition-dominated upper house.

Last month, the Anti-Money Laundering (Second Amendment) Bill and the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Waqf Properties Bill, were rejected by Senate. The three legislations were part of efforts by Pakistan to move from the FATF's grey list to the white list. Under the 18th Amendment, if a bill passed by one house of Parliament is rejected by the other, it can become a law only if it is passed by a joint sitting of the two houses.

Prime Minister Imran Khan attended the joint session which was chaired by National Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser. The opposition staged a walk out after most of their proposed amendments to the bills were rejected and they were not allowed to speak.

Khan thanked lawmakers who voted in favour of the legislations for "standing with their country". He said that the opposition's "attitude" on the bills showed that the "interests of [opposition parties] and their leaders were the opposite of Pakistan's interests".



Water floods a road as the outer bands of Hurricane Sally come ashore in the Gulf Shores, Alabama. The storm is bringing heavy rain, high winds and a dangerous storm surge from Louisiana to Florida. — AFP

**Sally pummels Alabama  
with heavy rain, outages**

**Pensacola (US), Sept. 16:** Hurricane Sally made landfall Wednesday near Gulf Shores, Alabama, as a Category 2 storm, pushing a surge of ocean water onto the coast and dumping torrential rain that forecasters said would cause dangerous flooding from the Florida Panhandle to Mississippi and well inland in the days ahead.

Moving at an agonisingly slow 3 mph, Sally finally came ashore at 4:45 a.m. local time with top winds of 105 mph (165 kmh), the National Hurricane Center said. Sally's northern eyewall had raked the Gulf Coast with hurricane-force winds and rain from Pensacola Beach, Florida, westward to Dauphin Island, Alabama, for hours before its centre finally hit land.

Some 150,000 homes and businesses had lost electricity by early Wednesday, according to the poweroutage.us site. A curfew was called in the coastal Alabama city of Gulf Shores due to life-threatening conditions.

In the Panhandle's

● **SOME 150,000** homes and businesses had lost electricity by early Wednesday, according to the poweroutage.us site. A curfew was called in the coastal Alabama city of Gulf Shores due to life-threatening conditions.

Escambia County, Chief Sheriff's Deputy Chip Simmons vowed to keep deputies out with residents as long as physically possible.

The county includes Pensacola, one of the largest cities on the Gulf Coast. "The sheriff's office will be there until we can no longer safely be out there, and then and only then will we pull our deputies in," Simmons said at a storm briefing late Tuesday. This for a storm that, during the weekend, appeared to be headed for New Orleans. "Obviously this shows what we've known for a long time with storms — they are unpre-

dictable," Pensacola Mayor Grover Robinson IV said. Stacy Stewart, a senior specialist with the hurricane centre, said the rainfall will be "catastrophic and life threatening" over portions of the Gulf Coast, Florida panhandle and southeastern Alabama, and will continue well after landfall, with the storm producing heavy rainfall Wednesday night and Thursday over portions of central and southern Georgia.

Sally was a rare storm that could make history, said Ed Rappaport, deputy director of the hurricane center. "Sally has a characteristic that isn't often seen and that's a slow forward speed and that's going to exacerbate the flooding," Rappaport said.

He likened the storm's slow progression to that of Hurricane Harvey, which swamped Houston in 2017. Up to rears) of rain could fall in some spots, and "that would be record-setting in some locations," Rappaport said in an interview Tuesday night. — AP

**EU: UK cannot change  
withdrawal agreement**

**Brussels, Sept. 16:** European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said Wednesday that the United Kingdom cannot unilaterally change the EU-UK bilateral withdrawal agreement without destroying global trust in the country.

Insisting that chances for a future trade deal are slipping away by the day, von der Leyen told the European Union's legislature that plans by British Prime Minister Boris Johnson to renege on parts of the withdrawal agreement signed by both of them dimmed those hopes

even further.

What's more, she insisted that Britain is throwing its good name to the wind by not respecting a deal it signed and approved last December. "It cannot be unilaterally changed, disregarded or disciplined. This is a matter of law and trust and good faith," she said in her State of the Union address. She rubbed it in by quoting from a 1975 speech by British conservative icon Margaret Thatcher.

