

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

COIMBATORE | THURSDAY 24 | SEPTEMBER 2020

WEATHER



Max: 33°C
Min: 23°C
Rainfall: 1.5 mm

Forecast: Times of clouds and sun with a thunderstorm in a couple of spots in the afternoon.

TN minister's PA abducted, freed after three hours

Coimbatore: Karnan, the personal assistant (PA) of animal husbandry minister Udumalai K. Radhakrishnan, was kidnapped at knife-point by a masked four-member gang in Udumalpet in nearby Tirupur district and released after three hours at a spot some 10 km from where he was abducted on Wednesday, police said. The motive behind the abduction is not known, they said. The minister was not in the office and only a woman staff member was present when the incident happened, police added. — *PTI*

Excess fee: Contempt proceedings against 9 schools

Chennai: The Madras high court has initiated contempt proceedings against nine schools in Tamil Nadu, which insisted for the payment of 100 per cent fees in violation of the interim orders of the court dated July 17, 2020 (which prescribed the percentage of fees to be collected by the educational institutions). Justice N.Anand Venkatesh directed the registry to issue notices to the correspondents. ■**Details on P2**



NCB summons clutch of B'wood stars

Mumbai, Sept. 23: The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), which is probing an alleged Bollywood-drugs nexus, Wednesday summoned actors Deepika Padukone, Shraddha Kapoor, Sara Ali Khan and Rakul Preet Singh among others for questioning, an official said. Padukone has been summoned on Friday, the senior NCB official said here. The NCB, which began the probe after a drugs angle came to light in connection with actor Sushant Singh Rajput's alleged suicide, has now widened its investigation and asked these 'A-list' celebrities of the Mumbai film industry to "join the probe", he said. — *PTI*

STATE | 3 Pandemic under control, no more lockdowns: Min



WORLD | 5 Trump: Kamala Harris incompetent

SPORT | 8 Mumbai beat KKR by 49 runs



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BEFORE SCHEDULE

Parliament session ends in Covid shadow

DCCORRESPONDENTS
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 23

Parliament's Monsoon Session, held amid the raging Covid-19 pandemic, was adjourned sine die Wednesday, eight days before it was to end, due to the growing coronavirus threat. Several MPs from both Houses had skipped the session due to the health risk. The truncated session's highlight was passage of the controversial farm bills, that triggered farmers' agitations across India and a political storm as key NDA ally Akali Dal opposed the bills and food processing minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal resigned from the

Cabinet. Overall, 25 bills were passed by the Lok Sabha and a long discussion was held on the pandemic. Among key bills passed were the Essential Commodities Amendment Bill, Industries Code Bill and the J&K Official Language Bill, besides the demands for grants for 2020-21. Mr Angadi was the third sitting Lok Sabha MP to die of the virus, after YSR Congress MP Tirupati B. Durga Prasad and Congress' H. Vasanth Kumar, who died earlier. Speaker Om Birla expressed satisfaction that despite the extraordinary circumstances, the session's productivity was 167 per cent.

TN seeks funds from Centre for Covid fight

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, SEPT. 23

Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami urged the Prime Minister Narendra Modi to raise to ₹3,000 crore the Emergency Response and Health Systems Preparedness package from the present ₹712.64 crore, allotted to the State. Speaking at the video conference meeting with the Prime Minister, Palaniswami also sought an ad-hoc grant of ₹1,000 crore from the NDRF immediately to fight the pandemic and release of pending Custom Milled Rice (CMR) subsidy of ₹1,321 crore to facilitate

● **"I request the Emergency Response and Health Systems Preparedness package for Tamil Nadu may be stepped up to ₹3,000 crore from the present ₹712.64 crore"**



— K. Palaniswami, CM

paddy procurement now. "We have fully exhausted the State Disaster Response and Mitigation Fund," the chief minister said, adding that the State had received ₹511.64 crore from the Centre in two tranches under the Emergency Response and Health Systems Preparedness package. Thanking the Prime

Minister for enacting the "pro-farmers legislations," he said they would go a long way in bringing stability to the agriculture sector. On managing the coronavirus crisis, he said, "I have so far personally visited and reviewed the performance in 26 districts which has proved very effective in controlling the pandemic." ■ **P3**

Collegium approves elevation of 10 judicial officers as Madras HC judges

New Delhi, Sept. 23: The Supreme Court Collegium Wednesday approved the proposal for elevation of 10 Judicial Officers as Judges of the Madras high court. The Collegium, headed by Chief Justice S A Bobde, recommended elevation of following judicial officers — Kannammal Shanmuga Sundaram, Sathikumar Sukumara Kurup, Murali Shankar Kuppuraju, Manjula Ramaraju Nalliah, and

Thamilselvi T Valayapalayam. Besides them, the Collegium also approved names of G Chandrasekharan, AA Nakkiran, Sivagnanam Veerasamy, Ilangoan Ganesan, and Ananthi Subramanian. The decision was uploaded on the website of the apex court. Apart from CJI Bobde, justices NV Ramana, RF Nariman, UU Lalit and A M Khanwilkar are part of the 5-judge Collegium. — *PTI*

CM wants PM to recast culture panel

A. ARUL PALANI | DC
CHENNAI, SEPT. 23

Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami has urged Prime Minister Narandra Modi to reconstitute an expert committee under the culture ministry to study the origin and evolution of Indian culture during the past 12 millennia by including scholars from Tamil Nadu. The Union ministry of culture, recently constituted an expert committee for conducting a holistic study of the origin and evolution of Indian culture during the past 12 millennia and its interface with other cultures of the world. Union minister of state, culture and tourism, Prahlad Singh Patel in a written reply in the Lok Sabha had said a few days ago that the 16-member expert committee had been set up for conducting holistic study of origin and evolution of Indian culture dating back to 12,000 years and its interface with other world cultures. In a letter sent to the PM on Wednesday, Palaniswami said the composition of the committee was a matter of "deep concern." ■ **P3**



TMC MP Kalyan Banerjee and other opposition lawmakers protest against the recent farm and labour bills in front of Mahatma Gandhi statue, during the ongoing Monsoon Session, at Parliament House in New Delhi, Wednesday. — *PTI*

Opposition parties protest in Parliament complex over farm bills

New Delhi, Sept. 23: From a silent march in the Parliament complex to carrying bundles of paddy crop in their hands while walking to Vijay Chowk, members of various opposition parties on Wednesday protested in unusual ways against the contentious farm bills passed recently. Most opposition MPs boycotted Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha proceedings for the second consecutive day on Wednesday and protested both inside and outside the Parliament complex against

the three agriculture-related bills. First, the Rajya Sabha MPs took out a silent protest march within the complex carrying placards with messages such as "Save Farmers, Save Workers, Save Democracy". They marched from the Mahatma Gandhi statue to the Ambedkar statue on Parliament premises. They also stood in a line before Gandhi's statue. Members of the Congress, Trinamool Congress, CPI, CPI-M, DMK, Rashtriya

Janata Dal (RJD), Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), Samajwadi Party and the NCP participated in the protest. "All MPs of the Congress and like-minded parties are marching from Gandhi statue to Ambedkar statue in Parliament protesting the anti-Farmers, anti-Workers Bills that have been rubber-stamped in Parliament in the most undemocratic manner by the Modi government," Congress chief whip in Rajya Sabha Jairam Ramesh said in a tweet. — *PTI*

Union minister Suresh Angadi dies of coronavirus

New Delhi, Sept. 23: Minister of State for Railways and Karnataka BJP MP Suresh Angadi passed away on Wednesday, days after he tested positive for Covid-19. The 65-year-old passed away at around 8 pm at the AIIMS trauma centre which has been converted into a dedicated Covid-19 facility, sources at the hospital said.

A fourth-term MP from Belagavi, Angadi is the first Union minister to have died of coronavirus. At least six MLAs and three MPs have earlier succumbed to it. Former President Pranab Mukherjee, who died on August 31, was also diagnosed as Covid-19 positive. Angadi had on September 11 himself announced on microblogging site Twitter that he had contracted the disease. — *PTI*

PM: Labour reforms will give boost to economic growth

New Delhi, Sept. 23: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday hailed the passage of key labour reform bills by Parliament, saying it will ensure well-being of workers and give a boost to economic growth.

The new labour code universalises minimum wages, timely payment of wages and gives priority to occupational safety of workers, he tweeted, asserting that these reforms will contribute to a better working environment which will accelerate the pace of economic growth.

Parliament on Wednesday approved three key labour reform bills that will remove impediments to winding up of companies and allow firing



of staff without government permission in firms with up to 300 workers from the existing 100, a move aimed at attracting more investments and job creation.

The first code on wages was approved by Parliament last year.

With passage of these three bills, 29 central labour laws have been codified into four broad codes as contemplated by the government under labour reforms to improve ease of doing business and providing universal social securi-

ty to workers as well. "Long due and much awaited Labour reforms have been passed by Parliament. The reforms will ensure well-being of our industrious workers and give a boost to economic growth," the prime minister said.

He said the three bills are also shining examples of "Minimum Government, Maximum Governance."

"The Labour reforms will ensure 'Ease of Doing Business'. These are futuristic legislations to empower enterprises by reducing compliance, red-tapism and 'Inspector Raj'. The reforms also seek to harness the power of technology for the betterment of the workers and industry both," Modi said. — *PTI*

Focus on micro-containment to fight Covid: PM

New Delhi, Sept, 23: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday asked states to press on with full strength in opening economic activities alongside fighting the coronavirus pandemic and suggested that they should now focus on "micro-containment zones" to curb the disease.

In a review meeting through video conference with chief ministers and

representatives of seven states with a high burden of Covid-19 cases, Modi said having micro containment zones will help states in dealing with the spread of the infection and also allow normal activities to continue. The prime minister also questioned the efficacy of one or two-day local lockdowns imposed by certain states from time to time and asked them to reassess as to

how effective they are in curbing the disease.

"Is it that this is creating difficulties in the resumption of economic activities in your states? This is my request that all states consider it seriously," he said.

Several states, including West Bengal and Punjab, have time to time imposed local lockdowns to contain the virus spread. With major festivals like Durga

Puja and Deepavali approaching in the next couple of months, Modi asked states to promote Covid-appropriate festivities, as he observed that the battle against the pandemic is far from over.

He noted that only 60 districts out of more than 700 districts across the country, and that too in just seven states, have a high load of cases. — *PTI*

Heavy rains cause waterlogging in Mumbai, disrupt traffic

Mumbai, Sept. 23: Heavy rains lashed Mumbai overnight, leaving many parts of the metropolis in waist deep water and disrupting rail and road traffic on Wednesday, officials said. The Santacruz observatory recorded 286.4 mm rainfall during the 24-hour period ending at 8.30 am on Wednesday, making it the fourth highest rainfall in Mumbai since 1974, an IMD official said. At the municipal Nair Hospital in central Mumbai, the Covid-19 outpatient department (OPD) set up in a tempo-

● **Mumbai's municipal commissioner Iqbal Singh Chahal has asked that all offices and establishments in the city, barring essential services, be shut on Wednesday due to the downpour**

rary shed in the compound was shifted to the casualty ward inside the building due to waterlogging in the compound, they said.

A doctor from the hospital said the normal OPD at the hospital has been suspended temporarily and only emergency cases are being examined at the casualty ward. Two watchmen died in

Agripada area after getting stuck inside a lift in the basement of a high rise building because of waterlogging, a police official said.

There was also waterlogging in several areas in the suburbs like Goregaon, Malad and Dahisar, he said. "Around 6 inches high water logging at Andheri Subway. However traffic

has been resumed and police personnel from DN Nagar Police Station are on the spot to ensure convenient commute for Mumbaiers," Mumbai Police tweeted.

Rains across the island city and the western suburbs picked up late on Tuesday evening.

There were intense spells across Mumbai overnight, a civic official said.

On Wednesday morning, public transport services were hit and normal life affected in the financial capital due to heavy downpour and waterlog-

ging. Several streets and low-lying areas were waterlogged due to overnight rains and the road traffic was also badly hit, a civic official said. Some vehicles broke down in the water, affecting the traffic movement, he added.

Mumbai's municipal commissioner Iqbal Singh Chahal has asked that all offices and establishments in the city, barring essential services, be shut on Wednesday due to the downpour and IMD's forecast of "heavy to very heavy rains" in the city. — *PTI*



Vehicles move on waterlogged LBS road after heavy monsoon rain, at Kurla in Mumbai, on Wednesday.

— *PTI*

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Purattasi 8
Tithi: Ashtami
Star: Moolam
Rahukalam:
 1.30 pm to 3 pm
Yamagandam:
 6 am to 7.30 am

PRAYERS

Fajar: 4.48 am
Zohar: 12.07 pm
Asar: 3.20 pm
Maghrib: 6.05 pm
Isha: 7.16 pm

SUNSET TODAY 6.04 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.58 AM
MOONRISE TODAY 12.39 PM
MOONSET TOMORROW 12.16 AM

COUNTER POINT



How much did the Centre spend on PM's visits to China and Pakistan?

SHORT TAKES

3 get RI in bank fraud case

DC CORRESPONDENT
 CHENNAI, SEPT 22

The special court for CBI cases, Coimbatore, on Wednesday convicted three persons including a former senior manager of a nationalised bank in Coimbatore in connection with a bank fraud case registered by CBI against them. The court has also slapped a total fine of ₹ 8 lakh on them.

According to sources, the Anti-Corruption Branch of CBI, Chennai, investigated and filed chargesheet against K.Sajeesh, the then senior manager, Canara Bank, Kavunthapalayam Branch, Coimbatore, Rakav Balaji and Jaishankar, both private persons on the allegation that Sajeesh had sanctioned 26 housing loans amounting to Rs.123.44 lakh to various borrowers working in BSNL/Primary Health Centres in violation of bank norms, without conducting pre/post sanction inspections and on the strength of forged and fabricated salary certificates produced/arranged by Rakav Balaji and Jayashankar. They caused a loss of ₹1.31 crore to the bank. On completion of trial, judge S. Nagarajan, special court for CBI, Coimbatore, on Wednesday said the prosecution proved the charges beyond reasonable doubt. The judge sentenced Sajeesh to 2-year RI and Rakav Balaji and Jaishankar 3-year RI.

School fees: Edu institutions violate court's order

Contempt proceedings against 9 schools in TN

J. STALIN | DC
 CHENNAI, SEPT 23

The Madras high court has initiated contempt proceedings against nine schools in Tamil Nadu, which insisted for the payment of 100 per cent fees in violation of the interim orders of the court dated July 17, 2020, (which prescribed the percentage of fees to be collected by the educational institutions).

