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HYDERABAD | WEDNESDAY | 2 SEPTEMBER 2020

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**WEATHER**

Max: 32.4°C  
Min: 23.8°C  
RH: 64%  
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Generally cloudy sky. Rain or thunderstorm likely.

**COVID-19 COUNT**

CASES	DEATHS
(+79,170)	(+1,021)
37,63,509	66,448

covid19india.org

**STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS**

(+2,734)	(+9)
TS: 1,27,697	836
(+10,368)	(+84)
AP: 4,45,139	4,053

**CASES AROUND THE WORLD**

2,57,75,868	DEATHS
8,57,439	COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES

worldometers.info/coronavirus

**ASTROGUIDE**

Sarvari; Dakshinayana  
Tithi: Bhadrapada Shuddha Pournami till 10.53 pm  
Star: Satabhisham till 6.35 pm  
Varjyam: 1.35 am to 3.20 am (Thursday)

Durmuhurta: 11.51 am to 12.40 pm

Rahukalam: 12 noon to 1.30 pm

HIJRI CALENDAR

Muharram 13, 1442 AH

**PRAYERS**

Fajr: 5.01 am  
Zohar: 12.26 pm  
Asar: 4.37 pm  
Magrib: 6.34 pm  
Isha: 7.44 pm

SUNSET TODAY 6.29 PM

SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.02 AM

MOONRISE TODAY 6.12 PM

MOONSET TOMORROW 5.05 AM

**COUNTER POINT**

We always have our eyes on their land except when we have breakfast, lunch and dinner!

**IN BRIEF**

**TS BRINGS IN LRS SCHEME ONCE AGAIN**

MADDY DEEKSHIT | DC HYDERABAD, SEPT. 1

The state government on Tuesday announced the layout regularisation scheme (LRS) and released a government order dated August 31, prior to the civic polls.

According to the order, unauthorised layouts which have come up and been registered through sale deed prior to the August 26 are eligible for regularisation on payment of penalty. It said that the order will be implemented following Telangana Regularisation of Unapproved and Illegal Layout Rules, 2020 in all the HMDA areas, other urban bodies, municipal and panchayats areas.

Full report on Page 3

**Revellers ignore Covid**

Hundreds of people gather on the road to bid adieu to the Khairatabad Ganesh in Hyderabad on Tuesday, ignoring physical distancing norms to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus. ■ More reports on P2 — S. SURENDER REDDY

**2-yr pause on repayment likely****Centre asks SC to allow RBI and banks to decide on interest**

New Delhi, Sept. 1: The moratorium period on the repayment of loans during the Covid-19 pandemic is "extendable" by two years and several steps have been taken to help the stressed sectors, the Centre and the RBI told the Supreme Court on Tuesday.

A bench headed by Justice Ashok Bhushan was informed by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre and Reserve Bank of India,

that the economy contracted by nearly 24 per cent in the April-June quarter due to coronavirus-related lockdown and restrictions.

The bench, also comprising Justices R.S. Reddy and M.R. Shah, said it would hear on Wednesday the pleas which have raised the issue of interest being charged on instalments which have been deferred under the central bank's scheme during the moratorium period.

At the outset, Mehta told

the bench that the Centre has filed its affidavit in the matter.

When the court said that it has not yet received the affidavit, he said the bench should look into it and the matter be listed after two-three days.

Mehta said several steps have been taken for stressed sectors. "Let the Central government, RBI and bankers should put their heads together on the aspect of interest on interest," he said.

At the outset, Mehta told

"The moratorium is extendable by two years," he added.

Mehta said that authorities have utilised the time and narrowed down the issue to the point on interest.

"There are stressed sectors and national economy has contracted by 23 per cent," Mehta said, adding, "I have filed the affidavit and heavens will not fall if the matter is taken after two-three days or tomorrow." — PTI

According to sources, the Chinese Army on Monday night was trying to close in the area and they were spotted by the Indian troops. "PLA troops were suitably warned and they dissuaded from coming closer," said sources.

Since May, the Chinese Army's strategy has been to grab unoccupied land at the LAC in Ladakh sector. However, on the southern banks of Pangong Tso, as soon as they saw a large number of Chinese troops moving in, Indian troops on Saturday night moved fast to occupy many peaks in a "pre-emptive move". Control of the peaks gives Indian the advantage to dominate the area as it can monitor the movements of Chinese troops.

**India beats back new Chinese bid**

Accuses Chinese Army of trying to occupy strategic peaks on the Indian side of LAC

PAWAN BALI | DC NEW DELHI, SEPT. 1

Chinese troops made a second failed attempt on Monday to capture peaks on the southern banks of the Pangong Tso that has emerged as the latest flash point between the two armies.

Indian troops had preempted the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) soldiers on Saturday night and occupied many peaks on the southern banks of the Pangong Tso to dominate the area.

"On 31st August, even as the ground commanders of the two sides were in discussions to de-escalate the situation, the Chinese troops again engaged in provocative action. Due to the timely defensive action, the Indian side was able to prevent these attempts to unilaterally alter the status quo," said MEA spokesperson Anurag Srivastava on Tuesday.

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Since May, the Chinese Army's strategy has been to grab unoccupied land at the LAC in Ladakh sector.

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DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, SEPT. 1

added, "India's move has grossly violated China's territorial sovereignty, seriously violated relevant agreements, protocols and important consensus reached between the two countries, and severely damaged peace and tranquility along the border areas. What India has done runs counter to the efforts made by both sides for a period of time to ease and cool down the situation on the ground, and China is resolutely opposed to this."

China claimed it "has made solemn representations to the Indian side, urged it to restrain its frontline troops, earnestly honour its commitments, stop all the provocative actions, withdraw its troops illegally trespassing the LAC at the southern bank of Pangong Tso Lake and near the Rechin Pass.

India, however, on Monday accused the Chinese Army of attempting to change the status quo at the southern bank of Pangong Tso Lake on the night of August 29 and 30.

Day after, the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi too claimed that Indian troops trespassed the LAC again at the southern bank of the Pangong Tso and near the Rechin Pass in the western sector of China-India border.

The Chinese Embassy

The brigade level talks held on Tuesday to de-escalate the situation but it failed to achieve any breakthrough.

Since Monday, China has issued at least five statements accusing India of crossing the LAC at the southern bank of the Pangong Tso and near the Rechin Pass in the western sector of India.

The status of these two peaks could not be officially confirmed. Indian Army denied a news agency report that the Chinese Army had tried to cross LAC in the Chumar sector in Ladakh on Tuesday.

Contradictory reports are coming about two peaks in the area: Blacktop and Helmet. While some reports said

that Indian forces occupied these two heights in its pre-emptive move, others suggest that it is under PLA.

These two peaks are reported to be on the Indian side of LAC.

The status of these two peaks could not be officially confirmed. Indian Army denied a news agency report that the Chinese Army had tried to cross LAC in the Chumar sector in Ladakh on Tuesday.

PARMOD KUMAR | DC NEW DELHI, SEPT. 1

Giving a major relief to telecom service providers (TSPs) facing financial stress, the Supreme Court on Tuesday permitted them to make staggered payment of their Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) dues over a period of 10 years. The Centre had earlier suggested giving TSPs 20 years' time to make the payments.

Permitting the TSPs, including Airtel and Vodafone-Idea, to clear all their outstanding AGR dues in 10 years, ending on March 31, 2031, a bench comprising Justices Arun Mishra, S. Abdul Nazeer and M.R. Shah said that to start with the TSPs would make the payment of 10 per cent of their total AGR dues as demanded by the department of telecommunications by March 31, 2021.

Shutting the door on any further litigation by TSPs seeking reassessment of their AGR dues, Justice Mishra, pronouncing the Supreme Court judgment, said: "That for the demands raised by the department of telecom in respect of AGR dues based on the judgment of this court, there shall not be any dispute raised by any of the telecom operators and that there shall not be any reassessment."

RAVINDRA SESHU | DC KHAMMAM, SEPT. 1

Tension prevailed in Kaimondigudem in the first division of Khammam Municipal Corporation on Tuesday after locals rounded on TRS corporator Ramoorthy Naik who had physically abused a woman.

Enraged locals tried to thrash the corporator at one stage and he ran away into a nearby school to escape the mob, where he locked himself in.

The locals went after him and demanded that he come out.

■ Page 2: TRS leader failed to pay relief money

SC allows Voda, Airtel to pay AGR dues in 10 years

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## IN BRIEF

**Telemedicine facility at AIIMS**

**Hyderabad:** In view of the situation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Bibinagar, would be launching a new telemedicine facility. This would make it the first hospital in the state to start video consultation through eSanjeevani out-patient department. Details are available on [www.aiimsbibinagar.edu.in](http://www.aiimsbibinagar.edu.in).

**TRS LEADER FAILED TO PAY RELIEF MONEY**

From Page 1

The incident took place when Naik went to the village as part of Badi Bata, a programme to get encourage children to join school.

The incident was the fallout of the death of one Anand Tejawat, a worker from Kaikondagudem, at Vamsikrishna Function Hall owned by Naik on August 18 while working there. Naik promised to pay some amount to his family and failed to do so. Tejawat's mother Vijaya approached Naik on Tuesday to ask him about the compensation. She said, "The corporator kicked me in the chest and I fell on my daughter. Both of us sustained injuries."

Locals and Vijaya's relatives rushed to the spot. Heated arguments followed between Naik and the locals. The locals questioned Naik on his hitting a woman. At one stage, the mob irked by the words used by Naik surrounded him.

The police rushed to the spot and rescued Naik and another person from the spot. The enraged mob burnt Naik's car. Vijaya lodged a complaint against Naik in the police station.

Naik convened a press meet and alleged that some TRS leaders were trying to malign his image. He had no connection with the death of Anand Tejawat who fell unconscious while working. "I tried to save his life by placing iron keys in his hand. I am being framed," said Naik, conveniently skirted the issue of his being violent with a woman.

**JBS-MGBS ROUTE REPAIR NOT YET COMPLETE**

From Page 1

The protocols will be decided in a day or two by the urban affairs ministry with the approval of the home ministry.

With a less than week left for Metro Rail operations, the HMRL is yet to complete repairs on the JBS-MGBS corridor.

The authorities after allowing time to slip away during the lockdown have now begun repair works. Metro Rail stations including Musheerabad wore a shoddy look and the authorities have damaged pavements in the name of plantations.

PTI reported from New Delhi that urban affairs secretary Mishra said: "We heard suggestions of metro managing directors, which will be considered. A draft of standard operating procedures has been prepared and it will be discussed with the Union home ministry on Wednesday. In consultation with the home ministry, the SOPs will be finalised."

Officials said that wearing a mask and physical distancing norms will be strictly followed once Metro Rail trains start operating. Passengers will be encouraged to follow anti-Covid-19 measures, they said, adding fines will be imposed on those violating the guidelines.

There are 17 Metro Rail corporations in the country. Once the detailed SOPs are issued by the urban affairs ministry, they can issue their details keeping in mind local requirements, the officials said.

The Union home ministry had issued the Unlock 4 guidelines on Saturday under which Metro Rail trains would be allowed to resume services from September 7.

Last week, the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) had said that it would resume services for the public from September 7 in a calibrated manner.

**OFFICIALS SAID** that wearing a mask and physical distancing norms will be strictly followed once Metro Rail trains start operating. Passengers will be encouraged to follow anti-Covid-19 measures, they said, adding fines will be imposed on those violating the guidelines.



Devotees in huge numbers take part in a procession from Charminar to Tank Bund on Tuesday to immerse the idol of Lord Ganesh.

— P. SURENDRA



Devotees during the Balapur Ganesh procession on Tuesday. The traditional Balapur laddu which used to be auctioned every year before taking out the procession was not organised this year due to the pandemic. The Balapur Ganesh Utsav Committee decided to present the laddu to Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao without auctioning it.

— DC

## Immersion ends with fewer idols, crowding

Around 30,000 idols immersed within the city limits

**MADDY DEEKSHITH I DC**  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 1

The 11-day-long Ganesh Chaturthi culminated on Tuesday with immersion of idols belonging to the elephant-headed God at various designated spots in the twin cities. Around 30,000 idols were immersed within the core city and an equal number on the city outskirts.

Tuesday was the 41st time that idols were immersed through a centralised procession in the twin cities. The event had begun in 1980 with just 1,500 idols installed in various parts of the city.

Despite the threat of Covid-19 infection, thousands of devotees joined the Khairatabad Ganesh procession, which began

at 11.45 am. The idol was immersed in the Tank Bund Lake around 5 pm. The Balapur Ganesh procession began early at 12.00 pm under police escort. As the size of idols had decreased this year, the statues were mostly carried in autos and trucks. This ensured timely immersion of idols.

Several devotees restricted themselves to their homes due to Covid-19 outbreak. The number of notified idols came down from 1.30 lakh last year to about 50,000 in the core city. Lack of coordination between Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation, police and pandal organisers, however, led to bumpy ride for Ganesh. Many roads were either dug up or severely

damaged. For instance, the part of the road at Moazzam Jahi Market had been dug, which resulted in traffic jams there.

Unlike like in the past, the state government did not declare a holiday on Tuesday. Still, enthusiastic commuters thronged to see the Khairatabad and other Ganeshas in the procession. Thousands had assembled along Telephone Bhavan-Secretariat-NTR Marg to watch the idols being taken out in the procession. Although GHMC notified 32 lakes for immersion, cranes were deployed only at three locations – Hussainsagar, Saroornagar and IDL Lake in Kukatpally. After a long time, authorities did not barricade areas around the Hussainsagar. As a result, enthusiastic citizens leaned dangerously over the bund to click selfies. Lack of barricading also helped several hawkers who came to sell eatables. Many of them were not wearing masks.

