





## IN BRIEF

## Man arrested for harassing woman

**New Delhi:** The Delhi police has arrested a 28-year-old man from Tapi in Gujarat for allegedly harassing a woman by sending her obscene messages on WhatsApp. The accused has been identified as Lad Ashish, a resident of Tapi where he works as a sales executive in a car firm. According to DCP (South district) Atul Kumar Thakur, the matter came to light on July 3 after a complaint was received at the Hauz Khas police station from a woman who alleged that a man was sending her sexually explicit messages on WhatsApp. "Based on her complaint, a case was registered under Sections 354 (assault or criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty) and 354A (sexual harassment and punishment for sexual harassment) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). Following this, a probe was initiated," said the DCP. "The accused was arrested and the mobile phone used to send vulgar messages was recovered from his possession," said the DCP, adding that the accused was brought to Delhi and further investigation is underway.

## Woman found dead, hubby &amp; kid missing

**Noida:** A 26-year-old woman was found dead under mysterious conditions at her home in a village here while her husband and child were missing, police said on Monday. The body of Sapna Yadav, who lived in Yakubpur, was found lying on the floor of the house with slight marks of strangulation on her neck, the police said. "There were no other injury marks on her body, which was spotted by her neighbours who alerted the local Phase 2 police in the morning," an officer said. Her husband Rajnesh Yadav and their son were not found at the house and are yet to be traced, the officer said. According to their neighbours, there was no fight between the couple the previous night, the police said, suspecting foul play in the case. The body has been sent for post mortem after which the cause of the death would be ascertained, the police said. — *PTI*

## 'What Women Want' campaign launched

**New Delhi:** The Delhi Mahila Congress, on Monday, launched an online campaign, 'Meri Ikshayen-What Women Want', for a safe and secure city for women from all walks of life. "Under the campaign, young girls and women aged not less than 12 years can express their views about a Delhi they want for themselves," said the president of Delhi Mahila Congress, Amrita Dhawan. Ms Dhawan explained that the participants will require to shoot two-minute videos expressing their views creatively in the form of text, poems, dance, and such suggesting what kind of Delhi they want for themselves. The best three videos that are most liked and shared on Twitter and Facebook will be given prizes. The campaign aims at making Delhi a safe and secure city for all women. Senior party leader and former Delhi minister Kiran Walia said that the idea of the campaign came from the way the state power was exposed in the gruesome Hathras gangrape case and the way its victim and her family faced harassment by the system.

## Man, 2 others held for faking robbery

**New Delhi:** A 30-year-old man has been arrested along with his two friends for allegedly faking a robbery and misappropriating ₹3.5 lakh of his employer to meet his financial requirements, police said on Monday. The accused Ajay had been working with a private company in Vikaspuri for the last four-five years, they said. He had asked his employer to give him some money during the Covid-triggered lockdown. However, the company had refused, saying they themselves did not have enough money due to the lockdown and instead gave him ₹1,500, police said. Thereafter, Ajay along with his friends, Arun (33) and Raman (25), decided to fake a robbery. All of them, residents of Tilak Nagar, have been arrested, police said, claiming that they have also recovered ₹1,39,000 of the robbed cash.

## Odd-even last weapon to fight pollution: Rai

Says govt is focusing on 'Red Light On, Gaadi off' campaign

AGE CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, OCT. 19

Delhi environment minister Gopal Rai on Monday said implementing the odd-even road rationing scheme would be the "last weapon" to fight air pollution in the city and presently the government is focusing on the "Red Light On, Gaadi off" campaign. The odd-even scheme is a road rationing plan under which odd and even numbered vehicles ply on alternate days.

Responding to a question at a press conference, Mr Rai said if all other ways fail then the Delhi government will think about implementing the odd-even scheme. "We have implemented the odd-even scheme several times in Delhi and it will be our last weapon. Odd-even is also a way to reduce vehicular pollution so right now we are completely focussing on this ("Red Light On, Gaadi off") campaign and if all other programmes don't work then the government will think about implementing the odd-even scheme," he said.

Chief minister Arvind Kejriwal on October 15 launched the "Red Light On, Gaadi off" (red light on, engine off) campaign

## Kejri seeks monthly meetings with Haryana, UP, Punjab CMs

**New Delhi, Oct. 19:** Chief minister Arvind Kejriwal requested Union environment minister Prakash Javadekar on Monday to hold monthly meetings with the CMs of Delhi, Punjab, Haryana and UP to curb air pollution, saying there is a lack of political will at the level of the states to address the problem of stubble burning.

In a virtual press briefing, he said the affected states have been unable to find a solution to stop stubble burning and prevent air pollution. "I believe pollution due to stubble burning can be controlled in a short span of time. But a lack of political will is visible in doing that."

Mr Kejriwal said the crop

to tackle pollution in the city and urged people to turn off the engines of their vehicles while waiting at traffic signals.

Mr Rai, responding to another question, claimed that Delhi is the only place where air pollution has been reducing in the last



► **THE CM** said although scientists and engineers have come out with solutions to reduce the incidents of stubble burning, such as the biodecomposer developed by the Pusa Institute in Delhi, there is a lack of political will to adopt these methods

residue can be biodegraded or converted into biogas, coal and even cardboard. The paddy straw can be converted into compressed biogas or cooking coal which some factories are doing in Karnal, he said, adding crop residue can be "converted into an opportunity" within a year; provided there are strict time-lines to move away from stubble burning. He said he agreed with Mr Javadekar

that pollution is not limited to one state, adding that all the state should come together.

He, however, added that Javadekar had said it will take at least four years to control pollution, but he believed if all the state governments and political parties "work honestly by keeping aside their political differences then we can check air pollution in much less than four years. — *PTI*

agency. "Secondly, we increased afforestation in Delhi — we did double then what we were assigned by the Centre. Thirdly, Delhi is the first place to shift towards electric vehicles. These are all long term solutions," he said.

five years and in all other places it has been seen that pollution is increasing. "There are reasons for this result. Our government has provided 24 hour electricity which has reduced pollution caused by genset, which is now used only incase of emer-

## 31 fatalities take Delhi's Covid death toll to 6,040

AGE CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, OCT. 19

The national capital recorded 31 more fatalities on Monday, taking the Covid death toll to 6,040, while 2,154 fresh cases took the infection tally to over 3.33 lakh, authorities said.

The relatively low number of fresh cases came out of the 36,445 tests conducted the previous day.

Thirty-one more fatalities have been recorded, taking the death toll to 6,040, according to the latest bulletin issued by the Delhi health department. On September 29 and October 10, 48 fatalities were reported in the city, the highest number of deaths recorded in a day since July 16, when Delhi saw 58 fatalities.

The tally of active cases on Monday dropped slightly to 22,570 from 23,292 the previous day.

The total number of cases has climbed to 3,33,171, the bulletin said. The number of containment zones in Delhi increased slightly to 2,782 from 2,770 on Sunday.

The positivity rate on Monday stood at 5.91 per cent while the recovery rate crossed 91 per cent, the bulletin said, adding that the case fatality rate stood at 1.81 per cent.

According to the bulletin, out of the total of 15,704 beds in Covid hospitals, 10,640 were vacant.

It said 904 beds in Covid care centres are occupied by persons under quarantine, including travellers who have returned by Vande Bharat Mission and bubble flights. Delhi government has significantly ramped up testing in the past few days, with the count on several times crossing the 60,000-mark.

of people and limit physical darshan to their members only.

The Chittaranjan Park Kali Mandir Society, which organises one of the biggest Durga puja festival in Delhi, has decided not to allow entry of general public to the temple premises this year due to Covid.

It has tied up with a DTH service provider and a local cable operator so that devotees can have a darshan of Durga idol from their houses. The temple society also has plans to facilitate online darshan on its Facebook page and YouTube channel.

"Around 2.5 lakh people attend our Puja. Due to

Covid, we have decided to organise the festival in a simple manner this year. Only a few members of our management committee will be in attendance.

"We have hired certified cook to prepare prasad and he has to show negative Covid report. As devotees will not be allowed, we will deliver prasad at their doorsteps within a 2-km radius for which an agency has been engaged," society joint secretary Prodip Ganguly said.

Ganguly said there will be live telecast of aarti and devotees can offer "pushpanjali" from their homes with all rituals being live streamed.

## MORE FESTIVAL SPECIAL TRAINS-2020

In order to clear extra rush of passengers during forthcoming Festival Season, Railways have decide to run the following Festival Special trains as per details given below:-

09611/09612 Ajmer-Amritsar-Ajmer Express Special Train (Bi-Weekly)						24 Trips
Train No. 09611		STATIONS		Train No. 09612		
ARR.	DEP.			ARR.	DEP.	
---	17:55	AJMER		10:00	---	
14:45	---	AMRITSAR		---	14:30	

**Days of run :** 09611 Ex. Ajmer from 22.10.2020 to 28.11.2020 on every Thursday, Saturday and 09612 Ex. Amritsar from 22.10.2020 to 01.12.2020 on every Tuesday, Thursday.  
**Accommodation :** AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Second Seating (Reserved); **Stoppages:** Kishanganj, Jaipur, Gandhinagar Jaipur, Getor Jagatpura, Dausa, Bandikui Jn., Baswa, Rajgarh, Alwar Jn., Khairthal, Rewari, Bhiwani, Hisar, Sirsa, Kalanwali, Bhatinda, Gangsar, Jaitu, Kot Kapura, Faridkot, Firozpur Cantt., Talwandi, Moga, Jagraon, Ludhiana Jn., Phagwara Jn., Jalandhar City and Beas Stations.

01115/01116 Pune-Gorakhpur-Pune Express Special Train (Weekly)						12 Trips
Train No. 01115		STATIONS		Train No. 01116		
ARR.	DEP.			ARR.	DEP.	
---	16:15	PUNE		04:05	---	
01:05	---	GORAKHPUR		---	15:30	

**Days of run :** 01115 Ex. Pune from 22.10.2020 to 26.11.2020 on every Thursday and 01116 Ex. Gorakhpur from 24.10.2020 to 28.11.2020 on every Saturday.  
**Accommodation :** AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Second Seating (Reserved); **Stoppages:** Daund Jn., Kopergaon, Manmad Jn., Jalgaon Jn., Bhusaval Jn., Khandwa, Itarsi Jn., Jabalpur, Katni, Satna, Manikpur Jn., Prayagraj Jn., Varanasi Jn., Mau Jn. and Deoria Sadar Stations.

84406/84405 Anand Vihar (T)-Bhagalpur-Anand Vihar (T) Suvidha Superfast Exp. Spl. Train (Bi-Weekly)						24 Trips
Train No. 84406		STATIONS		Train No. 84405		
ARR.	DEP.			ARR.	DEP.	
---	18:35	ANAND VIHAR (T)		15:25	---	
15:00	---	BHAGALPUR		---	18:45	

**Days of run :** 84406 Ex. Anand Vihar (T) from 23.10.2020 to 30.11.2020 on every Friday, Monday and 84405 Ex. Bhagalpur from 24.10.2020 to 01.12.2020 on every Saturday, Tuesday.  
**Accommodation :** AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Second Seating (Reserved); **Stoppages:** Kanpur, Prayagraj Jn., Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya Jn., Patna, Mokameh Jn., Kiul, Jamalpur and Sultanpur Stations.

84410/84409 New Delhi-Darbhanga-New Delhi Suvidha Superfast Spl. Exp. Train (Bi-Weekly)						22 Trips
Train No. 84410		STATIONS		Train No. 84409		
ARR.	DEP.			ARR.	DEP.	
---	19:25	NEW DELHI		17:30	---	
16:00	---	DARBHANGA		---	20:55	

**Days of run :** 84410 Ex. New Delhi from 22.10.2020 to 26.11.2020 on every Monday, Thursday and 84409 Ex. Darbhanga from 23.10.2020 to 27.11.2020 on every Tuesday, Friday.  
**Accommodation :** AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Second Seating (Reserved); **Stoppages:** Moradabad, Bareilly, Lucknow, Barabanki, Gorakhpur, Sevan, Chhapra, Hajipur, Muzaffarpur and Samastipur Stations.