Justice N.Anand Venkatesh who initiated the contempt proceedings, directed the Registry to issue notices to the Correspondents of PSBB Millenium CBSE School, Coimbatore, P.S.Chidambara Nadar Senior Secondary School, Virudhunagar, Shatriya Vidyasala Matric H.R.Sec.School, Virudhunagar, Shatriya Vidyasala Hr.Sec.School, Virudhunagar, Muslim Higher Secondary School, Ramanathapuram, Don Bosco Matriculation Hr.Sec.School, Paramakkudi, Ramanathapuram District, H.N.V. Matriculation Hr.Sec.School, Sivakasi, Virudhunagar District, Sri Shankara Vidya Kendriya Matriculation H.R.Sec.School, Thiruvotriyur, Tiruvallur district and Hussain Memorial Matriculation Hr.Sec.School, Ambattur, Tiruvallur district, mentioning the next date of hearing as October 14, 2020.

Passing interim orders, on a batch of petitions from Tamil Nadu Nursery Primary Matriculation Higher Secondary Schools Association, the judge had on July 17, 2020, among other things said the unaided private institutions shall collect 40 per

CBSE directed to open mail ID for receiving complaints

DC CORRESPONDENT
 CHENNAI, SEPT 23

The Madras high court has directed the Regional Officer, Central Board of Secondary Education, Chennai region, to immediately open a mail ID for receiving complaints from parents aggrieved by excess fee collected by schools coming under CBSE, in violation of the orders passed by the court on July 17, 2020.

Justice N.Anand Venkatesh gave the direc-

tive while passing interim orders on a petition filed by M/s SBOA School and Junior College Parents Association represented by its secretary Sahil Satyapal.

The judge said, "The parents are hesitant to give complaints directly fearing repercussions for their children studying in the respective schools. All complaints received against the schools concerned coming under CBSE, shall be enquired and a report shall be filed before this

court by the regional officer on the next date of hearing. The report shall be supported with all relevant documents and the list of schools that are found to have violated the orders of this court and had collected/demanded excess fees than fixed by this court, shall be specifically named in the report. This will enable the court to take appropriate action against the erring schools" The judge posted to October 14, 2020, further hearing of the case.

cent of the tuition fees as an advance fees based on the tuition fees collected during the academic year 2019-2020. This advance fee shall be paid by the students on or before August 31, 2020. The unaided private institutions shall also collect the arrears of fees payable for the academic year 2019-2020 and this arrear fees shall be paid on or before September 30, 2020. The balance of 35 per cent of the fees based on the tuition fees collected for the academic year 2019-2020, shall be collected within a period of two months from the date on which the institution was reopened and physical classes commences. The Fee Committee shall immediately start the process of the determining the tuition fees for the respective institutions and make an attempt to complete the process within a period of eight weeks starting from August 2020

onwards. The payment of balance if any, shall be determined after the final decision of the Fee Committee, the judge had added. In his present interim order, Justice Anand Venkatesh said pursuant to the earlier orders passed by this court on July 31, 2020, August 31, 2020 and September 7, 2020, the deputy secretary to the government, school education department, has filed an additional report along with all the relevant documents.

The judge said, "This court has carefully gone through the Additional Report filed today and also considered the submissions made by the Advocate General. This court had made it clear even at the time of passing the interim order that any school that is found violating the interim order passed by this court on July 17, 2020, will be dealt

with sternly in accordance with law. It was also indicated that contempt proceedings will be initiated against the persons in-charge of the schools which violates the order. Out of 78 complaints received by the department relating to violation of court order, 9 schools have been identified and a report has also been filed by the respective Chief Educational Officer, to the effect that the complaint is proved and those schools were insisting for the payment of 100 percent fees. This prima facie material is enough for this court to initiate contempt proceedings against the 9 schools mentioned in the Additional report that was filed today. In view of the above, contempt proceedings are initiated against the correspondent of the 9 schools".

The judge posted to October 14, 2020, further hearing of the case.



Line renovation work going on at Central suburban railway station in the city.

— DC

Flyover work in slow lane



Traffic moves at snail's pace due to flyover work in Koyambedu on Wednesday. — DC

Kerala-based criminal held for duping ₹1.67 cr

DC CORRESPONDENT
 POLLACHI SEPT. 23

The police have arrested a 31-year-old Kerala-based criminal in connection with duping a resort owner of Rs 1.67 crore.

Four cars, jewels and a countrymade gun were seized by the police.

According to police, Muthu, 67, a native of Anamalai - Ganapathypalayam on the outskirts of Pollachi, sold his resort for Rs 4.35 crore and deposited the money in a bank near Singanallur.

On September 2, Muthu went to the bank along with Anoop Kumar, a regular visitor to the resort. Muthu withdrew Rs 1.67

crore and requested Anoop to deposit the money in a bank near Kozhijampara in Kerala. While Anoop absconded with the money, Muthu's efforts to contact him on his mobile phone proved futile as it was switched off.

Based on Muthu's complaint, Anamalai police last week arrested five associates of Anoop and seized Rs 5 lakhs and two countrymade guns.

While the Valparai DSP deployed three special teams to nab Anoop, the police during a routine vehicle check on Tuesday intercepted him in a luxury car.

When SI Karuppasamy Pandian made an attempt

to stop the car, Anoop threatened him with a gun and escaped.

However, police after a chase arrested him and seized Rs 40 lakhs, 50 sovereigns of gold jewels, costly mobile phones and 4 latest model costly cars. Police also confiscated a pistol and three bullets from Anoop.

Further investigation revealed that Kerala police had registered 11 cases against Anoop for kidnapping, cheating and robbery. He was imprisoned several times and released on bail.

Anoop was produced before the Pollachi judicial magistrate court on Wednesday and imprisoned at Pollachi sub-jail.

Gold, drones and iPhone seized

DC CORRESPONDENT
 CHENNAI, SEPT. 23

The customs sleuths at the Chennai international airport on Wednesday arrested a smuggler, who flew in from Dubai with gold.

Based on a tip-off, a Chennai passenger who arrived from Dubai by Emirates Airlines flight was intercepted at exit. During search, gold paste was found stitched inside his underwear along with plastic pouches. The gold paste weighing 412 grams and valued Rs 21.4 lakh was recovered. A gold kada weighing 98 grams valued at Rs 5 lakh was recovered from his trouser pocket.

On searching his hand bag, five drones and two iPhone 11 valued at Rs 5.6 lakh were seized.

A total of Rs 32 lakh worth gold, drones &

iPhones were seized under the Customs Act. The passenger was arrested.

Two similar cases were reported on Tuesday. A passenger from Virudhnagar district who arrived from Doha and two passengers from Kadappa in Andhra Pradesh who came from Kuwait were intercepted at exit.

A gold kada was recovered from the pant pocket of one passenger and a gold chain and a gold cut bit were recovered from pant pockets of other two passengers. Around 586 grams of gold valued at Rs. 30.6 lakh were seized under the Customs Act.

In total, gold worth Rs 57 lakh along with drones and iPhones worth Rs 5.6 lakh, totally valued at Rs 62.6 lakhs, were recovered and seized. Further investigation is under way.

MAN KILLS HIMSELF AFTER TIFF WITH WIFE

DC CORRESPONDENT
 CHENNAI, SEPT. 23

A 33-year-old vegetable vendor, hailing from Anupuram in Chengalpet district, has allegedly ended his life by stabbing himself, after a quarrel with his wife on Tuesday night.

The deceased, M. Prakash, owns a vegetable shop in Anupuram and lived with his wife, Selvakani and two sons in a house near Vempuliammam Kovil.

A police officer said that on Tuesday night, Prakash had a tiff with Selvakani. While quarrelling with his wife, he reportedly pulled out a knife and stabbed himself. Selvakani rushed him to the Chengalpet government hospital where he was pronounced dead.

130 musicians to honour Papanasam Sivan's memory

B. VIJAYALAKSHMI | DC
 CHENNAI, SEPT. 23

The 130th birth anniversary of Papanasam Sivan, renowned Carnatic musician and legendary singer, who also made an indelible mark in Tamil movies, will be celebrated from September 26 to October 1 on Facebook live by 130 musicians in the country and abroad.

While Dushyanth Sridhar will deliver a special jayanthi talk on Papanasam Sivan, 80 students from North America of Ashok Ramani, musician and grandson of Papanasam Sivan, will sing *Iha param*.

Papanasam Ashok Ramani said, "In all, 130 musicians from Chennai, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Singapore, Malaysia, Australia and several parts of the US will render kritis of Papanasam Sivan without any repetition."

Kanna katharul, Paripalanai, Idadhu padham thooki, kanakasabayil, Konjam dayai, Thiruvurul thara and Devi padham will be among the Sivan songs to be rendered by musicians including Dr Rukmini Ramani, Mallika Ramani, Gayathri Venkataraghavan, Sikkil Gurucharan, Gayathri Girish, Saketharaman, Mahathi, O. S. Arun, Ashwath Narayanan, Vasudha Ravi and Suryaprakash.

Speaking to DC, well-known musician **Sudha Ragunathan** said, "It's a celebration and any celebration



Papanasam Sivan

reaches its zenith only when people are ready to participate with an open heart and mind. Papanasam Sivan's compositions comprise a major part of my musical repertoire. I am glad that Ashok Ramani has conceptualised this programme so beautifully despite the world being in the clutches of the pandemic and playing spoilsport. Sivan's compositions are of such wide variety that any number of people can participate at any level. It is my privilege to be part of this celebration."

Noted violinist **Lalgudi Vijayalakshmi** recalled her association with Sivan as a girl. "I had taken his blessings as a little girl when my father (Lalgudi G. Jayaraman) took me to him. I

sang a few sentences from his Dhanyasi varnam and he was overjoyed. When he listened to my father playing his *Enna Thavam Seithanai* on the violin he was overwhelmed and said he must have written the composition specially for my father.

"His krithis, like those of the Trinity, are part of all our concerts. By learning his compositions, a musician will realize how music can touch one's soul. His lyrics and music will go hand in hand and melt your heart. I am blessed to take part in the celebrations," she said.



Ashok Ramani

Sivan ruled Tamil cinema from 1930s to late '40s

ANUPAMA SUBRAMANIAN | DC
 CHENNAI, SEPT. 23

Tamil film *Seetha Kalyanam* produced by late iconic Marathi/Hindi filmmaker V. Shantharam marked the debut of musician Papanasam Sivan in Tamil films. He bankrolled the mythological story of Sita's Swayamvara in his home banner Prabhat Film Company. Directed by Baburao Pendharkar, the film featured VSundaram Iyer's children S. Jayalakshmi, S.Rajam and Veenai S. Balachander. While looking out for a music composer, it was Iyer who suggested his children's music tutor Papanasam Sivan's name. That's how Sivan's journey in Tamil films as a lyric writer and music director commenced. The success of his filmy compositions was mainly attributed to the usage of classical South Indian as a base.

The highlight of the film released in 1934 was that all the songs were recorded live on the sets with actors singing them in their own voices, while the orchestra players played their instruments beyond the camera range. The movie and the songs were

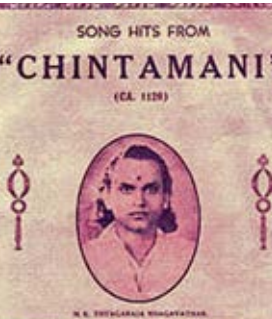


huge hits. In the same year, debutant director K.Subramanyam hired Papanasam Sivan for his film *Pavalakodi*, which starred M.K.Thyagaraja Bhagavathar (MKT). The film had 50 songs of which M. K. Thyagaraja Bhagavathar sang 22. Some of the popular songs from the movie are *Somasekara*, *Kanna Kariyamugil Vanna* and *Vanithaikul Uyirvaana*.

In 1935, K.Subramanyam produced and directed *Naveena Sarangadhara* directed by K.Subramanyam in 1936 had 41 songs, and all the songs' lyrics were written and composed by Sivan. *Ambikapathy* directed by American director Ellis R Dungan, which starred MKT and MR Santhanalakshmi in 1937 was the first Tamil film to name a music composer in the title credits. And apparently, it was Papanasam Sivan, who wrote lyrics and scored music for the super hit film. Yet another film *Chintamani* released in 1937, featuring MKT with cult songs like *Radhu Unakkku Gobam* composed by Sivan was a super hit. The gramophone discs of Chintamani were also popular. It was the 1943 film

(Left) A *Ambikapathy* scene being shot.

(Right) Gramaphone disc cover of *Chintamani*.



Sevasadanam (1938) became popular *Naveena Sarangadhara* directed by K.Subramanyam in 1936 had 41 songs, and all the songs' lyrics were written and composed by Sivan. *Ambikapathy* directed by American director Ellis R Dungan, which starred MKT and MR Santhanalakshmi in 1937 was the first Tamil film to name a music composer in the title credits. And apparently, it was Papanasam Sivan, who wrote lyrics and scored music for the super hit film. Yet another film *Chintamani* released in 1937, featuring MKT with cult songs like *Radhu Unakkku Gobam* composed by Sivan was a super hit. The gramophone discs of Chintamani were also popular. It was the 1943 film

Sivakavi, which had MKT and S.Jayalakshmi in the lead and directed by PK Raja Sandow and SM Sriramulu Naidu which took Sivan's songs to a different league. The soundtrack of the film consisted of 29 songs and Sivan also penned the lyrics. The songs *Vadhaname* and *Soppana Vaazhivil Maghindhu* were chart-buster hits. Songs contributed majorly to the film's success. *Haridas*, the 1944 flick, which starred MKT and TR Rajakumari held the record of being the longest-running Tamil film at a single theatre for 784 days, which was only beaten over 60 years later by *Chandramukhi* (2005). All songs written and composed by Sivan became huge hits. The number *Manmadha Leelayai Vendraar Undo*

HIS ACTING STINT: In 1936, K.

Subramanyam made a devotional film titled Kuchela and roped in Sivan in the titular character Kuchela, which was his first acting debut in K'town. He also doubled up as a music composer and lyric writer of the film. Kuchela had 30 songs and the songbook given had the details of the accompanying ensemble.

celebrating erotic love has become an enduring hit.

Pankajavalli released in 1947 featuring Sivan's assistant PU Chinnappa, the leading singing star of the day, as the hero was also a huge hit. Initially Chinnappa had apprehensions that Sivan was favoring M. K. Thyagaraja Bhagavathar. When he expressed it to Sivan, he smilingly said that while MKT has a high-pitched voice, Chinnappa had a low-pitched voice. Later Sivan wrote the opening song and also sang it.

A visibly impressed Chinnappa reportedly prostrated before Sivan and touched his feet.

