

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

COIMBATORE | TUESDAY 29 | SEPTEMBER 2020

WEATHER



Max: 32°C
Min: 23°C
Rainfall: 2 mm

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Purattasi 13
Tithi: Thrayodashi
Star: Sathayam
Rahukalam:
3 pm to 4.30 pm
Yamagandam:
9 am to 10.30 am

PRAYERS

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

SUNSET TODAY 6.00 PM

SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.58 AM

MOONRISE TODAY 4.40 PM

MOONSET TOMORROW 4.39 AM

CORONA COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+63,985)	(+685)
61,37,336	96,261

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+ 5,589)
TN: 5,86,397 9,383

WORLD CONFIRMED CASES

3,33,95,496

DEATHS

10,03,598

COUNTRIES,
AREAS WITH
CASES 213

worldometers.info

Two booked for posting 'objectionable' photo of Modi, Shah on Facebook

Ghaziabad: Two men were booked here for posting an "objectionable" photo of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Facebook, police said on Monday. Acting on a complaint lodged by a lawyer, Kavi Nagar Police registered a case against the duo under section 501 of the IPC (printing or engraving matter known to be defamatory) and section 67 of the IT act (publishing or transmitting obscene material in electronic form).

BDC employee shot dead by terrorists in J&K's Shopian

Srinagar: A Block Development Council employee Sabzar Ahmad Naikoo was shot dead by militants in Shopian district of Jammu and Kashmir on Monday, police said. Naikoo was referred to a hospital for treatment but was declared dead on arrival.

COUNTER POINT



Please vote for me!

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AP CM requests Centre to confer Bharat Ratna on SPB



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Covid suspect can take exam: SC

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Romania mayor wins poll after death



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AWAIT ANNOUNCEMENT ON OCT. 7

CM candidate issue pitting EPS against OPS hots up in AIADMK

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, SEPT. 28

The AIADMK's executive committee meeting on Monday was not just stormy, as expected, but also failed to finalise the party's next Chief Ministerial candidate, to decide on which it was primarily convened, thus widening the gap between the two warring factions.

Briefing the media after a close to five-hour noisy proceedings, the party deputy coordinator, KP Munusamy, said the party Coordinator, O Panneerselvam, and joint coordinator, Edappadi K Palaniswami, would announce the chief ministerial candidate on October 7.

At one point during the heated arguments in the meeting, a faceoff between Palaniswami and Panneerselvam took an acrimonious and personal turn. Panneerselvam claimed that he was chosen to be the



AIADMK joint coordinator and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami and party coordinator and deputy CM O. Panneerselvam arrive for party's executive committee meeting, at party headquarters in Chennai, on Monday.

Chief Minister by none other than J Jayalalithaa and that Palaniswami was VK Sasikala's pick. In an angry retort, Palaniswami said both of them were selected by Sasikala.

Even before the start of the meeting, it was clear

from the mood at the party headquarters premises that the battle lines were drawn. It was evident that the two factions, led by Palaniswami and Panneerselvam, were not inclined to give up on their demands.

When Panneerselvam arrived at the premises, his supporters gave him a rousing welcome with some of them wearing full face masks with his image. He was presented a sword as a gift even as slogans rent the air hailing him as Jayalalithaa's chosen Chief Minister.

Palaniswami's arrival, too, was marked with jubilation and the slogan, 'permanent Chief Minister.' There were placards, too, demanding that he be the next Chief Minister. Though the air was charged with emotion, the leaders entered the building to start to meeting.

Inside the hall, both leaders staked their claim to be the Chief Minister, if the party won the 2021 elections. Palaniswami cited his track record in the last four years in running the government and asked why the status quo should be disrupted when everything was running smoothly. ■ **P3**

‘Offset’ kept out in India defence purchase policy

PAWAN BALI | DC
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 28

In a major move, the defence ministry has done away with the off-set clause in future defence deals involving government to government agreements and single vendors as it made contracts costlier without resulting in any significant transfer of technology to India. Also, now Indian defence forces will be able to lease assets without the need to own them to “substitute huge initial cap-

ital outlays”

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), headed by the defence minister Rajnath Singh on Monday approved the Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) – 2020 to make defence acquisitions simpler and faster and promote Atmanirbhar Bharat.

The DAC also approved purchase of second batch of 72,000 SIG Sauer assault rifles from US for frontline Indian army soldiers amidst tensions with China at Eastern Ladakh for Rs

780 crore. It approved proposals for capital acquisitions of various equipment required by the Indian Armed Forces at a cost of Rs 2,290 crore.

“The offset clause will not be applicable in government to government, inter-governmental agreement, and single vendor defence deals,” said sources. This has been done as there has been no significant transfer of technology under the off-set clause and it only made defence deals costlier by around 10 per cent.



AB de Villiers (right) and Devdutt Padikkal scored half-centuries as Royal Challengers Bangalore edged out Mumbai Indians in a thrilling IPL match on Monday. De Villiers held his nerve in the Super Over, bowled by Jasprit Bumrah by taking RCB home after the match ended in a tie. ■ **Report on P8** — **BCCI**

CBI says all angles being probed in Rajput death case

New Delhi, Sept. 28: The CBI has not reached any conclusion in the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput and all aspects are under investigation, the agency said on Monday.

“The Central Bureau of Investigation is conducting professional investigation related to death of Shri Sushant Singh Rajput in which all aspects are being looked at and no aspect has been ruled out as of date,” a CBI spokesperson said in statement.

Rajput, 34, who made his silver screen debut in the critically acclaimed “Kai Po Che” seven years ago, was found dead in his apartment in suburban Bandra in Mumbai on June 14 this year.

The CBI had taken over the probe from Bihar police into the alleged



abetment to suicide case filed by the actor's father KK Singh in Patna against Rajput's girlfriend Rhea Chakraborty and her family.

Singh in his complaint to Bihar police had alleged that Chakraborty along with her family members had misappropriated Rajput's wealth, which was denied by Chakraborty in TV interviews.

Last week Singh's lawyer

Vikas Singh had expressed ‘helplessness’ over the slow pace of the CBI probe into Rajput's death.

The pace of the CBI probe into Sushant Singh Rajput's death has suddenly slowed down and all attention is being diverted to drugs-related issues with the NCB conducting “fashion parade” of Bollywood stars, the late actor's family lawyer Vikas Singh had alleged on Friday.

“Today, we are helpless as we don't know which direction the case is going in. Normally, a press briefing is done by CBI. But in this case, till today, CBI has not done a press briefing on what they have found out. This is a very serious issue,” Singh had alleged at a press conference. — **PTI**

MEDIA EXPOSE



Donald Trump a tax cheat?

Washington: Donald Trump paid just \$750 in federal income taxes in the year he was elected US president and also in his first year in the White House, according to a media report, which also said that he or his companies paid \$1,45,400 taxes in India in 2017. Mr Trump entered the 2016 presidential race as a Republican and was elected in a surprise victory over Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton. “Donald J Trump paid \$750 in federal income taxes the year he won the presidency.

An IPL dream cricket game seemed just too good to be true

R. MOHAN | DC

The fairytale win for Rajasthan Royals was almost too good to be true. The most creative scriptwriters would have struggled to string together a turnaround scenario tale like this in a T20 game in which history was made. The highest successful run chase in IPL was fashioned by a utility cricketer who could hardly get his bat to the first 20 balls he faced ball after being promoted as

a kind of pinch hitter. Rahul Tewatia surprised Kings XI Punjab by suddenly connecting virtually every ball to spank five sixes in an over.

The watchdog app surveilling unusual betting patterns in IPL 2020 may not have noticed suspicious gambling designs though the odds see-sawed dramatically towards the end. Otherwise, we would have known by now. Seasoned observers of the game were, however, left



Rahul Tewatia

shaking their heads in disbelief at the fluctuating fortunes and the improba-

ble becoming reality as 86 runs were taken in four overs for Royals to win a 'lost' game.

Was it just the Kings XI captain KL Rahul's inexperience showing in bringing on pace against a swinging bat and making it easier for it to connect? Tewatia had scored eight off the first 20 balls he faced and even commented on “the worst 20 balls he had ever faced.” His flailing efforts to hit the ball were at one time so painful

that his partner, the free striking Sanju Samson, had even declined a single in order to keep the strike.

Trolls were pouring their scorn on Tewatia but soon enough began targeting Kings XI Punjab for “snatching defeat from the jaws of victory.” How many teams make 51 off the last three overs to win a game when chasing, even in a relatively smaller ground like the Sharjah Stadium. Of course, we would have to forget all

about past links of this venue to the betting maze of D-Company controlled cricket 'satta' markets when Dawood Ibrahim had a private box in the pavilion stand for the elite.

The drama was far from over even after Tewatia's heroics. It appeared the chasers were losing their nerve on the threshold of victory.

Rajasthan Royals, a team once banned for two years from IPL because their owner was betting on a

games, nearly made a hash of the final over when two were needed and one batsman was also bowled taking a wild swing. A final lofted hit settled the issue on a night of the big sixes as RR made the target, a task that their opponents had not managed against Delhi Capitals and then lost the Super Over.

Fluctuations in form are the norm in T20 cricket. But was Kings XI Punjab guilty of a crucial tactical mistake by bringing on a

pace bowler against Tewatia when the batsman showed no signs he could read spin at all. Rahul had not thought of spin even when runs were leaking in the field-restrictions overs. And the Kings X skipper had overs of spin in hand besides the pace of Sheldon Cottrell who panicked after bowling a couple of juicy length balls for the bits-and-pieces all-rounder to connect as he swung in an ambitious arc to the on side. ■ **P3**

OTHER STORY

Woman sets afire two daughters, tries suicide

DC CORRESPONDENT
MADURAI, SEPT 28

A young mother attempted suicide after killing her two daughters aged four years and two years, in Madurai.

Tamil Selvi (28) got married five years ago with Pandi of Melavasal area here. It is alleged that the couple used to frequently quarrel.

Frustrated over this, Tamil Selvi is reported to have set her two daughters, Varanishree and Varunikasree, ablaze when they were asleep and also tried to commit self-immolation on Sunday midnight, at her residence.

On hearing the screams of Tamil Selvi and her daughters, neighbours broke open the house door and rescued Tamil Selvi, though the two children were burnt to death. Tamil Selvi was rushed to the Rajaji government medical college hospital with third degree burns, is undergoing treatment. Thideer Nagar police registered a case and are investigating.

Southern Railway gets new Additional General Manager

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, SEPT. 28

B.G.Mallya has taken over as Additional General Manager (AGM) of Southern Railway on Monday. Principal Chief Material Manager K.Shunmugaraj, was holding additional charge as AGM after the superannuation of P.K.Mishra in March 2020.

In more than three decades of service, B.G.Mallya has held several important posts in various zones including, Southern Railway, South East Central Railway, South Central Railway, Eastern Railway, South Western Railway, ICF and Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Ltd.

He brings with him the rich experience of having visited railway systems in various countries.

Saving lives first priority here...