05045/05046 Gorakhpur-Okha-Gorakhpur Mail Express (Weekly)						12 Trips
Train No. 05045		STATIONS		Train No. 05046		
ARR.	DEP.			ARR.	DEP.	
---	04:45	GORAKHPUR		19:25	---	
03:55	---	OKHA		---	21:00	

**Days of run :** 05045 Ex. Gorakhpur from 22.10.2020 to 26.11.2020 on every Thursday and 05046 Ex. Okha from 25.10.2020 to 29.11.2020 on every Sunday.  
**Accommodation :** AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Second Seating (Reserved); **Stoppages:** Basti, Gonda, Barabanki, Badshahnagar, Aishbag, Kanpur Central, Etawah, Tundla Jn., Raja Ki Mandi, Agara Cantt., Dhaulpur, Morena, Gwalior, Jhansi, Bina, Mugaoli, Ashok Nagar, Guna, Ruthiyai, Bhiyavra Rajgarh, Maksi, Ujjain, Nagda, Ratlam, Godhra, Chhayapuri, Anand Jn., Ahmedabad Jn., Viramgam Jn., Surendernagar, Rajkot, Jamnagar and Dwarka Stations.

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## NORTHERN RAILWAY

(E-Tender Notice)

The Sr Divisional Commercial Manager/Coaching, Northern Railway, Delhi Division, New Delhi invites online e-tender through website <https://ireps.gov.in>, for the parking contracts, for the period of 3 (Three) Years, to be closed on 11.11.2020 at 15:00 hrs, at the following stations/locations:

SN	Name of work with its location / Railway Station	Advertise Value/Reserve Price of one year (in Rs)	Cost of Tender document & 18% GST (in Rs)	Earnest Money Deposit (in Rs)	Website particulars where complete details of tender document can be seen
1	Parking contract of Cycle-Scooter at Bahadurgarh Railway Station (BGZ), "B" Category, with measuring an area of 711 sq mtrs	8,17,272/-	3,540/-	49,100/-	<a href="https://ireps.gov.in/tender-no: Parking93-2020">https://ireps.gov.in/tender-no: Parking93-2020</a>
2	Parking contract of Car at Delhi Sarai Rohilla Railway Station (DEE), "A" Category, with measuring an area of 1500 sq mtrs	25,30,656/-	5,900/-	1,51,900/-	<a href="https://ireps.gov.in/tender-no: Parking94-2020">https://ireps.gov.in/tender-no: Parking94-2020</a>

\*Applicable GST and TCS has to be paid by licensee extra, over and above the Advertise value/Reserve Price/license fee.

2280/2020

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

02883/02884 Durg-Hazrat Nizamuddin-Durg Superfast Express Special Train (Tri-Weekly)						34 Trips
Train No. 02883		STATIONS		Train No. 02884		
ARR.	DEP.			ARR.	DEP.	
---	12:00	DURG		15:10	---	
09:05	---	HAZRAT NIZAMUDDIN		---	17:25	

**Days of run :** 02883 Ex. Durg from 22.10.2020 to 28.11.2020 on every Mon, Thu & Sat and 02884 Ex. Hazrat Nizamuddin from 23.10.2020 to 29.11.2020 on every Tue, Fri & Sun.

**Accommodation :** 1st AC, AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Second Seating (Reserved); **Stoppages:** Raipur Jn., Bhatapara, Bilaspur Jn., Pendra Road, Anuppur Jn., Shahdol, Umaria, Katni Murwara, Saugor and Jhansi Stations.

02165/02166 Lokmanyatilak (T)-Gorakhpur Lokmanyatilak (T) Superfast Spl. Exp. Train (Bi-Weekly)						24 Trips
Train No. 02165		STATIONS		Train No. 02166		
ARR.	DEP.			ARR.	DEP.	
---	05:23	LOKMANYATILAK (T)		21:30	---	
11:25	---	GORAKHPUR		---	15:45	

**Days of run :** 02165 Ex. Lokmanyatilak (T) from 22.10.2020 to 30.11.2020 on every Thursday, Monday and 02166 Ex. Gorakhpur from 23.10.2020 to 01.12.2020 on every Friday, Tuesday.

**Accommodation :** AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Second Seating (Reserved); **Stoppages:** Thane, Kalyan Jn., Igatpuri, Nasik Road, Manmad Jn., Jalgaon Jn., Bhusaval Jn., Khandwa, Itarsi Jn., Jabalpur, Katni, Satna, Manikpur, Prayagraj Jn., Janghai Jn., Bhadohi, Varanasi Jn., Mau Jn. & Deoria Sadar Stations.

02530/02529 Lucknow Jn.-Patliputra-Lucknow Jn. Superfast Special Train (5 Days a Week)						60 Trips
Train No. 02530		STATIONS		Train No. 02529		
ARR.	DEP.			ARR.	DEP.	
---	05:00	LUCKNOW JN.		02:35	---	
14:50	---	PATLIPUTRA		---	15:50	

**Days of run :** 02530/02529 Ex. Lucknow Jn./Ex. Patliputra from 20.10.2020 to 30.11.2020 on every Mon, Tue, Wed, Fri & Sat.  
**Accommodation :** AC 3 Tier, Executive Chaircar, Chaircar & Second Seating (Reserved); **Stoppages:** Badshahnagar, Gonda, Basti, Gorakhpur, Deoria Sadar, Siwan Jn., Ekma, Chhapra & Dighwara Stns.

04656/04655 Firozpur-Patna-Firozpur Express Special Train (Weekly)						12 Trips
Train No. 04656		STATIONS		Train No. 04655		
ARR.	DEP.			ARR.	DEP.	
---	19:00	FIROZPUR		23:55	---	
21:25	---	PATNA		---	23:25	

**Days of run :** 04656 Ex. Firozpur from 23.10.2020 to 27.11.2020 on every Friday and 04655 Ex. Patna from 24.10.2020 to 28.11.2020 on every Saturday.

**Accommodation :** AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Second Seating (Reserved); **Stoppages:** Kot Kapura, Bhatinda, Rampura Phul, Barnala, Dhuri, Patiala, Rajpura, Ambala Cantt., Saharanpur, Moradabad, Bareilly, Lucknow, Sitapur, Varanasi, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar & Ara Stations.

04084/04083 Delhi-Katihar-Delhi Express Special Train (Weekly)						12 Trips
Train No. 04084		STATIONS		Train No. 04083		
ARR.	DEP.			ARR.	DEP.	
---	23:00	DELHI		22:50	---	
22:00	---	KATIHAR		---	23:50	

**Days of run :** 04084 Ex. Delhi from 23.10.2020 to 27.11.2020 on every Friday and 04083 Ex. Katihar from 24.10.2020 to 28.11.2020 on every Saturday.

**Accommodation :** AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Second Seating (Reserved); **Stoppages:** Ghaziabad, Moradabad, Bareilly, Sitapur, Gorakhpur, Chhapra, Hajipur Via Shahpur Patoree, Barauni, Begu Sarai, Khagaria, Naugachia & Katihar Stations.

**Note:** All norms of the State and Central Government regarding COVID-19 including Social distancing, sanitization etc., may be followed in the trains and at the Railway stations. All other precautions associated with COVID-19 should also be ensured.

**Beware of Touts** Always buy your tickets from Railway Counters or authorised rail travel agents only.

**Note:** For any kind of information passengers are requested to contact Railway Enquiry No. 139 or visit Indian Railways website: [www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in](http://www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in)

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## SHORT TAKES

## 6-year-old accused of 'sexual assault'

**Aligarh:** The police here are looking into a case in which a six-year-old boy allegedly sexually assaulted a girl of the same age. The incident took place in the Kurwasi police station area last Monday. The police said according to the five-and-a-half-year-old girl's family, she had gone to their neighbour's house to retrieve her ball when the boy dragged her into a room and sexually assaulted her. The family said the girl did not tell them about the incident as she was terrified, according to the police. On Sunday, she was taken ill and told her mother about it, police said, adding that the girl complained of pain in her private parts. SP (city) Abhishek Kumar said that a case has been registered and the girl was rushed to a hospital for a medical examination and a medical board is presently studying her report. — PTI

## HC junks Kerala plea against airport lease

**Kochi:** The Kerala high court dismissed petitions filed by Kerala government and others challenging the Centre's decision to lease Thiruvananthapuram international airport to Adani Enterprises. A division bench of Justices K. Vinod Chandran and C.S. Dias delivered the verdict, dismissing arguments raised by the state government and others opposing the decision to lease out the airport to Adani Enterprises Limited. The Kerala government, on August 21, had moved the high court seeking a stay on further proceedings in the leasing Thiruvananthapuram airport to Adani Enterprises. The state had filed the application in the court, after an all-party-meeting in Kerala demanded withdrawal of the Union Cabinet's decision to lease the airport to Adani Enterprises. — PTI

## KCR announces ₹10,000 flood relief

**Hyderabad:** Telangana chief minister K. Chandrababhan Rao announced ₹10,000 as immediate relief to each flood-affected household in the city, besides an assistance of ₹1 lakh each to totally damaged houses and ₹50,000 to partially damaged houses. Observing that essential commodities like rice and pulses have been lost due to the flooding, Mr Rao said the financial assistance of ₹10,000 would be distributed from Tuesday itself. He asked the chief secretary to monitor the distribution programme. — PTI

## China soldier...

■ Continued from Page 1 along the LAC in eastern Ladakh, including in Demchok sector. The military standoff between India and China in eastern Ladakh has now entered the sixth month, where for the first time in 45 years guns have been used and shots have been fired. China's state-owned Global Times newspaper said on Monday that the smooth handling of the latest incident involving the Chinese soldier was a "good sign". It said the incident will not lead to new conflicts in border areas and solving the matter will also signal new progress in the bilateral negotiations.

The incident occurred at a time when India and China are preparing to hold the eighth round of corps commanders' talks soon, but a date is yet to be worked out. Meanwhile, the Indian Army's top commanders will discuss the threats emerging from China and Pakistan at the commanders' conference due to be held next week, from October 26 to 29. The conference will also discuss proposals to cut down expenditure on ceremonies like colour presentations, regimental reunions and raising days, among others.

India has asked for complete disengagement from all points in eastern Ladakh, where China has transgressed into Indian territory, including Pangong Tso and Gogra Post-Hot Springs. India has made it clear that since it was China which had first transgressed, it will have to make the first move towards disengagement. India wants restoration of the status quo ante of April 2020 in eastern Ladakh. The Chinese PLA wants India to vacate the strategic heights it has occupied on the Kailash range which overlook the entry points of the Spanggur Gap in the Chushul sector during the pre-emptive action of August 29-31.

## Item jibe: Shivraj, Imarti ask Sonia to sack Nath

NCW seeks explanation, MP CM, Scindia hold 'maun vrat' in protest

**RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY**  
BHOPAL, OCT. 19

Madhya Pradesh chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Monday called upon Congress president Sonia Gandhi to strip former chief minister Kamal Nath of all party posts for showing disrespect to state minister Imarti Devi by calling her an "item".

In a letter to the Congress president, he said the Congress should condemn Mr Nath for his sexist remarks on the minister, who is also a dalit, and sack him from all party posts.

"If you fail to take any action against Mr Nath, then it will be deemed that you also support it," the letter said.

Ms Devi also exhorted the Congress chief to take action against Mr Nath for making such uncharitable remarks on her, saying he did not know how to respect a dalit woman and had lost his mind after losing the chief minister's post.

Campaigning on Sunday



Madhya Pradesh chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan during a silent protest in Bhopal on Monday against Congress state president Kamal Nath over his derogatory remarks on state Minister Imarti Devi. — PTI

for byelection at Dabra town, from where Imarti Devi, a former Congress minister, is contesting on BJP ticket, Nath said his party's candidate was a simple person unlike his opponent who is an "item". He, however, clarified that the word "item" is not offensive and anybody, including him, can be referred to as an item.