OTHER STORY

Lucknow man saved by Chennai hospital

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, SEPT 23

For the first time in India, a patient with severe lung infection post-Covid recovery was airlifted, with ECMO (Extracorporeal membrane oxygenation) support throughout the five and a half hour journey, from Lucknow to Chennai, where he is being successfully treated at the Gleneagles Global Health City.

When the 32-year-old man developed breathing complications a couple of weeks after he recovered from Covid-19, he was admitted to a hospital in Lucknow, where 'despite high ventilatory oxygen support his oxygen levels were extremely low with the accumulation of carbon dioxide at an alarming level in the blood,' a hospital press release said. Doctors from Gleneagles Global Health City went to Lucknow on September 16 and initiated ECMO, which stabilized the patient for a few hours. The next day the patient was airlifted by a chartered flight, in the presence of the medical experts to monitor his condition, the press release said. "Currently, the patient is slowly recovering from lung infection with the support of ECMO," said Dr Govini Balasubramani, senior consultant in the hospital.

Docs help pregnant woman with Covid give birth, recover

Chennai: A few days before her 28th birthday on August 27, a pregnant woman here found she had contracted Covid-19, but what was her greatest worry was what lay in store for her baby. Displaying grit while going through an induced coma, Priyadarshini was delivered of a pre-term girl, but the woman's anxiety and pain was she could not see her infant immediately after birth. She was forced to wait for a month to feed her loved one. Priyadarshini's determination earned the praise of doctors at the city's Kauvery Hospital where she was brought in the early hours of August 21 with complaints of breathlessness and discomfort. Dr Aravindan Selvaraj, executive director, Kauvery Hospital, lauded the woman's grit.

"I did not know how my baby looked like when she was born. I never thought that I would pull through (alive). The doctors said my child's life was critical (then). Now I am happy that the doctors have saved my life and my child's," a moist-eyed Priyadarshini said.

—PTI

Intensive checks



Corporation commissioner P. Kumaravel Pandian inspects mobile Covid swab testing vehicle at Singanallur bus stand in Coimbatore. — DC

Pandemic under control, no more lockdowns: Min

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, SEPT 23

Minister for revenue and disaster management R. B. Udhayakumar said that the coronavirus pandemic had been brought under control in the state through the various measures taken by the government and ruled out another lockdown.

Speaking to the media after welcoming some frontline Covid-19 war-

riors who were returning for duty after recovery from the disease at Purasawalkam in Chennai, he said 4,97,377 persons had recovered so far and gone home.

Prevention measures were in full swing in all over the city, he said adding that an IAS officer had been appointed to supervise the activities in each of 15 zones in Chennai, which had their own medical teams and

police to carry out the work.

An average of 80,000 RT-PCR tests were being done in the state and on Tuesday, the number of tests went up to 82,978, he said.

Answering a question, he said that there was no possibility for another lockdown as the relaxations had been brought in only after consulting experts and monitoring committees.



Carpenter Suryamoorthy, resident of Lourduh Nagar in Madurai, unable to buy a bicycle for his son, has designed a bicycle made of wood with box facilities for his son.

— K. Manikandan

Big feat by T'kudi port: Chairman

DC CORRESPONDENT
THOOTHUKUDI, SEPT. 23

The Thoothukudi VOC Port has handled longest wind blades ever undertaken by any Indian port, said the port chairman, T.K. Ramachandran.

The port handled 1,667 wind blades and 648 wind blade towers, which is the highest number of wind power equipments handled among the ports in south India during the last fiscal. In the first half of the current fiscal till September 21, the port handled 881 wind blades and 397 wind blade towers, according Mr Ramachandran, who added that on September 21, the Thoothukudi port loaded 33 longest wind blades (74.90mts) and 50

wind mill towers on a Panama flagged vessel, M V Ginkgo. The cargo vessel carrying the wind blades sailed from Thoothukudi port to the port of New Orleans in the USA on September 21.

Hoping to increase handling of such cargoes, the chairman said that port get such business opportunity by the localisation of the supply chain of wind energy equipment. He invited expression of interest from wind blade manufacturing companies to invest in 'Tuticorin SPEEDZ' (Smart Port Employment and Economic Development Zone), for which the port has allotted 1,680 acres of land within its premises in Thoothukudi.

Now, DMK, AIADMK cross swords over farmers' bills

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, SEPT 23

DMK president M. K. Stalin lashed out at Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami for the AIADMK's support to the controversial farmers' bills in Parliament while revenue minister R. B. Udhayakumar accused Stalin of raring to start a political fight over the issue on Wednesday.

Speaking to the media after attending a Covid-19 related event in Chennai, Udhayakumar said the Chief Minister had clarified that the bills would not be detrimental to the interest of farmers and charged Stalin with launching a false propa-

ganda. Stalin in a lengthy statement said Palaniswami had no moral right to call himself a farmer as a farmer would not support an anti-farmer legislation, adding that the bill that the AIADMK had supported did not even mention 'minimum support price,' something for which farmers in the country had been fighting for.

Reacting to Palaniswami's remarks that Stalin did not know anything about agriculture, he said that to express an opinion on a bill, one need not be a farmer. Basic knowledge on farming and concern for farmers would do, he said, adding that

Palaniswami lacked them.

Raising a series of questions to the Chief Minister, Stalin asked if the AIADMK MP S. R. Balasubramanian, who spoke against the Bills in Rajya Sabha, did not know anything about farming.

Or, did the thousands of farmers who walked to lay siege to Fort St George or the lakhs of farmers protesting in north India or the NDA Minister who resigned her post on the issue not know anything about farming? Stalin asked.

He also mentioned about the leaders of 18 Opposition political parties urging the President not to give sanction to the Bills and the articles pub-

lished in traditional newspapers like The Hindu and Deccan Chronicle against the Bills and asked the Chief Minister if they too did not know anything about farming.

The adverse effects of the Bills had been listed out in the advertisement put out by the DMK's farmer workers union, he said.

Alleging corruption in various farmers' schemes like kudi mamarathu (the traditional way of keeping water bodies clean), desilting of canals for providing water to farmlands and Prime Minister's Kisan Scheme, Stalin said a farmer would not indulge in corruption in a scheme to benefit farmers.

WILD JUMBOS RANSACK PDS OUTLET

B. RAVICHANDRAN I
DC
OOTY, SEPT. 23

The man-elephant conflict in the hills here took a new dimension on Tuesday night after a herd of five wild jumbos strayed into the Aamaikulam village limits in Gudalur in the Nilgiris border and ransacked a PDS outlet.

Village sources said that for the past few days a herd of elephants was spotted moving around the Aamaikulam village in the night. On Tuesday evening too this herd was seen a few kilometers away in the forest fringes along the village. But, shortly after midnight they entered the village limits, walked near the PDS outlet, damaged the wall of the building, made their way inside the godown attached to the shop and ransacked essentials such as rice, wheat and oil which were stocked inside the shop. The jumbos moved around the PDS shop for almost an hour and vanished into the nearby forest.

While the jumbos caused extensive damage to the PDS outlet, the foresters have formed a team to track the herd to evolve plans to chase them off.

FROM P1

Agriculture activities, food processing and other industries were almost back to full operation throughout the state, he said.

The state had been using only RT PCR test since the beginning, he said, adding, "These tests cost nearly ₹ 6.8 crore a day. I request the Government of India to fund 50 per cent at least of the cost of the PCR tests from the PM - CARES fund as the state is facing financial difficulties for incurring such expenses continuously."

Listing out the various measures taken by the government to combat the pandemic, he said deaths due to Covid-19 had been reduced from an average of 100 per day to around 7 and added that 2,751 doctors, 6,893 staff nurses, 1,058 lab technicians, 334 health inspectors, 2,751 multipurpose health workers and 2,000 paramedical workers had been additionally drafted.

"I have announced a special incentive package including capital subsidy, interest subvention etc. to promote manufacturing of Covid-19 related medical equipment and drugs in Tamil Nadu. At present, 50 such companies have started their production."

A high level committee headed by Dr C.Rangarajan, former RBI Governor, has submitted its recommendations on the economic revival measures in the state and suitable action will be taken on it," he said.

'None representing TN in committee'

FROM P1

The committee had no representative from any of the southern states, especially from Tamil Nadu, which has a glorious past and home to one of the oldest civilizations —

Dravidian civilization — a living and thriving culture in the South of India.

The recent archaeological excavations in Keezhadi and other parts of Tamil Nadu revealed that the world-reputed Sangam era can now be dated back to as early as 6th century BCE.

"The Tamil culture and language is one of the oldest surviving heritages in the world", he said.

Recalling Modi's visit during last year to Mamallapuram, which is home to ancient monuments, during an informal summit with Chinese President Xi Jinping, Palaniswami said "you had observed the awe-inspiring timeless monuments and glorious legacy of Tamil heritage in full splendour. You will, therefore, agree with me that any chronicle of Indian history and culture would be grossly incomplete without giving its rightful place to Tamil culture and

language".

He said "given this splendid heritage background, it is surprising that the Union ministry of culture had chosen to ignore experts from Tamil Nadu while setting up the said committee".

Seeking early reply from PM Palaniswami said "On behalf of the people of Tamil Nadu, I request you to personally intervene and direct the Ministry to reconstitute the expert committee by inducting eminent scholars from Tamil Nadu.

There has been heated debate in the state over the constitution of the committee. The DMK president and opposition leader MK Stalin, demanded that the panel should have representation from scheduled castes, minority communities and southern and north eastern states.

Demanding reconstitution of the committee, Stalin said Tamil scholars were 'not accommodated' in the panel and accused the BJP-led Centre of attempting to 'rewrite' Indian cultural history by relegating the Dravidian civilisation behind and 'thrusting' the Saraswathi river civilisation.

Full proof system for accident claims necessary: HC

J.STALIN | DC
CHENNAI, SEPT 23

Noting that many number of false claims are filed, processed and the tribunals are also awarding compensation in a routine manner and a full proof system in the matter of accident claims are necessary in order to avoid the bogus and fraudulent claims, the Madras high court has issued a set of directions to the Director General of Police, transport secretary and the director of medical and rural health services, besides Motor Accident Claims Tribunal, to be complied with.

Allowing an appeal from United India Insurance Company limited and setting aside an award of Rs 1.07 lakh ordered by a Motor Accident Claims Tribunal, Namakkal, which was based on a bogus claim,

Justice S.M.Subramaniam said though the issues were dealt on several occasions by the high court as well as by the Supreme Court, still such false claims are being noticed. Full proof system in the matter of accident claims is necessary in order to avoid the bogus and fraudulent claims. These apart, unethical practices in settlement of claims are to be eradicated in order to protect the interest of the genuine accident victims. Undoubtedly, the accident victims are to be provided medical treatment immediately and 'just compensation' is to be granted without any lapse of time. The very purpose and object of the statute is to ensure speedy remedy to the accident victims. However, such things are not happening on account of various corrupt practices in the process of settling the compensation. Courts are also struggling to minimize such irregularities and illegalities. In the process



Claims Tribunal in coordination with the Legal Services Authorities as well as the DGP of the states concerned, the judge added.

The judge said by a circular dated January 2, 2017 the DGP, Tamil Nadu had issued instructions for uploading online set of 12 documents relating to the accident and vehicle involved, besides separate set of documents in regard to victims as per DAR scheme. The Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS) platform was to be established as the online system of the Tamil Nadu police for making available documents under the DAR scheme, in lieu of physical filing before the tribunal by police, the judge added.

The judge said presently, while DAR online has been created, it was not used by the tribunals either in pre-litigation exercise or in pending cases for speedy disposal of cases. As observed by this court, Insurance Companies still await filing of claims before the Tribunal and the trial and adjudication still takes considerable length of time. There was no platform for any pre-litigation exercise in the tribunals. Section 166 (4) read with 158 (6) was not in use and the DAR online, which has been inspired and prompted by the agreed procedure and the order of the Supreme Court, have not been in use. Therefore, DAR online should be combined with the jurisdiction under section 166 (4) to create a platform as an opportunity for victims to secure relief without going through a full-fledged litigation. Without action by the Motor Accident Claims Tribunal, the entire platform that has been made available would not serve the victims and the stakeholders, the judge added.

Directions for effective settlement of fair compensation

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, SEPT 23

In order to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the Detailed Accident Report (DAR) as well as for the settlement of

SOME OF THE DIRECTIONS ARE :

The DGP is directed to issue orders to all the subordinate police authorities, so as to ensure that on receipt of information regarding any accident, jurisdictional police shall register the FIR immediately and upload the same on the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS) website without any further delay.

The DGP is directed to issue orders, conduct investigation of the accident without any undue delay and further, all other documents contemplated under the DAR as per DGP Circular dated January 2, 2017, are uploaded periodically during the investigation. The investigation is to be completed and the final report is directed to be uploaded within 90 days from date of accident.

The documents are directed to be uploaded after verification for authenticity with the departments/insurance companies concerned.

The DGP is directed to suitably modify/alter, so as to send E-mail notifications to specified E-mail ID of the respective Motor Accident Claims

just compensation in Motor Accident Claims cases, Justice S.M.Subramaniam of the Madras high court has issued a set of directions to be complied with by the authorities.

Tribunal and Insurance companies concerned across the State of Tamil Nadu in respect of the FIR and the other documents uploaded by the police authorities in order to serve the objective of section 158 (6) of the MV Act.

Prompt implementation of the DGP circular and the directions of this court are to be reviewed once in a month by the Inspector General of Police concerned and lapses, dereliction of duty by any authority are to be viewed seriously and disciplinary proceedings are to be initiated against the erring officials.

The DGP is directed, in case, where any vehicle involved in an accident does not have insurance, the investigating police officer shall not release and impound the vehicle.

The Director of Medical and Rural Health Services is directed to maintain Accident Registers in all the government hospitals across the state for road traffic accidents in a specified colour with continuous running numbers and upload the accident particulars in the medical department officials website.

The DMRHS is directed to ensure that the competent Medical Board examines the referred accident victim and issue 'Disability Certificate' within 30 days from the date of such reference.

The Motor Accident Claims Tribunals across the state of Tamil Nadu are directed to follow up the cases uploaded by the police authorities in CCTNS by downloading the FIR along with the relevant documents.

The MACT across the state of Tamil Nadu are directed to issue notice to the victims and the insurance companies/transport corporations/owners concerned as the case may be within 15 days from the date of numbering the FIR and take initiative/consider settlement of claims to the victims on the specified date recording the Aadhaar number of the claimant, so as to enable verification of proceedings at the later date.

If no settlement is concluded on the notified date or any further adjourned date, within a specified time by the tribunal on account of any specific dispute with regard to liability, then the pre-litigation file may be closed by the Tribunal.