The Kilpauk Medical College and Hospital has admitted more than 800 Covid-19 positive pregnant women since April, including 22 patients admitted with SARI/ILI symptoms. Most of the pregnant women were from Valasaravakkam, Anna Nagar, Ambattur and Poonamallee. The hospital recorded 292 deliveries of Covid-19 positive women. At least 40-50 per cent of the patients had comorbid conditions. All these women have recovered and more than 467 mothers were discharged. As many as nine newborn babies tested positive for Covid-19, but remained asymptomatic. Two complicated pregnancies of placenta previa were delivered by C Section through vascular ligation procedures. Three cases of puerperal sterilisation were performed. — N. Sampath



The Kilpauk Medical College and Hospital is all set to receive mobile intensive care units, mainly for Covid-19 patients. A single mobile ICU unit can conduct basic diagnostic tests and radiology procedures, including ECG, X-ray, scanning and blood tests. The mobile ICU can also undertake Covid-19 test and provide oxygen to patients. The unit can provide intensive care to five patients at a time. The unit also has got a separate station for the attending doctor. The units have been procured through the Tamil Nadu Medical Services Corporation from a Pune-based manufacturer. They can be used in rural areas and small healthcare units. The installation is likely to be completed by next month.

— N. Sampath

Constable killed in revenge attack

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, SEPT. 28

In an act of revenge, a TN armed reserve police constable, posted at the Puzhal Central Prison, was murdered by a gang of six persons on Monday morning.

Police said the gang assaulted A. Inbarasu, 28, who was riding his two-wheeler to the central prison.

According to the police, the victim informed his parents before leaving the house that he would meet his friends before heading

to duty. While he was on the Chengalpet-Kanchipuram Salai, the armed gang rammed his two-wheeler and Inbarasu fell on the road. Before he could realise what had happened, the gang murdered him brutally and fled the spot.

After passersby alerted the police, Chengalpet superintendent of police Kannan arrived at the spot and conducted inquiries. The body was sent to the Chengalpet government hospital for post-mortem.

Inbarasu was a resident

of Old Seevaram in Chengalpet district. Inbarasu visited his native village on Saturday morning to take part in a cricket match.

A clash took place between Inbarasu and one P. Rajan, son of former village president, during the game. The police are probing all possible angles.

The Palur police registered a case and began an investigation. SP Kannan formed two special teams to nab the murderers. Further investigation is under way.

165 MDMA pills worth ₹5 lakh seized

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, SEPT. 28

The Chennai air customs officials have seized two parcels that contained 165 MDMA pills, worth ₹5 lakh, that arrived at the foreign post office from the Netherlands.

According to sources, the postal parcels were intercepted on suspicion of containing narcotic substances. The first parcel contained 105 MDMA tablets with 'PP' marking, commonly known as 'Philipp Plein'. The parcel was addressed to an individual in Chennai city, but the address was found incomplete.

As many as 60 MDMA 'Blue Punisher' pills embossed with skull

NIA to have new branch in Chennai

New Delhi, Sept 28: The ministry of home affairs has approved three new branches for the National Investigation Agency in Imphal, Chennai and Ranchi, an NIA official said on Monday.

The decision will help in responding quickly to any emergent situation in the concerned states by the premier anti-terror investigation agency, the official said.

Currently, the NIA has nine branches in Guwahati, Mumbai, Jammu, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Kochi,

known as Ecstasy and Molly, is an illegal drug that alters mood and perception and is chemically similar to stimulants and hallucinogens, which produce feelings of increased energy and pleasure.

Lucknow, Raipur and Chandigarh besides specialised units at the headquarters in New Delhi, the official said. The decision to open three new branches will help in accomplishing its main vision -- to effectively fight terrorism and strengthen the anti-terror response framework. — PTI

Ramnad cops arrest five over fake job orders

ARULOLI M | DC
MADURAI, SEPT 28

The Ramanathapuram district crime branch police arrested three persons who secured job appointments by producing fake orders. An employee from the Ramanathapuram district chief education office and a panchayat union staff member were also arrested for helping the three to create the fake orders.

The racket came to light when the headmaster of Ramanathapuram government higher secondary school wanted to verify a candidate's appointment order with the district chief education office. The candidate, D. Rajesh, was supposed to join as junior assistant in the school.

On verification, the appointment order produced by Rajesh was found to be fake,

● The racket came to light when HM of a govt school wanted to verify a candidate's appointment order with dt chief edu office

and the district chief educational officer, Pugazhendhi, lodged a complaint with district SP Karthik, who forwarded the complaint to the district crime branch for investigation.

Further investigations revealed that two more persons, Kalaivanan (26) and Sathesh Kumar (33), working as junior assistants at the Pamban government higher secondary school and Karaiyoor government higher secondary school respectively, had also joined the post by producing such fake appointment orders.

The three men were arrested by the Ramanathapuram

district crime branch police led by DSP Thirumalai. Two other government employees, Kannan (47), an assistant at the CEO office and Kesavan, an employee at Paramakudi panchayat union office, was also arrested for abetting the crime, after getting a bribe of around Rs 5 lakh.

Police are also on the lookout for one Manoj Kumar, who joined as junior assistant by submitting a fake appointment order at R S Mangalam government school, in the district.

It is to be noted that 10 months back in December, Ramanathapuram police busted a similar racket, in which five men were arrested for producing fake sports certificates for recruitment under the sports quota for jobs in the TN unformed services recruitment board, for Grade-II constables and firemen.



SPB's son S.P. Charan, while making a joint statement with doctors of MGM hospital on Monday evening, denied that the family was unable to pay the hospital bills for the 50 days SPB underwent treatment. He said the bills were regularly paid every week. He said that on the day of his father's death, they had come prepared to pay the bills. "The hospital informed us that whatever we had paid up to that point was sufficient," he added. —DC

AP CM requests Centre to confer Bharat Ratna on SPB

Amaravati, Sept 28: Pradesh Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on Monday requested the Government of India to confer the nations high-

est civilian award 'Bharat Ratna' upon legendary singer S. P. Balasubrahmanyam, who passed away on September 25.

"This will be the highest recognition to his (SPB's) remarkable work which lasted for five decades and stays in our memory forever," he said

in a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "Our state of Andhra Pradesh is fortunate being the birthplace of the music maestro S P

Balasubrahmanyam. His untimely departure caused much distress to fans and celebrities in India and abroad," Minister said.

Health officer post: HC seeks original records

J. STALIN | DC
CHENNAI, SEPT 28

Observing that the court is facing wonder after wonder while traversing the facts, in respect of a doctor, (who was not selected to the post of health officer in Tamil Nadu Public Health Service 2013-2014 under most backward class/de-notified community (MBC/DC) category) and his three rounds of litigations, the Madras high court has called for the original records pertaining to the selection relating to notification dated December 10, 2014, in respect of candidates belonging to MBC/DC (general), in order to ascertain the actual facts.

Justice R.Suresh Kumar, who called for the original records, said, "The aforesaid original files and the details sought for, shall be produced before this court by the respondents 1 and 2 (state health and family welfare secretary and secretary Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission) without fail on September 30, 2020. It is made clear that, on that date, if those details and files are not produced before this court

for whatever reasons, this court will not hesitate to draw adverse inference against the respondents 1 and 3 (state health and family welfare secretary and director of public health and preventive medicine) and accordingly, will proceed to finalize the issue raised in this writ petition, on the basis of the available records/materials".

The judge was passing further interim orders on a petition filed by B.Dinesh Kumar, which sought to quash an order of the director of public health and preventive medicine) and to the direct the state government to select and appoint him by direct recruitment to the post of health officer in Tamil Nadu Public Health Service 2013-2014 under MBC/De-notified community category in the light of the proceedings issued by the TNPS and in the light of resignation of one of the appointee viz Dr.M.Vinoth whose resignation was accepted by the government.

Referring to the orders and the stand taken by the authorities in the earlier round of litigations, the judge said the fact



remains that Dr.M.Vinoth, municipal health officer, Rajapalayam municipality, Rajapalayam, whose resignation though was not accepted, initially due to the reason that, he had to remit a sum of Rs 1,44,806 as per the bond executed by him to the government, subsequently had been accepted and a government order to that effect has also been issued. Only in that circumstances, this court by order dated September 22, 2020, passed an order seeking explanation as to why the director of public health and preventive medicine has not chosen to operate the wait list meant for MBC quota against the petitioner, who was admittedly placed in Sl.No.1, the judge added.

The judge said pursuant to the said order, the government advocate has filed a positional note,

wherein, among other things, the reason given by the authorities for not picking up the candidature of the petitioner from the reserve list for consideration of giving appointment order, was that the name of the petitioner was not included in the reserve list of candidates furnished by the TNPS to the state government for issue of appointment to the post of health officer and hence the request of the petitioner was not considered. Therefore, the stand now taken by the authorities was that the TNPS has not at all sent the name of the petitioner in the wait list candidates meant for MBC/DC (general), therefore, the petitioner could not be given appointment. This stand also conveys the meaning that, had the TNPS sent the wait list candidates for the communal category of MBC/DC (general), where, as claimed by the petitioner, if his name stood at serial No.1, he would have been appointed, the judge added.

The judge said, "This court is facing wonder after wonder while traversing these facts, in respect of the petitioner

and his three rounds of litigations. Therefore, in order to ascertain the actual facts, this court wants to peruse the original records pertaining to the list of wait list candidates sent by TNPS pursuant to the selection relates to notification dated December 10, 2014 in respect of candidates belongs to MBC/DC (general), since five vacancies were earmarked for MBC/DC (general) category in the notification, who are all the five selectees originally made to that category to be filled up, their names, details and also the details where they have been posted and whether those five people except Dr.Vinoth, had been continuously working till date, if so, the details and the details with regard to Dr Vinoth as to when his resignation was accepted and after issuance of the GO dated March 13, 2020, whether the respondents explored the possibility of operating the reserve list meant for MBC/DC (general) and if so, the related file shall also be produced". The judge posted to September 30, 2020, further hearing of the case.



Metro rail subway work going on at fast pace in Tondiarpet.

— DC

Anti-rabies shots given to dogs, cats

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUCHY, SEPT 28

As many as 341 pet dogs and 12 cats were given anti-rabies vaccine shots across the district as part of 'World Rabies day', said Collector S Sivarasu. Inaugurating the camp at Palakkarai on Monday, Sivarasu said, in the memory of French scientist

Louis Pasteur who invented the anti-rabies vaccine, the 'World Rabies Day' is being observed annually on September 28. He said as many as 20,000 people die across the country every year due to rabies, representing 36 per cent of casualties at the global level. Similar camps were held in different parts of the district.

Collector T Anbazhagan inaugurated a similar camp in Karur, while Collector V Santha, Perambalur, Collector T Rathna, Ariyalur, Collector B Umamaheswari, Pudukkottai, Collector T Anand, Tiruvarur, and Collector Praveen P Nair, Nagapattinam, inaugurated such camps in their respective districts.