Speaking to reporters at Dabra, Ms Devi said, "He (Nath) does not know how to speak decently. He

belongs to Bengal and is not from Madhya Pradesh. What does he know about respecting a Harijan (dalit) woman? Mr Nath went mad after resigning as chief minister and he can say anything."

The exit of Imarti Devi and 21 other Congress MLAs in March brought down Nath's government.

"In Madhya Pradesh, mothers and daughters are considered as Goddess Lakshmi and Nath is abusing them. I want Congress

chief Sonia Gandhi to remove him from the party," she further said.

"As a woman, Ms Gandhi should show zero tolerance towards those in the party who show disrespect to women," she said.

Meanwhile, a video purportedly showing Devi breaking down while talking about Mr Nath's remarks to a news channel went viral of social media.

Meanwhile, senior BJP leaders, including Mr Chouhan, V.D. Sharma and Jyotiraditya Scindia led "maun vrat" (silence) demonstration at different places in the state in protest against the sexist jibe by Mr Nath to target the minister.

Meanwhile, the National Commission for Women on Monday sought an explanation from Mr Nath for his "item" jibe against the minister.

"The commission strongly condemns this irresponsible and disparaging comment made by the leader. The words used in the video are highly defamatory and shows disrespect to the dignity of a woman," it said.



BJP MP from Bengaluru South Tejasvi Surya with outgoing Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha president Poonam Mahajan at party headquarters in New Delhi on Monday as he takes charge as the party's new BJYM chief. — PTI

## Authorities seal Kashmir Times office in Srinagar

**Srinagar, Oct. 19:** Authorities on Monday sealed the office of a prominent daily in Jammu and Kashmir that was allotted to it in a government building here, with the newspaper owners claiming that the due process of law was not followed.

The estates department sealed the office of *Kashmir Times* at Press Enclave here on Monday, officials said. They, however, gave no reasons for the government action.

The English daily is headquartered in Jammu and is published from both the regions of the Union Territory.

The newspaper owners

claimed that no notice of cancellation or eviction was served on them and "nothing in writing" was given to them.

Our office in Srinagar was locked without any due process of law. No notice whether of cancellation or eviction was served to us, *Kashmir Times* owner Anuradha Bhasin told PTI over phone.

Ms Bhasin said they had heard murmurs about the government planning to evict them from the building at the Press Enclave a month back, but there was no formal communication from the estates department.

We had approached the estates department and asked them to please serve us the order, but they gave us nothing. Then we approached the court, but no order has been given even there, she said.

She said the locking up of the Srinagar office of the newspaper was something similar to her recent eviction from a flat in Jammu.

"The government has the right to evict an allottee, but there is a certain criteria and they have to follow the due process," she said. However, the due process has not been followed in my particular case, she added. — PTI

## House session off to a noisy start

## Opp. slams govt for not tabling bill against farm laws

**Chandigarh, Oct. 19:** The Opposition on Monday slammed the Punjab government for not tabling a bill to counter the Centre's new farm laws on the first day of a special Assembly session, which also saw a dharna in the House by AAP MLAs.

The AAP MLAs sat in the Well of the House till late evening demanding copies of the bill which the state's Congress government is now expected to introduce on Tuesday.

Earlier, finance minister Manpreet Singh Badal said the state government is consulting constitutional experts on the issue and copies of various bills to be tabled during the two-day session will be given to the opposition parties by the evening.

Even after the adjournment of the session for the day on Monday afternoon, AAP legislators continued their dharna, demanding copies of the

## PUNJAB

Bill to counter the legislation enacted at the Centre. Leader of the Opposition and AAP leader Harpal Cheema said they will continue the protest till they get copies of this and other bills to be tabled during the session.

AAP will support the legislation against the farm laws but the government should supply us with its copies. We haven't got copies of other bills as well. How can our legislators discuss and debate important issues, Mr Cheema said.

The Shiromani Akali Dal said the Bill should have been introduced on Monday. A delegation of the party met Speaker Rana K.P. Singh in the evening and objected to not getting copies of the Bills to be tabled in the Assembly. The SAD leaders termed it a "murder of democracy". — PTI

## Opp. accuses Centre of 'political vendetta'

## ED questions Farooq for 7 hrs in J&amp;K cricket scam

**YUSUF JAMEEL**  
SRINAGAR, OCT. 19

Former chief minister and National Conference (NC) president Farooq Abdullah was on Monday questioned by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) here in connection with an alleged multi-crore scam in Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association (JKCA).

The ED's summoning Mr Abdullah to its Srinagar office prompted the NC and other Opposition parties to link the move with their forming an alliance last week to fight for the restoration of the erstwhile state's special status.

The NC accused the BJP-led Central government of using official agencies to bully its president "after failing to fight him politically".

The ED's summoning Mr Abdullah to its Srinagar office prompted the NC and other Opposition parties to link the move with their forming an alliance last week to fight for the restoration of the erstwhile state's special status.

PDP leader and former chief minister Mehbooba Mufti termed it the Modi government's "political vendetta". "ED's sudden summon to Farooq Sahab displays the extent of GOI's nervousness about mainstream parties in J&K fighting as one unit. Also, reeks of political vendetta & won't in the least blunt our collective resolve to fight for our rights," she tweeted.

Mr Abdullah's son and NC vice-president Omar also reacted sharply to the ED's summoning his father. He wrote on the micro-blogging site, "This is nothing less than political vendetta coming days after the formation of the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration. To set the record straight, no raids are being conducted at Dr Sahib's residence."

Eighty-two-year-old Farooq Abdullah was



NC president Farooq Abdullah leaves the ED office in Srinagar. — PTI

called by the Srinagar wing of the ED to its office here early Monday where he was "interrogated" for seven hours over his alleged role in the misappropriation of ₹113.66 crore (including bank interest) received by J&KCA from the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) between April 2002 and December 2011. It is alleged that instead of utilizing funds on the development of infrastructure, these were swindled by some of its members including former treasurer Ahsan Mirza to live a lavish lifestyle.

On emerging from the ED office, Mr Abdullah told reporters "Let the ED do its job and I will do my own". Reiterating that he had nothing to do with the alleged scam, he said, "I'm quite clear. I will always face them. My fate will be decided by the court when they put the case into the court. I couldn't have lunch today. There was no time."

Though Mr Abdullah on being asked whether he was summoned by the ED because of the formation of "Peoples' Alliance for Gupkar Declaration" retorted by saying, "Don't



Imarti Devi

A native of Charbara village in Dabra under Gwalior district, Ms Devi hailed from an extremely poor family of which worked as farmhands to earn their livelihood. She along with her husband Puran worked as agricultural labourers in the area in their early days.

The three-time MLA began her political career in Congress in the 1990s and her rise in politics was due to her patronage by the scion of erstwhile Gwalior royal family Jyotiraditya Scindia. She was elected district panchayat member in 2004.

She has been representing Dabra Assembly constituency in the last three elections. She was also a minister in the 15-month-old Kamal Nath government which collapsed in March this year following the resignation of 22 Congress MLAs.

The minister, incidentally, has often landed in controversy for showing her loyalty to Mr Scindia in an unconventional way. She has sometimes been subjected to ridicule by Mr Scindia's political rivals.

Former Congress Legislature Party leader Ajay Singh, son of former chief minister late Arjun Singh, had once made sexist remarks on her by referring to her as "jalebi", a favourite sweet of people of Madhya Pradesh. She had once declared that she would not hesitate to sweep the floor if asked by Mr Scindia.

Even, she tried to lift Mr Scindia's shoes in a public function. But, Mr Scindia stopped her from doing so.

## Police officer shot dead by militants in Anantnag

Age CORRESPONDENT  
SRINAGAR, Oct. 19

A police official was shot dead by suspected militants in Jammu and Kashmir's southern Anantnag district late Monday evening following which the security forces launched a massive operation in the area to capture the assailants dead or alive.

Police sources here said that Inspector Muhammad Ashraf was targeted by the gunmen in Anantnag's Kenalwan area while he was returning home from a local mosque where he had gone to offer magrib or evening prayers.

"He was rushed to a nearby hospital in critical condition. However, doctors pronounced him dead on arrival," a police official said over the phone from Anantnag.

The J&K police's counterinsurgency Special Operations Group (SOG) along with Central armed police forces quickly cordoned the area off and started searches "to get the assailants dead or alive," the sources said.

Earlier during the day on Monday, one suspected militant was killed in a gunfight with the security forces in neighbouring Shopian district's Melhura village.

The officials said that the fighting broke out after a joint team of the SOG and the Army's 55 Rashtriya Rifles launched a cordon-and-search operation in the area. The operation was still underway as reports last came in. The officials said that the identity of the slain militant is being ascertained.

## Spl judge hearing drug case gets threat letter, detonator

KARNATAKA  
DRUG RACKET

**Bengaluru, Oct. 19:** An NDPS special judge hearing the celebrity drug racket case received a threat letter and a parcel with a detonator on Monday demanding grant of bail to two film actresses and those booked in the August 11 violence here, a senior police official said on Monday.

"We have taken up investigation," he told PTI, requesting anonymity.

According to top police sources, a parcel from the district headquarters town of Tumakuru and the letter addressed to the Special Judge hearing the drug case, in which some bigwigs of Karnataka, including film actresses Ragini Dwivedi and Sanjjanaa Galrani are among the accused, was found outside the court.

When the staff opened it, they found a suspicious object and informed

police, whose bomb disposal squad confirmed it was a detonator, the sources said.

The person who wrote the letter demanded that bail be granted to the actresses and that the 'innocent' people arrested in the August 11 violence at K.G. Halli and D.J. Halli areas here be immediately released and warned that a blast would be triggered if the demands were not met.

More than 15 people, including the actresses, a few Nigerians, realtors and rave party organisers have been arrested so far in the drug case.

Three people were killed after police opened fire on August 11 night to quell a mob that went on a ram-

page in a city locality, icked over a social media post allegedly put out by a Congress legislator's relative.

Scores, including around 50 policemen, were injured in the violence, apparently triggered by the online post.

Pulakeshi Nagar MLA Akhanda Srinivasa Murthy's home and a police station aware among those targeted by the angry mob.

The house of the MLA, who was not at home at the time, was allegedly set on fire. The rioters also torched many police and private vehicles, badly damaged the house and looted the belongings of MLA Murthy and those of his sister.

So far, 421 people have been arrested, including Social Democratic Party of India leader Muzammil Pasha. — PTI



# THE ASIAN AGE

20 OCTOBER 2020

## Cut back on festivities, Covid-19 threat is real

It's normal for the people to expect scientists to analyse data and provide a conclusive and independent opinion while taking the statements of the politician with a pinch of salt. But it looks like the report of the expert panel, appointed by the department of science and technology, which says India has gone past the peak with respect to the spread of the coronavirus, is comforting but comes with too many ifs and buts. On the other hand, Union health minister Dr Harsh Vardhan has been consistent and unequivocal in all his communications, insisting that the forthcoming festival season is going to be a game changer for the worse and cautioning people against being lackadaisical in their approach to the pandemic.

Dr Vardhan was persuasive enough to cite the example of Kerala and the way the state's containment strategy went completely awry after its annual festival Onam in late August to drive home the point that lapses in the coming season would prove to be too costly. The state, which reported almost zero new Covid-19 cases in the first week of May saw the numbers rise, albeit nominally, after the Union government decided to open inter-state and international traffic. But the number grew rapidly after Onam: the state's share in the total caseload shot up from 2.9 per cent until September to 6.4 per cent in the second half of the month to almost 10 per cent now. The state's total active cases of 96,000 contribute almost 10 per cent to the total cases in India at present. It is a fact that large congregations of people who threw caution to the winds undid all Kerala had done in the initial phases to stop the spread of the pandemic. A section of experts also blames the series of agitations the opposition had launched against the state government during the same period for the sudden spurt of cases.