"Britain does not break treaties. It would be bad for Britain, bad for our relations with the rest of

the world and bad for any future treaty on trade," von der Leyen quoted from Thatcher. Johnson has called his plan to unilaterally rewrite Britain's divorce deal with the EU an insurance policy against the bloc's unreasonable behaviour.

Johnson said a planned law designed to override portions of the Brexit withdrawal agreement he agreed to was needed because the EU might "go to extreme and unreasonable lengths" in its treatment of former member Britain.

— AP

## FILM | FEST

**SUPARNA SHARMA | DC  
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 16**

Woman, aged 69, raped by a 29-year-old man.

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Joo-bong) who has come to pick her up. He owns a small book store, and she works for him. She was once his nurse.

At home, Hyo rubs her wrists. He notices a bruise on her arm. The nursing assistant was clumsy with the needle, she says. Later she says to him, "I should report it to the police."

**Trump: Vaccine could  
be ready in a month**

**Philadelphia, Sept. 16:** US President Donald Trump said Tuesday that a Coronavirus vaccine may be available within a month — an acceleration of even his own optimistic predictions — but added that the pandemic could go away by itself.

"We're very close to having a vaccine," he told a town hall question-and-answer session with voters in Pennsylvania aired on *ABC News*.

"We're within weeks of getting it you know — could be three weeks, four weeks," he said.

Only hours earlier, speaking to *Fox News*, Trump had said a vaccine could come in "four weeks, it could be eight weeks". Democrats have expressed concern that Trump is putting political pressure on government health regulators and scientists to approve a rushed vaccine in time to help turn around his uphill bid for reelection against challenger Joe Biden on November 3.

Experts, including top US government infectious diseases doctor Anthony Fauci, say vaccine approval is more likely toward the end of the year.

At the ABC town hall Trump was asked why he'd downplayed the gravity of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has now killed close to 200,000 people in the US.

Trump replied by saying: "I didn't downplay it. I actually, in many ways, I

**SOCIAL DISTANCING WILL NOT HELP  
COMBAT COVID-19, SAYS UNGA PREZ**

**United Nations, Sept. 16:** Social distancing at the global level will not help as no country could combat Covid-19 alone, President of the UN General Assembly's 75th session Volkan Bozkir has said, asserting that multilateralism is the "panacea" to all the problems in the world.

Bozkir, addressing the UN ambassadors and delegates, said that since the beginning of the crisis earlier this year, critics of multilateralism have become more vocal and the pandemic has been used to justify unilateral steps and weaken the rules-based international system. "In the past six months, our plans for the 75th year of the United Nations have changed. Today, we have other urgent priorities. Our masks remind us of the very serious threat we face... They remind us we are in

this together," Bozkir said as the 75th session of the General Assembly commenced on Tuesday.

Wearing masks, UN diplomats and envoys sat socially distanced in the iconic General Assembly Hall as the high-level annual session begins in a largely virtual format this year due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"International organisations have been reproached and the need for international cooperation has been questioned. These criticisms are not baseless but their conclusions are misguided," the veteran Turkish diplomat said.

Giving a clarion call for strengthening multilateralism to combat the pandemic, Bozkir said, "Make no mistake: No state can combat this pandemic alone. Social distancing will not help at the international level."

— PTI

up-played it in terms of action." But Trump himself told journalist Bob Woodward during taped interviews for the new book "Rage" — published Tuesday — that he had deliberately decided to "play it down" to avoid alarming Americans.

Returning to one of his most controversial views on the virus, that has rav-

aged the economy and which government scientists say will remain a danger for some time, Trump insisted "it is going to disappear". "It would go away without the vaccine but it's going to go away a lot faster with it," he said.

Challenged about how the virus would go away by itself, he said "you'll

**Israel hits Gaza after rocket  
fire during US ceremony**

**Jerusalem, Sept. 16:** The Israeli military struck Hamas militant sites in the Gaza Strip early Wednesday in response to rocket fire toward Israel the previous night that coincided with the signing of normalisation agreements between Israel and two Arab countries at the White House.