With reference to the pre-litigation settlement, the MACT may take a decision and refer the proceedings to the Legal Services Authority for dealing with the same.

AIADMK in Pondy questions Sept. 28 protest against bills

Puducherry, Sep 23: The opposition AIADMK on Wednesday questioned the decision of ruling Congress-headed Secular Democratic Alliance here to hold agitations against the farm bills on September 28, saying it would be in violation of safety norms during the ongoing pandemic situation.

A day after the alliance at a meeting here decided to hold the protests in Puducherry and Karaikal regions of the union territory, AIADMK Legislature party leader A Anbalagan also appealed to Puducherry Lt Governor Kiran Bedi to intervene and take appropriate steps to ensure that there was no threat to public health.

"It is indeed perplexing that a Chief Minister himself is announcing holding of agitations although it would be a clear case of violation of safety norms during the ongoing pandemic (COVID-19) situation," he said in a release here.

He urged the District collector to ban the agitation under the Disaster Management Act 2005 and the Epidemic Diseases Act 1897.

The AIADMK MLA said his party would write to the Union Home Ministry drawing its attention to the proposed protest.

On Tuesday, Chief Minister V Narayanasamy had announced that the alliance would stage the agitation to register its "strong protest" against the agriculture reforms bills the



V. Narayanasamy

Centre had passed "in a hurry in Parliament."

It was in line with the agitation announced by DMK president M K Stalin. DMK is a partner of the ruling alliance in Puducherry.

"Myself, my ministerial colleagues and legislators of the Congress and the alliance partners would participate in the agitations to urge the Centre to roll back the bills and protect the farmers from a major catastrophe contemplated in the new bills," he had told reporters.

The Chief Minister had accused the Centre of 'inflicting' hardship on the farmers through the bills and called the passage of the legislations as "a democratic mayhem" by the BJP-led Centre.

—PTI

SHORT TAKES

VACB TO LOOK INTO LIFE MISSION ALLEGATIONS

DC CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
SEPT. 23

The Vigilance and Anti Corruption Bureau (VACB) has decided to conduct a probe into the allegations connected with the Life Mission Project in Wadakancherry under which 140 apartments are being constructed.

The main allegations include a commission of ₹1 crore pocketed by Swapna Suresh, one of the key accused in gold smuggling case from Unitac, the agency which is executing the project. Kerala finance minister Thomas Isaac had also made a statement that the commission amount was around ₹4.5 crore which triggered a major controversy in the state.

The Opposition and ruling fronts have been engaged in allegations and counter allegations over the issue for the past one month. As the allegations created doubts over the LDF government's flagship programme Life Mission, the ruling front was keen to come clean on the charges.

When asked about the vigilance probe at a press conference, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said allegations had been raised regarding commission from ₹20 crore given for the project. "The vigilance has ordered a preliminary probe to examine whether there is any violation of the Prevention of Corruption Act," he said.

HYD ACP HAS ASSETS WORTH ₹75 CR: VIGILANCE

SANJAY SAMUEL PAUL | DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 23.

The Anti-Corruption Bureau on Wednesday, in a series of raids on properties owned by the Malkajigiri assistant commissioner of police Narasimha Reddy, discovered assets far above his known sources of income. Simultaneous raids on his house in Mahendra Hills, several other towns in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, including some properties owned by his relatives, have revealed that the senior police officer has accumulated assets worth Rs 75 crore or more.

The raids conducted on 20 different locations revealed that Narasimha Reddy had accumulated some flats, independent houses in the city in Nacharam, Habsiguda and Gudimalkapur, and acquired 33 acres of land in Ghatkesar, assigned land parcels that spread over five plots, and documents related to 55 more acres in Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh.

NO COERCIVE ACTION AGAINST FB INDIA HEAD: SC

New Delhi, Sept. 23: The Supreme Court on Wednesday directed a Delhi Legislative Assembly panel not to take coercive action against Facebook India head Ajit Mohan till October 15 over its summons to him to depose before it in connection with the north east Delhi riots.

Following the order, the Peace and Harmony Committee of the Delhi Assembly deferred its proceedings, and said it would notify the further course of action and the next date of sitting in due course of time. The committee, chaired by AAP MLA Raghav Chadha, had issued a notice to Mohan, who is the vice president and managing director of Facebook India, over complaints accusing the social media giant of deliberately not taking action to curb hateful content on its platform. The committee had issued a fresh notice to Mohan to appear before it on Wednesday.

Senior advocate Harish Salve, appearing for Mohan, submitted in the top court that the committee cannot decide the breach of privilege of the house and that administrative control over social media is with the Central government. "Privilege is something to be decided by the Assembly. A committee cannot decide whether action on privilege can be taken or not," Salve said, adding the Delhi government could not put Mohan "in the pain of punishment" by asking him to appear before the Committee. Senior advocate A.M. Singhvi, appearing for the legislative committee, however, submitted it is not proper for the court to stay the proceedings in the matter, and that there is no question of coercive action.

Heavy rains lash Mumbai



People waded through a waterlogged street following heavy rains at Bhandi Bazaar in Mumbai on Wednesday. The city received its second-highest rainfall in 24 hours in the month of September since 1994. The incessant rains caused flooding at several areas in the city and left the rail and road traffic heavily disrupted.

— PTI

PM says only 60 districts in 7 states are a cause of worry

Modi meets CMs of seven states, talks of 'micro containment zones'

DC CORRESPONDENT
with agency inputs
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 23

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday asked state governments to focus on "micro containment zones" to prevent the spread of Coronavirus instead of shutting down activities in the entire state which may restrict economic growth.

During a review meeting with the Chief Ministers and representatives of seven states with a high number of cases, Modi asked them to reassess if lockdown of one or two days a week are being effective in containing the deadly virus or are hampering economic activities. He also asked states to enhance their focus on effective testing, tracing, treatment, surveillance and clear messaging to curb the pandemic.

Modi said out of 700 districts in the country, only 60 have major spread of Covid-19 and asked the CMs to spend about one hour a day overseeing containment in these districts.

Noting that most Covid-19 patients are asymptomatic, Modi said an effective messaging is all the

MP mantri shuns face mask in public, questions its purpose

RABINDRA NATH
CHOUDHURY | DC
BHOPAL, SEPT. 23

Madhya Pradesh home minister Narottam Mishra on Wednesday triggered a row by saying that he shunned face mask. Mishra was seen attending various government programmes in Indore, which has emerged as a Coronavirus hotspot in the state, without face mask, taking everyone by surprise.

"I don't use face mask (in public)," he said while fielding a question by reporters in this regard. "I never wear face masks when I attend public pro-

grammes. *Isi mein kya hota* (what purpose does it serve)", he quipped. Incidentally, the Indore district administration has made it mandatory for people to wear face mask in public and imposed a fine of ₹100 on those who violated the rule.

Opposition Congress seized the opportunity to attack the BJP on the issue and said that the home minister of the state has scant regard for the rules framed by his own government (Indore district administration).

"Mishra has thrown the rules to the wind by saying that he shunned face mask in public. He should

honour the rules framed by his own government", Congress spokesman here Narendra Saluja said.

Mishra, incidentally, was the only leader in MP who dared to move in public without a mask when the pandemic started claiming lives of people in the middle of April this year.

Indore topped the chart of Coronavirus cases in the state by reporting 20,383 Covid-19 cases. Indore also recorded the highest number of 509 deaths due to the virus in the state.

The state has reported 1,10,711 Coronavirus positive cases and 2,035 deaths so far.

● **THE PRIME MINISTER** asks the Chief Ministers to reassess if lockdown of one or two days a week are being effective in containing the deadly virus or are hampering economic activities.

KERALA RECORDS BIGGEST SINGLE DAY SPIKE OF 5K

DC CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
SEPT. 23

Kerala reported the biggest single-day spike of 5,378 cases on Wednesday even as 2,951 persons recovered from the infection in the last 24 hours. This is the first time that Kerala crossed the 5,000 mark on a single day in Covid-19 cases.

With this the total number of cases reported in Kerala so far has gone up to 1,48,132 of which 1,04,682 have recovered and 42,786 persons are under treatment in various hospitals across the state. The state reported 20 deaths on Wednesday taking the toll to 592.

Of the new cases 4,426 contracted the infection through contact, the source of infection among 640 persons is yet to be known, 64 came from abroad, 140 from other states and 99 health workers also got infected.

Most patients in TS on ventilator support

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 23

Coronavirus continues to make itself felt in Telangana state giving little respite to the people by registering 2,296 more cases. There were also 10 more deaths from the disease taking the fatalities from Covid-19 to 1,062, while the total cases so far reached 1,77,070 in the state.

As many as 6,346 suffering from Covid-19 were in various government and private hospitals in the

state as on Tuesday evening, according to the Covid-19 bulletin issued by the health department on Wednesday. An additional 23,527 Covid-19 patients were either in home or institutional isolation.

A majority of the admitted to hospitals - 4,966 - are receiving additional care including ventilator support. As per the data released by the health department among those requiring more hands on care, 824 were on ventilator support while 1,123 were in intensive care

units taking those on life support to around 2,000 persons. Another 3,019 patients were on supplementary oxygen support. The rest of 3,327 patients were in regular wards, the department said.

AP reports 7,228 new cases: Andhra Pradesh has registered an 88.26 per cent rate of recovery among the Covid-19 infected patients. The state health authorities in their Covid-19 bulletin on Wednesday reported that the total number of Covid-19 infected patients is

6,46,530, of which 5,70,667 were already discharged from hospitals after recovery indicating the remarkable rate of recovery percentage.

The state saw 7,228 new Covid-19 cases taking the tally to 6,46,530 and 45 deaths taking the death toll to 5,506.

6,997 new cases in Karnataka: Karnataka on Wednesday reported 6,997 new Covid-19 cases and 38 fatalities, taking the infection tally to 5,40,847 and the toll to 8,266. Out of 6,997 fresh

cases reported on Wednesday, 3,547 were from Bengaluru urban alone.

The day also saw 5,460 patients getting discharged after recovery.

As of September 23 evening, cumulatively 5,40,847 Covid-19 positive cases have been confirmed in the state, which includes 8,266 deaths and 4,37,910 discharges, the health department said in its bulletin. Out of 94,652 active cases, 93,836 patients are in isolation at hospitals.

CAG says Rafale maker violated offset clause

PAWAN BALI | DC
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 23

The CAG report on "management of defence offsets" said on Wednesday that French company Dassault Aviation and European missile maker MBDA have not transferred technology to DRDO which they had initially proposed in the ₹59,000 crore deal for 36 Rafale jets.

Dassault Aviation is the manufacturer of Rafale jets and MBDA provided missiles Meteor, MICA and SCALP for the fighter jet.

CAG in its report submitted in Parliament said that in many cases, it was found that the foreign vendors made various offset commitments to qualify for the main supply contract but later, were not earnest about fulfilling these commitments. "For instance in the offset contract relating to 36 Medium Multi Role Combat Aircraft (MMRCA), the vendors M/s Dassault Aviation and M/s MBDA initially proposed (September 2015) to discharge 30 per cent of their offset obligation by offering high technology to DRDO," said CAG report. It said that DRDO wanted to obtain Technical Assistance for the indigenous development of engine (Kaveri) for the Light Combat Aircraft. "Till date the Vendor has not confirmed the transfer of this technology," said the report.

India and France in 2016 had signed an inter-governmental agreement (IGA) which has a 50 per cent offset clause to be executed by the French partners. However a controversy arose when Dassault Aviation chose

Anil Ambani-owned Reliance Defence as their offset partner which had no experience in the defence sector.

In 2005, India adopted the offset policy for defence capital purchases. This meant that for all capital purchases above ₹300 crore made through imports, the foreign vendor was required to invest at least 30 per cent of the value of the purchase, in India. This investment was to be made in the Indian defence and aerospace sector.

Various avenues were available to the vendor to discharge these offset obligations. This included foreign direct investment, offering of free Transfer of Technology to Indian firms, and purchase of eligible products manufactured by Indian firms (exports) among others. For the discharge of these offsets the foreign vendor had to select an Indian firm as a partner (Indian Offsets Partner or IOPs).

CAG report said that from 2005 till March 2018, 46 offset contracts had been signed with foreign vendors, valuing ₹66,427 crore. Under these contracts, by December 2018, ₹19,223 crore worth of offsets should have been discharged by the vendors. "However, the offsets claimed to have been discharged by them was only ₹11,396 crore, which was only 59 per cent of the commitment," it said. Further, only 48 per cent (₹5,457 crore) of these offset claims submitted by the vendors were accepted by the Ministry.

The rest were largely rejected as they were not compliant to the contractual conditions and the Defence Procurement Procedure.

Don't sign bills, Oppn tells Prez

DC CORRESPONDENT
WITH AGENCY INPUTS
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 23

Eighteen Opposition parties stepped up the offensive against the Narendra Modi government over the passage of the farm bills, and their leaders urged President Ram Nath Kovind on Wednesday not to sign the controversial measures, alleging they were passed "unconstitutionally" in "complete disregard" of parliamentary norms.

The leaders of the 18 parties met President Kovind in the evening and asked him to return the bills so that can be passed after discussions and suitable amendments.

Briefing the media after meeting the President, Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Ghulam Nabi Azad said the Opposition didn't think it was responsible for the bedlam in the Upper House on Monday. "There was no division, no voice voting. The Constitution was undermined in the temple of democracy... Unfortunately, the deputy chairman got the bills passed forcefully and we couldn't understand what was happening," Mr Azad said.

He added: "The govern-

● **THE LEADERS** of the 18 parties met President Kovind in the evening and asked him to return the bills so that can be passed after discussions and suitable amendments.

● **MR AZAD** told the President the bills were pushed through the House without taking up five Opposition resolutions and two separate motions demanding referral of the agriculture marketing related bills to a select or standing committee of Parliament.

ment should have consulted all parties, farmers' leaders before bringing the farm bills".

Narrating the way in which the two bills were passed in the Rajya Sabha on Sunday, Mr Azad told the President the bills were pushed through the House without taking up five Opposition resolutions and two separate motions demanding referral of the agriculture marketing related bills to a select or standing committee of Parliament. "The President gave me a patient hearing and said he would look into the issue," Mr Azad said.

UN | MEET

China must be held accountable for failure to control coronavirus, says Trump

No plan to fight cold or hot war, no expansion: Xi

United Nations, Sept 22: China will never seek hegemony, expansion, or sphere of influence, President Xi Jinping said on Tuesday and said Beijing has no intention to fight either a 'Cold War' or a 'hot war' with any country.

Mr Xi also said China will continue to narrow the differences and resolve disputes with others through negotiations, in comments that came in the backdrop of the tense military stand-off between Chinese and Indian armies in eastern

Ladakh for over four months.