The Union government had announced two weeks ago it was launching Jan Andolan, a massive awareness campaign about the need to observe the critical points that have proved to be effective against the virus: hand hygiene, social distancing and wearing of mask. But we are yet to find the government taking it up seriously and make the message reach the nook and cranny of the country. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the best communicator India has today, but the nation is yet to hear him talk about this campaign with the force it warrants and the frequency it calls for. Instead, it looks like the government is now getting into preparing the protocols for the distribution of the evasive vaccine when it arrives.

The need of the hour, and the priority of the government, should be to prepare the nation to get past the festive season without an uncontrolled escalation in the number of Covid-19 patients, and the only way to do is to get into a massive campaign; vaccine protocol can at best be a parallel exercise. It pays to be mindful of the wolf at the door instead of counting the pie in the sky.

## Thrills & spills in Super Overs

A historic second Super Over bowled to break a tie in T20 and the succeeding Super Over in the IPL match between Kings XI Punjab and Mumbai Indians illustrated how the quest for a result can be fair. There's logic to the demands of a winner being spotted on the day in sport, which in a way is like war minus the shooting. It's a pity that the World Cup final, in which England and New Zealand tied in the 50-overs a side match and tied again in the Super Over, was not decided in this sensible and extended tie-breaker as in IPL rules. How ridiculous that England were declared the winners because they had scored more boundaries in their innings.

The drama, as a microcosm of life played out in such sudden death situations, enhances the thrills and spills of condensed cricket. The question of what makes winners stand apart from the chokers will, perhaps, never be satisfactorily answered. The fact that the defending champions Mumbai Indians have lost two games in Super Overs adds to the mystique of what makes winners different. Is it just calm nerves controlling sporting skills or the smile of lady luck or both? Be that as it may, the IPL season, which the corona virus seemed to have blighted, is now the harbinger of fine entertainment from the Arabian desert.

The T20 format might not have been thought of as a medium in which fast bowling would shine so lustroously in terms of speeds achieved in the air as measured by radar guns. The T20 of 2020 appears to be the glorious exception as Anrich Nortje of South Africa cracked the record kept from IPL speed guns in sending down the white cricket ball at 156.2 kmph, only to be reverse scooped for a boundary by Jos Buttler. Quality UAE cricket grounds with good run-ups are inspiring settings in which Nortje and other fast bowlers have sparkled with sheer pace achieved from the poetry of their bowling actions and Nortje came back with an incutter at 155 kmph to bowl Buttler and win the day. That's entertainment!

### THE ASIAN AGE

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Editor in Chief

Printer & Publisher: K. SUDHAKAR

THE ASIAN AGE office is located at:

New Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru National Youth Centre, 219 Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg, New Delhi-110002. Phone: (011) 23211124.

Published and Printed on behalf of and for

Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited, Jawaharlal Nehru National Youth Centre, 219 Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg, New Delhi 110 002 at BFL Infotech Ltd., C-9, Sector-III, Noida -201301.

London: Quickmarsh Ltd, 8th Floor, Block 2, Elizabeth House, 39 York Road, London, SE1 7NQ.

RNI Registration number: 57290/94

Subhani



## Delineate & demarcate LAC to end China mess



Akash Deep Anand

Tuesday, October 20, marks 58 years to the day the Chinese launched their synchronised and coordinated attack in Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh, then known as the North-East Frontier Agency (NEFA) on October 20, 1962. It is pertinent to note the choice of a Saturday as a mark of Chinese planning and cunning: the Indian decision-making apparatus would be enjoying a weekend break, though the concept of a five-day week was to come much later. In NEFA, their chosen theatre of operations, the Chinese successfully eliminated all military opposition by the time they declared a unilateral ceasefire on November 20, 1962. The Chinese attack in Ladakh overran the small standalone posts in Galwan, Pangong Tso and Chip Chap River areas. The Indian troops here gave a valiant account of themselves but were heavily outnumbered and out-gunned by better-prepared Chinese.

This area is again active 58 years later as the outstanding matter of settling the borders between the two nations hasn't been resolved. Unlike the India-Pakistan Line of Control (LoC), in J&K and Ladakh, the 1962 war led to the concept of a Line of Actual Control (LAC) along the Sino-Indian frontier. There is no demarcation in both situations. In the LoC's case troops on both sides are generally within range of small and medium arms, in an eyeball to eyeball deployment, except in certain gaps where physical deployment is not possible. Incidentally, these are the gaps used for infiltration from across the border. In the LAC's case, troops have been separated by far greater distances except in a few locations like Nathu La. As long as troops maintain considerable distances, the chance of clash-

es are minimal unless one side chooses to press a claim line by moving forward going by their assessment or comprehension of the LAC. It is because of such an action of staking their claim over Galwan Valley by the Chinese that the June 15 clash took place, resulting in casualties on both sides, an unspecified number of Chinese and 20 of ours, with Col. Santosh Babu, 16 Bihar's CO, and 19 soldiers killed in action.

With the LAC not being delineated (specifically described and agreed) and demarcated (marked with pillars, fences), the alignment is open to interpretation by troops and their commanders on the ground. Further clashes thus cannot be ruled out. Since the Chinese have been obdurate in disengagement by not pulling back, let's examine the factors behind China's behaviour.

India's border infrastructure development, particularly the Darbuk-Shyok-Daulat Beg Oldie (DSDBO) road opposite Aksai Chin through which runs the Chinese G-219 Highway connecting Sinkiang and Tibet, both restive provinces.

Daulat Beg Oldie (DBO) lies 8 km from Karakoram Pass, through which passes the Karakoram Highway linking Sinkiang with Pakistan. It is 9 km north-west of the LAC in Aksai Chin. The highway is important for the One Belt One Road (OBOR) project initiated by Xi Jinping with massive financial and political commitment. Indian infrastructure developments in the area are considered a potential threat to G-219 and the OBOR project.

India is raising objections to the OBOR project in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, Shaksgam Valley (ceded to China by Pakistan) and the Gilgit-Baltistan area,

**Did the present Union government lull itself into the belief that our actions to ramp up border infrastructure would not attract a belligerent response?**

which are claimed as part of J&K.

Chinese objections to the abrogation of Article 370 and bifurcation of the erstwhile state of J&K into the UTs of J&K and Ladakh which is claimed by China as one of "five fingers" of Tibet, the others being Nepal, Bhutan, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim.

Development of Indian maritime infrastructure in the Indian Ocean region, where China intends to extend its reach and influence.

India aligning its strategy with the United States, which is engaged in a trade war with China over tariffs, the 5G infrastructure of Chinese IT giant Huawei, Covid-19, theft of intellectual property and American technology, to name a few.

China has been hit hard by the worldwide Covid-19 pandemic, which originated at Wuhan in Hubei province. The consequent suspension in exports has led to a loss of earnings and reduced consumption in China. There are reports of food shortages and large-scale migration into the urban centres, leading to social tensions.

The Chinese exchequer is simultaneously burdened with the expenditure on OBOR.

A comparison with 1962 and China's then leadership under Mao Zedong is in order. Communist China's 2nd Five-Year Plan 1958-63 undertook the "Great Leap Forward", an overambitious project to boost agricultural and industrial growth. It is beyond our scope here to detail the specifics of that debacle. It's sufficient to say that overambitious unachievable targets led to a famine which caused an unspecified number of deaths: around 18 million to 45 million. Other purges

like the Cultural Revolution were to cause many more deaths; some estimates put the total number of Chinese deaths due to Mao and his policies at 80 million. That such a tyrant died peacefully in his own bed is a mark of how much control the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and its undisputed leader has over China's public. However, even dictators like Mao have detractors, thus they too need distractions. One of the reasons why Mao chose the opportune moment of a US-Soviet nuclear standoff over Cuba to divert the attention of detractors by ordering his PLA (People's Liberation Army) to launch the 1962 attack against India.

One also has to look at the role played by the then Indian leadership, and its principal players like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, V.K. Krishna Menon, Generals P.N. Thapar and B.M. Kaul through their amateurish "Forward Policy" of establishing small standalone posts along the frontier in the territorial claim line, assuming against all evidence and intelligence that the Chinese would not launch an offensive.

Starting in the 1980s, India has taken steps with China to ensure tranquillity along the disputed frontier. Did the present government lull itself into the belief that our actions to ramp up border infrastructure would not attract a belligerent response? Did Narendra Modi end up imitating the blunder of Pandit Nehru? Did he assume his personal rapport with Xi Jinping after his back-to-back summits at Wuhan and Mamallapuram had cemented such bonds that Mr Xi would simply acquiesce with our actions on an unsettled frontier that would raise the hackles of China's strategic hawks as well as his own detractors?

*The writer is a retired colonel with 37 years' experience in the Indian Army infantry, including stints in Poonch-Rajouri and Ladakh*

### LETTERS

#### CULTURAL SHIFT

The way the entire country has unitedly fought against Covid-19 over the last few months has dispelled many fears. Today, the recovery rate from the infection in our country is better than that in others. Additionally, the death toll is much lower than in most countries. The impact of the pandemic was different in different parts of India, and varied between urban and rural areas. However, the threat of coronavirus has not subsided. Citizens must continue to distance and use masks. It is time for an exercise of patience and a mass behavioural shift.

**M. Khurshid Darbhanga**

#### DAMN LIES

**A DAY AFTER** Prime Minister Narendra Modi said his government had fed 80 crore people over the past seven-eight months, India has been ranked 94th out of 107 countries on the Global Hunger Index (GHI), even lower than neighbours such as Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Pakistan. The government's claim that not a single person starved to death during the lockdown is a blatant falsehood. The bitter truth is that we are still an underdeveloped nation where people are dying of lack of food, even as lakhs of tonnes of foodgrains are allowed to rot.

**Neha Jamal Chandigarh**

#### PUJA MANIA

**ALL DURGA PUJA** pandals in West Bengal have been declared no-entry zones by Calcutta High Court on Monday. Only organisers can enter the marquees and names of people allowed to enter them have to be displayed outside. The order is highly justified given the fact that there was a massive Covid-19 surge in four states post Onam in August and Ganesh Chaturthi.

**Sankar Paul Chakdaha, West Bengal**

**Every Monday the best letter of the week wins ₹500. Email: asianage.letters@gmail.com.**

Aakar Patel



Complex problems require many minds. Leadership is important but mostly in terms of directionality. The solutions need to be produced by those implementing, not the person directing. If this is reversed, progress will not be made and generally what results is retardation.

For solutions to be produced below the level of leadership, it is necessary that there be some devolution of authority and power. Such is not the case in India in these present times. The leadership of this large and complex nation is centralised in a way that it has never been in our history. There are some parallels with Indira Gandhi, true, but the 1970s was altogether another world.

Some of the most important positions in the Union Cabinet are filled by those who have never won an election. The finance minister, external affairs minister, railways and commerce and industry minister are none of them elected. The previous finance minister was also not elected. They owe their position not to their personal political popularity but to the patronage of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. They cannot defy him, and they will always

do what he says. That is why they have, in fact, been chosen and placed there.

The moment they defy or question, they will be replaced by someone who will keep their mouth shut but keep their job. There is no devolution of authority and none of accountability.

When things begin to go wrong in such a place, the leader cannot be blamed or even named. It will be assumed that he is right and the solution lies not in correcting his behaviour but in something else.

A few weeks ago there was this headline in the online publication The Print: "Modi govt plans media blitz for 'image correction' to boost India rank on global lists". It reported that the government was trying to improve India's ranking on some 30 global indices by "building a massive publicity campaign" which was a "planned perception-overhaul exercise".

These indices are those which monitor religious, economic, political, media freedoms, the rule of law, innovation, terrorism and other things. Either data is compiled or global experts are asked for their perceptions and then countries given a score or rating.

Many of these are compiled by bodies

**One reason for Bangladesh overtaking India is that that the Bangladeshi leadership handled the Covid-19 hit to their economy better. The other reason is that in the past six years, Bangladesh has been growing much faster than India. It would have overtaken us anyway.**

that are multilateral, such as the World Bank or the United Nations. It is not clear how India will get its poor ratings improved through a media campaign when it comes to such bodies or when it comes to hard data.