OTHER STORY

**Dowry harassment:
Woman tries
to end life****DC CORRESPONDENT**
COIMBATORE, SEPT 28

A 20-year-old newly-married woman attempted to commit suicide in front of the collectorate here on Monday, leveling dowry charges against her husband.

Following the community spread of Covid-19 here, the collector recently requested villagers residing around the city to hand over their petitions to their corresponding VAOs instead of visiting the collectorate on Mondays.

The woman came to the collectorate on Monday and seeing the cops on duty at the entrance, doused herself with kerosene on the road and attempted to set herself afire, to draw the attention of the collector. But cops there foiled the attempt and took her to the Gandhipuram all women's police station.

Preliminary investigations revealed that the woman, Chitra, had got married three months ago to a 27-year-old youth, Gowri Shankar of Karamadal, after the bride fixed for Gowri Shankar escaped from the marriage hall in the last minute, unwilling for the marriage.

Chitra had agreed to marry Gowri Shankar, but after the marriage, Gowri Shankar had allegedly tortured Chitra for money.

Recently, following a heated quarrel Gowri Shankar had broken one of Chitra's hands and chased her out of the house asking ₹50,000 as dowry. Police had lodged a complaint and are investigating.

**Rains ruin crops;
ryots upset****DC CORRESPONDENT**
NAGAPATTINAM, SEPT 28

Paddy farmers in Sellur, Palaiyur, Sangamangalam, Perungkadambarur, Ilankadambarur, Palakkaadu, Vangaramavadi, Melanagoor, Puliyur, Tenkarai, Vadakarai, Theththi and Vadagudi and its surrounding villages of Keelvelur taluk in the district were disappointed over the damage caused to standing full-term Kuruvai paddy crops in about 1,500 acres, due to overnight rains.

The affected farmers told newsmen that due to various reasons they are unable to harvest their crop, which was fully damaged in Sunday's storm accompanied rain.

They said they were unable to harvest even 10 bags of paddy as against the total yield of at least 45 bags per acre.

They also pointed out that they had obtained loans from various sources and had spent ₹20,000 per acre, but now repayment of loans is another hell they would be facing.

They appealed to the Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami to send a high-level official team to inspect the damage and provide adequate compensation for them.

DMK, allies hold protests against farm bills

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, SEPT 28

Protesting against the three controversial agricultural bills, passed by Lok Sabha and also approved by the president, the DMK-led Secular Progressive Front organized protests at various parts of the state, drawing good crowds.

DMK president M. K. Stalin, who led the protest at Keelambi village in Kanchipuram district, said that the protests would continue if the bills were not withdrawn and that the next phase of the agitation would be announced after a discussion with the leaders of the alliance parties.

En route to the protest venue, Stalin disembarked from his vehicle at a village when he spotted a group of women working on the fields and walked up to them. Stalin asked the women if they were aware of the bills passed by the Central government and how they would affect their lives. He also explained to them that protests had been organized to save them from the ill-effects of the bills.

DK president K. Veeramani and DMK Youth wing secretary Udhayanidhi Stalin led the protest at the Valluvar Kottam, while DMK MP and CPM State secretary



DMK leader Stalin speaking to women working on the fields at Keelambi village in Kanchipuram district on Monday.

K Balakrishnan were at the Chennai District Collectors' office and DMK MP T R Baalu was at Sriperumbudur.

Among the other alliance leaders who participated in the protest, which is said have drawn about 3 lakh persons across the state, were CPI state secretary Mutharasan (Thanjavur), IUML's Kader Moideen (Tiruchy), VCK founder Thol Thirumavalavan (Cuddalore), Makkal Needhi Katchi's J a w a h a r u i l l a h (Tambaram), Kongunadu Makkal Desiya Katchi's E

R Easwarn (Coimbatore), MDMK founder Vaiko (Kandanchavadi) and TNCC president K S Alagiri (Korukupetta).

Stalin, in his speech, attacked both the Central and state governments. He said that there was a Prime Minister who called himself a 'poor mother's son' and a Chief Minister in the State who called himself a 'farmer.' But neither the poor nor the farmers had benefitted in their regimes, he said, adding that both had only worked for the detriment of the poor and farmers

through their policies.

Stalin explained how the farmers' bills would affect the life and livelihood of farmers and poor traders and said that the whole of India was opposing the bills.

Launching a broadside against the sate government, he described it as one indulging in corruption even at the time of pandemic. He alleged that the government was looting the State in the purchase of articles meant to fight the Coronavirus spread like brooms, sanitisers, bleaching powder.

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, SEPT 28

DMK president M. K. Stalin urged the state government not to

approve of the conduct of field trials for Bt brinjal, for which the Centre had identified eight states including Tamil Nadu.

In a statement on Monday, Stalin said that Bt brinjals caused immense damage to the health of human beings and other living things,

besides devastating the environment.

Allowing for the conduct of field trials in the state was not acceptable as Bt Brinjal would have

an adverse impact on agriculture itself, affecting traditional farming practices and hence the government should not allow it in the state.

Stalin opposes field trial of Bt brinjal in TN

**READYING FOR DEEPAM FEST**

The 'pandakaal' ceremony for Karthikai deepam fest at the Tiruvannamalai Annamalaiyar temple was held on Monday sans devotees, in view of the pandemic. The Karthikai deepam festival is scheduled to be celebrated on November 29 at the shrine for which preparatory rituals have begun.

— K. Senthil Nathan

2G case early hearing: HC order today

New Delhi: Delhi High Court will pronounce on Tuesday its order on the CBI and ED pleas seeking early hearing on their appeals challenging the

acquittal of former telecom minister A Raja and others in the 2G spectrum allocation scam case.

Justice Brijesh Sethi had reserved the order on

the pleas on September 22. The probe agencies have sought an early hearing of their 'leave to appeal' which are listed for October 12.

— PTI

Gutka issue: Privileges committee, Assembly secretary file appeal

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, SEPT 28

The privileges committee, its chairman and the secretary, Tamil Nadu legislative assembly, have filed appeals in the Madras high court, challenging an order of a single judge, which stayed all further proceedings pursuant to the issuance of fresh showcase notices of breach of privilege issued by the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly secretary against leader of Opposition and DMK president M. K. Stalin and 17 other MLAs of his party for displaying the banned gutkha sachets in the Assembly on July 19, 2017.

The appeals filed by the privileges committee and its chairman V. Jayaraman and the secretary, Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly, are likely to come up for hearing early.

In their appeals, the privileges committee and its chairman Jayaraman submitted that the single

judge has erred in admitting the petitions when the division bench confined its decision only to the question of breach of privilege as to whether the appellant can take action for the alleged violation of the notification dated May 23, 2017, issued under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006. It was in this context that the division bench held that the appellant cannot take action for violation of the said notification. Very significantly the division bench categorically observed that carrying gutkha sachets into the Assembly may or may not amount to breach of privilege in its common order. Therefore, entertaining of the present writ petition on the ground that the notice was against the previous common order was directly contradictory to the directions of this court in as much as this court had left it open to the appellants to decide the course of action, Jayaraman added.

He said the failure on the part of the single judge to look into the findings of this court in is common order dated August 25, 2020, more particularly in paragraph Nos. 71, 83, 87, 90, 92 and 106 (ii) of the judgment, has led to the single judge erroneously entertaining the writ petitions. The single judge has wrongly entertained the writ petition when the question raised in the writ petition arises out of a show cause notice of breach of privilege which cannot be gone into by this court in view of the prohibition contained in Article 212 of the Constitution. In this connection, the single judge ought to have seen, the observations made in paragraph 106 (iii) of the Common Order dated August 25, 2020 of the division bench of this court in a batch of writ petitions. This court while partly allowing writ petitions had held in Para 106 (iii) "We leave it open to the

committee of privileges, if it so chooses, to deliberate upon the issue any further in case it still is of the opinion that any breach has been committed of the privileges of the House by the petitioners and in that event, the petitioners will be at liberty to raise all such objections that have been raised before us, or even otherwise available in law." The above would clearly show that apart from leaving it open to the committee of privileges to deliberate upon the issue, this court had also given the liberty to the petitioners therein to raise such objections and all other objections available in law before the committee as well. In such circumstances, the single judge ought not to have entertained the writ petition which challenges the subsequent notice that was issued by the committee of privileges based on the findings in the common order dated August 25, 2020, he added.

Man held under Pocco Act

DC CORRESPONDENT
PUDUKOTTAI, SEPT 28

Police on Sunday arrested a 32-year-old man under Pocco Act for sexually assaulting a 11-year-old-girl, who later committed suicide by hanging at Sengathoppu area, near here. Police said the accused, Ganesh, had illegal intimacy

with the mother of the deceased. When the victim's mother and grandfather were away from home, the accused went to the victim's house, gave her a cool drink mixed with sleeping pills and later sexually assaulted her. When the victim came to her senses, she committed suicide by hanging.

A cricket match too good to be true

FROM P1

A shell-shocked Cottrell of the famous Territorial Army salute had given the game away by being taken for five sixes and only escaping with the fifth ball at which Tewatia, a player who had been traded out before being brought back into RR as an economical domestic recruit, swung and missed. Cottrell's over-the-wicket left arm into the batsman line was the perfect gift for a left-handed batsman. And Rahul had overs of Murugan Ashwin in hand besides those of the sharp Mohammed Shami.

The T20 game is the perfect format to make fools of predictors and fantasy game players. The odds on events can change so rapidly as to leave only the bookies happy because the punters are so bewildered as to

make bets at the right time at the wrong price on most matches or events. When an impossibly odd-on favourite like the Kings XI tumbles, the bookies as well as online book-making and fantasy cricket firms are laughing all the way to the bank.

The point is cricketers cannot aid them in any way in this exercise of taking the punters for a ride. Did that happen in this game is a question IPL management has to answer. After all, they are the ones who were singing when the game was in disarray for bringing it into disrepute with owners betting enthusiastically on games involving their teams. The organisers might believe this game was a dream offering for cricket fans provided, of course, no room is left for suspicion over events being scripted.

Divided loyalties haunt AIADMK

FROM P1

He claimed that he had worked hard to make the government successful and that he cannot give up on that now.

Panneerselvam said he agreed to be the Deputy Chief Minister only for the current tenure. He had been keeping quiet all these years only in the interest of the party. Now his time had come to stake the claim in the next tenure, he said. At least in the next term it should be a 50:50 arrangement, meaning that each of them would hold the Chief Minister's post for two and a half years.

However, right from the moment the meeting started, most of the participants stood divided, making their loyalties, either to Palaniswami or Panneerselvam, clear. Munusamy said that the 11-member steering committee to run the affairs of the party should be formed as it was planned when the factions led by Palaniswami and Panneerselvam came together in 2017.

The idea was shot down vociferously by Palaniswami supporters, Dindigul Srinivasan, Sengottaiyan and Thangamani. When every-



thing was going on smoothly what was the need for the committee, they claimed. Sengottaiyan said that the Chief Ministerial candidate should be decided upon in the meeting and announced to the outside world.