Addressing the general debate of the 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly, he said, "We will continue to narrow differences and resolve disputes with others through dialogue and negotiation."

"We will never seek hegemony, expansion, or sphere of influence. We have no intention to fight either a Cold War or a hot war with any country," Xi said in a pre-recorded video mes-

sage to the UN meeting.

"Rather, we aim to foster, over time, a new development paradigm with domestic circulation as the mainstay and domestic and international circulations reinforcing each other," he said.

The Chinese president also addressed the issue of the Covid-19 pandemic and international criticism about China's attempts to suppress details about the outbreak.

"Facing the virus, we should enhance solidarity

and get this through together. We should follow the guidance of science, give full play to the leading role of the World Health Organization, and launch a joint international response to beat this pandemic. Any attempt of politicising the issue or stigmatisation must be rejected," Mr Xi said.

Earlier, US President Donald Trump blasted China on Tuesday for "unleashing" the plague of the "China virus" onto the world, demanding that the

United Nations must hold Beijing accountable for failing to contain the coronavirus that has killed nearly one million people across the world, including 200,000 Americans.

Mr Trump demanded that China, where the coronavirus emerged, be held accountable for failure to control the virus and for allowing it to spread across the world.

"As we pursue this bright future, we must hold accountable the nation which unleashed this

plague onto the world: China," he said.

"The Chinese government, and the World Health Organisation -- which is virtually controlled by China -- falsely declared that there was no evidence of human-to-human transmission," Mr Trump said.

"Later, they falsely said people without symptoms would not spread the disease. The United Nations must hold China accountable for their actions," he said.

IN BRIEF

6th term: Belarus Prez takes oath

Kyiv: President Alexander Lukashenko of Belarus was sworn in Wednesday to his sixth term in office at an inaugural ceremony that was not announced in advance amid weeks of huge protests of the authoritarian leader's reelection, which the opposition says was rigged. Several European countries used the occasion to reiterate that they don't recognise the results of the election and refused to regard Lukashenko as the legitimate president. The ceremony was held in front of several hundred dignitaries at the ornate Palace of Independence in the capital of Minsk, the state news agency Belta said. Police and other security forces blocked off parts of the city and public transportation was suspended.

Navalny released from hospital

Berlin: Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny was released from a Berlin hospital after more than a month's treatment for poisoning, with doctors now believing that a "complete recovery" from the Soviet-era nerve agent is possible for him, the hospital said Wednesday. Navalny spent 32 days at Berlin's Charite hospital, 24 of them in intensive care, before doctors deemed his "condition had improved sufficiently for him to be discharged from acute inpatient care." As he was released Tuesday, the 44-year-old displayed his characteristic sarcastic sense of humour. In an Instagram post, he took swipe at Russian President Vladimir Putin, scoffing at reported comments by the Russian leader suggesting that Navalny might have intentionally poisoned himself. He was flown to Germany two days after falling ill on Aug. 20.

UK: Truck lines if no-deal Brexit

London: The British government says there could be lines of 7,000 trucks at the English Channel and two-day waits to get into France immediately after the UK makes its economic break from the European Union at the end of the year. Michael Gove, the minister in charge of Brexit preparations, described that as a reasonable worst-case scenario in a letter to logistics firms. The government letter says that between 30% and 50% of trucks wanting to cross the Channel may not be ready for new paperwork and regulations that will come into effect on Jan. 1. "This could lead to maximum queues of 7,000 port-bound trucks in Kent and associated maximum delays of up to two days," the document said. The UK withdrew from the EU's political institutions on Jan. 31 but remains in a tariff-free transition period until the end of the year.

COURT: NAWAZ ARREST REPORT BY SEPT. 30

SHAFQAT ALI | DC ISLAMABAD, SEPT. 23

The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday directed the concerned representative to submit report on the implementation of Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) supreme Nawaz Sharif's arrest warrant through United Kingdom's County Court by September 30. During the hearing of Avenfield and Al-Azizia references conducted by a two-member bench, Additional Attorney General has assured the court that official of Pakistan High Commission will reach the PML-N supreme's residence in London to inform him about court orders.

The IHC had issued non-bailable arrest warrant against Nawaz for September 22 and rejected his plea seeking exemption from the hearing.

The court had also directed the concerned authorities to initiate proceedings to declare him as proclaimed offender. His petition to continue the case hearings through legal representative was also turned down by the IHC.

Nawaz had requested the IHC to nullify its ruling and allow him to become a part of the court proceedings through his representative. He made the request on medical grounds.

The IHC had ordered him to surrender and appear on September 10 at any cost in the Al-Azizia Steel Mills corruption reference.

Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kiyani had said in his remarks, "Nawaz Sharif has to appear before the court for hearing. He may face additional three-year imprisonment if he is absconder in the reference."

Trump: Harris incompetent

Don: US has most powerful weapons ever produced

Washington, Sept. 23: US President Donald Trump has termed Senator Kamala Harris as "grossly incompetent," saying he was surprised when his Democratic rival Joe Biden picked her as his running mate in the November 3 presidential election.

Harris, 55, is the first-ever PoC and Indian-American woman to be the vice-presidential candidate of a major political party. "I was surprised to learn when Biden selected Harris as his running mate. Believe it or not, it's true she is rated the most liberal person in Congress. I think she's grossly incompetent I'll be honest with you," Trump said during a rally in Pennsylvania on Tuesday.

Trump, a Republican, said during the Democratic primaries no one treated Biden as badly as Harris. "Also, Harris was dropped out of the Democratic Party's presidential race as her popularity ratings dipped low," he said. Former vice president Biden has defended Harris, saying she is smart, tested and prepared. "She (Harris) is smart. She is tested. She is prepared," Biden said during a virtual fundraiser event with Harris.

"The way she talks about her mom, her immigrant story that started Indian. It's one of the things that really stood out to me. We both talked about our moms. My mom was all about sacrifice and community and how much they sacrificed for both of us, my mom and hers. And I know the pride you feel in her nomination," Biden said. Harris, who is busy campaigning in various parts of America, on Tuesday distributed yard signs to supporters who drive by parade-style and

Washington, Sept. 23: The US has the most powerful weapons ever produced and is the envy of the world, President Donald Trump has said, hoping that he will never have to use them, as he vowed to keep America out of "endless, ridiculous and stupid" foreign wars.

Trump said for decades, American politicians spent trillions of dollars rebuilding foreign nations, fighting foreign wars that never ended, and defending foreign borders. "Instead of endless war, we are forging peace in the Middle East, it's so great. Peace in the Middle East," he said.

"We will strike down terrorists who threaten our citizens and we will keep America out of endless, ridiculous, stupid foreign wars," he said at an election rally in Pennsylvania on Tuesday night. "I am just telling you the most powerful weapons ever produced we have and other countries know that and it's a good thing that they know it and I don't think we will ever be using them and I hope we don't, I hope to God," Trump said.

The president said by saying so, he was not leaking any classified infor-

mation. He said he was allowed to speak about it because he is the president of the United States. Trump said that he has rebuilt the US military. "It was totally depleted when I took over. We built a military, \$2.5 trillion we spent all made in the US saying, the greatest equipment, the greatest planes and rockets and missiles and our nuclear," he said.

CHINA TRAILS U.S. IN DEVELOPING 6TH-GEN CRAFT

Beijing, Sept. 23: China, which in recent years tried to catch up with the US in the design and production of new generation warplanes, is trailing the American air force in the development of the sixth-generation fighter jets by several years, according to a media report. America is leading the world in the sixth-generation fighter jets with the US Air Force saying it has flown a prototype — a milestone that is still years away for China, South China Morning Post reported.

Some tourists were still walking in the area, but it was unclear if any were still inside the tower on Wednesday. Two police officers at the scene told The Associated Press that the operation was the result of a phone-in bomb threat. Eiffel Tower management did not respond to requests for comment. After an inspection was carried out, nothing suspicious was found and the Eiffel Tower was able to reopen to visitors. "A man phoned up,

spoke at a voter mobilisation event in Detroit. She also launched Michigan's "Shop Talk" programme at Headliners Barbershop in Detroit. "Everything's

2L dead as Don vilifies science, prioritises politics

New York, Sept. 23: "I did the best I could," President Donald Trump said. Huddled with aides in the West Wing last week, his eyes fixed on Fox News, Trump wasn't talking about how he had led the nation through the deadliest pandemic in a century. In a conversation overheard by an *Associated Press* reporter, Trump was describing how he'd just publicly rebuked one of his top scientists — Dr Robert Redfield, a virologist and head of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Redfield had angered the president by asserting that a COVID-19 vaccine wouldn't be widely available until late 2021.

So hours later, with no supporting evidence, Trump called a news conference to say Redfield was

"confused." A vaccine, Trump insisted, could be ready before November's election. Mission accomplished: Fox was headlining Trump's latest foray in his administration's ongoing war against its own scientists. It is a war that continues unabated, even as the nation's Covid-19 death toll has reached 200,000 — nearly half the number of Americans killed in World War II, a once unfathomable number that the nation's top doctors just months ago said was avoidable.

Over the past six months, the Trump administration has prioritised politics over science at key moments, refusing to follow expert advice that might have contained the spread of the virus and Covid-19, the disease it causes.

China denies forced labour in Xinjiang

Beijing, Sept. 23: China on Tuesday lashed out at the passage of a bill by the U.S. House of Representatives that threatens sanctions over the alleged use of forced labour in China's Xinjiang region, calling the accusation a lie.

Foreign ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin said the bill "maliciously slandered the human rights situation in Xinjiang" and sought to curb devel-

opment and progress in the region while stirring up ethnic divisions and interfering in China's internal affairs. "The so-called problem of forced labor is totally a lie fabricated by some organisations and personnel in the United States and the West," he told reporters at a daily briefing.

The House voted 406-3 to declare that any goods produced in Xinjiang are

presumptively made with the forced labour of detained Uighurs and other ethnic minorities, and therefore banned from being imported to the US. If enacted into law, it could force companies to avoid a region that produces 80% of the cotton in China, one of the world's top producers of the fiber, as well as tomatoes and manufactured goods.

— AP



French police officers secure the bridge leading to the Eiffel Tower, Wednesday, Sept. 23, 2020 in Paris. Paris police have blockaded the area around the Eiffel Tower after a phone-in bomb threat.

Paris police barricade Eiffel Tower following phone-in bomb threat

Paris, Sept. 23: Paris police have blockaded the area around the Eiffel Tower after a phone-in bomb threat.

The Eiffel Tower in Paris was evacuated for two hours Wednesday after an anonymous caller threatened to blow up the great edifice situated in the heart of the French capital, police said.

Police cars and tape surrounded the streets below the tower and the bridge stretching from across the Seine River to the Trocadero Plaza.

Some tourists were still walking in the area, but it was unclear if any were still inside the tower on Wednesday.

Two police officers at the scene told The Associated Press that the operation was the result of a phone-in bomb threat.

Eiffel Tower management did not respond to requests for comment.

After an inspection was carried out, nothing suspicious was found and the Eiffel Tower was able to reopen to visitors.

— AP

shouted 'Allah Akbar' and said he was going to 'blow up everything'" at the Eiffel Tower, said a police source, who asked not to be named.

A security cordon was put around the monument, traffic diverted and the Eiffel Tower evacuated at 12:15 pm (1015 GMT).

Its operator SETE said in a statement that after a thorough search nothing was found and the tower was able to reopen at 2:15 pm.

The 131-year-old tower gets about 25,000 tourists

daily in normal years and about seven million visitors a year, some three-quarters from abroad, but visits are down this year because of Coronavirus travel restrictions.

While the Eiffel Tower is scheduled to be open every day, it occasionally closes because of suicide threats, bomb threats or labour strikes.

The monument had reopened on June 26 after its longest closure since World War II forced by the coronavirus pandemic.

— Agencies

IT'S 'CHINA VIRUS', NOT CORONAVIRUS WHICH SOUNDS LIKE A BEAUTIFUL PLACE IN ITALY, SAYS U.S. PRESIDENT

Washington, Sept. 23: US President Donald Trump has hit out at China for not stopping the Covid-19 pandemic that has claimed hundreds of thousands of lives globally, as he yet again used the term "China virus" and urged his supporters not to call it Coronavirus, saying the name sounds like a "beautiful place" in Italy.

Addressing a packed election rally in the battle ground State of Pennsylvania, Trump told his supporters on Tuesday that if re-elected, over the next four years, his administration will make America a manufacturing superpower of the world and will end US reliance on China

once and for all. Describing the November 3 election as a "matter of economic survival", Trump said that the country was doing great on economic front before the plague was unleashed on the United States, and blamed China for it. "You had the greatest year you have ever had last year, and you were really on your way — we were very, very sadly disturbed by what happened with China. They let the plague out. They shouldn't have done it," he said.

— PTI

MORE CURBS IN HARD-HIT MADRID

Madrid, Sept. 23: Health authorities in Madrid may extend to more communities the restrictions on movement it imposed on areas of the Spanish capital with high Coronavirus infection rates.

About 860,000 Madrid residents already are required to justify trips out of 37 neighbourhoods. The region's deputy health chief, Antonio Zapatero, said Wednesday that a decision on additional measures would be announced on Friday.

— AP

FAKE PAGES FROM CHINA TRIED TO DISRUPT US POLITICS: FACEBOOK

Washington, Sept. 23: Facebook says it has removed a small network of fake accounts and pages that originated in China and focused on disrupting political activity in the US and other countries.

The US-focused activity was just a "sliver" of the

accounts' overall activity and gained almost no following. Their primary focus was Southeast Asia, including the Philippines. The accounts posted material both in support of and against Pete Buttigieg, Joe Biden and Donald Trump.

— AP

ACADEMIC | ANOMALY

Admission policies and practices from 2013-14 to 2018-19 at 4 campuses examined

Auditor: UC wrongly admitted well-connected students

San Francisco, Sept. 23: The University of California "inappropriately admitted" at least 64 wealthy students over the past six years as "favours to donors, family, and friends," according to an audit released on Tuesday that found hundreds more questionable cases of student athletes accepted to the top UC schools.

"This is a significant problem that the university needs to deal with," State Auditor Elaine Howle said in a telephone interview. The audit examined admission policies and practices

over a six-year period at four of the UC's nine campuses — UCLA, UC Berkeley, UC San Diego and UC Santa Barbara. It reviewed the academic years of 2013-14 through 2018-19.

Auditors found that 22 applicants were falsely designated as student-athlete recruits "because of donations from or as favours to well-connected families." These students "had little or no athletic skills," Howle said. "UC Berkeley really had some significant weaknesses in their admissions process," Howle said.