Office-bearers of Bhagyanagar Ganesh Utsav Samithi (BGUS) were disappointed with the arrangements made for immersion. BGUS secretary Ravinuthala Shashidhar said there were several lacunae in the arrangements. It was only due to God's grace that the immersion ended on a peaceful note. Following the convention, idols of the south zone were immersed first followed by those of other areas, with immersion going on till late in the night.

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Foreigners with Ganesh idol also participated in the immersion procession.

— DC

## MAN DROWNS DURING IDOL IMMERSION

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 1

The Ganesh idol immersion celebrations turned tragic for a family at Kondamadugu village in Yadadri Bhongir district as a person drowned in a lake on Monday night. The deceased was identified as E. Srinivas, 45.

Bibinagar sub-inspector H. Raghavender said that the incident took place at about 10 pm on Monday. The family of Srinivas, who are into grocery business, had installed a Ganesh idol at their house. In connection with the immersion of the idol, along with the locals they took out a small procession to the lake.

Srinivas, before immersing the idol, jumped into the waters and swam for some time, and suddenly drowned. His family and locals tried to rescue him, but they could not and then informed the police.

"With the help of professional swimmers, the body of Srinivas was pulled out at around 12.15 am. It is found that Srinivas was under the influence of alcohol when he jumped into the water.

The body has been shifted for the post-mortem examination and a case has been registered," said SI Raghavender.

## No untoward incident in city

**JAYENDRA CHAITHANYA T. I DC**  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 1

The immersion of idols of Lord Ganesh in the city was peaceful as the festivities concluded on the 11th day after Vinayaka Chaturthi. The police are expecting that the immersion of idols may continue till the early hours of Wednesday, as some people do not want to immerse the idols on Tuesday.

Hyderabad police commissioner Anjani Kumar along with senior police officials inspected the security arrangements and the idol immersion process in the Hussainsagar. The commissioner said that the idol immersion process marking the conclusion of festivities passed peacefully with the public

cooperation. The commissioner along with his officers went in a boat in the lake to oversee immersion procedure. The police commissioner drove the boat himself.

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*, Anjani Kumar said, "The immersion process is being held peacefully." About 4,800 idols of different sizes were immersed in Hussainsagar on Tuesday, and a total of about 15,000 were immersed till date since the day of festival.

"No untoward incident took place during the processions and people of the city are extending their cooperation in conducting the event," said the commissioner.

In Cyberabad, about 250 five-foot idols were immersed in various tanks and lakes and in Rachakonda, it was around 600.

## Rally remains peaceful in Old City

**ATHER MOIN I DC**  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 1

The Ganesh idol processions passed peacefully through the Old City with no untoward incident. Normal life was not affected as there was no cen-

tralised procession due to Covid protocols, unlike previous years.

Vehicular movement was normal and business establishments were open. Though the festivity was a low-key affair, police made elaborate security

arrangements to ensure smooth conduct of immersion ceremony. Police pickets were deployed near masjids and sensitive places.

People carried the idols in caparisoned trolleys and vehicles. The devotees did not follow Covid-19 health precautions. The shobha yatra of the Balapur Ganesh idol passed through the Old City in the afternoon. There was no auction this year of the laddu.

## Kin of health workers who died of Covid to get ₹25L

**BALU PULIPAKA I DC**  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 1

The state government has agreed to provide ₹25 lakh as ex-gratia to all health-care employees' families in the government sector in the event of the loss of life of the medical worker, the joint action committee of doctors and health care workers said on Tuesday.

The JAC leaders met with health minister Etala Rajendar and discussed their long-pending demand of ex-gratia to health workers serving Covid-19 patients.

On the lines being paid in other states.

The JAC leaders said after the meeting that the health minister assured that all employees working in Covid-19 control and treatment, will have

their families receive ₹25 lakh in the event of their death.

The minister also agreed to allot 50 beds to medical employees (regular, contract, outsourced etc.) including family members of such medical employees, to treat any Covid-19 infection related absence as being on duty.

The JAC leaders, Dr Bongu Ramesh, Dr Lalu Prasad Yadav, Dr. Putta Srinivas, Bondulega Venkateswar Reddy, Jupalli Rajender, Dr B Narahari, Dr Rachu Rachcha, and Dr Rauf were among those who discussed these issues with the health minister.

— INN

## States have no major tax to levy: CM

From Page 1

He questioned the Centre about the justification in asking states to borrow now that there is a deficit.

The CM said after the introduction of GST, states have been left with no major buoyant taxes of their own, while the Centre still has buoyant sources like income tax, corporation tax and customs duties. In addition,

the Centre has access to non-tax revenues, such as dividends from the RBI, central public sector undertakings and so on. Thus, the Centre is endowed with more resources to help the states, he pointed out.

Maintaining that due to lockdown on account of

means advances and over-drafts".

Rao pointed out that with the broad fiscal policy being controlled by the Centre, states are made to depend on it even for market borrowings. He said the 3.5 per cent fiscal deficit prescribed for the Centre while states are restricted to 3 per cent is against the federal spirit of the Constitution.

The Chief Minister said argument put forth by the Centre has suffered a revenue loss of 83 per cent while the expenditure related to Covid-19 pandemic had gone up, the CM said. "We are faced with the difficult task of meeting the expenditure through front-loading of market borrowings and taking resort to ways and

means advances and over-drafts".

Rao noted that an artificial distinction is being made between the loss of revenue on account of GST implementation and impact of Covid. "Such a distinction is not provided for in the Act. Statutory provisions for GST compensation have no meaning if the GoI does not honour it in the letter and spirit," he stated.

Immunity-boosting foods are going to be a part of the diet till the threat of the Coronavirus lessens. With an undernourished



K. Chandrashekhar Rao.

## Allow only 50% school, college staff, says BJP

**IREDDY SRINIVAS REDDY I DC**  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 1

The MLC said the state government should reconsider its decision. Calling all the staff to schools and colleges may increase the risk of spreading Covid-19 who are till now taking measures to protect themselves from this dreaded disease, he said.

He said the government should accept constructive suggestions of Opposition parties instead of taking it as an allegation. He requested the TRS government to strictly implement Union government's Unlock 4.0 guidelines issued keeping in view of public health as cases in the state are increasing day by day.

## Expert: Eat food with antioxidants

From Page 1

Dr Manickam Mahalingam, director of a wellness centre, explained, "Foods containing antioxidants have to be taken in these times to boost immunity to help the body ward off infections. Everyone needs them now especially those who are immune-compromised."

Making a switch during the pandemic to traditional foods had been difficult for many but that is a cheap booster to immunity.

and malnourished population even in urban areas, the consumption of these foods has exploded. Nutritionists argue that people fail in making their children cultivate a taste for whole grains, legumes and vegetables. Instead, they have been giving them different sauces, soft foods and highly processed foods.

Making a switch during the pandemic to traditional foods had been difficult for many but that is a cheap booster to immunity.

## IN BRIEF

**Satyam Raju moves court against series**

**Hyderabad:** Satyam Computers former chairman B. Ramalinga Raju on Tuesday approached the Hyderabad city civil court challenging the September 2 release of Netflix's new web series titled *Bad Boy Billionaires* on suspicion that it was made based on his life story and that it would tarnish his image and invade his privacy in an unlawful manner. Additional chief judge Prathima granted an injunction restraining Netflix from airing the web series from Wednesday. Senior counsel S. Nirajan Reddy argued on behalf of Raju.

**3 AUTORICKSHAW DRIVERS HELD FOR RAPE OF MINOR**

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 1

Three autorickshaw drivers from LB Nagar, who kidnapped and allegedly raped a minor girl, were arrested by the police on Tuesday.

According to LB Nagar police, the incident occurred on August 25. The accused were identified by the police as A. Ramesh, 21, G. Pawan, 22, and R. Santhosh, 19, all residents of LB Nagar.

The victim who was going to her grandmother's house on foot was kidnapped by Ramesh and Pawan in the former's autorickshaw. While taking her to Hayathnagar, they called Santhosh and asked him to join them.

After allegedly sexually assaulting her, Pawan and Santhosh left in an autorickshaw while Ramesh made the girl sleep with him in the autorickshaw and dropped her near her grandmother's house the next morning, said the police.

The girl's family members lodged a complaint and the accused were traced and nabbed based on the technical clues, the police added.

**BEd ADMISSION FEE RANGES FROM ₹16,500 TO ₹36,000**

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 1

The Telangana State Admission and Fee Regulatory Committee (TAFRC) on Tuesday fixed the admission fee for Bachelor of Education (BEd) courses for the block period 2019-20 to 2021-22.

As per the government order, the recommended annual fees for 209 BEd colleges range from ₹16,500 to ₹36,000. The order said that the institutions shall not charge any capitation fee or any amount unauthorised or illegally under any other head or guise (e.g., donation etc.), either directly or indirectly, other than the fee fixed by the committee.

Collection of any such unauthorised amount would amount to charging of capitation fee. The surplus (profit) that is generated from the collection of fee must be for the benefit of the institution, and cannot be diverted for other purposes or personal gain, the committee said.

It also directed institutions to collect the annual tuition fee every year in advance only for that particular year either in a lumpsum or in instalments, if it so opts.

The order added that fixation of the fee structure by the committee will not by itself enable or permit the management to run the relevant courses in their institutions, if they are otherwise not duly recognised and permitted by the government or the National Council of Teacher Education or the university concerned at any relevant time.



Candidates wear masks and gloves provided by authorities and queue up outside a test centre in Old Alwal to appear for IIT-JEE online exams on the first day, in Hyderabad, on Tuesday. — R. PAVAN

**Students brave Covid, take JEE under protocol****Mixed reactions from parents, authorities on social distancing**

**HARLEEN MINOCHA | DC**  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 1

Amid protests and opposition from students across the country, the Joint Entrance Exam (JEE) Main started on Tuesday. Day 1 saw candidates appear for the BArch and BPlanning papers at various centres in the city. The JEE is being conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA).

Parents and guardians of JEE aspirants complained that there was no arrangement made for them outside the Noma Convention Centre, Nacharam, that led to crowding. Parents pointed out that those who had cars, sat inside waiting for temperature checks hours before the scheduled time. Even though the morning exam started at 9 o'clock, the reporting time started at 7. Students were provided separate arrival time slots as per their JEE Main admit cards to prevent crowding at the exam centres.

At other centres like iON Digital Zone, Old Alwal, most candidates arrived with guardians, who were not allowed to wait outside for the duration of the examination. A JEE aspirant, Ashmit Debroy noted that all safety measures were in place when he arrived at the center, where he was asked to dispose of his mask and use the one provided to them. Gloves and face shields were optional, he said.

"We weren't expecting the arrangements to be so smooth. Even inside the exam hall, in a row of eight systems, only two candidates were seated. The exit process was also completed with physical distancing in place," added Ashmit.

Students noted that since JEE Main Paper 2 had fewer candidates, there was less of a crowd on Tuesday, but since JEE Paper 1 exams for the BTech and BE courses, with candidates much larger in number, the real issues might crop up.

JEE Main Paper 1 for BEE and BTech courses will be held in two sessions each day from September 2 to September 6.

Students from various remote locations are supposed to take the upcoming exams. Due to absence of public trans-

port, candidates said reaching their examination centre would be a challenge. To aid them, a team of volunteers who were earlier providing help during the lockdown, called Sai Task Force, have diverted their resources to providing free transportation and even accommodation to students travelling from far-off districts to the city.

Rahul Shiva, member of the core team, informed that they have received several calls from candidates appearing for both JEE Mains and NEET, to ferry them to centres and back home. He said that they had bookings for transportation from districts like Sangareddy, Khammam, Warangal, among other places.

While the NTA has not released any state-wise data on the number of candidates that appeared for the exam on the first day, in Telangana state alone, 67,319 students have registered for JEE Mains to be held at 27 centres till September 6.

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**SHORT TAKES**  
**PROVIDE INFO ON RELIEF TO FLOOD VICTIMS: HC**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 1

# Hawala racket in gaming fraud

Shady transactions in human hair export

VIKRAM SHARMA I DC  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 1

Investigation into the multicrore online gaming fraud involving Chinese companies has taken a new turn with detectives stumbling upon evidence pointing to a hawala network that was being operated to fund individuals who were exporting goods to China.

A Hyderabad-based merchant who supplied tonnes of human hair to China through an exporter based in West Bengal had received ₹80 lakh through a Chinese gaming company which had a tie-up with the payment gateway Cashfree. This has now put multiple investigative agencies on the human hair trail.

Simultaneously, the sleuths have come across hundreds of shady transactions to the tune of hundreds of crores even as links have emerged between a Hong Kong-based company and Beijing T Power Company which was running an online gaming fraud in India. Further, some IP logs of the Chinese gaming companies are from Pakistan.

Sources in various agencies who stumbled upon the new leads in the case disclosed to *Deccan Chronicle* that the Hyderabad-based merchant had been a regular supplier of human hair to the Kolkata-based exporter.

The merchant would collect the hair from barber shops across Hyderabad and send them to Kolkata. Chinese firms buy a kilo of hair for anything between ₹500 and ₹8,000 or even more, depending on the quality. Over the years, demand for human hair has increased in China due to growth in the make-up and wig-making industry.