The barrage against Israel began Tuesday night just as the ceremony in Washington was getting underway to formalise the new agreements with the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain. Two Israelis were lightly wounded. The rocket fire continued overnight, with sirens sounding across southern Israel. The military said five projectiles landed in open areas with the rest intercepted by Israel's rocket defence system. In response, the military said it struck about 10 sites belonging to Gaza's militant Hamas rulers, including a weapons and explosives manufacturing factory, underground infrastructure and a military training compound.

The renewed exchange offered a stark reminder that the festive events in Washington would likely do little to change Israel's conflict with the Palestinians. In addition to the bilateral agreements signed by Israel, the UAE and Bahrain, all three signed a document dubbed the "Abraham Accords" after the patriarch of the world's three major monotheistic religions.

The Palestinians are opposed to the agreements with the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, viewing them as a betrayal of their cause by the Arab

**IRAN SAYS UAE, BAHRAIN WILL BEAR  
'CONSEQUENCES' OF ISRAEL DEALS**

**Tehran, Sept. 16:** Iran's President Hassan Rouhani said on Wednesday that the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain will be responsible for any "consequences" resulting from their normalisation of relations with Tehran's arch-foe Israel.

The remarks came a day after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the foreign ministers of Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates signed agreements establishing full diplomatic ties at a ceremony at the White House.

Speaking at a cabinet meeting, Rouhani said Israel was "committing more crimes in Palestine every day".

"Some of the region's countries, their people are

pious Muslims but their rulers neither understand religion nor (their) debt... to the nation of Palestine, to their brothers speaking their language," he said in televised remarks.

"How could you reach out your hands to Israel? And then you want to give them bases in the region? All the severe consequences that would arise from this are on you."

US President Donald Trump said that similar Washington-brokered deals were close to being signed between Israel and several Arab countries, including Iran's regional rival Saudi Arabia.

"After decades of division and conflict we mark the dawn of a new Middle East," Trump said.

— AFP

countries, which agreed to recognise Israel without securing territorial concessions. They vow that the agreements, and any others that may follow, will not undermine their cause. Neither President Donald Trump nor Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu mentioned the Palestinians in their remarks at the signing ceremony, but both the UAE and Bahraini foreign ministers spoke of the importance of creating a Palestinian state. Upon his departure back from Washington, Netanyahu said he was not surprised by the rocket attack or the timing of the militants.

"They want to take pe-

ce backwards but they won't succeed," he said. "We will strike hard against all those who seek to harm us and reach out a hand in peace to all those whose hand is reached out to peace with us."

The Islamic militant group Hamas has ruled Gaza since 2007, when it seized power from the internationally-backed Palestinian Authority. Israel and Egypt have imposed a crippling blockade on the coastal territory since then. A number of Palestinian militant groups operate in Gaza, but Israel holds Hamas responsible for all attacks and typically responds to rocket fire with airstrikes on militant targets.

— AP

develop like a herd mentality," apparently meaning the concept of herd immunity, when enough people have developed resistance to the disease to effectively stop transmission.

"It's going to be herd developed and that's going to happen. That will all happen but with a vaccine, I think it will go away very quickly. But I really believe we're rounding the corner," he said.

The president, who is rarely seen wearing a mask in public and long refused to push Americans to adopt the habit, said "a lot of people don't want to wear masks and people don't think masks are good." Asked what people he meant, Trump answered: "Waiters". "They come over and they serve you and they have a mask," he said. "I saw it the other day when they were serving me and they're playing with the mask. I'm not blaming them. I'm just saying what happens: They're playing with the mask. So the mask is over, and they're touching it, and then they're touching the plate, and that can be good." Polls show that a majority of Americans disapprove of Trump's handling of the health crisis.