The audit found that the

elite school admitted 42 applicants based on their connections to donors and staff while denying admission to others who were more qualified. Howle said she believes the findings have barely scratched the surface of problems in the UC admissions process.

The 64 students identified as being improperly admitted were based on "definitive evidence," such as emailed communications showing a student was denied admission but then reconsidered and accepted after an athletic coach or the development office got

involved to suggest the student's entry could lead to donations, Howle said. "There's at least another 400 or so students...that were really questionable," Howle said, including some student athletes who didn't appear to have any athletic ability. UC President Michael V. Drake, who took over the job in July, said in a statement that he took the findings and recommendations "very seriously and will do all I can to prevent inappropriate admissions."

"The University will swiftly address the concerns the State Auditor raised. Furth-

ermore, individuals involved in improper activities will be disciplined appropriately," Drake said. The audit recommends that the UC President's office take a more robust role in auditing the admissions processes at the nine campuses and closely examine what is called "admissions by exception," granted for student athletes, artists, or those who have other specific talents that are attractive to a campus.

"We think that the Office of the President and their audit function should be not only looking deeper at these four campuses but looking

at all of the campuses in the UC system," Howle said. The audit was requested last year by state Assemblywoman Tasha Boerner Horvath in response to the national college admissions scandal, which embroiled prestigious universities across the country, athletic coaches and dozens of wealthy parents.

The scandal shed light on the murky world of US college admissions and how the rich and famous exploited it to buy their children's way into top schools with rigged test scores or fake athletic credentials. At the

centre of the scheme was Newport Beach-based college admissions consultant, William "Rick" Singer.

Those investigations, known as Operation Varsity Blues, previously identified at least three students at UCLA and UC Berkeley who were improperly admitted. UCLA men's soccer coach Jorge Salcedo was indicted on charges of racketeering conspiracy for allegedly accepting \$200,000 in bribes from the scheme's mastermind, Singer, in exchange for helping two students gain admission to the school as soccer players.

— AP

DECCAN Chronicle

24 SEPTEMBER 2020

With Opp. away, govt sneaks in labour code

The government on Wednesday pushed through a set of key pieces of legislation that will impact the lives over 50 crore people who form the country's workforce. The Industrial Relations Code, 2020, the Code on Social Security, 2020, and the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020, along with the code on wages, which has already been enacted, subsume and replace 29 central laws that governed the country's industrial relations.

The Industrial Relations Code raises the threshold on the number employees needed in an organisation for retrenchment and closure of establishments without government approval to 300 from 100. While the law throws job security of a large number of people into the wilderness, it is welcomed by the industry as it makes hiring and firing easy. It also redefines the sole negotiating union in an establishment as the one in which more than 51 per cent of the workers are members. Establishments now need not listen to the voice of smaller sections of their employees.

The Code on Social Security provides for universal social security to all workers, including the unorganised and the gig and platform workers who account for over 90 per cent of the total workforce. The Bill mandates that the governments set up social security funds for them and fixes the maximum hours of work as eight per day. It is to be seen how the provision to allow women to work in hazardous industries, albeit with safety measures, will benefit them. A redeeming feature is the attention on inter-state guest workers: the government will now have to maintain a database on them online. They can also avail the benefits of the public distribution system either in the native state or the state of employment, and insurance and provident fund benefits available to other workers.

Critics have noted an alarming and unusual feature in the bills that gives the government wide powers to frame rules that will form the operational part of the legislation. They include the conditions for increasing the threshold for lay-offs, retrenchment, and closure, for applicability of different social security schemes to establishments, and specifying safety standards, and working conditions to be provided by establishments under the occupational safety code.

The government has made its intention clear when it said the purpose of labour reforms is to provide a transparent system to suit the changed business environment. The codes also empower the state government to offer relaxations in provisions on labour security, with an aim to trigger a race to attract capital.

That the codes cleared parliamentary scrutiny in less than three hours of discussion, that too when the Opposition was boycotting the proceedings, reflects the disdain the government has shown towards not only to parliamentary practices but also to the people whose lives they will impact. The government showed a similar high-handedness when it got the farm bills passed. Every trade union, including the Bharatiya Mazdur Sangh affiliated to the Sangh Parivar, has voiced their protest against the anti-labour provisions in the codes. It remains to be seen how the government will tackle the disaffection within India's workforce.

Callous disregard of data

Data, they say, is the new oil. The finance minister had poured scorn on the new maxim in her Budget speech saying it is just a cliché though she did acknowledge the significance of credible data to base decision-making on. The real import of the importance of data in modern administration may have dawned on the government when it confessed in Parliament that it had no data on the deaths of guest workers who were forced by the suddenness of the declaration of the world's most severe lockdown to collectively log millions of miles as they trudged home in distress. This human tragedy, so gut-wrenchingly portrayed when a child was photographed trying to wake its dead mother on a road in Bihar, surpassed even the horrors of the pandemic.

In the absence of credible data gathering, the figure of a crore migrant workers having walked or ferried home by special trains and buses can only be taken as a ballpark figure conjured to satisfy questions tabled in Parliament. If it did not collate any data from different states on the fatalities and the number of returning migrants, the government is guilty of carelessness. But if the real reason is that data is being withheld because of the embarrassment it would cause, the government stands condemned by its own callousness. The suspicion is data — media sources put guest workers' deaths near about 300 — is a tool to be manipulated in the hands of the current dispensation as amply proved in several debates over statistics regarding job losses in a downward spiral of the economy in the last couple of years.

The government also admitted in Parliament that it had no data on farmer suicides in the last three years. The fact that its own national crime database reveals 10,281 farmer suicides in 2019 and 10,357 in 2018, besides counting 42,480 deaths by suicide of farmers and daily wage workers last year, shows up the rulers as shying away from the truth when it comes to keeping people's representatives informed in Parliament. In refusing to address inconvenient data, the government is proving unworthy of the people it governs.

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Suresh Rajan



Investor visa: A way out of the Covid-19 conundrum?

Eight months after the first human case of the new coronavirus (Covid-19) was diagnosed in the United States, a countless number of dreams and plans have been permanently tabled or put on hold. Businesses have shuttered, some colleges and universities will be starting the fall fully remote, and racial strife is adding to the turmoil in the country.

While "unprecedented times" is now a cliché for describing this time we are in, it's also apropos to describe this year as a time like no other. If someone were to make a movie about the 1918 Spanish Flu, the Great Depression, and 1968 race riots all happening at once, it would look and feel like 2020.

Amid all the uncertainty in the US surrounding public health, job security, unemployment figures, and education, no one wants to put their future on hold. Foreign investors will continue to see opportunities to invest in US businesses and in support of creating more jobs and securing permanent US green cards.

Despite the pressures that the pandemic and surrounding rhetoric have

placed on immigration and some visa programs, the EB-5 Immigrant Investor Programs continues to be a viable, solid alternative to getting a quality US education and becoming US residents.

PRESSURES ON OTHER VISA PROGRAMMES

The topic of immigration has received particular attention from the Trump Administration this summer and has targeted some visa programs but not others.

Mr Trump's June 22, 2020, presidential proclamation effectively shut down L-1 and H-1-B visa channels by suspending visa issuances for workers, their spouses and children. Then, the administration said international students would have to transfer or leave the country if their universities opted for online-only learning this fall; this proclamation was later rescinded after major universities like Harvard and MIT sued.

On August 19, exemptions to the June order were announced for tech and healthcare workers who would be resuming employment with the same employer. Even then, there's an

uncertainty around these visas that cannot be shaken.

As a consequence, we are likely to see renewed interest in the EB-5 program, which provides mutually beneficial arrangements for immigrants and job creators. A one-time investment of \$900,000 for a new US business that creates at least 10 jobs for US workers earns the investors green cards and the ability to achieve permanent residency.

The "at-risk" capital is returned after the permanent green cards are received. Students who take advantage of this program are not limited by the industry they will work in after graduation — unlike other visas — and they do not have to worry about having to re-apply for visas or work permits.

In an average year, about 10,000 EB-5 visas are issued per year, and just under half that figure was used as of June over the course of fiscal year 2020 (which ends September 30), according to department of state visa control chief Charles Oppenheim in a June IIUSA webinar.

He acknowledged issuance has been slowed by the pandemic impacts, and

The protracted campaign which the Chinese call 'wei qi' is hardly best suited for the onset of winter. It's not in anyone's interest to be lost in the uncharted mountains like those five Arunachal Pradesh boys.

The writer is a senior journalist, columnist and author

WHAT'S NEXT?

In the coming months, businesses are going to be picking up the pieces. Some international students may have opted for a gap year rather than deal with visa uncertainty and the limits of virtual-only learning.

The next year could be an opportune time to plan carefully the kind of future families and investors want to establish for themselves.

The writer is executive chairman and founder of LCR Capital Partners



Subhani

Are we ready for 'give & take' with China at LAC?



Sunanda K. Datta-Ray
Reflections

The five teenaged Arunachal Pradesh boys who went missing on September 4 and were later found on the Chinese side of the border highlighted the dilemma that the top Indian and Chinese Army commanders must have faced during Monday's mammoth meeting.

Of course, the boys, who had unwittingly strayed across the border and were later found in China by People's Liberation Army personnel, were close to the extreme northeastern end of the 3,488-km Line of Actual Control between India and China. The meeting of Chinese and Indian commanders at Moldo was on the Chinese side of the LAC's north-western end. This is where, as Jawaharlal Nehru famously told Parliament before the 1962 border war, "not a single blade of grass grows".

In contrast, the Northeast is lush with vegetation and bristling with game. Moreover, as one of the lost boys put it: "We are hunters, we move around a lot." Yet, despite their experience and expertise, they got lost and could not be found for several days. "The borders are not demarcated well", they said. "We can't say which side is which."

It must be even more difficult to do so among the barren rocks and snow-clad heights of Ladakh where there are often no marked borders at all, as narrated in Kyle J. Gardner's forthcoming book, *The Frontier Complex: Geopolitics and the Making of the India-China border, 1846-1962*. This is where India accuses the Chinese PLA of encroaching on Indian territory in early May.

New Delhi and Beijing have been at loggerheads over charges and counter-charges for the past five months, re-enacting the tensions between Washington and Beijing that resulted in the recent menacing Chinese video of an aerial attack on what looks like a fortified American military position in Guam.

A September 6 meeting in Moscow of India's external affairs minister, Subrahmanyam Jai-shankar, and China's foreign minister, Wang Yi, on the sidelines of a gathering of foreign ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation went on for more than two hours. But it did not break the stalemate.

India is in the dual position of being both the aggrieved party and the one which enjoys a slight tactical advantage. It is pressing China to agree to a three-step process of disengagement, de-escalation and de-induction. The basis of the demand is that India now occupies tactical heights on the south bank of the Pangong Tso-Chushul river system.

This is the area that Raja Gulab Singh's general, Zorawar Singh, invaded in 1834. The Chinese, with their much vaunted sense of history, should not forget that the Dogra forces of the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir soundly defeated the Qing emperor's Sino-Tibetan army during the Sino-Sikh War of 1841-42. Ladakh's king, Tshespal Namgyal, was dethroned and exiled and Ladakh incorporated into the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir. China's PLA may be trying to regain through backdoor means what the Chinese lost fair and square in a war 178 years ago.

However, it must be

admitted that the proposed Johnson-Ardagh line (for Tibet's northern boundary with Chinese Turkestan) and the abortive Macartney-MacDonald Line (to delineate Aksai Chin) were even more inconclusive than the McMahon Line which those Arunachal Pradesh boys so unwittingly transgressed.

One wonders whether either side at the Moldo talks in a fresh bid to ease the months-long standoff remembered Rajiv Gandhi's warning about these mythic lines. India's sixth Prime Minister, who paid an epochal five-day visit to Beijing in December 1988 to meet Deng Xiaoping, reminded everyone that the disputed Sino-Indian border was a thick pencil line on a small-scale map, blurring all physical features. Identifying the border in the ground can't be easy since according to Gardner, the British left large stretches of it without delineation or demarcation.

Indians are indignant about the Chinese intrusion into our sacred motherland only because they have been told about them by their political and military leaders. No one has any direct knowledge of those inaccessible heights. Similarly, when the Chinese complain similarly of Indian encroachments, they are only echoing the PLA and what the *Global Times* prints. Again, there is no independent corroboration.

The Indian delegation for Monday's sixth round of military talks was headed by Lt. Gen. Harinder Singh, the commander of the Leh-based 14 Corps. Opposite him

was the South Xinjiang military district chief, Maj. Gen. Liu Lin. The inclusion in the Indian team of an external affairs ministry joint secretary, Naveen Srivastava, made it the first simultaneous military-diplomatic meeting between the two sides.

This was the first meeting between the two corps commanders since their 10-hour August 2 deliberations at Moldo. Indian and Chinese troops have clashed at least twice since August 2, accusing each other of firing warning shots in the air in violation of a long-standing agreement against using firearms within 2 km of the LAC.

It is futile now to reflect that a positive response to Zhou Enlai's suggestion of swapping Aksai Chin for Arunachal Pradesh, which the Chinese call "South Tibet", would have avoided much anguish. But one lost opportunity does not invalidate the underlying give-and-take principle that is so necessary for good neighbourliness. In fact, Russia resolved its territorial disputes with China only by relinquishing its claim to several hundred islands on the Argun, Amur, and Ussuri rivers and approximately 50 per cent of Bolshoy Ussuriysky Island. Now, Japan, Indonesia, Taiwan, Malaysia, the Philippines, Vietnam, Brunei, Laos, Nepal, Bhutan, Singapore and even protégé North Korea can solve their problems with China on a give-and-take basis without emulating Pakistan, which bought China's "irreplaceable, all-weather friendship" with a slice of India's Jammu and Kashmir that it had occupied.

The protracted campaign which the Chinese call "*wei qi*" is hardly best suited for the onset of winter. It's not in anyone's interest to be lost in the uncharted mountains like those five Arunachal Pradesh boys.

LETTERS

LAST MILE DELIVERY

Natural disasters and pandemics are not fought by governments and their machinery alone. It requires the nurturing of private institutions and NGOs. In its drive for weeding out NGOs, apparently out of sync with its social policies, government is for tighter regulations on their funding and compliance. There can be no quarrel with this and yet a summary approach could dampen the functioning of these bridge institutions. We may miss their organisation and trained contribution as they largely help provide the last mile delivery.