As investigators were scrutinising transactions of the gaming companies established by the Chinese company and their dealings with payment gateways like PayTM, CashFree, Razorpay among others, they stumbled upon hundreds of shady transactions including the one of the human hair merchant.

It was found that another gaming company — Aoke Club — established by the Chinese company had an account with Cashfree through which an amount of ₹80 lakh was deposited into the bank account of the local merchant. This way, both parties do business, evade taxes and import duty among other charges in both countries and mint money.

"Betting is one aspect of the investigation but the larger aspect is that of a systematic hawala network. Outward

transactions to various merchants and individuals have been traced from companies and gateways linked to the Chinese companies. There have been payments made to some persons in Srikrakulam to the tune of ₹2 crore, about ₹30 lakh to an individual in West Godavari district.

Further, a new Hong Kong based company's links with Beijing T Power company have been found, with transactions worth several hundreds of crores. Various agencies, particularly the Enforcement Directorate and income-tax sleuths, are working on the new leads.

The Enforcement Directorate had recently pointed out that payment gateways like Paytm, Cashfree, Razorpay etc had lax due diligence mechanisms and their non-reporting of suspicious transactions to the regulatory authorities helped the accused companies to launch pan-India operations.

## Adilabad forest officials bust pangolin poaching

PILLALAMARRI SRINIVAS I DC  
KUMARAMBEEM ASIFABAD, SEP. 1



Indian pangolin seized by officials

them to custody. The accused were booked under Schedule-1 of the Wildlife Protection Act.

Giving details to the media in Kagganagar, conservator of forests, Adilabad circle, C.P. Vinod Kumar said that they formed special teams with forest officials of three districts and conducted an investigation into the racket for over a month and finally busted it.

Stating that pangolins eat insects and ants but does not cause any damage to crops and human beings and that it has no medicinal value, Kumar added that some gangs are involved in the pangolin business by exploiting superstition.

## ₹4CR CASH FROM INSURANCE SCAM ACCUSED SEIZED

JAYENDRA CHAITANYA T. I DC  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 1

The Anti-Corruption Bureau on Tuesday seized ₹4.47 crore of unaccounted money belonging to the then Insurance Medical Service (IMS) director Devika Rani and pharmacist Naga Lakshmi. The money had been invested with a real estate firm.

In September last year, the ACB had arrested Devika Rani and her aides including Naga Lakshmi, for misappropriation of funds and creating fake bills while ordering medical equipment.

The ACB sleuths after verifying the bank statements and other documents recovered from Devika Rani and Lakshmi on Tuesday seized the money.

Officials said that Devika Rani had invested ₹3.75 crore and Lakshmi ₹72 lakh, with a real estate firm in the Cyberabad limits, to purchase six flats and about 15,000 sq feet of commercial space on the names of their family members. Devika Rani also invested ₹22 lakh in the name of her benamis, ACB officials found during the probe.

Another ₹2.29 crore paid to the real estate firm in the form of cheques and electronic transfer to purchase the properties are yet to be seized, said the officials.

## HC adjourns hearing of petition against RLIS

VIJJINI VAMSHIDHARA I DC  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 1

As petitions on the Rayalaseema lift irrigation scheme (RLIS), being built by the AP government, were pending with the Supreme Court, the Telangana High Court on Tuesday decided to indefinitely adjourn the petitions before it until the completion of the hearing in the apex court. Some more issues related to the project are pending before the National Green Tribunal.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Raghavendra Singh Chauhan and Justice Bollam Vijay Sen Reddy was dealing with petitions filed by Congress leader Challa Vamshichand Reddy and villagers of Vikarabad against the RLIS.

The court granted lib-

• **TO THIS, TS**  
Additional Advocate General J. Ramachandra Rao said the issue before the NGT was on environmental issues. He submitted that AP was indulging in double standards in submitting the arguments before the NGT and the High Court.

Property to the petitioners to bring the matters into its notice once the petition was settled in the Supreme Court.

Setting aside political differences, the Telangana state government, despite being a respondent in the petitions, put forward arguments on behalf of the petitioners.

When AP Advocate General S. Sriram said the same petitioner has approached the National Green Tribunal and did

not get a favourable order, Chief Justice Chauhan expressed anger that petitioner Vamshichand Reddy was indulging in 'forum shopping' and his petition needed to be dismissed with exemplary costs.

To this, TS Additional Advocate General J. Ramachandra Rao said the issue before the NGT was on environmental issues. He submitted that AP was indulging in double standards in submitting the arguments before the NGT and the High Court.

Ramachandra Rao that the AP government was pushing forward the project using political help from the Centre. If the provisions of the AP Reorganisation Act are followed by the AP government these issues would not have arisen, counsel said.

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## IN BRIEF

## Seema gets more Srisailam water

**Kurnool:** With the power plants belonging to AP in TS at Srisailam shut down, the inflows into the reservoir are flowing into the Pothireddy padu regulator. Out of the 32,826 cusecs inflows, 33,626 cusecs were let out to the Rayalaseema districts.

The Pothireddy padu head regulator is drawing 30,000 cusecs while 2,026 cusecs is being pumped out to the Handri Neela Sujala Sravanti scheme. The Kalwakurthy lift irrigation in Telangana state is drawing 1,600 cusecs, according to details shared by the Krishna river board.

## POLICE ISSUE NOTICES TO NAIDU, LOKESH

**AVINASH P.**  
SUBRAMANYAM | DC  
TIRUPATI, SEPT. 1

The death of Punganur-based autorickshaw driver, Om Pratap, took a controversial turn when Madanapalli subdivision police sending notices to Telugu Desam president N. Chandrababu Naidu, his son Nara Lokesh and party politburo member Varla Ramaiah for their observations and allegations levelled against the ruling party leaders in connection with the case.

Pratap, from Kanduru village in Somaia mandal under Punganur constituency, died last week at his residence, four days after a video in which he abused Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy and the state government for hiking the prices of liquor in the state exploded on social media.

Family members and the local police claimed that Pratap died of some medical ailments. However, TD leaders, including Naidu, Lokesh and Ramaiah, alleged that the driver, belonging to the Dalit community, had died due to the harassment by the ruling party leaders and demanded a high-level probe in the matter.

The TD chief also wrote a letter to AP DGP Gowtham Sawang in which he called for a high-level probe into the death of Pratap and demanded that the call list of the deceased be made public.

## MAN FINDS NO HELP TO CREMATE DAD'S BODY

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 1

People of villages or cities are suspecting that every death is due to Covid-19. This is leading to many problems. Sources said a kirana merchant died of a non-Coronavirus ailment in Eleswaram of East Godavari. But, his community members and people of the village did not come forward to assist the family in performing the last rites.

When family members contacted the village secretary and medical and health personnel, they excused themselves.

Finally, in the evening, the son of the deceased person hired a rickshaw and carried the body to the burial ground for performing the last rites. "Such incidents pain the heart. But we cannot do anything," K. Ramesh, another kirana merchant of the village, said.

He recounted when a relative of his had died in Rajahmundry of Coronavirus, the body was carried to the burial ground with the help of some social volunteers, including one Ameer Pasha.

East Godavari Covid-19 nodal officer B.V.V. Satyanarayana said that if a patient dies of Coronavirus, the set protocols need to be followed. Panchayat personnel in villages or officials in municipalities have to disinfect the body and put it in a special package before carrying the body for last rites.

## ENVIRONMENT | REPORT

## AP to measure farm power usage

Meters to be fixed on agri pumpsets, reading to be sent to farmers; state will pay power utility

**N. VAMSI SRINIVAS | DC**  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 1

**THE PILOT** project in one district will be completed before December 31 and efforts would be made to implement the project throughout the state from the 2021-2022 financial year.

Reeling under severe financial crisis and committed to implementing populist schemes, Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has decided to take a political gamble and implement drastic reforms to avail additional borrowings of ₹15,000 crore in the current fiscal.

To begin with, the government on Tuesday announced that meters would be fixed to all agricultural pump sets and the direct benefit transfer (DBT) scheme would be implemented wherein power subsidy would be paid to farmers who will pay the distribution companies.

The pilot project in one district will be completed before December 31 and efforts would be made to implement the project throughout the state from the 2021-2022 financial year. The Chief Minister himself may get ready to bite the bullet by implementing the pilot project in his native YSR Kadapa district.

Ironically, energy secretary N. Srikanth brought down the number of agriculture power connec-

ties, PDS sectors and ease of doing business to avail the 1.5 per cent enhanced limit.

Earlier, the state government had proposed to give an undertaking to implement reforms but the Centre did not agree and insisted that the reforms should be put in place to avail the additional borrowing. "We desperately need additional borrowing because we have been quickly exhausting the permitted level of borrowing to meet the expenditure of the CM's pet populist scheme Navaratnu," sources said.

YSRCC leaders, however, were apprehensive about the move which they say would instil fear among farmers that the government at a later date might link the free power to consumption. The energy secretary also made it clear that meters would be fixed and reading would be sent to farmers every month. The government will deposit the subsidy amount in exclusively created accounts for the farmers, and immediately transfer the money to discoms from there without farmers' intervention, he added.

With about ₹1,600 crore availed from the Reserve Bank of India through ways and means being disbursed to Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy's pet populist scheme of social pensions, finance managers were left with meagre funds to pay salaries. Official sources told *Deccan Chronicle* that the government had been trying to mobilise ₹3,000 crore through open market borrowings in a day or two to fill its coffers. With revenues falling due to Covid-19 and burden of populist schemes increasing, the state economy has

reached a precarious situation, sources added.

As per the stringent Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act cap on borrowings — three per cent of the Gross State Domestic Product — the state is permitted to borrow ₹3,000 crore for the current fiscal of 2020-21.

Of this, it has already exhausted ₹23,000 crore in the first quarter. The government also resorted to out-of-budget borrowings of at least ₹12,000 crore so far.

Though the Centre relaxed FRBM norms and allowed another two per cent borrowings, 1.5 per cent will come with strings attached and only 0.5 per cent can be raised without restrictions. "Of the ₹5000 crore that can be borrowed without restrictions, we are raising ₹3,000 crore in a day or two," a senior official

said adding that another ₹2,000 crore can only be raised in the next seven months.

The government has been exhausting the ways and means as well as over draft facility on a regular basis. Source said the government can borrow a maximum of ₹20,000 crore as per the existing provisions and another ₹15,000 crore if it can implement the stringent conditions that the Centre has imposed to avail the 1.5 per cent enhanced borrowing limit.

The Chief Minister, according to sources, reiterated at a recent meeting that his priority would continue to be the implementation of the Navaratnu, the populist and cash transfer schemes and the finance department should arrange funds for their smooth implementation.

## AP runs out of money, delays salaries, pensions

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 1

The Andhra Pradesh government did not have funds in the exchequer on Tuesday to clear the entire salary bill of its employees and pensions on pay day.

With about ₹1,600 crore

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Bank of India through

ways and means being

disbursed to Chief Minis-

ter Y.S. Jagan Mohan

Reddy's pet populist

scheme of social pensi-

ons, finance managers

were left with meagre

funds to pay salaries.

Official sources told *Deccan Chronicle* that the government had been trying to mobilise ₹3,000 crore through open market borrowings in a day or two to fill its coffers. With revenues falling due to Covid-19 and burden of populist schemes increasing, the state economy has

## AP REGISTERS 10,368 FRESH COVID-19 CASES, 84 FATALITIES IN 24 HOURS

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 1

Andhra Pradesh has registered 10,368 new Covid-19 cases, raising the overall tally to 4,45,139, apart from 40 deaths, taking the death toll to 4,053 in the last 24 hours.

State health authorities released a Covid-19 bulletin here on Tuesday reporting that out of 59,834 samples tested, 10,368 individuals have been found to be infected with Coronavirus. Out of a total of 37,82,746 samples tested so far, 3,39,876 patients

have been discharged after recovery, while 1,01,210 patients are undergoing treatment in various hospitals.

Among new confirmed Covid-19 infections, East Godavari tops the state by registering the highest number of 1,208 cases, followed by 1,068 in Chittoor, 1,059 in Nellore, 994 in Kadapa, 948 in West Godavari, 888 in Prakasam, 825 in Visakhapatnam, 813 in Kurnool, 629 in Srikakulam, 617 in Guntur, 552 in Vizianagaram, 456 in Anantapur and 311 in Krishna.

## 2 ROBBERS LOOT ₹51K FROM BANK

Anantapur, Sept. 1: Two robbers looted ₹51,000 from the counter of the Rayadurgam branch of Manappuram Bank after threatening the staff with pistols on Monday evening.

The duo wore masks and came to the bank saying they wanted to pledge gold and were allowed entry.

## EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

## E-Tender Notice

E-Tender Notice No. DDU/EL/G-E-Tender/20-21/08 Date : 28.08.2020

On line (through E-Tendering) for the following work is invited by DRD/Elect/DDU for and on behalf of the President of India from experienced and financially as well as technically sound contractors including those enlisted with the Railway, CPWD, BSNL, MES, PWD and other public sector undertakings.

Name of work with its location : No. DDU/EL/G/P/20-21/01, Sub- Laying of HT/LT Cables through HDPE Pipe by Pressure Mechanism at DDU/DDU/Divn. Approx. cost of the work: Rs. 977528.52, Earnest Money : Rs. 195600.00, Tender closing Date Time : 29.08.2020, 15:00 Hrs.