Munusamy said the steering committee could decide on the Chief Ministerial candidate but it was shot down. At one point Rajendra Balaji said the party was not for any particular caste. He said victory in the elections should be their motive and that should be united to form the government.

A suggestion by Panrutti Ramachandran that instead of the Steering Committee, a body like the Politburo of Communist parties could be formed to avoid controversy. But this suggestion too was noisily shot down.

Gokula Indira sounded a



note of caution, indicating the family of Sasikala, saying due to the potential entry of 'certain characters' the party may face trouble and to face this unity among them was essential. OPS supporter JCT Prabhakaran was vociferous in openly charging EPS with victimising OPS supporters by neglecting them in the party.

Minister Thangamani sounded a conciliatory note. He threw his weight behind the Chief Minister and said it was Palaniswami who saved this government and party together. But for him the party would have to smitherens. So, let's put the controversy to rest, he said. Thangamani. But he too was shouted down.

Surprisingly, C. V. Shanmugam who sounded a revolt in the last meet-

ing, threw his weight fully behind CM EPS.

Many compromise formulae had been suggested to work out a solution. One of them was to make Panneerselvam the general secretary of the party and Palaniswami the presidium chairman, while in government the status quo can be maintained. The present presidium chairman Madhusoodhanan could give way for that.

Since Palaniswami and his supporters are firm on the Chief Minister's post, some leaders are said to be asking Panneerselvam to hold the reins of the party as general secretary and work towards getting a Union minister's post for his son who is an MP.

Interestingly, the executive passed 15 resolutions, all of them praising the government for its achievements in the past four years and reiterating the stand taken by the government on various occasions.

There are a few resolutions that thank the Chief Minister specifically for his efforts but there is not a single mention of the Deputy Chief Minister in any way, though the last one is the party's vow to capture power in the state once again.

Notice to 109 tea units for quality violations

B. RAVICHANDRAN | DC
COONNOOR, SEPT 28

The Tea Board of India, South Zone (TBI-SZ) office here, has issued notice to over 100 tea factories across southern India for non-compliance of quality and hygiene standards set up by the board.

Executive director, TBI-SZ, Dr M Balaji, said that periodical inspection in tea factories across south India is being undertaken to monitor if the factories comply to the quality and hygiene

standards set up by the Tea Board. During the last few months, the price of green tea leaf has increased in a sustainable manner. For the last month, the price has been fixed at ₹27.06 per kg by the TBI-SZ. To sustain this upward trend and ensure supply of quality tea to consumers, intensive inspections are being carried out by board officials for the last two months.

An official team undertook inspection in a total of 119 tea factories this September across South India, following which showcase notices were



issued to 109 units for violations like lack of quality leaf procurement, poor hygiene standards, non-maintenance of statutory records, default in online payment to growers/farmers, non-adherence to licensed production limit, non-removal of iron fillings, non-filing of monthly return in the tea waste portal, non-payment of green leaf price as per the price sharing formula to farmers, and high levels of tea waste accumulation beyond permissible limits.

The factories have been given time to reply to the deviations noticed during the inspection and action would be taken after receipt of their reply, he noted.

SHORT TAKES

DASH WINS
SHANTI SWARUP
BHATNAGAR PRIZEAKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO |
DC
BHUBANESWAR, SEPT. 28

Dr Jyotirmayee Dash from Jagatsinghpur district has won the prestigious Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize for Science and Technology for 2020 in the field of Chemical Sciences.

Ms Dash's team works on new methodologies for synthesis of diverse molecules that can be used to study structure and function of therapeutic targets.

She will receive the award comprising ₹5 lakh from Prime Minister Narendra Modi at a presentation ceremony by Council of Scientific and Industrial Research at a later scheduled date.

Ms Dash became the first woman from Odisha to win the prize.

After pursuing MSc in Chemistry at the Ravenshaw University, Cuttack, Dash did her PhD in synthetic organic chemistry from IIT Kanpur. She is currently associated with School of Chemical Sciences, Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science, Kolkata.

Expressing happiness over her achievement, Dash said the prize will inspire her for further research in the field. Odisha Governor Prof. Ganeshi Lal and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik have congratulated Dash for the feat. Odisha governor Ganeshi Lal also congratulated Ms Dash for her achievement.

ASSAM GROUP
OPPOSES 25% NRC
RE-VERIFICATIONMANOJ ANAND | DC
GUWAHATI, SEPT. 28

A leading civil society group - the Forum Against Citizenship Act Amendment Bill - here on Monday said that they are opposed to idea of BJP-led alliance government for re-verification of 25 per cent names already included in the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam.

Claiming that Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal and his deputy in the cabinet Himanta Biswa Sarma were in New Delhi seeking support of the Central government for re-verification of 25 per cent names in the NRC, the chairperson of the forum Hiren Gohain in a statement feared that re-verification of NRC at such large scale may provoke communal elements and lead to serious social disturbances in the state.

He, however, said that only a minor re-verification may be undertaken, if it is necessary, in an atmosphere of peace and transparency. The forum said that the recent New Delhi visit of the Chief Minister was said to be to discuss the implementation of Clause 6 of the Assam Accord but some other sources claimed that his visit was aimed at seeking nod of the Central government for 25 per cent re-verification of the NRC.

Admitting that final NRC may have some errors, the forum which was pro-actively involved in the anti-CAA movement said that the intention behind re-verification of NRC at such large scale was certainly not to ensure peace and harmony but the contrary.

WB GOVT REJECTS
RAJ BHAVAN'S
REQUEST

Kolkata, Sept. 28: The West Bengal government has turned down a request from the Governor's House to increase its budget allocation, a senior official said on Monday.

The governor's office had written to the state secretariat a couple of times in the recent past, seeking additional funds of ₹53.5 lakh to meet everyday expenses.

The state government, however, expressed its inability to allot more funds, claiming that it has adopted austerity measures amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

"The governor's office had sought additional funds of ₹53.5 lakh. As our state has adopted certain austerity measures to handle expenses during this pandemic, the request was turned down," the official at the state secretariat said.

Notably, the state finance department has slashed 50 per cent of the budget allotted to the Raj Bhavan, and set aside ₹16 crore for its expenditure in 2020-21 fiscal.

Covid suspect can take exam: SC

Court says student can appear for the CLAT in a separate isolation room

New Delhi, Sept. 28: Hours before the scheduled start of Common Law Admission Test (CLAT)-2020 the Supreme Court on Monday allowed a suspected Covid-19 positive aspirant to take the entrance test in a separate isolation room.

The CLAT-2020 exam, an entrance test for the 22 National Law Universities (NLUs) for admission to LLB, LLB 5 year Integrated and LLM, courses was held at 2 pm on Monday.

A bench headed by Justice Ashok Bhushan said, in the facts of the present case, we are of the view that the student Deepansh Tripathi should be permitted to take his CLAT examination on September 28, 2020 in a separate isolation room to be provided by his Centre Superintendent.

The bench also comprising Justices R. Subhash Reddy and M.R. Shah said that the student shall ensure that a downloaded copy of this order should be presented before his Centre Superintendent as early as possible by any other non-symptomatic person. On such order being produced, the Centre Superintendent shall provide a separate room for applicant to appear in the examination.

Applicant shall enter into the centre after other candidates take entry and shall first leave the examination centre, it said.

The top court said the Centre Superintendent may also request the Chief Medical officer of the District or Superintendent, Government Hospital to provide medical staff to render necessary assistance.

The student has contended that although as per the admit card issued to him, Covid-19 symptomatic candidates will be allocated to isolated room, instructions have been issued by the Consortium of NLUs that candidates who have been tested positive and are under medical surveillance or in isolation will not be permitted to take the CLAT, 2020 examination.

The bench recorded that the student has already received admit card show-

ing his centre as ION Digital Zone IDZ Chitoura Road, Bhartiya Vidya Mandhir Shiksha Samiti at Gwalior. In his intervention application filed by the student, he said that he is aspiring to clear the CLAT exam and is holding a valid admit card for the CLAT Exam.

However, he is presently in isolation due to his being suspected of being Covid positive. He is otherwise fine and is fully ready and prepared to give the CLAT-2020 examination scheduled to take place on September 28, he has said in his application.

On September 21, the top court had directed that for conduct of CLAT-2020 examination on September 28, taking all precautions and care for health of the students after following the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) and Ministry of Human Resource Development.

The plea of Tripathi had sought clarification of the September 21 judgement on CLAT and order to the Consortium with regard to denial to appear in entrance examination to aspirants suffering from Covid-19 by not providing isolation rooms at the exam centres.

As per the latest order of the CLAT Consortium, the candidates who have tested positive for Covid-19 and are under medical surveillance will not be permitted to take the CLAT 2020 examination scheduled to be held on 28 September 2020.

The student in his application said, "The sudden change in the stand of the Consortium of National Law Universities has deprived the applicant of his fundamental right under Article 14 of India to be treated as an equal and be given opportunity to appear in the examination on September 28, 2020 which otherwise he was well entitled to like any other student."

Nearly 78,000 students of the Nagpur University in Maharashtra will appear for their final year exams online through a mobile app from October 1 in the wake of the pandemic, officials said. —PTI



Women wait in long queues to cast their vote at a polling station during Panchayati Raj elections, amid the ongoing pandemic at Jhala ki Chauki village near Beawar on Monday.

KERALA OPPN
CALLS OFF MASS
AGITATIONSGILVESTER ASSARY | DC
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
SEPT. 28

With Kerala reporting a huge spike in Covid-19 cases, chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan has convened an all-party meeting on Tuesday to devise an effective strategy for dealing with the massive spread of infection in the state.

The total cases reported in Keala so far are 1,79,922 of which 1,21,268 persons have recovered and 57,879 patients are currently under treatment in various hospitals across the state.

Meanwhile, in the wake of an increase in cases the opposition Congress led UDF has decided to avoid mass agitations in the state.

The recent agitations of opposition parties which on many occasions ended in direct confrontation with police and violence, had allegedly led to the spread of infection in many parts of the state.

India sees over 82k cases, over 74,000 recoveries

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 28

The total number of coronavirus cases in India crossed 60 lakh on Monday as 82,170 fresh cases were reported from various parts of the country.

India's total toll was 95,542 with 1,039 fresh fatalities in the last 24 hours.

At this rate, by Tuesday, India's death toll will cross one lakh.

As per union health ministry, India's total recoveries have crossed 50 lakh on Monday with 74,893 recoveries.

"With a very high number of Covid patients recovering every single day, India's steady trend of posting high levels of daily recoveries continues. India has witnessed a very high level of more than 90,000 recoveries every day in the recent past. The total recovered cases have outpaced active cases by more than five times. With the exponen-

tial increase in the recoveries, there is close to 100% increase in recovered cases in one month," health ministry officials said.

TS sees further drop: Telangana state on Sunday saw a significant drop in new Covid-19 cases at 1,378, while seven more persons lost their lives from the disease. There were 29,673 active cases, the health department said adding that on Sunday 1,932 individuals were discharged.