For instance, India is ranked 142 on the World Press Freedom Index, falling from 140 in 2019 and 138 in 2018. The main reason for its fall is the violence against journalists and the number of Internet shutdowns in Kashmir. These are objective things that are measurable. They cannot be corrected by publicity campaigns. This year India has introduced a new media policy in Kashmir that has more or less throttled all freedom of the media in that state.

The government's response in the instance of the media index was to set up its own "Index Monitoring Cell" which would have journalists Rajat Gupta (of *Aap ki Adalat* fame) and P. Sainath. Not much has been heard from this cell since and it will not affect the global rating. India's ranking in press freedom is not going to improve globally next year either and spending money on marketing an image that is removed from reality is neither wise nor will it be effective.

India's numbers on Covid-19 are self-declared. These are government numbers. They can and they will be compared to how India is doing versus the rest of the world and particularly the rest of South Asia with which an honest comparison can be made. On infections and fatalities, our performance is below the rest. A media blitz will not correct the perception that India has been the least competent at addressing the issue because the perception is based on reality.

This week has come news that in the current financial year, Bangladesh will overtake India in terms of per capita income. Meaning that the average Bangladeshi's income will be more than the average Indian's. Even to

those who are referred to as Modi haters, this was shocking. It was not expected because India was far ahead of Bangladesh in terms of per capita income in 2014.

One reason for Bangladesh overtaking India is that that the Bangladeshi leadership handled the Covid-19 hit to their economy better. The other reason is that in the past six years, Bangladesh has been growing much faster than India. It would have overtaken us anyway in time. The Covid-19 fall just made it sooner. It has been a long slide that has been not been in the public realm because the leader does not acknowledge it and the minions cannot speak.

It seems like we were talking about competing with China and the United States only a few years ago. Now we must first compete with Bangladesh. This is not what we had been promised. How will this be corrected by a media blitz? It will not. But it is what the great man has ordered, and so it will be done. The slide will continue, but the noise about "*achche din*" will also continue.

*Aakar Patel is a senior journalist and columnist*



## IN BRIEF

## Japan, Vietnam up defence ties

**Hanoi:** Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga, in his first overseas summit since taking office last month, agreed with his Vietnamese counterpart to step up defence and security cooperation in the face of China's expanding influence in the region. In talks in Hanoi on Monday, Suga and Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc set a basic agreement allowing Japan to export defence equipment and technology to Vietnam. Japan has been pursuing such agreements in recent years to bolster ties with Southeast Asia and sustain its own defence industry. Suga says his four-day trip to Vietnam and later Indonesia is key to pursuing the "free and open Indo-Pacific" vision for multilateral economic and security cooperation to counter China's growing power and protect sea lanes in disputed areas of the South China Sea.

## Suspended terms for Golden Dawn

**Athens:** A prosecutor on Monday recommended that all former lawmakers of Greece's extreme right Golden Dawn party who have been convicted and sentenced to prison for leading or participating in a criminal organisation should be allowed to remain free until their appeal has been heard. Prosecutor Adamantia Economou argued that none of the former lawmakers was a flight risk or at risk of re-offending while they remain out of jail, and said most had a clean criminal record prior to this. A final decision on whether the sentences will be suspended pending appeal is to be made by the panel of judges trying the case following summations by defence lawyers, and is expected either Monday night or Tuesday morning. The lengthy sentencing procedure caps a marathon, politically charged five-year trial that involved 68 defendants.

## Last ETA boss sorry for deaths

**Paris:** The last known chief of ETA, the now-extinct Basque separatist militant group, goes on trial Monday in Paris for terrorism charges that he deems "absurd" because of his role in ending a conflict that claimed hundreds of lives and terrorised Spain for half a century. Josu Urrutikoetxea led ETA during one of its bloodiest periods, when its victims included children bombed to death while sleeping in a Zaragoza police compound, where a monument to their stolen lives now stands. In a rare interview after 17 years on the run, he offered an apology, advised other separatist movements against resorting to violence and painted himself as a changed man. That's a preposterous claim to those who lost loved ones to ETA's violence, which caused around 850 deaths and thousands of injuries and hijacked the Basque and Spanish political debate for decades.

## THAI CENSOR ON STUDENT STIR COVERAGE

**Bangkok, Oct. 19:** Thai authorities worked Monday to stem a growing tide of protests calling for the prime minister to resign by threatening to censor news coverage, raiding a publishing house and attempting to block the Telegram messaging app used by demonstrators. The efforts by PM Prayuth Chan-ocha's government to drain the student-led protests of support and the ability to organise comes as they have grown in the capital and spread around the country, despite an emergency decree, which bans public gatherings of more than four people in Bangkok, outlaws news said to affect national security and gives authorities broad power to detain people. The mostly young protesters have gathered en masse across Bangkok the past six days to push their demands, which also include a controversial call for reform of the monarchy. The protesters charge that Prayuth, an army commander who led a 2014 coup, was returned to power unfairly in last year's general election because laws had been changed to favour a pro-military party. The protesters say a constitution written and passed under military rule is undemocratic. But their more recent demand for checks and balances on the monarchy has deeply angered conservative Thais.

## Confirmed Coronavirus cases across world surpass 40 mn

Experts: Only tip of the iceberg when it comes to impact of pandemic

**London, Oct. 19:** The number of confirmed Covid-19 cases across the planet has surpassed 40 million, but experts say that is only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the true impact of the pandemic that has upended life and work around the world. The milestone was hit Monday morning, according to Johns Hopkins University, which collates reports from around the world. The actual worldwide tally of Covid-19 cases is likely to be far higher, as testing has been variable, many people have had no symptoms and some governments have concealed the true number of cases.

To date, more than 1.1 million confirmed virus deaths have been reported, although experts also believe that number is an undercount. The US, India and Brazil are reporting by far the highest numbers

of cases — 8.1 million, 7.5 million and 5.2 million respectively — although the global increase in recent weeks has been driven by a surge in Europe, which has seen over 240,000 confirmed virus deaths in the pandemic so far. Last week, the World Health Organisation said Europe had a reported a record weekly high of nearly 700,000 cases and said the region was responsible for about a third of cases globally.

Britain, France, Russia and Spain account for about half of all new cases in the region, and countries like Belgium and the Czech Republic are facing more intense outbreaks now than they did in the spring. WHO said the new measures being taken across Europe are "absolutely essential" in stopping Covid-19 from overwhelming its hospitals.



A medical staff member takes a sample from the mouth of a student at a newly-opened Covid-19 testing centre for students at the KULeuven University, in Leuven, on Monday.

Those include new requirements on mask-wearing in Italy and Switzerland, closing schools in Northern Ireland and the Czech Republic, closing restaurants and bars in Belgium, implementing a 9 p.m. curfew in France and having targeted limited lockdowns in parts of the UK. The agency said several

European cities could soon see their intensive care units overwhelmed and warned that governments and citizens should take all necessary measures to slow the spread of the virus, including bolstering testing and contact tracing, wearing face masks and following social distancing measures. WHO

has previously estimated about 1 in 10 of the world's population — about 780 million people — have been infected with Covid-19, more than 20 times the official number of cases.

That suggests the vast majority of the world's population is still susceptible to the virus. Some researchers have argued that allowing Covid-19 to spread in populations that are not obviously vulnerable will help build up herd immunity and is a more realistic way to stop the pandemic instead of the restrictive lockdowns that have proved economically devastating. But WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has warned against the belief that herd immunity might be a viable strategy to pursue, saying this kind of protection needs to be achieved by vaccination.

— AP

## Trump inciting domestic terror: Michigan Gov.

**Detroit, Oct. 19:** Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer said Sunday that President Donald Trump is inciting "domestic terrorism" following "lock her up" chants at his rally in the state the night before.

Whitmer told *NBC's* "Meet the Press" that the rhetoric is "incredibly disturbing" a little more than a week after authorities announced they had thwarted an alleged plot to kidnap the Democratic governor. "The president is at it again and inspiring and incentivising and inciting this kind of domestic terrorism," Whitmer said.

"It is wrong. It's got to end. It is dangerous, not just for me and my family, but for public servants everywhere who are doing their jobs and trying to protect their fellow Americans. People of good will on both sides of the aisle need to step up and call this out and bring the heat down."

At a rally in Muskegon Saturday evening, Trump urged supporters to push Whitmer to reopen the state following Covid-19 restrictions. When the crowd started chanting "lock her up" Trump added, "Lock 'em all up." House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, speaking on ABC's "This Week," said Trump's statements were "irresponsible" and accused him of injecting fear tactics.

— AP

**Biden not good for India: Donald Trump Jr**

**New York, Oct. 19:** Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden is not good for India as he could be soft on China, US President Donald Trump's son said at an event to celebrate the "success" of his book that talks about graft allegations against the Bidens.

Forty-two-year-old Donald Trump Jr is leading the re-election campaign of his 74-year-old father. The presidential elections in the US are slated to be held on November 3. "We have to understand the threat of China and no one knows that probably better than Indian-Americans," Trump Jr. told a select group of supporters from the community at the event in Long Island, New York. In his book "Liberal Privilege," he has documented allegations of corruption against 77-year-old Joe Biden's family, particularly against



Donald Trump

## DON, BIDEN GO ON THE OFFENCE IN STATES

**Las Vegas, Oct. 19:** President Donald Trump and his Democratic rival Joe Biden went on offense Sunday, with each campaigning in states they are trying to flip during the Nov. 3 election that is just over two weeks away.

Trump began his day in Nevada, making a rare visit to church before an evening rally in Carson City. Once considered a battleground, Nevada hasn't swung for a Republican presidential contender since 2004.

While seated in the front row at the nondenominational International Church of Las Vegas, Trump received blessings from the church's pastors, with Denise Goulet telling attendees that God told her Trump is the apple of his eye and would secure a second term. "At 4:30, the Lord said to me, 'I am going to give your president a second win,'" she said, telling Trump, "you will be the president again."

Trump offered short remarks, saying "I love going to churches" and that it was "a great honour" to attend the service. The president also said that "we have a group on the other side that doesn't agree with us," and he urged people to "get out there on Nov. 3 or sooner" to vote.

— AP

his son Hunter Biden.

"When you look at our opponents in this race... you think the Chinese gave Hunter Biden \$1.5 billion ... because he was a great businessman, or because they knew the Bidens could be bought, and therefore soft on China," he said. Trump Jr was referring to the latest allegations of corruption against the Biden family.

— PTI

## Not surprised Don got Covid: Fauci

**Washington, Oct. 19:** America's top infectious disease expert Dr Anthony Fauci says he was "absolutely not" surprised when Donald Trump contracted Covid-19 after seeing the president surrounded by several people not wearing face masks and flouting best public health practices against the deadly pandemic.

Fauci, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases appeared to be referring to the White House Rose Garden event on September 26 where Trump announced Judge Amy Coney Barrett was his pick to replace Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg on the Supreme Court. At least 12 people have tested positive for Covid-19 after

attending the function.

Fauci said during an interview on *CBS* "60 Minutes" that was aired on Sunday, "I was worried that he was going to get sick when I saw him in a completely precarious situation of crowded — no separation between people, and almost nobody wearing a mask."

"When I saw that on TV, I said, 'Oh my goodness. Nothing good can come out of that, that's got to be a problem,'" he said.

"And then sure enough, it turned out to be a superspreader event." His remarks came as Americans face another surge in the Covid-19 pandemic ahead of the November 3 US presidential election.

— PTI

## Chile church set ablaze



The dome of the church of Asuncion falls down burning in flames after being set on fire by demonstrators on the commemoration of the first anniversary of the social uprising in Chile, in Santiago, on Monday, as the country prepares for a landmark referendum.

— AFP

## Israel, Bahrain establish relations

## First Emirati flight lands near Tel Aviv

**Jerusalem, Oct. 19:** Israel and Bahrain on Sunday agreed to establish formal diplomatic relations, making the small Gulf country the fourth Arab state to normalise ties with Israel.

The US-brokered agreement capped a one-day visit by a high-level delegation of American and Israeli officials to Bahrain. Bahrain joined the United Arab Emirates at a festive White House ceremony last month marking the "Abraham Accords," a pair of US-brokered diplomatic pacts with Israel.