Website particulars of e-tendering : [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) Sr. Divnl. Elect. Engr. (G) E.C. Rly/DDU PR/0570/DDU/EGEN/Elect/T/20-21/32

## EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

## E-TENDER NOTICE

The Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer, East Central Railway, Samastipur for and on behalf of the President of India invites Tender from competent and experienced Contractors having technical expertise, financial solvency through E-Tendering mode of IREPS web portal of Indian Railway for execution of the following works.

Tender No. & Date : EL-TRD-04-ET-20-21 (Open) Sr. No. (1) Name of the work with its location & completion period : Design, Supply, Erection, Testing & Commissioning of 25KV, 50Hz Single Phase, AC, Electricity including OHE/PSI Work Dauram Madhepura-Purnea section, Samastipur Division of East Central Railway. (2) Approx. Cost of Work : Rs. 32,81,87,838.18 (3) Earnest Money : Rs. 17,90,900/- Cost of tender document-Rs. 10,000.00 (4) Refundable (4) Date & Time for closing and opening of tender : Date of Closing of E-tender at 12.00 hours on 11.09.2020 Date of opening of E-tender from 12.30 hours on 11.09.2020

(5) Website particulars, Notice Board location where complete details of tender can be seen : <http://www.ireps.gov.in> D.R.M.(Elect.) Office/TRD/SJP. Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD)/Samastipur PR/0568/SJP/ETRDT/20-21/36

## SHIPS CARRYING AMMONIUM NITRATE WAIT AT VIZAG PORT

**K.M.P. PATNAIK | DC**  
VISAKHAPATNAM, SEPT. 1

Andhra Pradesh has registered 10,368 new Covid-19 cases, raising the overall tally to 4,45,139, apart from 40 deaths, taking the death toll to 4,053 in the last 24 hours.

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Tender No. 53-1/2020-21/Admn./NIUM/Tender

## TENDER NOTICE

NIUM invites sealed tenders from registered and reputed firms/establishments for Garden and Canteen Services for the year 2020-21.

For details and tender form, please log on to [www.nium.in](http://www.nium.in)

Last date for submission of tenders: 05.10.2020 (3:00 PM)

Dav 17201/11/0014/2021

Sd/- Director

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF UNANI MEDICINE

Kottigepalya, Magadi Main Road, Bangalore-560091

(An autonomous body under

Ministry of Ayush, Govt. of India)

Tel: 080-23584260

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Dav 17201/11/0014/2021

Sd/- Director

RAIL COACH FACTORY, KAPURTHALA

On-line bids are invited by PCMM, RCF on behalf of President of India for following items:-

Sr. No.	Tender No. & Due Date	Description	Qty.(Nos./ Sets)	EMD (₹)
1.	12201245 24/09/2020	1) Supply and Apply Lavatory window in LHB Coaches. 2) Supply and Apply Emergency window in LHB AC Sleeper Coaches. 3) Supply and Apply Fixed window in LHBAC Sleeper Coaches.	2429 Nos	9,53,360/-
2.	12201240 24/09/2020	1) Supply and Apply Emergency wider window with sliding shutters in LHB SCN Coaches. 2) Supply and Apply Fixed window in LHB Coaches with wider window. 3) Supply and Apply wider window with sliding shutters in LHB SCN Coaches. 4) Supply and Apply Emergency window in LHB Coaches with wider window.	991 Nos	4,05,660/-
3.	16201241 25/09/2020	1) Turban cotton cloth for pagris size 115cm wide, 8.5 MTR long piece	1,1872 Nos	18,4870

# DECCAN Chronicle

2 SEPTEMBER 2020

## Only long-term measures can resuscitate economy

**L**itter over four years ago, then International Monetary Fund managing director Christine Lagarde billed India as a bright spot in the gloomy global economy. Notwithstanding the fact that the Indian economy shone majorly because of cheaper crude oil, all of us felt euphoric. Hearts swelled with pride and a sense of reinvention. Within the next year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched his googlies, demonetisation and the Goods and Services Tax. Instead of launching the economy into a geostationary orbit of the global economy, the government's twin mistakes sent it into a free fall. The Covid-19 pandemic has finally taken the Indian economy to a journey of the netherworld. The government finally admitted that the economy had shrunk 23.4 per cent in the quarter ended on June 30 — the worst performing economy among the top 50 countries.

Does it mean an end to the economic growth story of India? Definitely not! The people of this country are smart enough to set right things. However, the journey of the Indian economy over the last four years — from being the bright spot in the global economy to the worst performer among 50 countries — gives a vivid commentary on the economic policy of the central government. The economic crisis during the UPA-2 government was attributed to policy paralysis. And if one were to pick one phrase to describe the economic failure under the current regime, it would be "impulsive policy". Be it demonetisation or the rollout of the GST or lockdown, the government went after headline-grabbing policies without adequate preparedness to handle the consequences of those decisions. The result is a big mess-up.

The lockdown was not per se a wrong decision. Several countries have effectively implemented the lockdown to control the Coronavirus pandemic. But implementing blindly what other foreign countries did without taking into consideration the uniqueness of India was wrong. Perhaps, top officials might not know that the majority of Indian families have hand-to-mouth existence. One wonders how the ministers, who grew up in middle-class backgrounds, could have forgotten this stark reality of India. How did the ministers expect that crores of such people remain locked in without money and food? Had the government transferred some cash to all families, the lockdown could have been successful. But the Narendra Modi government dithered in taking this step. With state elections on the horizon, the government did not stop guest workers from returning home. This fatal error helped the Coronavirus spread to smaller towns and rural India, making containment of the pandemic much more difficult and potentially pushing lakhs of people into poverty.

With large swathes of the economy, involving businesses such as hospitality, events, weddings, tourism, entertainment, travel in a virtual coma, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or the size of the economy cannot be expected to reach pre-Covid levels immediately. There is nothing that the government can do in the short term to resuscitate the economy. Two things that the government could do are: Not deploying smokescreens to make everything look hunky-dory, and adopting a transparent and consultative approach in framing the economic policy.

## Bhushan's choice

**I**t is no precedent in terms of redefining the law, nor is it an example of judicial statesmanship — an exercise that the respondent in the Supreme Court's 2020 suo motu contempt of court petition had prayed for before the court. But the much-publicised sentence of a ₹1 fine in menacing conjunction with the nasty threat — of a three-month jail sentence and disbarment — that failed to conceal or disguise the intent of intimidation nor the old-style, passive-aggressive conservatism of its writers — coming as it did in 82 thick leaves pursuant to a 108-page judgment — during a lockdown when thousands of urgent petitions desperately awaited their audience — nonetheless spells hope. It holds the promise that the citizens' right to free speech may yet emerge morally victorious. Should their view carry genuine weight, its opponents will blink, and expose themselves.

This is despite the fact that Mr Bhushan is a privileged man. None other than the attorney general of India spoke for him. His name carries influence in the bar association circles. As it transpired, the conclusion to the case was plain for what it was — a crafty manoeuvre by the bench — of Justices Arun Mishra, B.R. Gavai, and Krishna Murari — to beat a hasty retreat after biting of more than it could chew. Perhaps Justice Mishra and his brother judges had made an error of judgment in taking suo motu cognisance of contempt in response to advocate Mahek Maheshwari's petition in the first place. It is widely believed that Mr Bhushan, in fact, did a service to the judiciary by calling attention to his misgivings. This newspaper opined that the bench was in contempt of justice by pronouncing him guilty. And the bench went on to prove it right!

In sentencing Mr Bhushan to the token fine, the bench had aimed for the high moral ground. It ended up making a mockery of itself. There was much mirth over photos of Mr Bhushan's advocate, Rajeev Dhawan, comically presenting him a one-rupee coin, post the announcement. Kudos to Mr Bhushan for displaying grace under pressure, not giving in to the impulse for drama — of being seen braving imprisonment and discredit — but paying the fine cheerfully as he had promised to. He deserved the right to file a review petition. His next move remains unpredictable.

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**G**ram: CHRONICLE Postal registration no: No. H/SD-348/2006/008

Subhani



## Delimitation next stop in govt's Kashmir project



Riyaz Wani

**E**ver since Narendra Modi government stripped J&K of its semi-autonomous status in August last, the decision has invariably been explained as the outcome of the BJP's push to fulfil its longstanding ideological agenda and electoral promise. It was certainly about that but only in a rhetorical sense. In its implementation on the ground since then, the decision has come across as an elaborate and minutely-thought-through plan of action that seeks to fundamentally alter the facts on the ground to end the lingering conflict on this side of the Line of Control. And in that sense the withdrawal of the former state's special status and the actions undertaken over the past year form an ambitiously envisioned alternative settlement formula for Kashmir.

This formula is not about resolving the Kashmir issue as we know it: a dispute between India and Pakistan going back to Partition and the one arising from a decades-long separatist struggle in the region. There is no plan underway to talk to Pakistan or to the dissenting political and militant groups in J&K to arrive at a solution. On the contrary, the effort is to enforce a unilateral solution — a merger of J&K into India — without taking Kashmiris or Pakistanis on board.

And this solution, if we go by the constitutional and legal changes ushered in over the last year, operates along two axes: one, a demographic shift being brought about by throwing J&K open to settlement by outsiders and another by altering the nature of the political representation through the delimitation of the constituencies that has already been initiated.

According to new domicile law, issued on April 1, anyone who has

been a resident of Kashmir for 15 years will get the residency rights. The law applies retrospectively. For central government officials, the period is 10 years and for students it is only seven years. According to 2011 census there are 28 lakh migrant labourers in J&K other than lakhs of security personnel and thousands of central government employees, a significant number of whom have become eligible for residency rights should they wish to settle down in the former state.

As for the delimitation, the BJP has made no secret of its desire to enhance the number of Assembly seats to Jammu region. Before J&K's bifurcation into two Union territories — J&K and Ladakh — its Assembly had 87 seats of which predominantly Muslim majority Kashmir Valley had 47 seats, Hindu majority Jammu 37 and the now separated Ladakh with a slim Muslim majority four seats. Now according to the delimitation, that in normal course was due to be held in 2026, seven new seats are being added to the Assembly, most of which, if not all, are expected to go to Jammu.

This has the potential to shift the region's political centre away from Kashmir Valley to Jammu, turning in the words of Haseeb Drabu 'a demographic majority into a political minority'.

Delimitation has the potential to shift the region's political centre away from Kashmir Valley to Jammu, turning in the words of Haseeb Drabu 'a demographic majority into a political minority'

of the 13.6 million living in J&K, according to Census 2011, 68.3 per cent are

**SHORT TAKES**

**SHINCHAN'S NAME APPEARS IN WB MERIT LIST**

Kolkata, Sept. 1: After Bollywood actor Sunny Leone and singer Neha Kakkar, Japanese cartoon character Shinchan Nohara's name "mischievously" made it to the merit list of a college in West Bengal.

Shinchan's name appeared at the top of the B.Sc (Honours) merit list of Siliguri College in north Bengal, an official of the institution said on Monday.

"The name was immediately removed and a fresh list put up on the college website. We have lodged a police complaint as it was an act of mischief," he said.

The college had outsourced to an agency the process of compiling the merit list based on details given by the candidates during online applications, but the students' details will be scrutinised by the authorities of the institution before the classes begin, the official said.

The incident comes close on the heels of Kakkar's name appearing in the BA English (Honours) merit list of Malda's Manikchak College and Leone's name figuring in the lists of three other colleges. The four colleges have lodged complaints with cyber cells of the police.

**SUSHANT DEATH CASE: CBI GRILLS RHEA'S PARENTS**

DC CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI, SEPT. 1

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Tuesday began questioning of Rhea Chakraborty's parents in connection with the Sushant Singh Rajput suicide probe. The grilling took place in the absence of Rhea who has undergone exhaustive interrogation of at least 35 hours in the past four days.

Rhea and her parents are named as accused in the case filed by the Bihar police, being probed by the CBI. Meanwhile, the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) on Tuesday detained a supplier and seized drugs sourced from the USA and Canada.

The first round of CBI questioning of Indrajit and Sandhya Chakraborty along with their son Showmi began with the kind of relationship their daughter shared with Rajput. The officials sought details on the monetary transaction and financial relationship between Chakrabortys and the late actor. The questioning continued till late evening at the DRDO guest house, Santacruz.

"The CBI will question the parents again if needed and other accused named in the case as the investigation progresses. The facts recorded till now in the interrogation of those questioned will be verified with the versions given by all," said an officer privy to the investigation.

The ED, meanwhile, continued questioning Arya for the second day in a row on Tuesday. The agency is probing the possible role of Arya in laundering money to the tune of ₹15 crore, belonging to Rajput.

**KONARK SUN TEMPLE REOPENS AFTER 5 MONTHS**

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC

BHUBANESWAR, SEPT. 1

The 13th century Sun Temple at Konark in Puri district reopened on Tuesday after remaining closed for visitors for over five months in the wake of Covid-19 pandemic. The monument has been thrown open for public as per the Unlock 4 guidelines of the Central government as well as state government after a discussion of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) authorities with the district administration.

"We had already received the instructions for reopening of the temple from the Centre. However, we were waiting for the guidelines of the state government," ASI superintendent Arun Mallick told reporters here.

He said all the guidelines issued by the government of India and the Odisha government will be followed while allowing the visitors to the site.

Thermal screening of visitors will be conducted at the entry point.

Mallick said sign boards having quick response (QR) code have been installed outside the temple for visitors as manual booking of tickets will not be done as now.