The latest *NBC News* *SurveyMonkey Weekly Tracking* poll Tuesday found that 52 percent of adults do not trust Trump's statements about an upcoming Coronavirus vaccine, compared to 26 percent who do. — AFP



Yoshihide Suga

**SUGA IS JAPAN  
PM, RETAINS  
MOST MINISTERS**

**Tokyo, Sept. 16:** New Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga, elected by parliament on Wednesday after pledging to pursue his predecessor Shinzo Abe's policies, formed a 20-member Cabinet that retains many ministers.

Here are some key appointees: Defence Minister: Nobuo Kishi (new) — Former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's younger brother, he was adopted soon after birth by his mother's brother, who was childless. His grandfather, Nobusuke Kishi, was a deeply conservative former prime minister. He has close ties to Taiwan and its president, Tsai Ing-wen.

Foreign Minister: Toshimitsu Motegi (retained) — A trade minister in Abe's earlier Cabinet, Motegi was a key figure in reaching a toughly negotiated US trade deal following demands from President Donald Trump that Japan narrow the trade imbalance.

Deputy PM and Finance Minister: Taro Aso (retained) — A governing party heavyweight who served as prime minister for one year, Aso was an influential lawmaker in the Abe government. — AP

**South Korean director Lim Sun-ae's *An Old Lady* ends with a nod to the MeToo movement  
Woman, 69, raped. Where did you pause? At rape, or 69?**

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A scene from *An Old Lady*, starring Ye Su-jeong.

*An Old Lady* is framed in a way that everything seems to be against the woman who claims she was raped by the handsome nursing assistant, Lee Joong-ho.

He's 29, and she's 69 and in a live-in relationship. That makes the young cops snigger. It was not rape. It was consensual sex, Lee tells the cops. Though Hyo's poly-

graph tells them that she may be telling the truth, there are bruises and she has the stained clothes she wore that day, old people, you know, they forget, they mix up things. And in any case, he says he didn't do it. He's 29. Handsome.

The burden of proof on the elegant, stylish Hyo keeps mounting. She must convince the cops first, to even attempt a proper investigation. She must herself prove to them that it was rape and not consensual sex. She is forgetting things. Maybe dementia is setting in. Maybe... But those flashes keep interrupting, dis-

turbing her. The bruise on her wrist is fading, but it still aches.

Director Lim Sun-ae has said that she was riled up to make *An Old Lady* by a real-life case in which the warrant dismissal letter said, "There is not much reason for a young man to rape an old woman."

*An Old Lady* ends on an empowering note, with a nod to the MeToo movement. But it leaves you wondering how many women must still be keeping their sexual assault, rape a secret because they are scared they'll be asked, "Who will rape an old lady?"



## SHORT TAKES

## Hari in joint lead after three rounds

**Chennai:** Indian Grandmaster P. Harikrishna claimed a share of the top position with Armenian GM Levon Aronian after posting two wins and a draw in three rounds of rapid competition in the St Louis Rapid and Blitz online chess tournament.

The India No.2 started with a win over US Grandmaster Leinier Dominguez, before settling for a draw with Iranian prodigy Alireza Firouzja in games played late on Tuesday. In the third round, Harikrishna pulled off a victory over experienced Russian Alexander Grischuk in 41 moves.

World champion Magnus Carlsen was fifth with three points. After a win over Hikaru Nakamura in his opener, the Norwegian went down to Russia's Ian Nepomniachtchi in the second round. A draw with Wesley So in the third left the world no.1 in fifth spot.

Harikrishna outwitted the American in 51 moves with black pieces, to begin his campaign in the elite 10-player event. — PTI

## Bernal bows out of Tour de France

**Grenoble, France:** Last year's winner Egan Bernal withdrew from the Tour de France on Wednesday with the defence of his title already in tatters.

The 23-year-old Colombian's team Ineos announced he was dropping out ahead of the key 17th stage.

Bernal came into the Tour with a back injury and missing key allies and two of his team then suffered injuries before Bernal himself suffered a meltdown on a tough ascent on Sunday that effectively ended his 2020 campaign as he fell eight minutes behind the pace.