The GHMC area continued to have the most cases for a day with 254 and the second most cases for Sunday -110 was reported from Ranga Reddy district. Karimnagar district had 78 new cases, Medchal-Malkajigiri 73, Siddipet 61, Warangal-Urban 58, and Nizamabad had 55 new cases.

Karnataka reports 6,892 cases: Karnataka on Monday reported 6,892 new Covid-19 cases, down from 9,543 on September

27, and 59 related fatalities, taking the total infection count to 5.82 lakh and toll to 8,641, with sample tests showing a decline.

Among those who tested positive today were Law and Parliamentary affairs minister J.C. Madhuswamy and Congress MLA H.K. Patil. So far cumulatively, 5,82,458 Covid-19 positive cases have been confirmed in the state, which includes 8,641 deaths and 4,69,750 discharges while active cases numbered 1,04,048.

Further fall in AP numbers: Andhra Pradesh seems to be witnessing a steep fall in daily Covid-19 cases. Since September 10, when it registered 10,175 cases, it has been reporting fewer infections every day, with only 5,487 new infections and 37 deaths in the last 24 hours. Out of 56,66,325 samples tested so far in the state, 6,12,300 patients have been discharged after recovery.

Kerala to limit number of pilgrims to Sabari

DC CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
SEPT. 28

The Kerala government on Monday decided to allow only a limited number of devotees to the Sabarimala hill shrine during the annual pilgrimage season including Makaravilakku.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said though notwithstanding the restrictions imposed on the number of devotees, all rituals and ceremonies at the temple will be held as usual.

A majority of pilgrims come from Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry and there are no restrictions on them during normal pilgrim seasons. However, this time around only a limited number of devotees would be allowed from each state. A high level committee headed by chief secretary and comprising state police

chief, home secretary, devaswom principal secretary, health secretary and forest secretary has been constituted to examine the ground situation and recommend measures for the Sabarimala pilgrimage.

Mr Viayan said the entry to the hill shrine will be strictly through the virtual queue system of Kerala police. Pilgrims above the age of 65 and children should avoid visiting the shrine this season, he said.

The devotees who are registered for the pilgrimage will have to take Covid test and obtain a negative certificate in their respective state. Another test will be conducted by Kerala health authorities on arrival in the state. The pilgrims who normally spend the night in the hill shrine will not be allowed to stay back this time. After darshan they will have to immediately climb down the hill.

FOR BIHAR
POLLS, CENTRE
DEPLOYS 30,000
SECURITYMENDC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 28

The Home Ministry has decided to deploy 300 companies, roughly 30,000 para-military security personnel, for the three-phase Bihar Assembly polls starting Oct. 27.

Since these are the first major elections being held during the Corona pandemic, all security personnel would be given special training in managing health protocols during elections and counting.

The Assembly elections in Bihar are scheduled to be held in three phases on October 28, November 3 and 7 while the results will be declared on November 10.

Following detailed consultations between the Election Commission and the Home Ministry, the poll panel decided to hold Bihar Assembly polls in less phases in order to minimise the movement of security personnel and ensure their safety along with that of other polling staff in wake of the Corona pandemic.

"Since elections involve large scale deployment of security forces, all efforts have been made to minimise their movement over long distances. This is due to their fatigue as well as Covid-19. The number of phases to three due to this," a senior Home Ministry official said.

Also, for the first time all security personnel being deployed for polling duty will be briefed in details about all health protocols and safety measures that they will have to follow while on duty.

The security personnel will also ensure that the common people coming for voting also follow all strict health safety measures that have been laid down by the Health Ministry and the EC.

Both the Home Ministry and the poll panel are confident that they would be able to contain spread of Corona in Bihar during the elections.

HEROIN WORTH
₹25CR SEIZED
IN ASSAM

Guwahati, Sept. 28: Over five kg of heroin worth ₹25 crore was recovered from Karbi Anglong district in Assam and one person held in this connection, DGP Bhaskar Jyoti Mahanta said on Monday.

The operation was part of the ongoing action against the drug smuggling activities in the state, he said.

"The @karbianglong-pol (Karbi Anglong police) on Sunday night seized a whopping 5kgs of Heroin at Assam Nagaland border. Kudos to the team," the director general of police said, adding that this was the biggest blow to drug peddlers.

Ismail Ali, son of Akabor Ali, has been taken into custody in the case, he said.

The market value of 5.05 kg of heroin recovered is estimated at ₹25 crore, he added. —PTI

REAL | DRAMA

The court says the BMC's conduct while demolishing Kangana Ranaut's bungalow was 'fishy'

HC tells Raut, Ranaut to show guts to own their comments

SHAHAB ANSARI | DC
MUMBAI, SEPT. 28

The Bombay High Court on Monday told Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut and actor Kangana Ranaut to show guts to own up their comments made against each other on social media and public interviews.

The court's observation came after Mr Raut's counsel denied in the court that his client's comment "should be taught a lesson" was aimed at Ms Ranaut. The court also said that the

Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation's conduct while demolishing Ms Ranaut's bungalow was "fishy".

A bench of Justices S.J. Kathawalla and R.I. Chagla continued to hear the writ petition filed by Ms Ranaut challenging the demolition of a part of her bungalow in Pali Hill in suburban Bandra by the BMC on September 9.

While arguing on behalf of Ms Ranaut, advocate Dr Birendra Saraf played a clip of a news interview where Mr Raut had

allegedly said that Ms Ranaut "should be taught a lesson". However, Mr Raut's counsel Pradeep Thorat argued that in the entire interview, the Sena leader had not referred to Ms Ranaut by name.

"If it is your stand that you (in the audio) have not called the petitioner a 'haramkhor', we will record it. Should we record your statement?" the court said, referring to an alleged comment Mr Raut made in the interview. "Don't run around the bushes... Have the guts

● **THE BENCH** questioned the BMC's conduct and said that in Ms Ranaut's case, the civic body did not follow its own practice of attaching photos of alleged illegal constructions with its stop-work notices and waiting for some days before carrying out demolitions.

to say (before the court) what you have tweeted or told a news channel," the court said to both Mr Raut's and Ms Ranaut's

counsels. The bench also questioned the BMC's conduct and said that in Ms Ranaut's case, the civic body did not follow its own practice of attaching photos of alleged illegal constructions with its stop-work notices and waiting for some days before carrying out demolitions.

The judges were questioning the BMC's ward officer Bhagyawant Late under whose jurisdiction Ms Ranaut's property falls. During the questioning, the bench noted that in cases of similar illegal-

ties in buildings close to Ms Ranaut's, the BMC had waited for several days to carry out the demolition. Besides, in most other cases, it had attached photos of the alleged illegal constructions with its stop-work notices served to building owners, and in such cases, it did not often take the police along for demolition, it said.

However, when it came to Ms Ranaut's case, the BMC did not have any photos with digital date and time stamps of the alleged illegalities, and the demoli-

tion had been carried out in the presence of a huge police force just 24 hours after the stop-work notice was served to the actor, the bench noted. In its reply to Ms Ranaut's petition, the BMC had claimed to have demolished a similar case of illegality on September 8. But when the bench asked Mr Late for photos or records of the demolition, he said no such photos or documents existed. The ward officer said the BMC team had not taken the police along for the September 8 demolition.

IN BRIEF

Shooting outside strip club: 6 hurt

Detroit: A shooting early Monday outside a Detroit strip club has left six people wounded, police said. A large group was outside the club on the city's west side shortly before 2 a.m. when at least one person opened fire, police said, citing preliminary information about the investigation. Details about what led up to the shooting were under investigation, police said. No arrests were immediately reported. Those shot were in their 20s, police said. Five were taken by medics to the hospital and another was transported by private vehicle. Two men were listed in critical condition, police said, and two men and a woman were in stable condition. The condition of another woman who was shot wasn't immediately known by police.

Romania mayor wins poll after death

Bucharest: A mayor in southern Romania grabbed a landslide election victory — despite dying of Coronavirus days earlier, local reporters said on Monday. Ion Aliman clocked up 1,057 of 1,600 votes cast in Deveselu municipality even though he died on September 17, reports said.

The ballots had already been printed at the time of Aliman's death and his name could not be removed, according to local officials. After the polls closed, local supporters flocked to his grave to "celebrate the victory". "We went to congratulate him," a Deveselu resident commented under a photo posted on Facebook that showed dozens of people with candles at the local cemetery.

A re-run of the election is now expected.

Deveselu previously hit the headlines in 2018 when a local farmer was ordered to move his flock of sheep because they kept triggering the alarm at a US military facility.

Writer Alexievich leaves Belarus

Minsk: Belarusian writer Svetlana Alexievich has left the country for treatment in Germany, her friend said Monday, after the Nobel Literature Prize winner faced official pressure for supporting the opposition. The 72-year-old author, who has been summoned for questioning by investigators after joining the opposition's Coordination Council, has gone to Germany for planned treatment, her friend Mariya Voiteshonok said. "She will return to Belarus in a month. She is not dropping her activities as a Coordination Council member," Voiteshonok said. She added that Alexievich also planned to visit Italy where she has been awarded a literary prize. The announcement of her departure comes as President Alexander Lukashenko has jailed or forced out most of the country's prominent opposition activists. Known for her Russian-language books with witness accounts of the Soviet era, including World War II and the Chernobyl disaster.

11 KILLED IN MEXICO BAR SHOOTING

Mexico City, Sept. 28: Gunmen killed 11 people, including four women, early Sunday in a bar in the central Mexico state of Guanajuato. State prosecutors said the bullet-ridden bodies were found at a bar near the town of Jaral del Progreso. The area is near the border with Michoacán state, which has been a point of incursion for the Jalisco cartel, which wants to move into Guanajuato. Local media reported the four dead women may have been employed as dancers at the bar, located on the side of a highway. There was no immediate information on a possible motive in the attack, but it bore the signs of a drug gang killing. Guanajuato has been the most violent state in Mexico in recent years, but authorities had hoped the detention of a leader of a local gang on Aug. 2 would help stem the violence.

The detained leader of the Santa Rosa de Lima gang, José Antonio Yépez Ortiz, was better known by his nickname "El Marro," which means "The Sledgehammer." He had long fought a bloody turf battle with the Jalisco cartel, and authorities blamed him for much of the violence in the state.

While murders across the state dropped slightly to 339 in August from 403 in July, they may be rebounding in September as gang members fight to fill the vacuum left by Yépez Ortiz's detention.

Trump paid just \$750 tax in 2016, 2017

President pocketed \$21.2 mn in state, local refunds



Donald Trump

Washington, Sept. 28: President Donald Trump paid just \$750 in federal income taxes the year he ran for president and in his first year in the White House, according to a report in *The New York Times*. Trump, who has fiercely guarded his tax filings and is the only president in modern times not to make them public, paid no federal income taxes in 10 of the past 15 years.

The details of the tax filings published Sunday complicate Trump's description of himself as a shrewd and patriotic businessman, revealing instead a series of financial losses and income from abroad that could come into conflict with his responsibilities as president. The president's financial disclosures indicated he earned at least \$434.9 million in 2018, but the tax filings reported a \$47.4 million loss.