While the UAE's deal

with Israel formally established ties, the agreement with Bahrain was less detailed and included a mutual pledge to follow suit. Sunday's visit appeared to complete that task, clearing the way for the countries to open embassies and exchange ambassadors in the coming months. "It was indeed an historic visit, to start opening relations between both countries, to have fruitful bilateral relations in both fields," said Bahrain's foreign minister, Abdullatif al-Zayani, at the signing ceremony.

— AP

**Tel Aviv, Oct. 19:** The first commercial passenger flight to Israel by a carrier from the United Arab Emirates landed near Tel Aviv on Monday, further cementing a normalisation deal between the two countries.

Etihaad Airways Flight No. 9607 landed at Israel's Ben-Gurion international airport just after 7 am.

The Boeing 787 Dreamliner departed for Abu Dhabi later Monday with an Israeli travel and tourism delegation on board, according to an Etihaad statement. Etihaad said it plans regular passenger flights between the countries in the future and was launching a dedicated Hebrew website.

— AP

## Imran incapable, clueless: Oppn

**Karachi, Oct. 19:** Prime Minister Imran Khan is "incapable and clueless", and his government is worse than a dictatorship, Pakistan's opposition leaders have said at the second rally of an alliance formed to oust the premier. The Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), an alliance of 11 opposition parties formed on September 20, has launched a three-phased anti-gov-

ernment movement under an "action plan" to remove the Khan-led Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government. Under the plan a number of rallies public meetings and demonstrations will be held across the country, before a "decisive long march" to Islamabad in January next year. The first of these rallies was held on Friday in Gujranwala near Lahore. "This incapable and clue-

less prime minister will have to go home," Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) chief Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said on Sunday at the Bagh-e-Jinnah, which was packed with people including supporters and workers of the alliance's members. History has proved that the biggest dictators could not survive and "what standing does this puppet have?", Zardari said targeting Prime

Minister Khan and added that "this is not a new fight but this will be a decisive fight".

The rally here also marked the 13th anniversary of the twin blasts in Karsaz that targeted the homecoming procession of former prime minister Benazir Bhutto in 2007. The blast left around 200 people dead and several injured.

— PTI

## GUINNESS | FEAT

## Naseej 1, the painting, is made out of seven connected cotton cloths

## Saudi woman makes largest coffee painting

**Dubai, Oct. 19:** A Saudi Arabian artist has entered her name in the Guinness Book of World Records by drawing the world's largest coffee painting using expired granules, becoming the first woman from the kingdom to achieve the feat. Ohud Abdullah Almaliki's coffee painting illustrates seven renowned figures of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

She drew two giant pic-

tures of founding fathers, King Abdulaziz bin Abdul Rahman and Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan of Saudi Arabia and the UAE respectively. Almaliki used approximately 4.5 kgs of expired coffee powder.

She painted all the figures in hues of brown mixing the coffee powder with water. "It took me 45 days of continuous work to complete under the watchful eyes of two witnesses, video recording

and drone footage. My aim is to remind the world of the centuries-old entente between the two nations," Almaliki said.

Called "Naseej 1", the painting is spread over 220.968 square metres, 15.84 metres long and 13.95 metres wide. It is made out of seven connected cotton cloths; each measuring 15.84 metres long x 2 metres wide.

"Normally, only one kind of coffee is used in such

paintings, but I have used four different shades of brown coffee. I used several rollers and paint brushes of different sizes to finish this project. A drone footage of the painting was shown in "Mokhatat Ar-Riyad" neighbourhood in Jeddah with the artist behind the painting with her father," she said.

Women of Saudi Arabia took part in previous Guinness World Records attempts, but this is the

first time a Saudi woman has achieved the feat on her own.

In 2015, the largest human awareness ribbon consisted of 8,264 participants and was achieved by the women of Saudi Arabia. As a student in the Vth year of College of Law at King AbdulAziz University in Jeddah, Almaliki features weekly on popular TV channels across the Middle East and North Africa region.

— PTI

**It took me 45 days of continuous work to complete under the watchful eyes of two witnesses, video recording and drone footage. My aim is to remind the world of the centuries-old entente between the two nations.**

OHUD ABDULLAH ALMALIKI, Painter



## quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	40,431.60	1.12
Nifty 50	11,873.00	0.94
\$P 500*	3,476.78	-0.20
Dollar (₹)	73.36	0.02
Pound Sterling (₹)	95.29	0.44
Euro (₹)	86.08	-0.20
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	50,682.135	0.27
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	42.91	-0.02
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.940	0.006
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.769	0.025

\* As of 9:30 PM IST

## Sykes India opens its third facility in Hyderabad

Sykes India, a leading digital marketing and customer service global outsourcer, has opened its third centre of excellence in Hyderabad. This 33,000 sq. ft. facility is the company's third in Hyderabad and fifth in the country. It employs around 1,000 in Hyderabad and 200 in Bengaluru. It has hired an additional 300 people, which will work from the new facility at NSL SEZ, Uppal in Hyderabad.

## Malabar Gold offers 'one India one Gold rate'



Malabar Gold & Diamonds has launched 'One India One Gold Rate', an initiative that offers uniform gold rate across all states in the country for 100 per cent BIS hallmarked. While the international gold prices are transparent and uniform across states in the rates of gold, though gold is sourced from the designated banks.

## Nuvoco Vistas bets on individual home builders

Nuvoco Vistas, a leading building materials company, has launched a water-and-cracks-resistant concrete to address the dearth of premium quality concrete in the Individual Home Builders segment. The concrete — Concrete Permature — improves the durability of the structure by minimising micro cracks and water seepage, said Prashant Jha, chief, ready-mix business at Nuvoco Vistas.

## DMart converts 2 stores into fulfilment centres

Avenue Supermarts Ltd, which owns and operates supermarket chain Dmart, has closed two of its retail stores in Mumbai and converted them into fulfilment centres to cater to its growing e-commerce business in the city. The company opened six new Dmart stores during the July-September quarter this fiscal taking its store count to 220 with total retail business area of 8.2 million square feet.

Printed & Published by K. Sudhakar on behalf of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited. Printed at BFL Infotech Ltd, C-9 Sector 3, Noida-201301. Published at 219, N D Tiwari Bhawan, Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg, New Delhi-110002. Editor: T.Venkatram Reddy, RNI Registration number 30074/09, Air surcharge Re 1. © All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission of The Editor, Financial Chronicle ® is prohibited.

# FinMin asks eight PSUs to buyback Centre's shares

■ Windfall from state firms to reduce widening fiscal deficit

AFTAB AHMED & NIDHI VERMA  
NEW DELHI, OCT. 19

India has asked at least eight state-run companies to consider share buybacks in the fiscal year that runs through March 2021, two government officials said, as New Delhi scours for ways of raising funds to rein in its fiscal deficit.

The firms asked include miner Coal India, power utility NTPC, minerals producer NMDC and Engineers India Ltd, said one of the sources, who sought anonymity as the discussions are private. "Buyback is an important tool in our strategy and it helps in building market price," added the second official, who also spoke on condition of anonymity.

India is unlikely to be anywhere near its fiscal deficit target of 3.5 per cent of GDP for 2020-21 as coronavirus curbs hit tax collections and delayed efforts to privatise energy firm Bharat Petroleum Corp and flag carrier Air India.

In February, the government had set itself a target of raising more than \$27 billion from privatisations and sale of minority stakes in state-owned companies this fiscal year.

However, some companies, particularly in the oil sector, may not be able to do buybacks, the sources warned, as the government's stake is just sufficient to ensure its position as a majority holder.

## Centre bets on PSUs to kick-start capital spend

SANGEETHA G.  
CHENNAI, OCT. 19

With central PSUs spending only 32 per cent of its capex target for the fiscal, the finance ministry has directed state-run firms to spend 75 per cent of their capital expenditure by the end of December.

While reviewing their performance, the ministry stressed on more coordinated efforts at the levels of secretary of concerned ministries and chairpersons and managing directors of CPSEs to achieve capital expenditure targets.

The government finds that the better performance of CPSEs can help the economy in a big way to recover from the impact of Covid-19 pandemic.

The central PSUs have a capital expenditure target of ₹1,15,934 crore for the fiscal 2020-21. Till the first

half of the year, they have only achieved 32 per cent or ₹37,423 crore of this target. This is 13 per cent lower than the capital expenditure made in the first half of last fiscal.

In H1 FY20, CPSEs had spent ₹43,097 crore even when the total target was ₹1,11,672 crore. However, by the end of the year, they had achieved 104 per cent of the capex target.

The government, however, has claimed that CPSEs have cleared ₹13,400 crore of pending payments to MSMEs in the past five months. Out of this, payments worth ₹3,700 crore have been made in September only.

Though it is mandatory for all CPSEs and companies with turnover of more than ₹500 crore to join the TReDS platform started by Reserve Bank of India, many companies are yet to join it or trans-

act on it. The MSME ministry has now written to the top management of over 2,800 corporates by name to make payment of pending dues of MSMEs in this month itself.

Last month, the ministry had written to top 500 corporates about the pending payments of MSMEs.

According to reports, MSMEs have around ₹5 lakh crore of pending dues from PSUs, government agencies and private enterprises.

The MSME Development Act, 2006, mandates companies to make the payments to MSMEs within 45 days. If the cash flows of MSMEs improve, they can make use of the festival season when there is opportunity to earn by supplying goods and services. Some of the MSMEs look for such a period for their sustenance of the whole year.

But for those with sufficient funds and capital expenditure below target for this fiscal year, the government could seek approval from the cabinet to prune its stake to less than 51 per cent in individual firms without giving up control, the official said. — Reuters

- THE FIRMS asked include miner Coal India, power utility NTPC, minerals producer NMDC and Engineers India Ltd, said one of the sources.
- THERE is a competing claim on their cash in the form of huge capital expenditure commitment and dividend payments, the second source said.

"The government stake in these state-run companies is about 51 per cent and there is a competing claim on their cash in the form of huge capital expenditure commitment and dividend payments,"

## Protests against Nokia's job cuts



A man throws a wooden pallet into a fire as Nokia's employees gather in front of their factory to protest against job cuts in Lannion, western France, on Monday. The Finnish telecom group Nokia announced in June 2020 a plan to cut around 1,200 jobs from its operations in France.

## Maruti rolls out Swift's limited edition

MICHAEL GONSALVES  
PUNE, OCT. 19

Maruti Suzuki, India's biggest car maker, on Monday launched Swift Limited Edition, ahead of the festive season to boost sales in Asia's third biggest economy.

It is priced between ₹5.19 lakh and ₹8.02 lakh at Delhi showroom, which is ₹24,990 more than regular models.

While it comes a few cosmetic tweaks here and there, the Maruti Suzuki Swift limited edition offers a bit bolder and



more dynamic look. The limited-edition hatchback follows an all-black dominant theme to make it look a bit sporty.

The hatchback sports new visual additions like

gloss black body kit, aerodynamic spoiler, body side moulding, door visor, all-black garnish on grill, tail lamp and fog lamp.

Now in its third generation, the Maruti Suzuki

# Centre must borrow ₹2.3tr for GST: Kerala

SANGEETHA G.  
CHENNAI, OCT. 19

Having agreed to borrow money to fund shortfall in GST collections on behalf of states, the Central government should negotiate with the states on how much should be borrowed, said Kerala finance minister Thomas Issac.

He wants the entire shortfall of ₹2.35 lakh crore (₹2.35 trillion) to be provided to the states this year itself.

"Having come the half-way through for an amicable settlement on the issue of who should borrow, the Centre should take initiative to settle the remaining issue: How much to borrow?" he said in a tweet. Last week, the Centre had agreed to borrow ₹1.1 lakh crore on behalf of the states, ending an impasse with the states.

Talking to *Financial Chronicle*, Issac said the Centre has to negotiate

● IF YOU can borrow ₹1.1 lakh crore, why can't it be higher? We should be getting the full ₹2.35 lakh crore this year. We are facing an economic recession now and not tomorrow, said Kerala finance minister Thomas Issac

with the states as to what is the requirement.