A bartender arranges wine glasses at a lounge pub ahead of its reopening, after authorities allowed the sale and consumption of alcohol at the pubs and bars with social distancing during Unlock 4.0, in Bengaluru on Tuesday. The order by the Excise Commissioner said such relaxations were already in place in states like Assam, Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan.

— PTI

## CPM, Cong spar over killing of DYFI members

GILVESTER ASSARY | DC  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,  
SEPT. 1

A day after the murder of two DYFI workers in Venjaramoodu, about 15kms from state capital Thiruvananthapuram, the ruling CPM accused the Congress leaders including a Lok Sabha MP of plotting the killing.

"It was a clash between two gangs. Our party men are not involved in any way," maintained Kerala PCC chief Mullapadu Ramachandran.

The police said the incident occurred late on Sunday night when the gang clapped to attract the attention of the DYFI workers who were returning home on a motorcycle.

"After carrying out the killings, the assailants first called the MP to inform him about the incident. All the accused have close links with the Congress leaders. There is a high-level conspiracy which needs to be probed," he told media persons.

However, Prakash said the minister was making baseless allegations. "The police, home department, Intelligence and other agencies are at the minister's disposal. Let him prove my involvement," he said.

DYFI activists Haque Muhammad, 24, and Mithilaj, 30, were murdered by a group of six members at Thenbamodu near Venjaramoodu while they were returning home late Sunday night. The rural police suspected political rivalry behind the murders as the area had witnessed clashes between the Congress and CPM workers a couple of months ago. Both sides used to have abusive exchanges on social media as well.

The murders have sent a shock wave in the area.

Four Congress workers have been taken into custody while six more including the first and second accused are absconding. The Congress leadership sought to distance itself from the gruesome murders.

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## Kerala mantri's tweet triggers controversy

DC CORRESPONDENT  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,  
SEPT. 1

was referring to the one by Sahodaran Aiyappan, an ardent disciple of Sree Narayana Guru. If you are not convinced, read his Onapattu, the most popular Onam song of Kerala."

Legend has it that Mahabali a generous king once ruled Kerala. He was sent to the nether world by Yamana as a "cheat" and angered the BJP and hindutva organisations in the state.

The minister's controversial tweet, greeting the people of Kerala, said: "Happy Onam! We celebrate Mahabali who did not discriminate by caste or creed, not Yamana who cheated him." In his tweet Isaac also referred to Kerala announcing the floor price of 14 types of vegetables to suggest that people had something to celebrate this festival season.

However, Isaac's tweet didn't go down well with the BJP which accused him of insulting Yamana who is one of the reincarnations of Lord Vishnu.

Kerala finance minister Dr Thomas Isaac's tweet on Monday describing Yamana as a "cheat" has angered the BJP and hindutva organisations in the state.

In 2016, the then BJP national president Amit Shah wished everyone a "happy Yamana Jayanthi" with the image of Mahabali under Yamana's feet.

Many felt that it was a deliberate attempt to change the narrative and redesign Onam as a festival of Brahmanical victory over "lower" caste groups.

## 56% of cases from 5 states: Centre

Urban affairs ministry to issue SOPs for functioning of metro trains

**Maha: Nod for inter-district travel in long-distance trains**

Mumbai, Sept. 1: Inter-district travel will now be permitted on special long-distance trains as per the Maharashtra government's latest set of guidelines for the Covid-19 "unlock" phase, a railway official said on Tuesday.

While restrictions have not been eased for local trains, frequency of special long-distance trains, which are currently being plied, also remains unchanged, the official said.

Cumulatively, these five states reported 536 deaths in a day which is over 65 per cent of the total fatalities registered in the country during the period.

Passenger reservation system has been enabled and starting September 2, people can travel in long-distance trains only on reserved tickets, he said.

This travel will be restricted on special trains, which are being plied to Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and other states, he said, adding that the railways is currently running 32 such trains and there will be no change in the frequency.

Earlier, long-distance trains were only running from the station of origin to the destination, without any stops in between.

However, these trains will now stop at various stations in the state along the way depending on their scheduled stops, the official added.

Meanwhile, the Union Housing and Urban Affairs (HUA) ministry is likely to issue detailed standard operating procedures (SOPs) on Wednesday for the functioning of metro trains allowed under the 'Unlock 4' guidelines, an official said.

Ministry secretary Durga Shanker Mishra held a meeting with all managing directors of metro rail corporations on Tuesday to finalise the Standard Operating Procedures. — PTI

## Delhi HC holds physical courts after 5-month gap

New Delhi, Sept. 1: The legal fraternity gave a mixed response to the commencement of physical hearings by the Delhi High Court on Tuesday, after a gap of more than five months, with several lawyers asking the court that their matters be heard via video conferencing.

The high court has been conducting hearings through video conferencing since March 24 to contain the spread of ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Two division benches - one of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice Prathee

Jalan and other of Justices Vipin Sanghi and Rajnish Bhatnagar - and three single judges - Justices Jayant Nath, V.K. Rao and Yogesh Khanna held physical hearing of cases on Tuesday.

The same set of division benches and judges will hold the court on Wednesday, September 2; thereafter, on the next two days it will be another set of division benches and judges. Other division benches and single judges would hold court via video conference as they did on Tuesday.

The staff of the respec-

tive courts of the Chief Justice, Justice Nath and Justice Rao said that in several matters the lawyers indicated their preference for hearings via video conferencing and urged that their cases be listed on dates when virtual hearings would be held.

However, in the separate courts of Justice Sanghi and Justice Khanna all the matters listed for physical hearing were conducted without a hitch and no one sought dates for virtual hearings, the respective court staff said.

- PTI

## OVER 1,100 NEW COVID-19 CASES IN KERALA

DC CORRESPONDENT  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,  
SEPT. 1

Kerala on Tuesday reported 1,140 new cases of Covid-19 even as 2,111 people recovered from the infection.

The total number of cases reported in Kerala so far has gone up to 76,525 of which 53,653 have recovered from the disease while 22,512 are under treatment.

Of the new cases, 1,059 contracted the infection through contact, while the source of infection for 158 is yet to be known.

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Many felt that it was a deliberate attempt to change the narrative and redesign Onam as a festival of Brahmanical victory over "lower" caste groups.

**LOW-KEY FEST Several events generally held during the 10-day festival will either be curtailed or cancelled**

## Mysuru Dasara celebrations to be a simple affair this year

SHILPA P. | DC  
MYSURU, SEPT. 1

The ambiguity on plan for this year's famous 410th Mysuru Dasara celebration amid the Covid pandemic is likely to be cleared soon.

Chief Minister B.S. Yeddyurappa has already announced that Dasara is going to be a simple event. However, a detailed picture on the celebrations will emerge only after the Chief Minister meets this week in Mysuru or next week in Bengaluru.

Meanwhile, with 45 days ahead of the festival which will be celebrated from October 17 to 26, new Deputy Commissioner of Mysuru Sharath B. has held an informal meeting with district-level officials to discuss the plans for this year's celebrations.

The elephants, a major attraction of jumbo savari procession were supposed to have been held by now. But the process of finalising the list of elephants which would be part of this year's procession, itself is yet to be finalised.

The forest department officials have written to state government in

namely Gaja Payana (to fetch Dasara elephants from forest to city) and Gaja Agamana (to welcome them to Palace courtyards where they will be treated with nutritious food and where they stay along with their caretakers until the end of Dasara) were supposed to have been held by now. But the process of finalising the list of elephants which would be part of this year's procession, itself is yet to be finalised.

The festival usually con-

cludes with the grand jumbo savari procession witnessed by over 4 lakh people who come to Mysuru from across the state, country and world on Vijayadashami, the 10th day, where in elephant carries idol of Goddess Chamundeswari housed in the 750 kg golden howdah.

Along with that is atleast a kilometer-long procession with tableaux depicting Karnataka's cultural diversity. However, this year jumbo savari procession on October 26 is likely to be restricted to palace premises and it might

have very few cultural troupes and there might not be any tableaux.

The finale for the ten-day festivities is usually grand torch light parade witnessed by over 30,000 people at Bannimantap grounds at night on 10th day of Dasara. But this year, torch light parade is likely to be dropped, as per official sources.

However, royal family of Mysuru is preparing for the 10-day traditional Dasara poojas and rituals, which will be held within the palace as a private affair to keep up with their tradition.

## SHORT TAKES

## 19 KG OF TUSKS SEIZED IN KEONJHAR

AKSHAYA KUMAR  
SAHOO | DC  
BHUBANESWAR, SEPT. 1

The allegation by animal lovers that Odisha is a happy hunting ground for elephant poachers has once again received credence as the state forest department officials on Monday night seized around 19 kg of elephant tusks from a car near Bayapita village in Keonjhar district.

Three persons, all ivory traders, were arrested in this connection.

According to reports, the officials, acting on a tip off about the smuggling of the tusks in the car, chased the vehicle and intercepted it near Bayapita village.

On searching the car, the tusks were recovered. The accused were being questioned to ascertain the possible involvement of others in the offence.

According to Dr Biswajit Mohanty, an eminent wildlife activist, poachers are indulging in mindless killing of tuskers in the state to extract their teeth.

“Despite Odisha being criticised for the rising number of elephant deaths, the state forest department has not been able to crack down the poachers and traders. Unless the state government wakes up to nail the poachers, the elephant population here will cease to exist,” said Dr Mohanty.

## SENA WELCOMES AMBEDKAR'S TEMPLE DEMAND

SONU SHRIVASTAVA | DC  
MUMBAI, SEPT. 1

A day after VBA chief Prakash Ambedkar visited Lord Vitthal temple in Pandharpur as part of a protest seeking its reopening, the Shiv Sena on Tuesday cryptically said his procession must be “welcomed” if it is heading in the direction of Hindutva. Ambedkar on Monday led the protest of scores of Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi (VBA) workers at Pandharpur in Solapur district, seeking reopening of the temple which has been shut due to Covid-19 restrictions.

During his visit to the temple, he had applied *bukka* (a fragrant black powder) and sandalwood powder on his forehead, as Warkaris (devotees of Lord Vitthal) do.

Latching onto it, the Shiv Sena in an editorial in party mouthpiece ‘Saamana’ said, “In a way, he took the saffron pataka (flag) on his shoulder. The new procession of Advocate Ambedkar and his VBA must be welcomed if they are heading in the direction of Hindutva.”

The ruling Shiv Sena in Maharashtra noted that the BJP last week staged a protest, demanding reopening of temples in the state, while Ambedkar did so on Monday. It is pure coincidence that the two demonstrations are being linked.

## JEE MAINS HELD AMID STRINGENT PRECAUTIONS

New Delhi, Sept. 1: The Joint Entrance Exam (JEE)-Mains for admission to engineering colleges began on Tuesday amid stringent precautions and social distancing measures in view of Covid-19 pandemic.

Staggered entry and exit for candidates, sanitisers at the gate, distribution of masks and maintaining social distancing as candidates queued up, were among the scenes witnessed at the exam centres across the country.

The exam which has been postponed twice in view of Covid-19 pandemic is scheduled from September 1 to 6.

“Hand sanitiser are being made available at the entrance of the examination centre and inside the exam hall at all times. The usual process of checking the admit cards of candidates has been replaced with barcode readers, which have been made available to the examination centre authorities,” said an official of the National Testing Agency (NTA).

“While all the candidates are asked to go to the exam centres with masks and sanitisers, once they enter the centre, they have to use the masks provided by the examination authority. Each candidate will be offered a 3-ply mask at the time of entry and expected to wear the same during the examination in order to avoid any form of unfair means at the time of examination,” the official added.

## ARMY HITS UPON ‘HUGE’ ARMS CACHE ALONG LoC

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC  
SRINAGAR, SEPT. 1

The Army on Tuesday claimed that its troops defending the Line of Control (LoC) hit upon ‘a huge cache of arms and ammunition’ left behind by a group of infiltrators in secreted locations in Rampur sector of Uri belt in north-western Baramulla district.

It said that, after being challenged by alert troops, the infiltrators moved back into Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

Separately, the Border Security Force (BSF) and J&K police said that they during a joint operation carried out in Shiendara Top and Khanater Top villages in the hills of Poonch district of Jammu region, recovered two pistols with four magazines and 150 rounds of live ammunition, five AK-47 magazines and 250 bullets, two wireless sets, four grenades and a Binocular from a militant hideout.

Defence spokesman, Colonel Rajesh Kalia, said here that the Army troops detected movement of suspicious persons in a forward area in Rampur sector on August 30. “The movement was from a village close to the LoC and the suspects crossed into Indian territory. Due to terrain of thick foliage and weather conditions an alert of likely infiltration attempt was sounded,” he said.

He added, “The surveillance grid was beefed up all across the area and along the likely infiltration routes and ambushes were sited to thwart any attempt of infiltration. Surveillance continued throughout the night.”

The spokesman said that at first light on Monday, the troops carried a search of the area which continued for seven hours and that it was when two “concealed locations” in two “hideouts” were discovered.

“From these hideouts five AK series rifles along with six magazines and two sealed boxes of 1,254 rounds of AK ammunition, six pistols with nine magazines and six rounds, 21 grenades, 2 UBGL grenades and 2 Kenwood radio sets with one antenna were recovered,” he said.

The Army said that the area has villages ahead of the anti-infiltration fence and claimed that the suspected modus operandi is to drop war-like stores in caches near the LoC.