The tax filings also illustrate how a reputed billionaire could pay little to nothing in taxes, while someone in the middle class could pay substantially more than him. Roughly half of Americans pay no income taxes, primarily because of how low their incomes are. But IRS figures indicate that the average tax filer paid roughly \$12,200 in 2017, about 16 times more than what the president paid. The disclosure, which the *Times* said comes from tax return data it obtained extending over two decades, comes at a pivotal moment ahead of the first presidential debate Tuesday and weeks before a divisive election against Democrat Joe Biden.

Speaking at a news conference Sunday at the White House, Trump dismissed the report as "fake

news" and maintained he has paid taxes, though he gave no specifics. He also vowed that information about his taxes "will all be revealed", but he offered no timeline for the disclosure and made similar promises during the 2016 campaign on which he never followed through.

In fact, the president has fielded court challenges against those seeking access to his returns, including the US House, which is suing to get Trump's tax returns as part of congressional oversight.

During his first two years as president, Trump received \$73 million from foreign operations, which in addition to his golf properties in Scotland and Ireland included \$3 million from the Philippines, \$2.3 million from Turkey, among other nations. He in 2017 paid \$145,400 in taxes in India and \$156,824 in the Philippines, compared to just \$750 in US income taxes. The *Times* said the tax records did not reveal any unreported connections to Russia. Trump found multiple ways to reduce his tax bills. He has taken tax deductions on personal expenses such as housing, aircraft and \$70,000 to style his hair while he filmed *The Apprentice*. — AP

Washington, Sept. 28: A *New York Times* report that President Donald Trump paid just \$750 in federal income tax the year he entered the White House — and, thanks to colossal losses, no income tax at all in 11 of the 18 years that the *Times* reviewed, suggests why that might have been so. It reported that many of Trump's top businesses are losing money, even as those losses have helped him shrink his federal tax bill to essentially nothing.

The *Times* noted that Alan Garten, a lawyer for the Trump Organisation, said that "most, if not all, of the facts appear to be inaccurate" and asked for the documents on which the reporting was based, which the *Times* declined to provide to protect its sources. He then directly disputed only the amount of taxes Trump had paid.

Some key takeaways: Trump paid just \$750 in taxes in both 2016, 2017.

The newspaper said

Trump initially paid \$95 million in taxes over the 18 years it studied. But he managed to recover most of that money by claiming — and receiving — a stunning \$72.9 million federal tax refund. According to the *Times*, Trump also pocketed \$21.2 million in state and local refunds, which are typically based on federal filings.

Trump's sizable refund became the subject of a now-long-standing Internal Revenue Service audit of his finances.

The audit was widely known. Trump has claimed it was the very reason why he cannot release his returns. But the report is the first to identify the issue that was mainly in dispute.

As a result of the refund, Trump paid an average \$1.4 million in federal taxes from 2000 to 2017, the *Times* reported.

By contrast, the average US taxpayer in the top .001% of earners paid about \$25 million annually over the same timeframe.

Russia, China paid money to Biden son: Don

Washington, Sept. 28: Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden's son Hunter received a large sum of money from Russia and China, US President Donald Trump has alleged and said that the mainstream media is "underplaying" the story and keeping quiet on it.

"It's hard to believe, when you see the kind of money that he (Hunter) has made from China,

from Russia, where the wife of the mayor of Moscow gives him three-and-a-half million dollars and nobody even has any question about it," Trump told reporters at a White House news conference on Sunday.

According to a Senate Republican report released last week, during Biden's tenure as vice president, Hunter, 50, received a \$3.5 million

Trump has financed an extravagant lifestyle with the use of business expenses

From his homes, his aircraft — and \$70,000 on hair styling during his television show *The Apprentice* — Trump has capitalised on cost incurred from his businesses to finance a luxurious lifestyle.

The *Times* noted that Trump's homes, planes and golf courses are part of the Trump family business and, as such, Trump classified them as business expenses as well. Because companies can write off business expenses as deductions, all such expenses have helped reduce his tax liability.

Many of President's best-known businesses are money-losers

The President has frequently pointed to his far-flung hotels, golf courses and resorts as evidence of his success as a developer and businessman. Yet these properties have been draining money.

The *Times* reported that Trump has claimed \$315 million in losses since 2000 on his golf courses, including the Trump National Doral near Miami, which he has portrayed as a crown jewel in his business empire. Likewise, Trump International Hotel in Washington has lost \$55 million.

Foreign visitors have helped support Trump's properties

Since Trump began his presidential run, lobbyists, foreign governments and politicians have lavished significant sums of money on his properties, a spending spree that raised questions about its propriety and legality.

The report illustrates just how much that spending has been: Since 2015, his Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida has taken in \$5 million more a year from a surge in membership. The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association spent at least \$397,602 in 2017 at Trump's Washington hotel. — AP

TAX CHARGES ADD FUEL TO FIRST DEBATE

Washington, Sept. 28: US President Donald Trump on Sunday faced allegations that he paid little or no income tax for years before he came to power, as his cloudy financial past stoked controversy ahead of the first election debate. The *New York Times* alleged the billionaire president paid just \$750 federal income taxes in 2016, the year he won the White House, and no income taxes at all in 10 of the previous 15 years because he reported losing more money than he made.

Trump, who immediately dismissed the accusations as "totally fake news," is readying to come face to face with his Democratic opponent Joe Biden at a live debate on Tuesday.

The Republican leader has broken with presidential tradition by refusing to release his tax returns, fighting a long battle in the courts and triggering speculation about what they might contain.

"First of all, I paid a lot and I paid a lot of state income taxes too... It'll all be revealed," Trump said as he shrugged off the *Times* story that cited tax data extending more than 20 years.

The paper said the records "reveal the hollowness, but also the wizardry, behind the self-made-billionaire image" of the president. — AFP

550 Armenians killed in fight with Azerbaijan

Yerevan, Sept. 28: Armenia and Azerbaijani forces kept fighting Monday over the disputed separatist region of Nagorno-Karabakh after hostilities broke out the day before, with both sides blaming each other for resuming the deadly attacks.

Azerbaijan's Defence Ministry told the Interfax news agency Monday that over 550 Armenian troops have been killed, a claim that Armenian officials denied. According to Nagorno-Karabakh officials, 31 servicemen have been killed so far.

Armenian Defence Ministry spokesman Artsrun Hovhannissyan said Monday over 200 people have been wounded.

The Azerbaijani Defence Ministry claimed that Armenian forces started shelling the town of Tartar on Monday morning, while Armenian officials said the fighting continued throughout the

night and Baku resumed "offensive actions" in the morning.

The heavy fighting broke out between the two countries on Sunday morning in the region that lies within Azerbaijan but has been under the control of ethnic Armenian forces backed by Armenia since 1994 at the end of a separatist war.

It was not immediately clear what sparked the fighting, the heaviest since clashes in July killed 16 people from both sides. Mostly mountainous Nagorno-Karabakh — a region around 4,400 square kilometres (1,700 square miles) or about the size of the United States state of Delaware — lies 50 kilometres (30 miles) from the Armenian border. Local soldiers backed by Armenia also occupy some Azerbaijani territory outside the region. — AP

US: China using SCS outposts for control

Washington, Sept. 28: China is using its militarised outposts in the South China Sea as platforms of coercion to assert control over waters it has no lawful claim over, the United States has said, demanding President Xi Jinping to honour his commitment that these maritime constructions "would not target or impact any country". Beijing claims almost all of the 1.3 million square-mile South China Sea as its sovereign territory. China has been building military bases on artificial islands in the region which, in parts, is claimed by Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam.

Beijing has impeded commercial activity like fishing and mineral exploration by neighbouring nations in recent years, saying the ownership of the resource-rich maritime territory belongs to China for hundreds of years. US State Department spokesperson Morgan Ortugas on Sunday said five years ago on September 25, 2015 the Chinese President, standing in the

White House Rose Garden, promised 'China does not intend to pursue militarisation' of the Spratly Islands, and China's outposts 'would not target or impact any country'.

Instead the Chinese government backed by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has pursued reckless and provocative militarisation of these disputed outposts, deploying anti-ship cruise missiles, expanding military radar with signal intelligence capabilities, constructing dozens of fighter jet hangars and runways capable of accommodating combat aircraft, Ortugas said.

"The CCP uses these militarised outposts as platforms of coercion to assert control over waters to which Beijing has no lawful maritime claim," Ortugas said. They serve as staging grounds for the hundreds of maritime militia vessels and China Coast Guard ships that regularly harass civilian carriers and impede legitimate law enforcement activities, offshore fishing, and hydrocarbon development by neighbouring states. — PTI



People cross a street in Melbourne's central business district on Monday as five million residents in Australia's second biggest city emerged from an almost two-month overnight curfew as just five Coronavirus cases were recorded in worst-hit Victoria state. — AFP

Quarantine breach: Tougher UK fines in force

London, Sept. 28: People across England will be required by law from Monday to self-isolate if they test positive for the Coronavirus or face a £1,000 fine, which increases to £10,000 for repeat offenders. The government said that as the infection is now spreading rapidly again across the country, the tougher measures are aimed at ensuring compliance and reducing the spread of Covid-19.

"These new measures are about saving lives. Everyone must take personal responsibility and self-isolate if they test positive or if told to do so by NHS Test and Trace," said UK Home Secretary Priti

DUBAI TO RESTRICT NIGHTLIFE AMID COVID-19 INCREASE

Dubai, Sept. 28: Dubai has announced new restrictions on nightlife to curb a rising tide of Coronavirus infections. Dubai's tourism authorities have ordered all bars and restaurants in the city-state to stop serving and halt "entertainment activities" at 1 a.m. Hotels will be restricted

by law to offering only delivery and room service after 3 a.m.

Authorities urged dining and drinking establishments to adhere to anti-virus protocols or face "consequential procedures and violations," including shutdowns and huge fines. The new rules are the first since restaurants and

bars were allowed to reopen in July as Dubai, a top travel destination known for its lively nightlife, emerged from lockdown. The United Arab Emirates has recorded more than 90,600 infections since the pandemic began, including over 400 deaths. — AP

Patel. "For those who fail to do so, the police will enforce the law. These new fines are a clear sign that we will not allow those who break the rules to reverse the hard-won progress made by the law-abiding majority," she said.

The government said that employers who force or allow staff to come to work when they should be self-isolating will also be

liable for fines of up to £10,000, as a clear message that this will not be tolerated. Those on lower incomes who cannot work from home and can show that they have lost income

Pak court stays release of Pearl murder accused

Islamabad, Sept. 28: Pakistan's Supreme Court on Monday barred the Sindh government from releasing British-born al-Qaeda leader Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh and his three aides — the main accused in the abduction and murder of US journalist Daniel Pearl in 2002.