"This is obviously not how I wanted my Tour de France to end, but I agree that it is the right decision for me in the circumstances," Bernal said in a statement from Ineos. Slovenian rider Primož Roglič leads the Tour, riding for the Jumbo team that has eclipsed Ineos this year. — AFP

## Tiger gears up for US Open golf

**New York:** Tiger Woods returns to the US Open at Winged Foot this week with a score to settle against a course he regards as one of the three toughest in the world.

During more than a decade of dominance between Woods' first major victory in 1997 and his 14th major at the 2008 US Open, the former world number one played in 46 consecutive majors. That streak of 46 tournaments included only one missed cut — at the 2006 US Open held at Winged Foot. Woods, who collected the 15th major of his career at last year's Masters, is preparing for another demanding assignment in New York this week.

The 44-year-old believes only Oakmont in Pennsylvania and Carnoustie Links in Scotland run Winged Foot close in terms of difficulty.

"It's right up there next to Oakmont and I think Carnoustie as far as just sheer difficulty without even doing anything to it," Woods said Tuesday. — AFP

## Djoker behaves better, in 3rd round

**Rome:** Novak Djokovic behaved better Wednesday in his first match since being defaulted from the US Open. The top-ranked Serb was mostly courteous with the chair umpire and had no interaction with the line judges during a 6-3, 6-2 win over local wild-card entry Salvatore Caruso in his opening match at the Italian Open. The performance came in sharp contrast to the scene in New York 10 days ago, when Djokovic was disqualified for unintentionally hitting a line judge in the throat with a ball. Djokovic said earlier this week that the incident taught him "a big lesson."

"I was actually looking forward to (playing again) as soon as possible after what happened in New York," Djokovic said. "Because I feel like the sentiment on the court needs to be positive, and I need to kind of remove anything that can possibly cause any kind of issues to me — if there is something." After winning, Djokovic laughed to himself as he performed his usual on-court celebration, waving his arms toward all four sides of the Campo Centrale stands. — AP

Live on TV

TENNIS

Rome ATP Masters: Matches from 2.30 pm on Sony Six, HD

## BEAT THE HEAT

## Adapting to UAE climate biggest challenge, says ABD

**Dubai, Sept. 16:** South African star AB de Villiers believes the biggest challenge for all teams in the upcoming Indian Premier League will be adjusting to the prevailing hot and humid conditions in the UAE.

Most games will be played in the night but the conditions would still be challenging.

"I am not really used to these kind of conditions to be honest. It's very hot, it reminds me of a Test match we played in July in Chennai once where Viru (Virender Sehwag) scored 300. It was one of the hottest weather conditions I have experience in my life," he said in an interview posted on RCB's Twitter handle.

"The humidity is similar to that, even at 10 at night. When I arrived here I checked the weather conditions of a few months and it seems to be getting better. It is definitely going to play a part and you have to make sure you have the energy for the backend of the innings or last 5 overs of your bowling spell," he added.

De Villiers said he would also miss playing in front of packed crowds in India with the event to be played behind closed doors in UAE due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

De Villiers said young Australian wicketkeeper batsman Joshua Philippe is an exciting cricketer and he would love share his knowledge with the Australian opener in RCB dressing room.

The 36-year-old dashing cricketer, said not just him, every player is just happy to be back on the field after international cricket came to a halt in mid-March because of the pandemic.

De Villiers' first foray into the cricket field amid the pandemic was the inaugural 3TC Solidarity Cup organised by Cricket South Africa in July.

RCB will open their IPL campaign against Sunrisers Hyderabad in Dubai on September 21. — PTI



Chennai Super Kings captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni in action in this file photo.

## Waiting for Dhoni delight: Viru

**Mumbai, Sept. 16:** Virender Sehwag expects this year's IPL to be "extra special" and a major reason for that is Mahendra Singh Dhoni getting back on the pitch after announcing his international retirement following a year-long sabbatical from the game.

"I think this tournament will be extra special for everyone — the players as well as the audience... watching Dhoni back on the pitch is sure to be a delight. There's so much

in store, need I say more?" Sehwag, who will be co-hosting a show 'Power Play with Champions' on Flipkart Video, said.

Dhoni, who surprised everyone with his decision to call it quits from international cricket in mid-August, will be back in action when he leads the Chennai Super Kings in the IPL.