Seven family members of late Pranab Mukherjee perform rituals during the funeral of the former president, at Lodhi Road cremation ground in New Delhi on Tuesday. Former President's son Abhijit, a parliamentarian, said he plans to convert one floor of their house in West Bengal's Jangipur into a museum-cum-library in the memory of the departed leader. - PTI

## SC: ONLY PURE MILK TO BE USED FOR JYOTIRLINGA

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC  
BHOJPUR, SEPT. 1

The Supreme Court on Tuesday ordered the authorities of the famed Mahakaleswar temple in Ujjain to take measures to preserve the Jyotirlingam, the symbol of the presiding deity of the 18th century shrine, from erosion and decay.

Taking suo moto cognizance of the matter, the bench of Justice Arun Mishra listed out measures to be undertaken by the temple for preservation of the Jyotirlingam.

“The Supreme Court ordered to take measures to protect the Jyotirlingam. The court has made 45 recommendations for the purpose. We are waiting for the hard copy of the judgment”, Ujjain district collector Ashish Singh, who is chairman of the management committee of the shrine, said.

Use of pure milk while performing the ritualistic offerings to the Jyotirlingam was one of the key points made in the order by the apex court for its preservation, an official of the temple administration told this newspaper.

Besides, the court ordered to shun the practice of treating the Jyotirlingam with *panchamrutha*, made of milk, ghee, liquid jaggery and honey.

The court observed that only pure milk should be allowed to pour over the Jyotirlingam as offerings.

## POWERFUL NAGALAND GB FEDERATION WRITES TO PM

MANOJ ANAND | DC  
GUWAHATI, SEPT. 1

A massive polarisation has started in Nagaland where almost all the tribal bodies in tune with sentiments of civil society have started mounting pressure for an early Naga peace accord - either with or without NSCN (I-M).

This was more visible on Tuesday when one of the most powerful, the Nagaland GB (Gaon Burahs) Federation wrote a hard-hitting letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi pleading for a political solution for Nagaland at earliest.

The letter of Nagaland GB Federation has come close on the heels of a mega political initiative of opposition Nagaland Peoples Front (NPF) led by former chief minister T.R. Zeliang who had a consultative meeting with NSCN (I-M) led by its chairman Q. Tuccu on Monday and urged NSCN (I-M) to be more accommodative with other Naga political groups, while assuring the NSCN (I-M) of continuing to play the role of an active facilitator in the ongoing political dialogue for reaching a final settlement on the Naga political issues.

The NPF which has formed Political Affairs Mission (PAM) to act as facilitator in Naga peace talks has not only raised serious question over the role of Nagaland chief minister Neiphiu Rio, known for his proximity with NSCN (I-M) leader Th Muivah but the opposition has also decided to rope in the working committee of Naga National Political Groups (NNPGs) for consultation to conclude the Naga peace-process at the earliest.

The Nagaland GB federation which is considered as to be the custodians of the Naga customary laws, traditions and practices in its letter to Prime Minister said, “The solution of Naga political issue has to incorporate the aspirations of the people rather than the dictated lines of leadership or their ulterior motive for a dictatorial reign.”

## HC quashes Kafeel Khan’s illegal detention under NSA

Court says Aligarh DM did a ‘selective reading’ of his speech at the AMU

Allahabad, Sept. 1: The Allahabad High Court on Tuesday quashed the detention of Dr Kafeel Khan under the National Security Act and ordered his immediate release, saying the Aligarh district magistrate did a “selective reading” of his speech at the AMU.

## ● KHAN HAS

been in jail since January after he delivered the allegedly provocative speech at the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) during the anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) protests in December last year. He is lodged in Mathura jail.

## ● UNDER THE NSA,

a person can be detained without a charge for up to 12 months if authorities are satisfied that he or she is a threat to national security or law and order.

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Quashing Khan’s detention order, the court said, “A complete reading of the speech prima facie does not disclose any effort to promote hatred or violence. It also nowhere threatens peace and tranquility of the city of Aligarh. The address gives a call for national integrity and unity among the citizens. The speech also deprecates any kind of violence. It appears that the District Magistrate had selective reading and selective mention for few phrases from the speech ignoring its true intent.”

The court further said in the instant case, the “causal link is found to be missing or completely broken”.

“In absence of any material indicating that the detainee continued to act in a manner prejudicial to public order from December 12, 2019 up to

February 13, 2020 or that he committed any such other or further act as may have had that effect, the preventive detention order cannot be sustained,” it said.

“In fact, the grounds of detention are silent as to public order at Aligarh being at risk of any prejudice in February 2020 on account of the offending act attributed to the detainee on the date December 12, 2019,” the court said in its order.

“What remains is a mere apprehension expressed by the detaining authority without supporting material on which such apprehension may be founded,” it said.

The court said it had also tested the legality of the detention on the count of giving effective opportunity to the detainee to represent at earliest.

“The record shown to us and the pleadings of the petition also refer that only radiograms relating to decision of the State Government for extension of the term of detention were supplied to the detainee,” it added.

One more important aspect of the matter is that the orders of extension of detention were never served upon the detainee, the court said.

“The record shown to us and the pleadings of the petition also refer that only radiograms relating to decision of the State Government for extension of the term of detention were supplied to the detainee,” it added.

“The radiograms mention that the actual order shall be sent through speed post but in fact nothing except the radiograms

were given to the detainee. In light of the discussion above, we are having no hesitation in concluding that neither detention of Dr. Kafeel Khan under National Security Act, 1980 nor extension of the detention are sustainable in the eye of law,” it said.

In its order, the court said, “The writ petition for the reasons above is allowed. The order of detention dated 13th February, 2020 passed by District Magistrate, Aligarh and confirmed by the State of Uttar Pradesh is set aside. The extension of the period of detention of detainee Dr. Kafeel Khan is also declared illegal.”

“On asking, it is conveyed to us that no transcript of the speech was supplied to the detainee. The non-supply of transcript would have been of no consequence, if a device would have been supplied to the detainee to play the compact disk. It is the position admitted that no such device was made available to the detainee,” it added.

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## IN BRIEF

## 10 guards hostage in Guatemalan jail

**Guatemala City:** Imprisoned Guatemalan gang members took 10 guards hostage Monday after prison system authorities moved some gang leaders to another lockup. Interior Minister Olivero García Rosas dismissed gang demands that the Barrios 18 gang leaders be returned for the guards to be released at the prison known as "Little Hell". He said authorities had control outside the prison. Early Monday, prison authorities had transferred some gang members who made up the inmate leadership. "It was an operation organised to break up the gangs," García said. "If the use of force becomes necessary, force will have to be used." In an audio recording sent to reporters, someone saying he was a guard held hostage said the gang members wanted a peaceful dialogue to make sure their leaders weren't sent to two prisons.

## Earthquake hits northern Chile

**Santiago:** A magnitude 6.8 earthquake struck near the coast of Northern Chile on Tuesday, the GFZ German Research Center for Geosciences said, and some damage and minor landslides were reported in areas near the epicentre, according to local media. A number of people living near the coast were evacuated as a precaution, according to BNO News. There were no reports of casualties. GFZ reported aftershocks of around magnitudes 6.2 and 5.5. There was no tsunami threat from the earthquake, according to the Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre.

GFZ earlier showed the magnitude as 7, with the quake at a depth of 10 km (6.2 miles). Chile is on the Pacific Ring of Fire, an arc of fault lines circling the Pacific Basin which is prone to frequent earthquakes. In June, a magnitude 6.8 earthquake had struck Chile's mineral-rich northern desert. Damage in that quake was minimal.

## Japan typhoon heads to Koreas

**Tokyo:** A powerful typhoon blew over Japan's southernmost islands on Tuesday and was headed toward the country's main southern island and the Korean Peninsula. More than 20,000 homes were left without electricity, according to Okinawa Electric Power Co. As of noon, Typhoon Maysak had already traveled past the area around Okinawa, home to US military bases, but warnings continued to be issued about strong gusts that could cause homes to collapse. Extremely high tides were a risk as well. The Japanese Meteorological Agency had said earlier that Maysak was expected to later make landfall on Kyushu, Japan's main southern island, but its course appeared to be swerving away. Still, it's passing close by could bring strong winds and rain. The storm is on course to hit South Korea by Thursday. A typhoon that hit the Korean Peninsula last week caused scattered minor damage in both Koreas.

## TALIBAN HIT MILITARY BASE, KILL 3

**Kabul:** Sept. 1: Taliban insurgents launched a complex attack on Tuesday morning against a military base in eastern Afghanistan, killing at least three public protection forces, an official said.

Five other forces were wounded in the attack, said Abdul Rahman Mangal, a spokesman for the governor in Paktia province of the country.

A suicide car bomber targeted the entrance gate of the base in the provincial capital Gardez then two gunmen started shooting at the Afghan security forces, Mangal said.

Security forces killed both attackers in a gunbattle lasting almost 10 minutes and the area is now under control, he added.

A Taliban spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, said the group claimed responsibility for the attack in Gardez.

The attack comes after Afghanistan's president appointed 46 members to a council for national reconciliation, which will have final say on whether the government will sign a peace deal with the Taliban after what are expected to be protracted and uncertain negotiations with the insurgents.

The negotiations were envisaged under a US-Taliban peace agreement signed in February as intra-Afghan talks to decide the country's future.

## Israeli knee on Palestinian neck



Israeli soldiers detain a Palestinian protester during a demonstration against the Israeli settlement expansion in the village of Shufat, southeast of Tulkarm in the occupied West Bank, on Tuesday. — AFP

## Outrage as cops shoot, kill another PoC in LA

## HOUSE TO SUBPOENA POSTMASTER GENERAL OVER MAIL DISRUPTIONS

**Washington, Sept. 1:** The House Oversight Committee intends to subpoena Postmaster General Louis DeJoy for documents about disruptions in mail delivery operations that are now central to questions over the ability to handle an onslaught of mail-in ballots expected for the November poll.

Rep. Carolyn Maloney, D-N.Y., the committee chair, sent a memo Monday saying DeJoy blew past last week's deadline to

fully respond to the committee's request for more information. He has not provided any new materials, she said. "It is clear that a subpoena has become necessary to further the Committee's investigation and help inform potential legislative actions," she said.

Democrats are aggressively pursuing oversight of postal operations after President Donald Trump railed against mail-in ballots. — AP

## WORKING FOR TRUMPS A 'MISTAKE', SAYS EX-ADVISER TO FIRST LADY

**Washington, Sept. 1:** A former friend and adviser of Melania Trump says it was "the worst mistake of my life" to work for President Donald Trump and his family, lashing out at the first lady for not defending her over questions about costs for the presidential inauguration she helped produce.

Stephanie Winston Woloff was an unpaid White House adviser to the first lady until February 2018, when her contract was te-

rminated as questions about inaugural spending arose. "When it really counted, Melania wasn't there for me," Woloff writes in "Melania and Me: The Rise and Fall of My Friendship with the First Lady," to be published Tuesday. "She wasn't really my friend. In fact, I wish I had never met her." Woloff said. Woloff, a New York-based event planner, said the pair first met in 2003 in the hallways of *Vogue* magazine. — AP

us all," a woman told a CBS News reporter in tears. "Why are you all here?" Who are you protecting? The latest murder came as US President Donald Trump headed to Kenosha, Wisconsin on Tuesday, where police shot PoC father Jacob Blake seven times in the back on August 23, leaving

him paralysed from the waist down.

Blake's shooting sparked further grief and protests three months after George Floyd suffocated below the knee of a white policeman in Minneapolis in May, paving the way for the most widespread civil unrest in the US since the 1960s. — Agencies

## Detentions resume in Belarus

**Moscow, Sept. 1:** Belarusian authorities on Tuesday resumed detaining protesters in the capital, Minsk, where students took to the streets demanding the resignation of the country's authoritarian leader after an election the opposition denounced as rigged.

Several dozen students on Tuesday held pickets outside their universities and marched through the

city centre on the fourth week of mass protests rocking the country. Belarusian media reported that at least 18 students were detained as police moved to break up the crowd. President Alexander Lukashenko has dismissed the protesters as Western puppets and bristled at the demands for him to step down after 26 years in power or start a dialogue with the opposition.

On Tuesday, people start-

ed gathering near several large plants in support of the striking workers. Belarusian prosecutors have opened a criminal probe against the opposition Coordination Council, accusing its members of undermining the country's security. Last week, the country's courts handed 10-day jail sentences to two council members and summoned several others for questioning. — AP

**WHO'S NEXT?** Sep. 14 vote will pick leader after Abe decided to step down over poor health

## Party manoeuvres to pick Japan's next PM

**Tokyo, Sept. 1:** With Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announcing his plans to step down due to health reasons, members of his ruling party are furiously maneuvering ahead of an internal vote that will ultimately decide his successor. Executives of Abe's ruling Liberal Democratic Party met Tuesday and decided that the September 14 vote for party leader — and with it almost assuredly prime minister — will be limited to lawmakers and not broader members of the party. Some younger lawmakers had called for the latter

to be included in order to make the process more open and democratic. Whoever is chosen will fill in for the rest of Abe's term, until September 2021. The next prime minister will face a number of challenges, including the ongoing fight against Covid-19, managing the Tokyo Olympics that has been postponed to next summer; setting Japan's security policy in the face of an increasingly assertive China, and dealing with the results of the presidential election in the US, Japan's key ally.

Here are the three candi-

dates, who have either announced their intention to run or are expected to do so: Yoshihide Suga: Japan's top government spokesman and Abe's longtime right-hand man, the 71-year-old Suga has emerged as the favourite among ruling party heavyweights.