In April, a two-judge Sindh High Court bench commuted the death sentence of 46-year-old Sheikh, who was convicted in the abduction and murder

Money laundering case: Shahbaz held

Lahore, Sept. 28: Pakistan's top Opposition leader and PML-N President Shahbaz Sharif was arrested by the country's anti-graft body on Monday after a court rejected his bail plea

of Pearl in 2002, to seven years. The court also acquitted his three aides who were serving life terms in the case — almost

two decades after they were found guilty and jailed. Two days after the Sindh High Court overturned Sheikh's conviction,

the Sindh government invoked the Maintenance of Public Order to keep the four convicts in jail. — PTI

COURT INDICTS ZARDARI, SISTER

Islamabad, Sept. 28: An anti-corruption court in Pakistan on Monday indicted former president Asif Ali Zardari and his sister Faryal Talpur in a money laundering case. It comes just ahead of the planned protests next month by Opposition parties to demand the resignation of PM Imran Khan. — PTI

DECCAN Chronicle

29 SEPTEMBER 2020

Arbitrary tax policies harm India's image

A Hague-based international arbitration tribunal's decision to reject India's retrospective tax demand worth ₹20,000 crore against Vodafone Plc and term it as unfair should serve as a lesson to governments that seek to change the rules of the game arbitrarily. The tribunal's award underscores the importance of a stable and fair policy environment for investors.

The case relates to the acquisition of Hutchison Whampoa's telecom interests in India by London-based Vodafone Plc by taking over a holding company based in the Cayman Islands, a noted tax haven. With Hutchison booking huge profits in the sale, the government had asked Vodafone to cough up the capital gains as it had failed to withhold money for tax from the payment made by Hutchison. Vodafone argued that Indian tax authorities do not have jurisdiction over the acquisition deal between two foreign companies involving the takeover of another foreign company. But the Indian argument, led by Pranab Mukherjee, the finance minister of the second United Progressive Alliance government, was that India had the right to demand tax as the underlying asset was in the country. The Supreme Court upheld Vodafone's argument as the Income-Tax Act, 1961 does not envisage such tax levy. But Mukherjee got the law amended in 2012 to allow taxmen to levy tax retrospectively from 1961.

Whereas the government was well within its rights to amend the law, it is the last thing investors would like. Instead of being a rare aberration, the midway policy change — either by executive order or legislation or judicial pronouncements — has become a norm in the country, reflecting poorly on the investor-friendliness environment in the country. Several sectors have borne the brunt of arbitrary policies in the country. The telecom sector, in particular, has ended up with a mountain of debt because of frequent interventions by the judiciary. Several infrastructure companies had become bankrupt when the governments did not meet their obligations on time. The government's sudden demand for switching over to electric vehicles was threatening to nullify thousands of crores showed by automobile companies in adding capacities. Such practices show that businesses in India can flourish until it has the blessings of the government — a scenario that is not any different from a banana republic.

In February 2014, before he became the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, as the Bharatiya Janata Party's prime ministerial candidate, had said that traders take more risk than soldiers. Though he retracted his statement immediately, Modi was speaking the truth, especially in India where an official can wipe out the entire wealth of a person with a mere stroke of a pen. However, his government also continued past mistakes and further consolidated the power of bureaucrats. Tax terrorism still continues with tax officials getting greater powers to meet the revenue estimates given in the Union Budget. It is high time the Prime Minister works towards providing a stable policy framework for businesses in the spirit of his 2014 statement. Otherwise, India will end up in the league of countries governed by ruling class plutocracy.

Akalis out: What next for NDA?

The Shiromani Akali Dal's formal parting of ways with the BJP-led NDA late Saturday took no one by surprise: it was widely anticipated for some time, certainly after Harsimrat Kaur Badal, the lone Akali minister in the Narendra Modi government, quit the Union Cabinet in protest over the agricultural marketing bills passed in Parliament (amid much drama in the Rajya Sabha) a week earlier. The Akalis hadn't spoken out while this legislation was being discussed in Cabinet, and its change of stance gives rise to the suspicion they were driven to it amid the farmers' rising anger to protect their political base. While many commentators and Opposition parties noted the significance of the BJP's "oldest ally" walking out of the saffron alliance, there is little sign the BJP is all that unhappy, which has triggered speculation on whether it was SAD that decided to leave the alliance, or whether it was driven to do so by the BJP which was seeing it as an encumbrance. The NCP and Trinamul Congress, among others, hailed the Akalis' move, hoping it would be a nail in the NDA's coffin, generating talk about possible political realignments, but the Congress' Punjab unit had a different view. Punjab's PCC chief claimed the Akalis were "thrown out" of NDA and "staged a drama" to ensure its political survival.

Where does the BJP go from here? Some in the party wanted to break with the Akalis long back, thinking SAD was a millstone around its neck, and it can now seek more compatible partners, like the breakaway faction led by S.S. Dhindsa. On Sunday, Akali chief Sukhbir Badal said for many years the NDA all but ceased to exist, with the BJP disinclined to consult its allies. The ruling party, however, still needs allies to pass bills in the Rajya Sabha and govern several states. More important, it must sit down with the farmers and find solutions so their anger is defused, else it may start a bigger fire. The Punjab CM, among others, plans to move the Supreme Court over the "lethal" farm bills that got the President's assent Sunday, but the real solution must be a political one.

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Subhani



Reforming bureaucracy: Many pitfalls lie ahead



Mohan Guruswamy

Six years ago, Prime Minister Narendra Modi initiated a discussion under the aegis of the Niti Aayog on the reform of the bureaucracy. Sixteen years ago Dr Manmohan Singh too had said that his topmost priority was the reform of the bureaucracy. Little has happened. We haven't even had a decent and half-intelligent discussion about it. The object of concern clearly doesn't share the need to discuss its reform. The government is now a golden gated community and takes away as much as 11.5 per cent of the country's GDP for its own upkeep. And yet, the dil maange more!

The base of government is the district. A typical district officer is usually still in his twenties or early thirties. But unlike his Indian Civil Service predecessor (of the British Raj era), the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) district collector/magistrate or deputy commissioner has neither the unquestionable authority conferred either by racial exclusivity or superb education or social class, or all three, to dominate and control the lower bureaucracy.

As required in a democracy, the administration is subservient to a government run by elected politicians. They play havoc with civil service tenures. According to a study by S.K. Das, an IAS officer, the average tenure of a district officer is about seven months. He or she invariably falls victim to the constantly changing and treacherous currents of an intensely competitive political system.

The lower and permanent bureaucracy has adjusted well to this essential change and has become a tool in the hands of the politicians. In fact, the lower bureaucracy has increasingly

become the nursery for the new political class. Little wonder, no one gives a fig for our district officers any longer. But quite clearly, ordinary citizens are paying a heavy price for this. India still ranks among the bottom half of the United Nations' global Human Development Index.

Clearly, we need to restructure the government and the administration in each of India's 600-plus districts. The district collector, like his Indian Civil Service predecessor, must become the executive head of the district with all branches of the government subject to his/her authority and power. This must particularly include the police. He/she must be redesignated as the commissioner and should be an officer with over 16 years of service, a mature and seasoned individual with the seniority and clout to exercise complete authority over the administrative apparatus.

This seniority will also give him/her the experience and guile needed to deal with the political system. Above all, the commissioner must have a fixed tenure of at least five years and a board consisting of elected representatives of the district as well as his/her administrative superiors must make the officer's selection to the position.

In the late 1980s, former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was reportedly contemplating such a restructuring of the government. No sooner had the word got around, the traditional politicians opposed it, as it would deprive them of much of their clout. Former deputy prime minister Devi Lal jeered that it would be a "PM to DM system" which would bypass all other political structures.

From the mid-1990s,

Poor Dr Manmohan Singh had listed the reform of the bureaucracy as his first priority, but the politicians paid no heed to him, and hence the bureaucracy saw no need to take him seriously.

even amidst the most severe economic downturns, one industrial segment has posted consistent and significant growth. This is the segment called the white goods sector, which accounts for consumer durables like refrigerators, washing machines and other home appliances. This spurt coincides with the selective implementation of the Pay Commission's recommendations. Apart from recommending whopping increases in salaries and benefits, the Pay Commission noted the low productivity and also recommended that the numbers employed in the government should be drastically slashed. Consequently, the wage bill of the Central government alone is now the second biggest item in the Union Budget after interest payments.

The state governments together now directly employ 7.5 million people in addition to the Central government, which gainfully or painfully employs about 3.3 million. Given the comparatively high salary levels in the Central and state governments, one can easily compute the approximate cost of government by way of salaries alone.

In addition to this huge army of babus, the Centre and the states employ a further 6.3 million people in PSUs and departmental undertakings like the Indian Railways. Local bodies like municipalities, zilla parishads and panchayats employ another 2.3 million. This entire cohort of about 23 million people belongs to the 27.2 per cent who make up our middle and upper income groups.

A look at the capital expenditure on account

of "development" suggests that it costs the Centre and the states about Rs 10 to give us a benefit of Re 1! Revenue expenditure very simply means wages, utilities, fuel, repairs and maintenance, and chai-pani aur dawa-daru kharcha. So, the effective cost of government is almost 90 per cent of the cumulative receipts of which the Centre and the states collect as taxes from us and/or beg, borrow and steal for us. This is about a good one-third of our GNP, and growing!

However, the real slap in the face is that "public administration" is categorised as a part of the services sector for national income accounting, and the 14 per cent annual growth in the cost of government is what mainly accounts for the growth of this sector. Even in the time of the coronavirus pandemic, this sector is happily growing. The growth of the industrial sector is marginal, like that of the agricultural sector.

The burgeoning cost of government is our single major public policy issue. Yet, it is not debated at all. All parties go into a funk when they are confronted with these facts. Thus, for the BJP, once again it seems there are only two issues that really matter: Hindutva and the Ram Mandir. And as for the sycophants in the Congress, they are only concerned with the interim Congress president's two issues: Rahul or Priyanka.

Poor Dr Manmohan Singh had listed the reform of the bureaucracy as his first priority, but the politicians paid no heed to him, and hence the bureaucracy saw no need to take him seriously. Now it is Narendra Modi's turn.

The writer, a policy analyst studying economic and security issues, has held senior positions in government and industry. He also specialises in the Chinese economy.

LETTERS

FARM BILLS

Small and medium farmers in particular will be hard put to negotiate a remunerative price with corporates (Agri bills to benefit farmers, says Modi, Sept. 28). Indeed the new agriculture sector bills leave much to be desired. With negotiated prices not linked to MSPs, corporates developing their own cartels, open market prices not legally pegged to MSPs and absence of a guarantee for retaining MSPs, farmers are indeed a worried lot. In a situation where small and medium farmers would lack the resources to sell their products at distant places, middle men could easily intervene to buy up farm products at throw away prices. While the agriculture sector needs reforms, the pricing of farm products is going to be a critical issue for ryots. The Centre must be ready for course correction of the laws if farmers are short-changed by powerful corporates.