Sehwag said cricket is an integral part of an Indian's life and the fans have waited long for the sport to return.

Meanwhile, former Australian cricketer Dean Jones reckons Suresh Raina's absence from the IPL would be a major concern for Chennai Super Kings.

"Raina's absence is a major concern this time and he is in the top 5 run getters in IPL. He is a left hander and plays spin very well and the weakness for CSK could be that majority of their players are right handed," Jones told *Star Sports*.

— PTI

## BOOM BEST T20 BOWLER, SAYS AUSSIE PACER

**Abu Dhabi, Sept. 16:** Mumbai Indians' Australian recruit James Pattinson has called Jasprit Bumrah the best T20 bowler in the world and said he was looking forward to working along side the India pace spearhead in the upcoming IPL.

"Personally, it's just fantastic to work with some of the best bowlers in the world. Obviously, Bumrah is probably the best T20 bowler in the world. And Boult (Trent Boult) is up there as well. So, for me it will be a great experience to be around those guys," Pattinson said.

The reigning champions named Pattinson as a replacement for seasoned Lasith Malinga, who has decided to skip this edition of the IPL due to personal reasons.

— PTI

## Ex-athletics head gets 2-yr jail term

**Paris, Sept. 16:** Former track federation president Lamine Diack was sentenced Wednesday to two years in prison for his role in a scheme that allowed Russian athletes who paid hush money to keep competing when they should have been suspended for doping.

The guilty verdict in a Paris court represented a spectacular fall from grace for the 87-year-old Diack, who was the powerful head of the IAAF from 1999-2015.

The court also sentenced Diack to another two years of suspended jail time and fined him \$590,000.

Diack was found guilty of multiple corruption charges and of breach of trust but acquitted of a money laundering charge. At Diack's trial in June, prosecutors requested a four-year jail term and a fine of \$590,000. The judge, Rose-Marie Hunault, detailed his role in the payoff scheme, dubbed "full protection," that squeezed Russian athletes suspected of doping of about \$3.74 million in hush money. "The money was paid in exchange for a program of 'full protection,'" she said, adding the scheme allowed athletes who should have been suspended "purely and simply to escape sanctions."

The court also handed guilty verdicts to five other people, including Diack's son, Papa Massata Diack, who worked as an IAAF marketing consultant.

— AP

## FIRST VACCINE TO OLY BOUND ATHLETES: AFI

**New Delhi, Sept. 16:** Athletics Federation of India (AFI) on Wednesday said it has requested the government to give priority to Olympic-bound athletes when a Covid-19 vaccine is available.

Several countries, including India, are trying to develop a Coronavirus vaccine. The Indian government is considering inoculating the front line workers, army personnel and certain categories first.

"We have already discussed this with the government and told them we will need it (vaccine) for our athletes going to the Olympics," AFI President Adille Sumariwalla said during a webinar.

"We need to make sure once the vaccine comes out, they (Olympic-bound athletes) should be amongst the first batches to get it and the discussion regarding that has already happened," he further added.

Asked if any player is apprehensive about getting inoculated, like tennis star Novak Djokovic, or if the vaccine could cause problem with dope control, national badminton coach Pullela Gopichand said the athletes are looking forward to it.

— PTI



Jamal Murray (left) of the Denver Nuggets drives the ball against Lou Williams of Los Angeles Clippers during their NBA Playoffs at AdventHealth Arena at the ESPN World Of Sports Complex in Lake Buena Vista, Florida on Tuesday. Nuggets won 104-89. — AFP

## Murray puts LA through wringer

**Los Angeles, Sept. 16:** Jamal Murray scored a game high 40 points and Nikola Jokic had a triple double as the Denver Nuggets stunned the Los Angeles Clippers 104-89 in game seven to reach their first Western Conference finals in 11 years.

The underdog Nuggets became the first team in NBA history to rally from a 3-1 series deficit twice in the same postseason.

Jokic completed his triple double by the third quarter of Tuesday night's contest in the NBA's quarantine bubble in Florida, finishing with 16 points, 13 assists and 22 rebounds.