Considering the current economic recession, he said, the states should be provided the entire shortfall of ₹2.35 lakh crore.

The Centre in August had estimated that the GST shortfall for FY21 would be around ₹2.35 lakh crore. Of the ₹2.35 lakh crore, Centre has agreed to borrow ₹1.1 lakh crore. Out of the remaining ₹1.25 lakh crore, ₹50,000-60,000 crore will come from the current year's compensation cess. The remaining amount

will be paid only in 2023 from the compensation cess, he said.

"If you can borrow ₹1.1 lakh crore, why can't it be higher? We should be getting the full ₹2.35 lakh crore this year. We are facing an economic recession now and not tomorrow. I need to spend today. If for some reason, the Centre cannot give it, it is a negotiable point," he said.

Issac said he was not bothered about increase in the fiscal deficit of states. "I am not bothered about that. I think, in a recession the fiscal deficit can go much higher. Look at the developed countries, what is their fiscal deficit," he said.

"Further, I don't believe in this number game. Nothing is sacrosanct — this 3 per cent, 5 per cent or 10 per cent. It is the macro economic situation that determines fiscal deficit," the Kerala minister added.

# Kalyan Jewellers gets Sebi approval for ₹1,750-cr IPO

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD  
MUMBAI, OCT. 19

Kerala-based Kalyan Jewellers has received market regulator Sebi's approval to float ₹1,750-crore initial public offer (IPO) just two months after filing a draft red-herring prospectus.

Kalyan Jewellers has 137 retail stores spread across India and the Middle East. Besides over 100 stores across 21 states in India,

as on June 30, 2020, Kalyan Jewellers has 30 showrooms in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries spread across the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait and Oman.

The IPO comprises the issue of fresh equity shares aggregating up to ₹1,000 crore and an offer for sale worth ₹750 crore, according to the DRHP.

Kalyan Jewellers promoter T.S. Kalyanaraman proposes to offload shares

worth up to ₹250 crore, while Highdell Investment would sell shares aggregating up to ₹500 crore through the OFS route.

The proceeds from the fresh issue of shares would be utilised for working capital requirements and general corporate purpose. Axis Capital, Citigroup Global Markets India, ICICI Securities and SBI Capital Markets are merchant bankers.

# Bank recap must not be postponed, says Viral Acharya

Mumbai, Oct. 19: India is neglecting bank recapitalisation as it focuses on debt moratoriums and interest waivers for borrowers amid the Covid-19 pandemic, a former central bank official said on Monday.

Indian banks are saddled with over \$120 billion in bad debt, and in severely stressed conditions the bad-loan ratio could nearly double by March, according to Reserve Bank of India projections.

Restoring banks' capital is critical for aiding a meaningful recovery, but there has been little focus on the matter, former RBI deputy governor Viral Acharya said.

"This lack of focus is tantamount to kicking the can down the road and jettisoning financial stability for short-term gains," said Acharya, who recently wrote a book titled the "Quest for Restoring Financial Stability in India".

"This repeated mistake has prevented India from recovering well from adverse shocks," Acharya said. His comments came weeks after India offered to waive the compounded interest

● INDIAN BANKS are saddled with over \$120 billion in bad debt, and in severely stressed conditions the bad-loan ratio could nearly double by March, according to Reserve Bank of India projections.

component on all loans up to 20 million rupees following a legal challenge to the terms of a six-month moratorium.

Designing moratoria and forgiveness like farm-loan waivers that favour borrowers excessively in the short term has been detrimental to a sound recovery of credit growth in the medium term, Acharya said.

"If the government doesn't wish to recapitalise banks in a timely manner, then it must ensure that the contours of debt moratoria and forgiveness package are not so generous that banks won't be in a position to lend well during the recovery phase, which is likely around the corner," Acharya said.

"It would be good to learn from the past mistakes and start the work of repairing bank balance sheets." — Reuters

# Job losses put thousands on verge of eviction in US

New York/Chicago, Oct. 19: On September 1, US health officials announced they would suspend evictions across the United States to help stem further spread of the novel coronavirus.

That was three days too late for Latrice Bean. About 72 hours before the declaration by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Bean, 35, was ordered evicted from her Milwaukee apartment. She'd lived there for three years despite the sagging ceilings, smell of urine in

the hallways and homeless squatters in the basement — because it was all she could afford.

Bean, whose hours as a fraud specialist at a software company had been cut due to the pandemic, tried to find a new place. But with the eviction on her record, landlord after landlord rejected her. She is now sharing an air mattress with her five-year-old daughter, in a temporary unit in a neighborhood even worse than the one she left behind.

"I feel so unlucky," said Bean. "I have really been

through it."

It has been a nightmare year for many of America's renters. The local, state and federal eviction bans that gave them temporary protection in the spring began to lapse in early summer — ensnaring renters like Bean in the gap. September's reprieve by the CDC, which protected many, but not all, renters will expire in January.

At that point, an estimated \$32 billion in back rent will come due, with up to 8 million tenants facing eviction filings, according

● JANUARY IS going to be a mess. Nobody can get a new place because they have an eviction case pending against them — and they don't have any money anyway, says Nick Toman, a Milwaukee Legal Aid lawyer.

to a tracking tool developed by the global advisory firm Stout Risius and Ross. The nonprofit group advocates for tenants in eviction court to secure lawyers.

In a typical year, 3.6 million people face eviction cases, according to the Princeton University Eviction Lab, a national housing research centre.

Landlords, most of whom are mom-and-pop operators with mortgages to pay, say they, too, are under unprecedented financial strain, as many move into the eighth month of nonpayment.

Many owners are "not generating sufficient revenue," said Bob Pinnegar, CEO of the National Apartment Association. "This is not a high-profit-

margin business."

"Only 9 cents of every dollar return to the owner or investor as profit," he added.

Unless Congress and the Trump administration move past their deadlock over the contours of a new Covid-19 relief package and include financial relief for tenants and landlords, January will bring a surge in displacement and homelessness "unlike anything we have ever seen," said John Pollock, a Public Justice Center attorney and coordinator of the National

Coalition for a Civil Right to Counsel.

More than 60,000 evictions have been filed since the pandemic started in the 17 cities tracked by the Princeton Lab.

Health experts say evictions may contribute to a second-wave Covid-19 crisis, as the newly homeless are forced into shelters or tight quarters with friends and relatives, potentially exposing them to infection. The danger is particularly acute in the winter, when colder weather pushes people indoors. — Reuters



## SHORT TAKES

## Indian girls enter Asian chess last 8

**Chennai:** The top-seeded Indian women recorded three wins on Monday to finish on top in the Swiss system preliminaries and qualify for the quarterfinals of Asian Online Nations (Regions) Cup Team Championship. They will face Kyrgyzstan in the last eight after topping the preliminary phase with 16 match points (two match points for a win and 1 for a draw) ahead of the Philippines (13) and Iran (13).

On a good day for the Indians, they beat the Philippines 3-1 in round seven, Kazakhstan 2.5-1.5 in the eighth round before edging out Vietnam 2.5-1.5 in the ninth and final round.

In the fixture against the Philippines, Mary Ann Gomes and PV. Nandhidhaa posted victories while R. Vaishali on the top board and Padmini Rout on the second board, settled for draws. The tournament will conclude with the finals on October 25. — *PTI*

## Spurs rocked on Bale's return

**London:** West Ham ruined Gareth Bale's Tottenham return with a stunning late fightback from three goals down to rescue a thrilling 3-3 draw, while Aston Villa extended their perfect start with a dramatic 1-0 win at Leicester on Sunday.

Tottenham were leading 3-0 when Bale came on as a 72nd minute substitute for his first appearance since joining on a season-long loan from Real Madrid. But he suffered a debut to forget as Tottenham capitulated in astonishing fashion. The Wales star was one of the main Tottenham culprits as he missed a golden opportunity to wrap up the points before West Ham's Manuel Lanzini snatched a stoppage-time equaliser.

Tottenham took the lead with just 45 seconds gone when Son Heung-min and Harry Kane combined to create a goal for the seventh time this season. — *AFF*

## Alex takes 850th podium for Honda

**Alcalz, Spain:** Alex Marquez continued his fine form aboard his Honda RC213V on home ground at the Aragon MotoGP on Sunday finishing second to Alex Rins of Suzuki Ecstar. When the lights went out, Alex leapt forward and immediately gained a handful of places to move into the top ten. Alex briefly battled with Andrea Dovizioso, the rookie quickly dispatching the Ducati rider and continuing his march forward with Miller next in line. Race-leading pace saw Alex as the fastest rider on track, cleaving his way through the pair of Petronas Yamahas and moving up into podium battle for the second week in a row. The podium is Alex's first dry weather podium in MotoGP and Honda's 850th in the premier class.

## Sociedad go top with Betis win

**Madrid:** Real Sociedad continued La Liga's unpredictable start to the season by going top of the table on Sunday, after a 3-0 win away at Real Betis. Villarreal had temporarily claimed first place earlier in the day by beating Valencia 2-1 at la Ceramica but Real Sociedad's impressive victory put them ahead on goal difference. They are the sixth different team to lead La Liga after six rounds of fixtures so far, as Real Madrid gave up their place at the top of the pile after a surprise loss at home to Cadiz on Saturday. — *AFF*

## Live on TV

## CRICKET

**IPL:** Kings XI Punjab vs Delhi Capitals from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

## FOOTBALL

**Champions League:** Zenit vs Brugge from 10.25 pm on Sony Six; Dynamo Kyiv vs Juventus from 10.25 pm on Sony Ten 2; Chelsea vs Sevilla from 12.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Six; Lazio vs Dortmund from 12.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 3; Barcelona vs Ferencvaros from 12.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 1; Paris Saint German vs Manchester United from 12.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 2

Published by K. Sudhakar for and on behalf of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited at Jawaharlal Nehru National Youth Centre, 219 Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg, New Delhi 110 002. And Printed by him at BFL Infotech Limited, C - 9, Sector - III, Noida - 201301. Editor - T. Venkatram Reddy, RNI Registration number 57290/94, Price in Nepal - Nep. Rs. 20.00 per copy.

## Resurgent Royals

## Rajasthan defeat Chennai by 7 wickets to climb to fifth spot

**Abu Dhabi, Oct. 19:** Rajasthan Royals defeated Chennai Super Kings by seven wickets in their Indian Premier League match here on Monday.

Batting first, Chennai Super Kings were stopped at 125 for five as Rajasthan Royals produced a fine bowling effort at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium.

In reply, RR chased down the target in 17.3 overs and climbed to the fifth spot on the leader board, who were earlier languishing at the bottom of the table.

Jos Buttler top scored for Royals with an unbeaten 70.

Opting to bat, CSK never got going and lacked the fire power to put up a decent score after being reduced to 56 for four in 10 overs.

Ravindra Jadeja top-scored for CSK with a 30-ball unbeaten 35 and skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni, playing in his 200th IPL game, made a run-a-ball 28 while adding 51 runs for the fifth wicket.

Jofra Archer (1/20) was terrific with the new ball but he would be disappointed with his outing on the field. Besides Archer, the spin duo of Shreyas Gopal (1/14) and Rahul Tewatia (1/18) were economical in the middle overs, while young Kartik Tyagi (1/35) too was impressive.

Dhoni's decision to bat first backfired as RR picked up wickets at regular intervals to make life difficult for CSK.

CSK lost the in-form Faf du Plessis (10) in the third over, caught by Jos Buttler off Archer. — *PTI*



Rajasthan Royals players celebrate the wicket of Chennai Super Kings opener Faf du Plessis in an Indian Premier League match at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi on Monday.