R. Narayanan,
Chennai

UNRULY CONDUCT

WHENEVER THE ruling party brings in a Bill not to their liking and convenience, Opposition parties invariably shout from rooftops that 'democracy is murdered' and indulge in every kind of disorderly behaviour. I just don't know how such violent and unruly conduct of breaking mikes tearing off papers and dancing on the desks and mocking the Speaker or Chairman of the House are going to infuse fresh life to democracy, which according to them is dead because of the acts of the ruling party. The recent show of indiscipline and unruly conduct of a few Opposition members in the Rajya Sabha will not help democracy to grow and survive. The dramatics of this kind has increased of late after the start of live telecast of the proceedings enabling delinquent members to display their histrionics.

Sarath Chandran,
Coimbatore

KUDOS TO RR

KUDOS TO Rajasthan Royals for winning their tie against Chennai Super Kings. Sanju Samson's hurricane knock and his century partnership with his Captain Steve Smith, enabled them to post a mammoth total of 216. But for the 30 runs conceded by Ngidi in the final over, CSK should have won the match easily. But Sanju Samson and then Archer during the final over, took the wind out of CSK, who bravely fought till the end to lose by just 16 runs. It may not be out of place to mention that time and again Sanju Samson has been knocking the door of selectors, but has not been able to divert their attention from their blue-eyed boys. Hope this knock, compounded with his keeping, should be another reminder to our selectors to remove their blinders.

N. Mahadevan,
Chennai

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	37668.42	-0.17
Nifty 50	11,131.90	-0.20
S&P 500*	3,304.65	0.33
Dollar (₹)	73.56	0.02
Pound Sterling (₹)	93.25	1.13
Euro (₹)	85.96	0.48
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	49,697*684	-1.36
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	42.20	0.48
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.990	-0.021
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.676	0.012

* As of 9:30 PM IST

Mobile World Congress will be held in June 2021



The world's biggest four-day telecom assembly Mobile World Congress has been scheduled to start from June 28, 2021, global industry body GSM Association said on Wednesday. The Mobile World Congress is held in the last week of February every year but this year, it was cancelled due to Covid-19 pandemic, and after telecom companies one after the other started pulling out of the conference.

Boycott call fails to reduce import of Chinese products

Chinese share in imports rose to 19% as against 14% last year

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, SEPT. 23

Despite the drop in demand post-lockdown and the general resentment towards Chinese products after Ladakh incursion, China has increased its share in imports into India. Imports from the Communist country came down only by 29 per cent between April and August this year compared to 48 per cent decline in overall imports.

China's share in India's total imports has gone up to 19 per cent between April and July, up from 14 per cent in the year-ago period.

During the lockdown months of April and May and even during the initial months of unlock, the flow of imports in general

FOREIGN DEPENDENCE

While India's total imports declined by 48 per cent, the country's imports from China have dropped merely by 29 per cent.

Agro chemicals, medical and scientific instruments, other miscellaneous chemicals, handicrafts and petroleum products have seen rise in imports



and especially those from China had faced several issues. During these months, the shipments of many items got stuck at the ports, consumption was curbed and logistics remained unresolved.

Further, the Chinese incursion into Ladakh evoked a strong resentment among Indian consumers and calls to ban

Chinese imports had become loud. Small and medium traders under Swadeshi Jagran Manch and the Confederation of All India Traders had given open calls to boycott Chinese products. This was followed by increased scrutiny of Chinese products at ports and consequent delays. The government also wanted to cut

the Chinese imports wherever possible and promote indigenous production. Certain curbs in the form of increased import duties were also brought in for select items.

However, the share of Chinese imports in India's overall imports has gone up to 19 per cent in the period between April and July compared to 14 per cent in the year-ago period. Among the top 50 commodity groups, import of agro chemicals rose from \$321 million to \$377 million, medical and scientific instruments grew from \$200 million to \$205 million, other chemicals from \$212 million to \$240 million, handicrafts from \$156 million to \$168 million and petroleum products from \$60 million to \$68 million.



Depositors and account holders of Punjab and Maharashtra Co-operative Bank hold placards during a protest near the Reserve Bank of India in New Delhi on Wednesday. On Tuesday, the central bank said net worth erosion, steep fall in deposits posed serious challenges in finding a workable plan for the revival of the fraud-hit bank.

— AFP

Gold price likely to touch record high by November

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, SEPT. 23

The uncertainty around US Presidential elections may see gold making new highs, finds a report by Citigroup. A revisit of the record high levels in the international market will see gold touching ₹56,000 in the Indian market.

Uncertainty over the contest and delays about the outcome may "be underappreciated by precious metals markets," Citigroup said in a quarterly commodities outlook.

This could see gold moving up by more than \$200 an ounce from the current levels to cross \$2,070.

Gold had touched \$2,070 in the first week of August. But the metal has

been witnessing some correction with the movement of the dollar index.

The election "could be an extraordinary catalyst for gold flat price and volatility skew late in the fourth quarter, even though historically there is no clear pattern for gold trading or price volatility into and after US elections," Citi said. "That is one reason why we expect gold prices to hit fresh records before year-end," it added.

According to Himanshu Gupta, vice-president and head of commodities and currencies research, Globe Capital, gold went up during the last presidential elections, but due to the lack of support from the macro fundamentals, it fell later.

"However, this time, gold has the support of macro fundamentals. Interest rates are low and are expected to remain lower until 2023. Despite the recent recovery in the dollar index, the greenback is in bearish territory. Further, the global economies are not going to recover any faster," he said. "Our medium term target is \$2,250-\$2,300 levels. Even if gold moves back to the record high levels of \$2,070, at the current rupee levels, gold in India may move past ₹56,000 per 10 gm towards ₹58,000. Our Diwali target is around those levels," he said. Kedia Commodities has set a 3-month target of \$2200 and a 6-12 month target of \$2400 per ounce.

COFFEE-BREAK

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



Aries: It is advisable to focus on financial matter. Stay away from bad investments and luxurious purchases. Seniors will appreciate your work and dedication.



Taurus: You and your partner may work in tandem socially and professionally. Finances look good but there may be some unexpected expenses due to bad planning.



Gemini: Stressing on finances and work may divert attention from a family member and cause a rift and worries. Your health will remain normal.



Cancer: Expenses won't stop you taking a lot on your shoulders. You are likely to get into a more permanent relationship. Take health precautions.



Leo: Romance may not be satisfactory and lead to unexpected developments. Serious financial matters need sorting out as some negative developments could arise.



Virgo: Don't give the impression that you're ready to assume the boss's role. Accept that it is necessary to correct issues in a current relationship. Be cautious and careful in financial matters.

You share your b'day with

Mohinder Amarnath, an Indian former cricketer and current cricket analyst. He played 69 Tests scoring 4,378 runs at a batting average of 42.50, with 11 hundreds and 24 fifties, and claimed 32 wickets.



Libra: Your romantic life will be smooth. Don't be too sensitive and emotional. You could be offered a challenging project at work. Relaxing in the company of loved ones will bring joy.



Scorpio: A gainful day, with chances of unexpected news that will leave you pleasantly surprised. Take care not to be provoked. Keep the peace at home.



Sagittarius: Mind your speech to avoid controversy. Curb your spending. Avoid important meetings. Some news from a distant land is likely.



Capricorn: The day will bring financial benefits. You will be in harmony with your spouse. Personal progress and happiness are indicated. Romance is in the air.

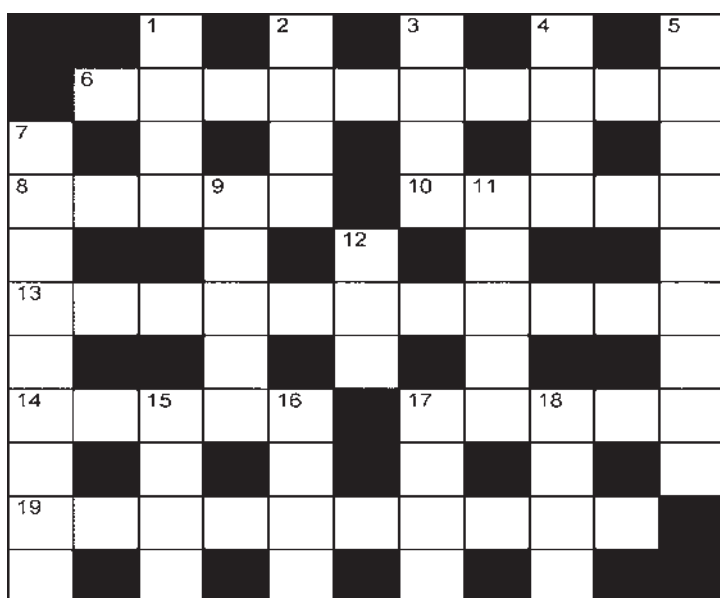


Aquarius: Money matters are positive. Family issues will take most of your time. A positive day for those doing business. You will make wise decisions.



Pisces: A good day. Progress in career can be expected. Social occasions are indicated. Romance and married life will be happy and progress at work is indicated. Try to balance your personal and professional life.

QUICK CROSSWORD



Across
6. Look (10)
8. Eminent (5)
10. Recess in coastline (5)
13. Family history studio (11)
15. Become less intense (5)
17. Set forth (5)
19. Narrow-minded (10)

Down
1. Expectorate (4)

2. Nourish (4)
3. Nipping sea creature (4)
4. Unforeseen drawback (4)
5. Poverty-stricken (9)
7. Mysterious (9)
9. Vote into power (5)
11. Cast metal bar (5)
12. Ailing (3)
15. Singing voice (4)
16. Long fishes (4)
17. Father (4)
18. Skin problem (4)

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

Across: 1. Dangle, 3. Whoo, 7. Rate, 8. Rebuff, 10. Formula, 13. Foghorn, 16. Chalet, 17. Cage, 18. Onyx, 19. Likely.
Down: 1. Dirk, 2. Notion, 4. Hour, 5. Affair, 6. Healthy, 9. Imposed, 11. Poncho, 12. Ornate, 14. Navy, 15. Deny.

Word Mine

F
N N A
O E T O R

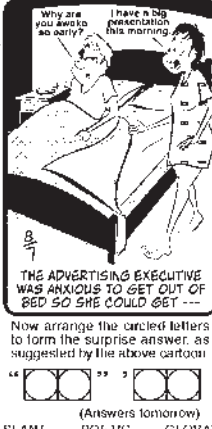
TODAY'S RATINGS: 15 AVERAGE; 17 GOOD; 19 OUTSTANDING

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

ANSWERS: 19 OUTSTANDING

jumble

LAPID
SUREH
EYEDML
ACNYGE



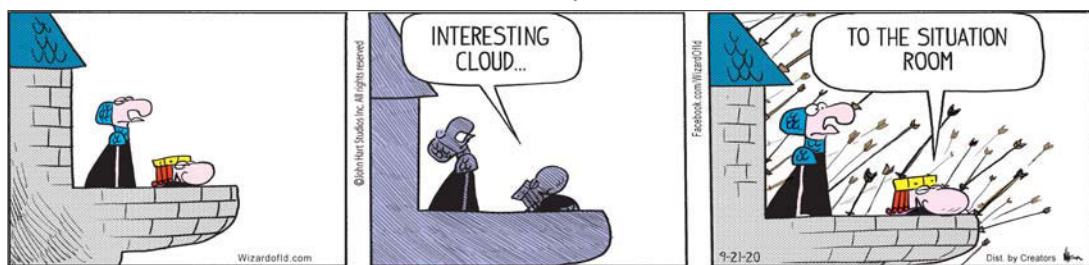
Yesterday's Jumble: SIXTY

Answer: If you want to know if dogs are happy, look for — TELL-TAIL SIGNS

CALVIN AND HOBBS | Bill Watterson



THE WIZARD OF ID | Parker and Hartsd



ARCHIE | Bill Henry Scarpelli & Craig Boldman



BLONDIE | Dean Young and John Marshall



ANDY CAPP | Reg Smythe



TARZAN | Edgar Rice Burroughs



bridge
PHILLIP ALDER

THE UNUSUAL ROUTE MAY BE RIGHT

Alfred North Whitehead, who was an English mathematician and philosopher, said, "It requires a very unusual mind to undertake the analysis of the obvious."

Maybe that depends on the obvious. In today's deal, for example, since the contract is four spades, it is obvious that South needs to win 10 tricks. However, the winning approach contains one unusual feature that the

declarer must analyze. After West leads the club king, what should South do? South starts with five potential losers: one spade, two diamonds and two clubs. He has nine apparent winners: three spades, four hearts, one diamond and one club. A club ruff on the board is the obvious-looking route to a 10th winner. So there is a strong temptation to duck the first trick, opening up the line for that ruff. This would

often be the right start -- but not here. Assuming East discouraged in clubs, West might shift to the diamond 10 at trick two, and then the contract will fail. Even if declarer wins with dummy's ace and plays a trump, East takes the trick with his ace, cashes the diamond king and gives his partner a diamond ruff. Instead, South wins the first trick in his hand and plays a trump, hoping for a 3-2 split.

Suppose the defenders continue with the spade ace, a club to the jack and the diamond 10 shift. Declarer can finesse the queen (necessary if trumps prove to be 4-1), take the next diamond with dummy's ace, draw trumps, unblock his heart winners, ruff a club on the board and discard his last diamond on the heart jack.