His rebound count is the most by a Nuggets player in an NBA playoff game, breaking his old record of 19.

An odd couple for sure. A Serbian and a Canadian pair that has engineered

the biggest upsets of the 2020 postseason so far.

Denver will once again be the underdogs when they face LeBron James and the Los Angeles Lakers in the conference finals beginning Friday.

Meanwhile, in the Eastern Conference finals, Bam Adebayo made a clutch block with 2.5 seconds left in overtime as the Miami Heat beat the Boston Celtics 117-114 in the opening game of the series. Adebayo leapt high to take what appeared to be an easy dunk away from Celtics star Jayson Tatum to preserve the Heat's slim lead, 116-114.

Adebayo then capped the scoring by sinking a free throw at the other end.

Tatum, who finished with a game high 30 points, missed a desperation 29-foot three-pointer at the buzzer. — AFP

## BCCI tightens grip on fraudsters

**New Delhi, Sept. 16:** The BCCI has tied up with UK-based company Sportradar, which will offer its "integrity services" to prevent betting and other corrupt practices during the upcoming IPL through its Fraud Detection Services (FDS).

With the 13th Indian Premier League being held behind closed doors, the challenge for the

Board's Ajit Singh-led Anti-Corruption Unit is very different as there has been a surge in betting-related frauds and it's expected to increase manifold during the lucrative event.

"Yes, BCCI has inked a deal with Sportradar for this year's IPL. They will be working closely with the ACU and offer their integrity services," an

IPL source confirmed.

The BCCI ACU, in recent times, tracked unusual betting patterns during the state T20 leagues, including the Tamil Nadu Premier League (TNPL).

According to Sportradar, Fraud Detection System (FDS) "is a unique service that identifies betting-related manipulation in sport. This is possible due to the FDS's sophisticated

algorithms and constantly maintained database of odds which are leveraged for the purpose of detecting match-fixing."

It is believed that the company tracks the odds and movements of at least 600 independent bookmakers to detect anomalies in betting patterns. It processes around 5 million data sets per day.

— PTI



Bournemouth's goalkeeper Asmir Begovic dives to save a penalty shot from Luka Milivojevic of Crystal Palace during their English League Cup second round match at the Vitality Stadium in Bournemouth on Tuesday. Bournemouth won 11-10. — AFP

## Palace lose kickathon

**London, Sept. 16:** Bournemouth beat Crystal Palace 11-10 in an unusually long penalty shootout to advance to the third round of the English League Cup after the game ended at 0-0 after 90 minutes.

As the sides remained deadlocked after five penalties each, even both goalkeepers had to take spot kicks and they both missed.

Eventually David Brooks scored his second penalty for Bournemouth

and Luka Milivojevic's second was saved by goalkeeper Asmir Begovic to knock out the Premier League side.

Bournemouth, which was relegated from the Premier League in July, plays Manchester City in the next round.

Meanwhile, Jack Grealish celebrated his new contract at Aston Villa by scoring the decisive goal in a 3-1 victory over Burton.

The match looked to be heading for a penalty

shootout after Ollie Watkins had scored Villa's equaliser late in the first half to cancel out Colin Daniel's opener for the third-division team after only 68 seconds.

But Grealish struck a volley from the edge of the area to put Dean Smith's team in front in the 88th minute.

Also, Sebastian Haller scored twice before Felipe Anderson added a late third as West Ham advanced past Charlton 3-0. — AP

## INDO-AMERICAN SONIA GRIZZLIES ASST COACH

**Houston, Sept. 16:** Memphis Grizzlies, an American professional basketball team which competes in the NBA, has hired an Indian-American as its assistant coach.

Sonia Raman joins Vin Bhavnani (Oklahoma City Thunder) and Roy Rana (Sacramento Kings) as the only coaches of Indian origin in the National Basketball Association.

Raman becomes the 14th female assistant coach in the history of the NBA and the 10th among current coaching staffers in the league. She becomes the seventh female coach to be hired as an assistant in the league since the beginning of the 2019-20 season. — PTI