— *BCCI*

## SCORECARD

**Chennai Super Kings:** S. Curran c Buttler b Gopal 22, Faf du Plessis c Buttler b Archer 10, S. Watson c Tewatia b Tyagi 8, A. Rayudu c Samson b Tewatia 13, M.S. Dhoni run out 28, R. Jadeja not out 35, K. Jadhav not out 4. **Extras:** (b-1, lb-2, w-1, nb-1) 5. **Total (for 5 wks, in 20 overs) 125.**

**FOW:** 1-13, 2-26, 3-53, 4-56, 5-107

**Bowling:** Archer 4-0-20-1, Rajpoot 1-0-8-0, Tyagi 4-0-35-1, Stokes 3-0-27-0, Gopal 4-0-14-1, Tewatia 4-0-18-1.

**Rajasthan Royals:** Ben Stokes b Chahar 19, Robin Uthappa c Mahendra Singh Dhoni b Josh Hazlewood 4, Sanju Samson c Mahendra Singh Dhoni b Chahar 0, Steve Smith not out 26, Jos Buttler not out 70. **Extras:** (lb-6, w-1) 7. **Total (for 3 wks, in 17.3 over) 126.**

**FOW:** 1-26, 2-28, 3-28.

**Bowling:** D. Chahar 4-1-18-2, J. Hazlewood 4-0-19-1, R. Jadeja 1.3-0-11-0, S. Thakur 4-0-34-0, S. Curran 1-0-6-0, P. Chawla 3-0-32-0.

## IPL POINTS TABLE

Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
Delhi Capitals	9	7	2	0	14	+0.921
Mumbai Indians	9	6	3	0	12	+1.201
Royal Challengers Bangalore	9	6	3	0	12	-0.096
Kolkata Knight Riders	9	5	4	0	10	-0.607
Rajasthan Royals	10	4	6	0	8	-0.591
Sunrisers Hyderabad	9	3	6	0	6	+0.008
Kings XI Punjab	9	3	6	0	6	-0.262
Chennai Super Kings	10	3	7	0	6	-0.463

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

## PCB WANTS ICC TO ENSURE INDIA VISAS FOR PAK TEAM

**New Delhi, Oct. 19:** The Pakistan Cricket Board wants the ICC to assure visas for its players and officials when India hosts the T20 World Cup in October next year, by January 2021, CEO Wasim Khan has said.

The PCB CEO also confirmed that there is "no chance" of an Indo-Pak bilateral series in "foreseeable future" and neither will it be a part of fresh the Futures Tours Programme that starts in 2023.

India would be hosting the global T20 event in October and given the tense diplomatic ties between the two neighbours, the PCB has sought assurances that the visa process of their players and support staff would be dealt with by the ICC.

"This is an ICC matter. We have discussed

## T20 WORLDS

our concerns. There is a 'Host Agreement' that states very clearly that host nation (India in this case) will have to provide visas and accommodation for teams that are due to participate in T20 World Cup and Pakistan is one of them," Khan told said.

"We have sought assurances from the ICC that our players will receive visas and ICC is now taking this up with the BCCI because that directive and confirmation will clearly need to come from their government," Khan said.

He then clarified that it's only fair that there is a time-frame for such a deadline.

"We have asked for a deadline till December-January, which we believe is the right thing." — *PTI*

## High-flying Kings XI run into table-leaders Delhi

**Dubai, Oct. 19:** The nail-biting win over defending champions Mumbai Indians was certainly a morale-lifter but the inconsistent Kings XI Punjab have another tough battle at hand when they take on table leaders Delhi Capitals in an IPL match here on Tuesday.

Having lost two tight games they should have won at the start of the season, KXIP managed to get on the right side of the results in the last couple of games, although it was too close for comfort by their own admission.

The fact that KXIP have struggled this season despite having tournament's top two run-getters in openers K.L.Rahul (525) and Mayank Agarwal (393) best sums up their erratic run.

On a positive note, the successful return of Chris Gayle has reduced the bur-

## NUMBERS GAME

## HEAD TO HEAD

**OVERALL:**  
● Matches: 25  
● Kolkata: 14  
● Bangalore: 11

## MEETING IN 2019

● Kolkata Knight Riders beat Royal Challengers Bangalore by 5 wickets in Bengaluru.  
● Royal Challengers Bangalore beat Kolkata Knight Riders by 10 runs in Kolkata

## MEETING IN CURRENT EDITION

● RCB beat KKR by 82 runs at Sharjah

## FOR THE RECORD

● AB de Villiers, who has scored 8,942 at an average of 37.57 in 301 innings of 319 matches, needs 58 runs to become the eighth batsman to score 9,000 runs in Twenty-20 cricket.  
● Lockie Ferguson claimed 50 wickets at an average of 26.92 in 52 innings of as many matches in T20 cricket.

— *S. PERVEZ KAISER*

den on the shoulders of the star openers, especially allowing Rahul to play more freely.

Delhi are clearly the team to beat in the tournament and have gained in confidence with a close win against Chennai Super Kings on Saturday night.

## DUBEY JOINS DELHI AS MISHRA'S REPLACEMENT

Delhi Capitals on Monday named Karnataka leggie Pravin Dubey as a replacement for veteran spinner Amit Mishra, who was ruled out of the IPL due to a fractured finger.

The 27-year-old leg-spinner has played 14 domestic T20 matches for his state, and has 16 wickets to his name with an economy rate of 6.87.

Mishra was ruled out of the tournament after sustaining an injury to the ring finger of his bowling arm. — *PTI*

## High praise for Super Shami

**Dubai, Oct. 19:** Kings XI Punjab captain K.L. Rahul lauded his pace spearhead Mohammed Shami for his ability and clarity of thought to bowl six yorkers in the Super Over while defending just five runs in their dramatic IPL match against Mumbai Indians here.

The match on Sunday night ended in a tie in the regulation 20 overs and KXIP could only score five runs in the first Super Over but Shami bowled brilliantly to restrict MI to the same score.

KXIP eventually won the match in the second Super Over.

"You can never prepare for Super Overs. No team does. So you have to trust your bowler's gut. You trust your bowler, and let them believe their instinct and gut," Rahul said at the post-match presentation.

"He (Shami) was very clear he wanted to go with six yorkers. He has been phenomenal, and keeps getting better every game. It is important that senior players win the games for the team."

Rahul, who was named man of the match for his 77, expressed happiness at the victory but said his side would not want to make a habit of winning like this. Even in the last game against RCB, KXIP could have finished the job earlier than they eventually did.

"It is not the first time.



Mohammed Shami

But we don't want to make a habit out of it. We will take the two points in the end. It doesn't always happen the way you plan so you don't really know how to stay balanced.

"I was just hoping we get over the line because the boys have been working really really hard. In the games that we have lost, even then we have played well and just not been able to get over the line." — *PTI*

## UNIVERSE BOSS WAS 'ANGRY' HEADING INTO SUPER OVER

**Dubai, Oct. 19:** The big-hitting Chris Gayle revealed that he felt "angry and upset" going into the Super Over after Kings XI Punjab were in a comfortable position to win the IPL match against Mumbai Indians in regulation period.

Chasing 11 runs in the second Super Over, the "Universe Boss" cracked a six off the first ball before opener Mayank Agarwal smashed successive fours to give KXIP their second consecutive win.

"No, I wasn't nervous. I was a bit more angry and upset that we got ourselves in this position. But it's a game of cricket and these things do happen," Gayle told Agarwal and Mohammad Shami during a post-match show for IPLT20.com.

"Even when we were going out to bat (in the second Super Over) you asked me 'who is going to face the first ball'. I was like 'Mayank you really asked that question? It has to be the boss who faces the first ball'," Gayle added. — *PTI*

## Ganguly not in fray for ICC chief's post

**New Delhi, Oct. 19:** New Zealand Cricket's Gregor Barclay and Imran Khwaja of Singapore are the only two prominent names who will be fighting for the ICC chairman's post to replace Shahshank Manohar.

Sunday was the last day for filing nominations and a one-month window has been kept by the ICC Board to see if it can have an unanimous candidate.

"As of now, it looks like there will be an election between Barclay and Khwaja, who is ICC's acting chairman. They are the only two who have filed nominations. Both have their share of support in board," a senior official, privy to developments in ICC Board, said.

In a 17-member ICC board, 16 can cast their vote (17th member is CEO Manu Sawhney without

voting rights) and as per the existing rules, either Barclay or Khwaja would need 11 votes (2/3rd of board) to become the next chairman.

In case Cricket South Africa (CSA) gets suspended by the ICC over government interference, then the number of voters will come down to 15.

While Colin Graves, the former England and Wales Cricket Board chairman was the favourite to become the next ICC chief, it was learnt that he didn't file his nomination after it became certain that neither he is an unanimous choice nor does he have the numbers to win an election. There is a buzz that the BCCI will lend support to Barclay against Khwaja, who is known to be close to a former ICC head. — *PTI*

## Revival of domestic season a boon for home players



Hemant Kenkre  
Silly Point

A significant meeting went unnoticed thanks to the Indian Premier League (IPL) bandwagon proceeding in grand fashion over the weekend. With matches extending to three super overs in a single day and an 'Act of God' to describe irreplaceable AB de Villiers' innings, the announcement made by the Apex Council of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) got smothered under the scrum of news dedicated to the IPL.

BCCI gave a glimmer of hope to hundreds of players that comprise the 'home' structure of India by speaking about the revival of the Indian domestic season, tentatively from January 1, 2021. The decision of the Apex Council, as of now, is in the thought stage as they plan to host tournaments like the Ranji Trophy by creating bio-bubbles to ensure safety in a pandemic-ravaged country.

Holding tournaments for 38 teams is going to be a humongous exercise for the BCCI and, towards

this, they are looking at hosting the Ranji Trophy in selected cities by creating mini bio-bubbles. Their plan, from what one understands through the usual BCCI 'sources', is to look at cities that have three or more cricket playing venues that will host the national championship of cricket.

Though there has not been any official communication on the format of the tournament, it does seem that the BCCI plans to go back to the zonal/knock-out one that was played in the old days. This will make it easier for the BCCI to conduct the Ranji Trophy (and other shorter-format tournaments) with one city per zone looking like the safest bet.

One assumes that the plan, at this point in time,

is subject to the health situation closer to January, the proposed month of the start of the domestic schedule.

The 2020-21 season has already lost out some time and starting it five months behind the usual period (August, in the past) will have its issues with the programme being truncated. Nevertheless, the restart of the Ranji Trophy will provide succour to thousand plus cricketers and support staff across India who have been twiddling their thumbs since the March lockdown.

The BCCI also announced that they have received an itinerary from Cricket Australia for India's proposed tour which comprises three Twenty20s (T20), three One Day Internationals

(ODI) and four Test matches. Though the dates for the series haven't been finalised, it is believed that the Test leg of the tour will begin with the first encounter being a day-night 'pink ball' game in Adelaide. This brings us to an important element — team selection for the tour.

There has been no comment from the BCCI or any official about when the selection for this long tour will take place. The IPL will culminate in three weeks and the selected players (those part of the IPL) are expected to head straight down under post the tournament as the quarantine regulations in Australia are stringent, as one would expect, and differ from state to state. The selection, therefore, will have to be conducted within a week, at the latest, to

enable players to get mentally ready for a tough tour as well as for BCCI to execute the logistics pertaining to travel, etc.

With no domestic cricket since March this year and the lack of any likely to happen till January, the IPL is the only platform for the selectors to judge the form of those they will pick for the three segments of the tour. This works very well for selecting the team for the T20 segment of the tour and may suffice when the ODI team is picked, as the format is a short one.

The real examination that Chief Selector Sunil Joshi and his team will be faced with will be to choose the squad for the Test series.

Considering this is part of the ongoing World Test Championship of the

International Cricket Council (ICC) and the opponents, Australia, happen to be sitting at the number one position in the ICC Test rankings, Joshi and Co. have their task cut out for them.

While most players have been exposed to match practice while playing the IPL, a few Test specialists like Cheteshwar Pujara and Hanuma Vihari will only have their past experience to stand up for them.

For many youngsters who have shown remarkable form in the current IPL so far, this is a heaven sent opportunity. The next few matches of the IPL will have young Indian talent showing their very best with the added incentive of the much wanted chance of wearing the India cap.