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SHORT TAKES

Marsh ruled out, Holder in for SRH

Dubai: Australian and Sunrisers Hyderabad all-rounder Mitchell Marsh was on Wednesday ruled out of the remainder of the Indian Premier League with an ankle injury he suffered in the team's opener against Royal Challengers Bangalore. West Indies captain Jason Holder has been named as Marsh's replacement and is expected to join the Sunrisers squad soon in the UAE. "Mitchell Marsh has been ruled out due to injury. We wish him a speedy recovery. Jason Holder will replace him for #Dream11IPL 2020," Sunrisers posted on its official Twitter handle. Marsh came out to ball the fifth over in Sunrisers' opening game against Royal Challengers Bangalore on Monday. However, he could only bowl four deliveries as he twisted his right ankle in the second ball while trying to stop a drive by Aaron Finch in his follow through. — PTI

Focus is more on fun, says Stoinis

Dubai: Star all-rounder Marcus Stoinis says carrying the confidence of good BBL performance into the 13th IPL and not putting too much pressure on himself should help him deliver for his new team Delhi Capitals. The 31-year-old made a quick-fire 53 off 21 balls to help his side score 157 for 8 and then snapped two wickets to drag their IPL opener against Kings XI Punjab into a Super Over, where they emerged victorious. "I've come in with some confidence through good performances this year, but also maybe putting less responsibility on myself than some other years. My focus is on just having a lot of fun and trust that I'll be good. Everyone who plays cricket at this level, the main reason you play it, is because you love it. That's the main ingredient," said Stoinis. — PTI

Medvedev goes down in Hamburg

Hamburg: Daniil Medvedev lost his first match since reaching the US Open semifinals as he was beaten 6-4, 6-3 by unseeded French player Ugo Humbert in the first round of the Hamburg European Open. The top-seeded Medvedev was a break up at 4-3 in the first set but was broken twice in a row by Humbert, who is ranked 36 places below the Russian at 41st. This was Medvedev's only clay-court warm-up ahead of the French Open. He hadn't played on clay for 16 months since a first-round defeat at last year's French Open and played only at hard-court tournaments in the last 14 months. Humbert next faces qualifier Jiri Vesely. Medvedev lost to eventual winner Dominic Thiem in the semifinals of the US Open. — AP

West hammer Hull amid Covid scare

London: West Ham manager David Moyes and Hammers players Issa Diop and Josh Cullen tested positive for the coronavirus just before the Premier League club's 5-1 win over Hull in the League Cup on Tuesday. Sebastian Haller and Andriy Yarmolenko both scored twice and Robert Snodgrass was also on target. West Ham's medical team were informed of the test results while Moyes and his squad were at the London Stadium preparing for the third round tie. Diop and Cullen had been named in the West Ham team and both had to withdraw from the line-up. "The manager and both players immediately left the stadium and returned home. All three, who are asymptomatic, will now follow Public Health England and Premier League guidelines and protocols," a West Ham statement said. — AFP

Live on TV

CRICKET

IPL: Kings XI Punjab vs Royal Challengers Bangalore from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

TENNIS

ATP Hamburg European Open: Fourth day's action from 4 pm on Sony Six, HD

FOOTBALL

UEFA Super Cup: Bayern Munich vs Sevilla from 12.30 am (Friday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

BASKETBALL

NBA Western Conference Finals (Game 4 of best-of-7): Denver Nuggets vs Los Angeles Lakers from 6.30 am (Friday) on Sony Six

Mumb high Indians

Blues vault from bottom to top as Rohit cracks whip

Abu Dhabi, Sept. 23: Skipper Rohit Sharma's effortless batting formed the cornerstone of Mumbai Indians' resounding 49-run win over Kolkata Knight Riders in an Indian Premier League match here on Wednesday.

On a big Sheikh Zayed Stadium, Rohit pummelled the KKR bowlers into submission for a 54-ball 80 and powered Mumbai to an imposing 195/5.

The night belonged to Rohit, the great white-ball exponent, whose knock was laced with six sixes.

Then the Jasprit Bumrah-led Mumbai attack did most things right to restrict KKR to 146 for 9.

KKR were never on course for a comfortable chase as they lost openers Shubhman Gill (7) and Sunil Narine (9) cheaply to be in a spot of bother at 25 for two.

One-down skipper Dinesh Karthik (30 off 23) and Nitish Rana (24 off 18) tried to up the ante but they were still playing the catch-up game with 125 runs needed from the last 10 overs.

Kolkata were dealt a double blow in quick succession — first Karthik was trapped by Rahul Chahar (2/26) in front of the wicket and then Hardik Pandya grabbed a running catch on the fence to send back Rana.

Bumrah (2/32) in the 16th over sealed the game for Mumbai as he removed Andre Russell (11), who was bowled, and then forced Eoin Morgan (20) to edge to the wicket-keeper: Pat Cummins (33 off 12) launched into Bumrah with four sixes in a very expensive 18th over, but it was too late for Kolkata.

Kieron Pollard (1/21), Trent Boult (2/30), James



Rohit Sharma of Mumbai Indians plays a shot against Kolkata Knight Riders in their IPL match at Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi of United Arab Emirates on Wednesday. — BCCI

SCORECARD

Mumbai Indians: Quinton de Kock c Naik b Shivam Mavi 1, Rohit Sharma c Pat Cummins b Shivam Mavi 80, Suryakumar Yadav run out (Sunil Narine/ Eoin Morgan), 47, Saurabh Tiwary c Pat Cummins b Sunil Narine 21, Hardik Pandya hit wicket b Andre Russell 18, Kieron Pollard not out 13, Krunal Pandya not out 1. **Extras:** (lb-2, nb-1, w-11) 14.

Total: (for 5 wickets in 20 overs) 195.

Fall of wickets: 1-8, 2-98, 3-147, 4-177, 5-180.

Bowling: Sandeep Warrier 3-0-34-0, Shivam Mavi 4-1-32-2, Pat Cummins 3-0-49-0, Sunil Narine 4-0-22-1, Andre Russell 2-0-17-1, Kuldeep Yadav 4-0-39-0.

Kolkata Knight Riders: Shubhman Gill c Pollard b Trent Boult 7, Sunil Narine c de Kock b James Pattinson 9, Dinesh Karthik lbw b Rahul Chahar 30, Nitish Rana c Hardik Pandya b Pollard 24, Eoin Morgan c de Kock b Jasprit Bumrah 16, Andre Russell b Bumrah 11, Nikhil Naik c Pandya b Boult 1, Pat Cummins c Pandya b Pattinson 33, Shivam Mavi st de Kock b Chahar 9, Kuldeep Yadav not out 1. **Extras:** (lb-2, w-3) 5. **Total (for 9 wickets in 20 overs) 146.**

Fall of wickets: 1-14, 2-25, 3-71, 4-77, 5-100, 6-101, 7-103, 8-141, 9-146.

Bowling: Trent Boult 4-1-30-2, Pattinson 4-0-25-2, Jasprit Bumrah 4-0-32-2, Rahul Chahar 4-0-26-2, Kieron Pollard 3-0-21-1, Krunal Pandya 1-0-10-0.

Gambhir lashes out at Dhoni

New Delhi, Sept. 23: Mahendra Singh Dhoni did not lead from the front by dropping himself down the batting order during a mammoth chase, opined former India batsman Gautam Gambhir, tearing into CSK captain's decision to bat at number seven against Rajasthan Royals.

The former India opener reckons that if any other captain had done this, he would have drawn a lot of flak but since it is Dhoni, people are not even talking about it.

With Chennai Super Kings chasing a massive 217-run target in Sharjah, Dhoni came to bat when they needed 103 runs from 38 balls.

Dhoni sent the likes of Sam Curran, Ruturaj Gaikwad and Kedar Jadhav ahead of him. CSK lost the match by 16 runs.

"I was a bit surprised to be honest. MS Dhoni batting at No. 7? And sending (Ruturaj) Gaikwad, Sam Curran before him. Makes no sense to me. In fact you should be leading from the front," Gambhir told *ESPNCricinfo's* T20 Time Out.

RAYUDU SET TO MISS ONE MORE GAME

C. SANTHOSH KUMAR | DC CHENNAI, SEPT. 23

After Covid-19, now it's an injury scare for Chennai Super Kings. M.S. Dhoni's three-time champions are sweating over the fitness of their key batsman Ambati Rayudu.

Rayudu who played a stellar role in CSK's win over Mumbai Indians in the opener is nursing a hamstring injury and is set to miss Friday's encounter against Delhi Capitals. Rayudu didn't play Tuesday's game against Rajasthan Royals as Chennai hit a bump with a 16-run defeat.

K.S. Viswanathan, CEO of Super Kings, said Rayudu's fitness will be assessed on Thursday.

West Indian all-rounder Dwayne Bravo missed the first two games due to a knee injury, but young Sam Curran proved to be a blessing in disguise for CSK.

"This is not what you call leading from the front. Batting at No.7 when you're chasing 217. The game was over. Faf was probably the lone warrior," he said.

"See, if someone else would have done this, some other (batsman) captain had batted at

No.7, he would have got a lot of flak. It is MS Dhoni — probably that's why people don't talk about it" he added.

Gambhir also questioned CSK's intent to win the game.

"There is nothing wrong if you end up getting out early, at least

However, Rayudu's prolonged absence from the XI could disrupt the team's balance.

The pull-outs of Suresh Raina and Harbhajan Singh have already depleted the CSK squad, but the team management hasn't pressed the panic button yet.

"We are not thinking of replacements," Viswanathan said.

Coach Stephen Fleming said there could be some movement in the batting order, suggesting that in-form Faf du Plessis may open the innings.

"Maybe...keeping in mind that we have had a couple of injuries. We already had to shuffle because of Rayudu injury. It's still early days and we are trying to find out who can drive this car. We are playing another game in a quick succession. We have to make sure that we don't panic and we never do," added the Chennai Super Kings coach Fleming.

QUARANTINE DIDN'T HELP, SAYS DHONI

Sharjah, Sept. 23: The extended two-week quarantine of Chennai Super Kings hampered his preparations as he did not get enough time for batting practice, said captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni after his side lost to Rajasthan Royals by 16 runs in their second IPL game.

Dhoni came in to bat at No.7, sending Sam Curran and Kedar Jadhav ahead of him in a mammoth 217-run chase on Tuesday.

Asked why he came so low in the order, the CSK captain said, "I haven't batted for a long time. 14-day quarantine doesn't help."

Dhoni was not out on 29 off 17 balls with three sixes in the last over.

"With 217 on the board, we needed a very good start which was not the case. Smith and Sanju batted very well. We need to give credit to their bowlers. Once you've seen the first innings, you knew the lengths to bowl," Dhoni said. — PTI

Kings XI to lock horns with RCB

Dubai, Sept. 23: Kings XI Punjab will look to put behind the controversial 'short run' decision in their IPL opener and start afresh when they take on Virat Kohli's buoyant Royal Challengers Bangalore here on Thursday.

In their opening game against Delhi Capitals, the square-leg umpire erroneously called KXIP's Chris Jordan for a 'short run' in the third ball of the 19th over, effectively costing his team the closely fought game.

In contrast, RCB opened their campaign on a winning note defeating Sunrisers Hyderabad by 10 runs, raising hopes that things might finally fall into place for them this season.

Devdutt Padikkal started his IPL career on a classy note hitting a sublime half-century and will once again be in focus, while AB de Villers will also look to continue in the same vein following a crucial half-century.

Both Kohli and Aaron Finch looked good on Monday night and would be itching to spend more time in the middle.

Yuzvendra Chahal, as always, will be the key man in the RCB bowling attack. The leg-spinner was instrumental in his team's victory on Monday, triggering a batting collapse.

However, RCB will again miss the services of South African all-rounder Chris Morris who has picked up a side-strain. Morris was bought for a whopping ₹10 crore at the auction.

Umesh Yadav continues to leak runs in the IPL and going by his showing in the first game, he could be replaced by Mohammad Siraj. It remains to be seen if the team can fit in England all-rounder

NUMBERS GAME

HEAD TO HEAD

OVERALL:

● Matches: 24

● Punjab won: 12

● Bangalore won: 12

MEETING IN 2019

● Royal Challengers Bangalore beat Kings XI Punjab by 8 wickets at Mohali

● Royal Challengers Bangalore beat Kings XI Punjab by 17 runs at Bangalore

FOR THE RECORD

● Mohammed Shami recorded his best bowling for Kings XI Punjab by taking three for 15 in the previous match against Delhi Capitals. He took 22 wickets at an average of 22.00 in 15 matches for Kings XI Punjab in IPL.

● Virat Kohli, who scored 5426 runs at an average pf 37.68 in 170 innings of 178 matches for Royal Challenger Bangalore, is the highest run-getter in IPL. He scored just 14 runs in the first match against Sunrisers Hyderabad.

— S. PERVEZ QAISER

Moeen Ali in the middle-order.

For KXIP, Mayank Agarwal looked in imperious touch but was gutted to not be able to get his team over the line with just one run required to win.

Rahul, Glenn Maxwell and Nicholas Pooran will be expected to step up as they possess the ability to take away the game from any opposition.

Big hitters Chris Gayle, who was left out of the opener for better balance in the eleven, could be back and batting all-rounder Jimmy Neesham could also be given a chance. — PTI

IPL POINTS TABLE

Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
Mumbai Indians	2	1	1	0	2	+0.993
Rajasthan Royals	1	1	0	0	2	+0.800
Royal Challengers Bangalore	1	1	0	0	2	+0.500
Delhi Capitals	1	1	0	0	2	+0.000
Chennai Super Kings	2	1	1	0	2	-0.145
Kings XI Punjab	1	0	1	0	0	+0.000
Sunrisers Hyderabad	1	0	1	0	0	-0.500
Kolkata Knight Riders	1	0	1	0	0	-2.450

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

COACHES FOR A CAUSE



As part of Association of Indian Football Coaches' (AIFC) Covid-19 stimulus programme, former India football player Raman Vijayan (left) distributed relief packages to around 40 beneficiaries in Tamil Nadu.

Murray magic spurs Nuggets

Orlando, Sept. 23: Jamal Murray scored 28 points as the Denver Nuggets held off a ferocious late fightback from the Los Angeles Lakers to roar back into contention in the Western Conference finals series on Tuesday.

Murray nailed two crucial late three-pointers in the closing minutes as Denver held on for a 114-106 victory in game three to reduce the Lakers' lead to 2-1 in the best-of-seven series.

But the Nuggets — who looked in complete control for long periods of the contest — were given a mighty scare by the Lakers in a thrilling fourth-quarter battle.

The Lakers had trailed by 20 points with just over 10 minutes remaining but whittled away the Denver lead to just three points

That's my whole energy, my whole approach to the game, not getting down if I miss a couple of shots. I'm just trying to be aggressive.

— JAMAL MURRAY

Nuggets player after beating Los Angeles Lakers

with 3min 53sec left on the clock in Orlando.

But just as it looked as if LeBron James and Anthony Davis were poised to complete a remarkable comeback, Murray regrouped to take the game away from the Lakers.

The 23-year-old Canadian's three-pointer from 26 feet gave Denver a seven-point advantage at 106-99 and he then provided the assist for Paul Millsap to make it 108-99.

With less than a minute on the clock, Murray struck the dagger blow with a 29-foot three-point jumpshot to

make it 111-99 and effectively seal victory.

Denver coach Michael Malone said his team — who had suffered an agonising buzzer-beater defeat in game two on Sunday — were determined not to go 3-0 down in the series.

The Nuggets have already overturned 3-1 series deficits en route to the Western Conference finals.

"I had no doubt we were going to show up tonight," Malone said.

Asked about his late flourish, Murray said he had set out to lead by example. "That's my whole energy,

my whole approach to the game, not getting down if I miss a couple of shots. I'm just trying to be aggressive," Murray said.

The Lakers meanwhile were left reflecting on an uneven display which ultimately left James and Davis with too much to do.

— AFP

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Jamal Murray (centre) of Denver Nuggets goes up for a shot against Los Angeles Lakers during their NBA Western Conference final in Lake Buena Vista, Florida, on Tuesday. Nuggets carved out a 114-106 victory. — AP