Suga has been pegged by the party secretary general as the best caretaker who can ensure the continuation of Abe's policies. The son of a farmer in the northern prefecture of Akita, Suga is a self-made politician, rare in Japan's largely hereditary world of politics. As chief cabinet

secretary, Suga is a policy coordinator and advisor to Abe. He is also the public face of Abe's government, doing twice-daily televised media briefings. He's become known as "Uncle Reiwa" after he was tasked with unveiling the new imperial era name for Emperor Naruhito last year.

Suga has been a loyal supporter of Abe since his first stint as prime minister from 2006-2007 and helped his return to power in 2012. Suga had previously denied that he would run, but on Monday simply said he would not comment.

Fumio Kishida: Abe's fo-

reign minister from 2012-2017, the 63-year-old Kishida had once been considered the party's preferred choice to become the next prime minister. His status has slipped, however, after he was seen as fumbling some of the party's response to the Coronavirus in his role as policy chief. In formally announcing his candidacy Tuesday, Kishida said he would be a leader who listens to the voices of the people — something Abe has been criticised for not doing enough.

A low-key lawmaker from Hiroshima with somewhat dovish stance on security issues, he has been less supportive of Abe's longtime push to rewrite Japan's war-renouncing Constitution.

Shigeru Ishiba: A former defense minister seen as Abe's archrival within the party, the 63-year-old Ishiba is the public's favorite for the next prime minister in media surveys. Ishiba's vocal criticism of Abe, however, has hurt his popularity among ruling party lawmakers. — AP

## Tug leaving wreck sinks, 3 sailors die

## It was responding to Mauritius oil spill

## Johannesburg, Sept. 1:

The oil spill disaster off Mauritius turned deadly this week when a tugboat leaving the shipwreck collided with a barge and sank, killing at least three sailors, police said Tuesday. The tug was towing the empty barge from the stranded hull of the Japanese ship, the MV Wakashio, on Monday night when heavy seas rammed the barge into the tug. It sank off the northeast coast of the Indian Ocean island nation, near a village called Poudre D'or.

Four sailors were rescued and one is missing, said Mauritius police constable Jordan Jason Sunasy. "It is a terrible twist in this disaster," environmental consultant Sunay said.

More than 1,000 tonnes of fuel spilled into the coastal waters. About 3,000 tonnes remained on the boat and was pumped into barges before the Wakashio broke in two several days later. Thousands of civilian volunteers created makeshift oil barriers by stuffing fabric tubes with sugar cane leaves and using empty plastic bottles to

keep them afloat.

Environmental workers carefully ferried dozens of baby tortoises and rare plants to shore, plucking some trapped seabirds out of the goo. Dead dolphins began washing up on the coast last week. So far 47 dolphins and three whales have been found, Dowarkasing said.

An initial autopsy by a government laboratory said oil was not the cause of the deaths, but few Mauritians believe that, Dowarkasing said. The government of Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth is under pressure to explain why immediate action was not taken when the ship first ran aground.

He has blamed bad weather for the government's apparent inaction. Tens of thousands of people marched in the capital on Saturday in protest, calling on top officials to step down. The ship's captain and first officer have been arrested and charged with "endangering safe navigation", and several investigations are underway. — AP

## Mass testing for virus in HK amid public doubts

## Hong Kong, Sept. 1:

Hong Kong tested thousands of people for Coronavirus on Tuesday at the start of a mass-testing effort that's become another political flash point in the semi-autonomous Chinese territory. Volunteers stood in lines at some of the more than 100 testing centres, though many residents are distrustful over the resources and staff being provided by China's central government and some have expressed fear DNA could be collected.

The Hong Kong government has dismissed such concerns, and leader Carrie Lam urged the public to see the programme in a fair and objective light.

## Children in Wuhan return to school

Beijing, Sept. 1: Children returned to school Tuesday in the central Chinese city of Wuhan, the original epicentre of the Coronavirus epidemic that underwent months of lockdown but which has not seen new cases of

local transmission for weeks.

## It's class time again across Europe

Paris, Sept. 1: Tugging on their masks or dashing to hug long-unseen friends, millions of children returned to school across Europe and beyond Tuesday in a mass experiment aimed at bridging inequalities and resuscitating economies — despite the persistent pandemic. — AP

## Graft charges: Saudi Arabia sacks 2 royals

## Riyadh, Sept. 1:

A top Saudi military commander and his son were sacked on Monday over graft allegations, state media said, in the government's latest anti-corruption purge.

Joint forces commander Prince Fahad bin Turki — a senior royal family member — and Abdulaziz bin Fahad, the deputy emir of northern Al-Jouf region, were fired and placed under investigation for corruption, according to the report.

Several other officers and civilian employees of the defence ministry were also being probed for corruption, it added, citing a royal decree from King Salman. Prince Fahad served as the commander of the Saudi-led military coalition fighting Iran-linked Houthi rebels in neighbouring Yemen.

He was replaced by Muqtada bin Salim, the deputy chief of staff, on the recommendation of the kingdom's de facto ruler Crown Prince Mohammed. — AP

bin Salman, state media said. The government decision to sack the commander was a "very public signal against corruption in the military", said Saudi author and analyst Ali Shihabi.

The announcement marks the latest government crackdown on what officials describe as endemic corruption in the kingdom. Senior Saudi security commanders were among a string of officials sacked last month over graft allegations at tourism projects.

In March, Human Rights Watch voiced alarm over the arrest of 298 Saudi officials over corruption allegations, warning of possible "unfair legal proceedings" in an opaque judicial system.

Military and judicial officials were among those arrested over allegations of bribery and embezzlement amounting to a total of 379 million riyals (\$101 million), according to the state anti-corruption watchdog. — AP

Justice Aamer Farooq remarked that the court wanted to give an opportunity to the former prime minister to surrender and appear before being declared absconder.

Justice Aamer Farooq remarked that the court would initiate the process to declare Nawaz Sharif as absconder if he failed to present himself before court till next date. A division bench comprising Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Mohsin Akhter Kiyani conducted hearing on a case seeking exemption from hearing for Nawaz Sharif on medical grounds in appeals pertaining to graft references.

Haris pleaded that his client could still challenge the Punjab government's decision for rejecting extension of Nawaz's bail despite the summons of this court. To this Justice Farooq said that the court was not depriving the accused from his legal rights.

## PAK COURT TO INDICT ZARDARI ON SEPT. 9

Islamabad, Sept. 1: A Pakistani accountability court on Tuesday fixed date for indictments of former president Asif Ali Zardari, his sister Faryal Talpur and Omni Group's Abdul Ghani Majeed in the mega money laundering case. The AC Judge Muhammad Azam Khan conducted hearing of the case and summoned the suspects on September 9 for indictments.



## SHORT TAKES

## Root's omission shocks Smith

**Southampton:** Australia star batsman Steve Smith believes England's "surprising" decision to omit Joe Root from the upcoming Twenty20 series between the two sides is a sign the hosts want to play an "all-out power" game.

Test captain Root has been left out of the squad for a three-match contest starting at Southampton on Friday even though the likes of Jason Roy and Ben Stokes are unavailable.

He has not featured in the ongoing T20 series against Pakistan, where the likes of white-ball captain Eoin Morgan and Dawid Malan have been leading the way with the bat for the 50-over world champions.

England national selector Ed Smith made clear on Monday that Root was not currently in the country's best XI when it came to cricket's shortest international format, although he held out the hope the accomplished batsman could make his way into the squad for next year's T20 World Cup. — PTI

## Uruguay club axe Forlan as coach

**Montevideo, Uruguay:** Diego Forlan says he has been fired as coach of Uruguayan club

Pearol. The former Atletico Madrid and Manchester United player took the job in February but leaves amid a poor campaign in the local championship.

His last match with Pearol was Sunday's 2-0 loss to league leader Montevideo Wanderers. Forlan, who retired from professional football in 2018, had his first coaching job at his boyhood club Pearol. He guided the team to four wins from 11 games. The team is in the middle of the Uruguayan championship standings with only six rounds remaining.

"I have to leave Pearol, but beforehand I want to write a few words of gratitude, Forlan said in his social media channels. I have no reproaches, this is football," said the fired coach. — AP

## Nat'l online fitness event set to start

**Mumbai:** Fitness platform Xtralling in association with the Directorate of Sports and Youth Services of Maharashtra will host the National Level Online Athletic Fitness Championship to keep athletes going amidst the pandemic.

Competitors will be shown a workout video on September 10 by the team of professionals.

They will have to submit a video performing the same workout by September 20 with the results scheduled to be announced on October 2. The first three positions stand to win ₹75,000, ₹50,000 and ₹25,000 respectively. Registrations are free on [www.itsxtralling.com](http://www.itsxtralling.com).

## Roglic wins stage, Julian keeps lead

**Orcieres-Merlette, France:** Hotly-tipped Tour de France contender Primoz Roglic won Tuesday's Stage Four on the race's first summit finish but failed to drop any of his key rivals in the process, including overall leader Julian Alaphilippe.

On a perfect day for racing the Vuelta a Espana champion edged home his Slovenian compatriot Tadej Pogacar in second, while Guillaume Martin was third after 160.5km rolling run to the 1850m altitude finish line.

The Alpine summit stage was billed as the moment the true form of the various contenders would be revealed on the 7.1km climb to the ski resort of Orcieres-Merlette at a 6.7% average incline.

It was here in 1971 the great Spanish climber Luis Ocana beat Eddy Merckx by nine minutes, but there was nothing resembling that this year despite the desperate jostling and posturing over the final kilometre. — AFP

## Live on TV

## CARIBBEAN PREMIER LEAGUE

Trinidad Knight Riders vs St Kitts & Nevis Patriots from 7.30 pm; St Lucia Zouks vs Guyana Amazon Warriors from 3 am (Thursday) on Star Sports 1, 2, HD

## US OPEN

Matches from 8.30 pm on Star Sports Select 1, 2 HD

## TOUR DE FRANCE

Stage Five from 4.45 pm on Eurosport, HD

## BACK TO BASICS

## CSK likely to start training this weekend

C. SANTHOSH KUMAR  
DC  
CHENNAI, SEPT. 1

After a series of setbacks, Chennai Super Kings on Tuesday moved a step closer to kicking off their IPL preparations. While the 13 Coronavirus-infected members who are staying in a separate hotel in isolation will be tested only after the mandatory 14-day quarantine period, the rest of the team cleared another test on Tuesday.

Chennai Super Kings CEO K. S. Viswanathan said there will be one more test on Thursday. "Only after we get the test result on Friday can we confirm the training date. Hopefully, we will be able to hit the ground this weekend. Two players who are currently in isolation can join later if they clear the tests," Viswanathan told this newspaper.

While their rivals have already begun their preparations, CSK are in an extended room quarantine. Viswanathan said the support staff, led by coach Stephen Fleming and his deputy Michael Hussey, are engaging players in online sessions.

"Apart from that, our trainer and physio are giving instructions over Zoom calls on how to train indoors," said Viswanathan.

Viswanathan said Super Kings will definitely play warm-up games if the organisers can arrange them. "I think all the teams want to play some warm-up games," he added.

The CSK team management hasn't decided if they need a replacement for Suresh Raina, who has returned to India.

## BHAJI'S ARRIVAL DELAYED

Veteran off-spinner Harbhajan Singh who was expected to join the CSK camp on Tuesday has delayed his arrival. While speculation is rife that Harbhajan is in a dilemma over going to Dubai, Viswanathan said the bowler hadn't said no yet.

"He said he would let us know (arrival date) by tomorrow. We are expecting him by the end of this week," he said.

## I WILL BE IN ACTION SOON: CHAHAR

Deepak Chahar, who is in quarantine after testing positive, said on Tuesday that he was recovering. "Hopefully, I will be back in action soon. I am better now and trying my best to keep myself fit. Thanks for your wishes," said Chahar in a video.



Royal Challengers Bangalore captain Virat Kohli plays a shot during a training session on Monday.

## Did not miss cricket, says Virat

## 'PRIVELEGED TO PLAY'

**Dubai, Sept. 1:** Royal Challengers Bangalore captain Virat Kohli understands "the privilege" of being able to play cricket in the middle of a raging pandemic and he wants all IPL participants to respect the tournament's bio-secure bubble.

"Maybe because I was going on day and night for the last 10 years... It was a revelation for me in the sense that my focus was not solely on missing the game all the time," Kohli said on RCB's YouTube show *Bold Diaries*.

"We are all here to play cricket... The bio-bubble needs to be respected at all times for the tournament to happen eventually. We are not here to have fun and roam around and you know say that 'I want to hang out in Dubai'. That is not the time we are living in. Accept the and understand the privilege that we have," Kohli asserted.

thought I might. Maybe because I'd been going on for nine, 10 years before that and this was the only break I was ever going to get (which was) that long," he said.

Kohli and his wife Anushka Sharma recently announced they were expecting their first child in January.

"The best thing was Anushka and myself were

at home. We never got so much to spend together since we started seeing each other (in 2013)," Kohli said.

"Just being in your own home with the one you love, you couldn't ask for anything better. We just made the most of the whole time," Kohli said.

Kohli, one of the top batsmen in the world in all formats of the game, will remain in a bio-bubble with his Bangalore teammates throughout the 53-day tournament.

The competition is expected to be played behind closed doors, and Kohli said it will be an unusual setting.

"It is going to be strange, it is going to be new. Just the echo of (the) ball hitting the bat, I haven't experienced that since Ranji Trophy cricket began in 2010," he said. — PTI

## ZAMPA COMES IN FOR KANE

**New Delhi, Sept. 1:** Leg-spinner Adam Zampa has been called up by Royal Challengers Bangalore to replace fellow Australian Kane Richardson, who pulled out of the Indian Premier League for the birth of his first child.

Both Richardson and Zampa are currently in Britain as part of Australia's squad.

— PTI

## Heartbroken Raina asks for help

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, SEPT. 1

In an effort to put to rest intense speculations over his surprise IPL pullout, Suresh Raina on Tuesday took to Twitter to say he was grieving his relatives who were murdered in a midnight robbery.

Raina however, didn't specify that was the exact reason for his leaving the CSK camp.

Ever since he took a red eye to reach India last weekend, various reports have claimed there was a serious bubble breach,

"team rift" and a 'hotel room issue' that led to Raina's return.

A day after CSK boss N. Srinivasan issued a denial saying his comments on Raina were wrongly attributed, the cricketer said his uncle was murdered in a "horrible" inci-

dent in Pathankot.

"What happened to my family is Punjab was beyond horrible. My uncle was slaughtered to death, my bua & both my cousins had severe injuries. Unfortunately, my cousin also passed away last night after battling for life for days. My bua is still very very critical and is on life support (sic)," Raina tweeted.

Raina also requested the

Punjab chief minister Captain Amarinder Singh to look into the matter.

"Till date, we don't know what exactly had happened that night & who did that. I request @PunjabPoliceInd to look into this matter. We at least deserve to know who did this heinous act to them. Those criminals should not be spared to commit more crimes," his second tweet added.

— PTI

## Srinath backs Mankading move

**New Delhi, Sept. 1:** If a batsman at the non-striker's end is leaving the crease before the bowler has released the ball, he is not following the spirit of the game and should not seek empathy if he is run out, reckons ICC match referee and former India pacer Javagal Srinath.

India off-spinner R Ashwin courted controversy when he ran out Jos Buttler during last year's IPL as the England batsman backed up too far. The act triggered the age-old debate on the bowler's conduct in such dismissals.

Srinath does not feel that the bowler is wrong if he runs out a batsman in this fashion.

"The bowler is focusing

on the batsman. For the batsman (at the non-striker's end) to stick to his crease till the ball is released is no big deal, because he's not batting, nor is he thinking of anything else," Srinath told Ashwin on his YouTube show *DRS With Ash*.

Delhi Capitals head coach Ricky Ponting feels that the bowler violates the spirit of the game by this dismissal and he would not allow Ashwin to do it. Ashwin, who captained Kings XI Punjab last year, will play for Delhi Capitals in this year's IPL.

"So the batsman shouldn't leave the crease and the bowler should focus on just bowling and the batsman he's going to

been released.

"Don't look for any empathy. Don't invoke the spirit of the game. The spirit of the game is with the runner. He cannot move out of the crease. If he is doing it, he's not invoking the spirit of the game itself. I would believe that the batsman should stick to the crease."

The former bowler said if the runner is leaving the crease he is taking undue advantage and it can have an impact on the outcome of a close game in an unfair manner.

"Even if the batsman has inadvertently left the crease, and it happens to be the last ball of the match where there's a run-out (chance) with the

batsman in by an inch, but he has already taken three foot forward before the ball has been delivered, the result is unfair."

"One of the teams will probably pay for it. I would like to see a balance here."

Srinath said he would want the batsman to stay more careful. Look into the arm of the bowler and let himself go only after the ball is released.

"It cannot be that he's gaining four to five feet advantage every ball. In T20, every ball matters. How many games go to the last ball?" he asked.

Ashwin has backed his decision and also found support from Delhi Capitals co-owner Parth Jindal. — PTI

## KKR enjoy first bonding session



"Today we had our first get-together. It felt great meeting everyone and to be back together like old times. We do meet each other at the nets and talk a lot about cricket," KKR's left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav said in a video posted on their official website.

"But when we have such get-togethers, we get to keep our minds off the game a bit."

— KULDEEP YADAV

KKR cricketer

and they were all excited. "It's not really eight-10 days, after six seven months' of isolation we are getting to meet so many people. We all were really excited for this day," Rana said.

"Since the past eight-10 days, we were waiting for a moment like this, to meet teammates and hangout like previous years as a team, as a family. Today we finally got that chance. Felt really good," Rana added.

Echoing similar sentiments, explosive batsman Rinku Singh said: "It was quite boring during the quarantine being confined in our rooms.

But today we are out for the first time with the team."

Among the foreigners, the Windies duo of Sunil Narine and Andre Russell will arrive post Caribbean Premier League, while Pat Cummins, Eoin Morgan and Tom Banton will join post the England-Australia limited overs series.

— PTI



Jimmy Butler (left) of the Miami Heat dribbles past Khris Middleton of the Milwaukee Bucks during Game One of their Eastern Conference Second Round at the Field House at ESPN Wide World Of Sports Complex in Lake Buena Vista, on Monday. Heat won 115-104. — AFP

## Miami too hot for Milwaukee

With a career-high score of 40 points, Jimmy Butler helped Miami Heat beat the Milwaukee Bucks 115-104 in the opening game of their second round NBA playoff series.

sively which set the stage for Butler's offensive heroics.

PAUL SELLS THE DEAL FOR THUNDER

In the West, Paul tallied 15 points in the fourth quarter and nailed a pair of clutch three-pointers that pulled the Thunder even at 98-98 with just under three minutes left in game six of their first round series. His two free throws with 12 seconds helped seal the victory for Oklahoma City.

Paul's 15 points in the fourth were more than Houston's James Harden and Russell Westbrook had combined. — AFP

## SHORT TAKES

## Barca brace for season sans Messi

Madrid: With or without Lionel Messi, Barcelona already knows it will start its season at home against Villarreal at the end of September.

The Spanish league announced its calendar on Monday, and the first round is scheduled for the second weekend of September. But Barcelona and other teams who played later into this past season will have some of their games postponed so they have time to prepare.

All matches will continue to be played in empty stadiums. The league hoped at least some fans would be allowed into matches, but Spain has been struggling to contain a new surge of Coronavirus cases.

Messi, who last week told Barcelona he wants to leave, skipped the team's first day of training on Monday. — AP

## Barca's Rakitic now with Sevilla

Seville: Spanish club Sevilla reached a deal for the return of midfielder Ivan Rakitic on Tuesday. The club said Rakitic arrives from Barcelona on a contract until 2024.

The 32-year-old Croatian was one of the players that incoming Barcelona coach Ronald Koeman said was not in his plans for the future.

Rakitic had played three years

with Sevilla before joining Barcelona in 2014, where he had played in nearly 200 matches. He left for Barcelona shortly after helping Sevilla win the 2014 Europa League title.

Rakitic has more than 100 appearances with Croatia, helping the team reach the 2018 World Cup final. He was a regular starter with Barcelona during most of his time with the club, but he hadn't been playing as often since coach Quique Setin took over in January. — AP

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## DJOKER ON A ROLL

## Novak, Zverev into second round of US Open

New York, Sept. 1: Pre-tournament favorite Novak Djokovic marched into round two of the US Open Monday as he launched his bid for a 18th Grand Slam with a straight-sets win.

The World No.1 dispatched unheralded Damir Dzumhur of Bosnia-Herzegovina 6-1, 6-4, 6-1 under floodlights at an empty Arthur Ashe Stadium in New York.

The Serbian superstar took just 23 minutes to win the first set before laboring to a narrow victory in an hour-long second set.

With Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer absent, Djokovic is looking to close the gap on them in the race for the all-time men's singles Grand Slam record.

Djokovic currently has 17, behind Nadal on 19 and Federer on 20.

Earlier, fifth seed Alexander Zverev was made to work hard as he progressed into round two of the US Open Monday following a three-hour-long tussle with 2017 finalist Kevin Anderson.

The German, seeking his first Grand Slam title, took the first set on a tie-break 7-6 (7/2) before losing the second 7-5 in an eerily empty Arthur Ashe Stadium.

Ultimately, the 23-year-old proved too much for the South African veteran, winning the third set 6-3 and the fourth 7-5.

Afterwards he shared a moment on a big screen with his tennis-playing brother Mischa Zverev who was beamed into the stadium from his sofa at home.

"I am actually quite happy with a first round like that," said Zverev, who reached his first Grand Slam semifinal at the Australian Open earlier this year. — AFP



Naomi Osaka of Japan wears a mask in honour of Breonna Taylor as she celebrates after defeating Misaki Doi of Japan during the first round of the US Open tennis championships in New York on Monday. — AP

## Osaka honours racial victims

New York, Sept. 1:

Naomi Osaka arrived on court for her opening US Open game on Monday wearing a face mask bearing the name of Breonna Taylor, the African-American nurse shot dead by police who raided her apartment in Kentucky in March. By the time the US Open fortnight is over, Osaka says she hopes to have honoured the memory of six other victims of racial injustice.

"For me, I just want to spread awareness," Osaka said after her 6-2, 5-7, 6-2 win over Japanese compatriot Misaki Doi.

"I'm aware that tennis is watched all over the world, and maybe there is someone that doesn't know Breonna Taylor's story. Maybe they'll Google it or something. For me, just spreading awareness. I feel like the more people know the story, then the more interesting or interested they'll become in it," the fourth seed added.

Osaka, of Haitian and Japanese heritage, said she has six other masks bearing the names of black people killed by police that she hoped to wear through the Grand Slam. "I have seven and it's quite sad that seven is not enough for the amount of names," she said.

The 22-year-old has spoken out repeatedly in the

wake of the protests that swept USA following the death of George Floyd during a confrontation with police in May.

Osaka said she is increasingly comfortable in her role as athlete activist. "A lot of people ask me if I feel more stressed out ever since I started speaking out more. To be honest, not really. At this point, if you don't like me, it is what it is," she said. — AFP

## Pliskova pulls off 1st round in style

New York, Sept. 1: Karolina Pliskova led a day of dominance for seeded players as the underdogs failed to bite at the US Open on Monday.

Top seed Pliskova shrugged off the surreal setting of an empty arena at Arthur Ashe Stadium to breeze past Ukraine's Anhelina Kalinina 6-4, 6-0 in 1 hour 3 minutes.

Pliskova's brisk victory set the tone for the remainder of the opening day in the women's draw, where 15 of the 16 seeds in action progressed safely.

World number three Pliskova, elevated to top seed in the absence of world number one Ashleigh Barty and second-ranked Simona Halep, faces France's Caroline Garcia in the second round.

Pliskova, who made a disappointing early exit at last week's ATP/WTA Western & Southern Open tune-up event in New York, said she was adjusting to playing before empty stands at the Open, where spectators are barred because of Covid-19 protocols.

## SELECTED RESULTS

**Men's singles first round (number in brackets denotes seeding):**

Novak Djokovic (SRB x1) bt Damir Dzumhur (BIH) 6-1, 6-4, 6-1; Kyle Edmund (GBR) bt Alexander Bublik (KAZ) 2-6, 7-5, 7-5, 6-0; Jan-Lennard Struff (GER x28) bt Pedro Martinez (ESP) 6-0, 7-5, 6-4; Pablo Carreno-Busta (ESP x20) bt Yasutaka Uchiyama (JPN) 4-6, 6-3, 1-6, 6-3, 6-3; Mitchell Krueger (USA) bt Pedro Sousa (POR) 3-6, 6-2, 7-5, 6-3; Ricardas Berankis (LTU) bt Federico Gaio (ITA) 7-6 (7/3), 4-6, 6-4, 6-4; Stefanos Tsitsipas (GRE x4) bt Albert Ramos (ESP) 6-2, 6-1, 6-1; Alexander Zverev (GER x5) bt Kevin Anderson (RSA) 7-6 (7/2), 5-7, 6-3, 7-5; Steve Johnson (USA) bt John Isner (USA x16) 6-7 (5/7), 6-3, 6-7 (5/7), 6-3, 7-6 (7/3); Denis Shapovalov (CAN x12) bt Sebastian Korda (USA) 6-4, 4-6, 6-3, 6-2; Soonwooo Kwon (KOR) bt Thai-Son Kwiatkowski (USA) 3-6, 7-6 (7/4), 6-1, 6-2; Gilles Simon (FRA) bt Mohamed Safwat (EGY) 6-1, 6-4, 6-4; Taylor Fritz (USA) bt Dominik Koepfer (GER) 6-7 (7/9), 6-3, 6-2, 6-4.

**Women's singles first round (number in brackets denotes seeding):**

Karolina Pliskova (CZE x1) bt Anhelina Kalinina (UKR) 6-4, 6-0; Petra Kvitova (CZE x6) bt Irina Begu (ROU) 6-3, 6-2; Naomi Osaka (JPN x4) bt Misaki Doi (JPN) 6-2, 5-7, 6-2; Alison Riske (USA x13) bt Tatjana Maria (GER) 6-3, 6-2; Caroline Garcia (FRA) bt Jasmine Paolini (ITA) 6-3, 6-2; Kirsten Flipkens (BEL) bt Rebecca Peterson (SWE x32) 7-6 (7/1), 6-4; Kateryna Bondarenko (UKR) bt Alexandra Krick (USA) 3-6, 6-3, 6-1; Catherine Bellis (USA) bt Tamara Korpatsch (GER) 6-7 (13/15), 6-3, 6-2; Jennifer Brady (USA x28) 6-2, Anna Blinkova (RUS) 6-3, 6-2; Anna-Lena Friedsam (GER) bt Caroline Dolehide (USA) 6-2, 6-2.

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