Kangayam R. Narasimhan, Chennai

OUTSTANDING PARLIAMENTARIAN

AFTER HAVING served in the Indian Army for decades, he took a plunge into politics and went on to become one of the important leaders of BJP when its stalwarts such as Vajpayee and LK Advani held sway over the rank and file of the party. Regarded as one of the outstanding parliamentarians of the country, Jaswant Singh was instrumental in mending ties with the US after it imposed sanctions on India following the Pokhran nuclear tests of 1998. His exemplary role in restructuring the foreign policy framework during his stint as country's external affairs minister will always be remembered.

M. Jeyaram, Sholavandan

ROYAL PERFORMANCE

IT WAS a real Royal performance by the Rajasthan Royal team to topple Kings XI Punjab, who set up a mammoth target of 224. First, hats off to Mayank Agarwal and KL Rahul, who once again led the team from the front to notch up a century opening partnership to lay a firm foundation to reach 223. Though everyone was betting for a Kings XI win, RR captain and ever reliable Sanju Samson had other ideas. They gave a rollicking start to lay a firm foundation for the young Rahul Tewatia to reach the target.

N. Mahadevan, Chennai



Aakar Patel

Several NGOs trying to uplift India might be forced to shut

The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act is a funny old piece of legislation. It appeared in India in 1976 as a law to prevent external interference in India's electoral process and democracy. It prohibited the receiving of foreign money by political parties and their candidates, journalists and newspaper publishers, judges, bureaucrats and members of Parliament.

In time, liberalisation meant that many of these categories could receive foreign money legally and the Indian government actively promoted the bringing in of such money. That, after all, is the foreign direct investment whose numbers this government is so proud of and speaks of regularly. For instance, the media, both print and television and certainly online (which is the most dominant form of media today), can not only receive foreign investment, it can be dominated by it. The largest media companies in India are Facebook and Google, which are entirely foreign owned and managed. Newspapers can receive equity investments from foreign firms as can news channels.

Even political parties managed to

get themselves off the hook on FCRA. In January 2013, a public interest litigation case was filed in the Delhi high court claiming that the BJP and the Congress had got donations from the same company, Vedanta/Sterlite, which were in violation of the FCRA Act. On March 28, 2014, the court held that the BJP and Congress were guilty of violating FCRA and asked the Narendra Modi government and the Election Commission to act against the two parties.

In December 2015, it was reported that the government was making amendments to the law that would get both parties off the hook. This happened in the 2016 Budget, when the definition of foreign source was changed, legitimising the donations received by the political parties. Unfortunately for the parties, this was done in a fairly slipshod fashion and so another amendment was passed in 2018 to again try and get the parties off. This finally happened in March 2018 through the amendment of a repealed law, an entirely farcical operation.

This is the background to the political side of the FCRA, which was the

intent of the legislation. What has happened over the years is that the law has been turned around and instead of reducing foreign influence on politics, it has been made a weapon against non-profit organisations. No government has any fondness for the sector called civil society, but the BJP in particular is hostile to it. In 2016, The Economic Times reported a speech in Bhubaneswar that the Prime Minister made to put forth his views on the subject. Mr Modi offered no evidence for his accusation that NGOs were foreign agents, but was convinced that they were trying to topple his government.

In the entire Modi era, the government has been trying actively to cut the size of the NGO sector. India has over 30 lakh such organisations, which range from neighbourhood associations to the most powerful NGO in the world, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. The groups work on education, disaster relief, violence against women, public health, human rights, the criminal justice system, the environment, agriculture and so on. Between 2014 and 2018, a report estimated, there

had been about a 40 per cent cut in foreign funding for these groups.

Yet another amendment made to the FCRA this month seeks to squeeze them further. This was introduced without any advance notice or consultation and passed without much debate. What it does is make it even more difficult for NGOs to function in India and in fact is an invitation for them to shut down.

I have worked in the sector for a few years and can say that it is filled with highly committed individuals who do the work in many sectors that the State in India simply cannot do. This is work that happens without a problem in large parts of the world and in all parts of the democratic world. The damage that is being done to the Indian NGO sector is being done in part because of the paranoia of the BJP that there is some sort of giant agenda behind organisations who do such work. Many of them are highly respected organisations around the world and the one that I worked for has won the Nobel Peace Prize. It is not in the interest of India or its people or even the government to persecute and harass these organisations.

Unfortunately that is what has happened and is happening and the reality is that many of them, already under assault from the State, will have to wind up operations and others will have to scale down.

India's civil society is full of motivated people and much of their work will continue because these individuals are not doing this work because of the money. I have worked with people with a background in investment banking, law and of course the media who have chosen to work in an NGO for much less than in their corporate job. Such Indians will continue their work and it is a shame that they are being hindered.

Today India invites foreign investment in arms and ammunition and bombs and guns, and in alcohol and tobacco, and petroleum and pharmaceuticals and everything else that one can think of. But it restricts investment in India on health, education and people's rights. Something is very wrong with such a state of affairs.

Aakar Patel is a senior journalist and columnist

SHORT TAKES

Wow-rinka
downs Murray

Paris: Roland Garros got underway in the "ridiculous" chill and damp of Paris on Sunday with Stan Wawrinka brushing aside fellow three-time major winner Andy Murray in the day's mar-

quee clash. Murray, playing his first clay court match since losing a five-set semi-final to the Swiss star in 2017, may have wished it had remained shut as 16th seed Wawrinka swept to a 6-1, 6-3, 6-2 win.

On a grim day for Britain, ninth seed and 2019 semi-finalist Johanna Konta was knocked out by teenage sensation Coco Gauff.

The American making her debut in the main draw having been the junior champion just two years ago, eased to a 6-3, 6-3 win despite serving up 12 double faults. — *AFP*

Leicester hit
Man City for five

London: Jamie Vardy's hat-trick dealt an early blow to Manchester City's hopes of wrestling back the Premier League title as they conceded three penalties in a 5-2 defeat to Leicester, while Newcastle's late spot-kick to snatch a 1-1 draw at Tottenham sparked fresh debate over the handball rule. City were without a host of first-team regulars due to injury and Covid infections, but the deficiencies at the back that undid their title defence last season were again exposed by the pace and finishing prowess of Vardy as a Pep Guardiola team conceded five for the first time in his coaching career. Leicester stormed to the top of the league, but had to come from behind to extend their perfect start to the season. — *AFP*

Messi scores as
Barca win big

Madrid: Lionel Messi scored in his first game since trying to leave Barcelona as Ronald Koeman began his tenure as coach by overseeing a 4-0 La Liga demolition of Villarreal on Sunday. Messi converted from the spot 10 minutes before half-time and it was the Argentinian's cross that then forced Pau Torres into an own-goal, after an early double from the Ansu Fati had already put Barca in charge. It meant Barcelona's past, present and future were all amongst the goals on the same afternoon as Luis Suarez, whose departure was confirmed on Thursday, marked his Atletico Madrid debut by scoring twice in a 6-1 win over Granada. In a farewell message to his best friend and former neighbour last week, Messi took another swipe at the Barca board by saying he was not surprised by the clumsy way Suarez's exit had been handled. — *AFP*

Heat book finals
clash with Lakers

Miami: The Miami Heat poured it on in the fourth quarter to beat the Boston Celtics 125-113 on Sunday and book a NBA Finals showdown with the Los Angeles Lakers. The Heat reached the championship series for the sixth time in club history with a four games to two victory over the Celtics in the best-of-seven Eastern Conference finals.

Live on TV

CRICKET

IPL: Delhi Capitals vs Sunrisers Hyderabad from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

TENNIS

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

FOOTBALL

Spanish League Real Sociedad vs Valencia from 10.30 pm; Getafe vs Real Betis from 1 am (Wednesday) on LaLiga page on Facebook

UEFA Champions League Play-offs: Dynamo Kyiv vs Gent from 12.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 1; Ferencvaros vs Molde from 12.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Six; Omonia vs Olympiacos from 12.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

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RCB mum Indians

ABD's knock powers Bangalore to down MI in super over

Dubai, Sept. 28: Royal Challengers Bangalore beat Mumbai Indians in a thrilling Super Over contest in the Indian Premier League on Monday after the match was tied during regulation 20 overs.

In the Super Over, Navdeep Saini conceded only 7 runs and RCB skipper Virat Kohli hit Jasprit Bumrah for a boundary off the final delivery to win it for his team.

Chasing a target of 202, Mumbai Indians managed 201 for 5 after Ishan Kishan (99 off 58 balls) and Kieron Pollard (60 off 24 balls) nearly pulled off an incredible chase but could manage 8 off the required 19 runs in the last over.

When RCB batted, half centuries from AB de Villiers, Aaron Finch and Devdutt Padikkal propelled them to 201 for 3 after being put into bat.

De Villiers scored 55 off 24 balls while Finch (52 off 35 balls) and Padikkal (54 off 40 balls) also contributed handsomely.

For MI, Trent Boult got 2 for 34 and Rahul Chahar got the other wicket.

Earlier, it was De Villiers, who used all his might during the death overs to smash his way to an unbeaten 55 off 24 balls, taking the score past 200-run mark. His innings had four sixes and as many boundaries as the swift yet brutal assault of Jasprit Bumrah (0/42 in 4 overs) will be remembered for a long time.

Even James Pattinson

● **It was AB de Villiers who used all his might during the death overs to smash his way to an unbeaten 55 off 24 balls, taking the score past 200-run mark.**

(0/51 in 4 overs) received a lot of stick as two speed merchants accounted for 8 off the 10 sixes in the RCB innings.

The last five overs produced 78 runs with Shivam Dube scoring 27 not out off 10 balls.

While Australia's white ball skipper Aaron Finch scored 52 off 35 balls to get his team off to a flying start, the extremely elegant Padikkal upped the ante in the later half with some delightful big hits, scoring 54 off 40 balls. The duo added 81 runs for the opening stand.

Padikkal's innings was studded with five boundaries and two sixes and a good stand of 62 runs for the third wicket with De Villiers, who then provided the final flourish as he has been doing for years now. The tall upright Padikkal's second IPL half-ton will be remembered specially for two sixes off fast bowler James Pattinson. The first was when the left-hander rocked on the backfoot and punched it over mid-off and the next was a stand and deliver straight into the sight screen.

— *PTI*



AB de Villiers of Royal Challengers Bangalore en route to his unbeaten 55 against Mumbai Indians in their Indian Premier League match at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium on Monday. — *BCCI*

SCORECARD

Royal Challengers Bangalore: Devdutt Padikkal c Pollard b Boult 54, Aaron Finch c Pollard b Boult 52, Virat Kohli c Sharma b Chahar 3, AB de Villiers (not out) 55, Shivam Dube (not out) 27. **Extras: (lb-7, w-3) 10. Total: (for 3 wkts, in 20 overs) 201.**

FoW: 1-81, 2-92, 3-154.

Bowling: Trent Boult 4-0-34-2, James Pattinson 4-0-51-0, Rahul Chahar 4-0-31-1, Jasprit Bumrah 4-0-42-0, Krunal Pandya 3-0-23-0, Kieron Pollard 1-0-13-0.

Mumbai Indians: R. Sharma (c) c sub (P. Negi) b Washington Sundar 8, Q de Kock c sub (P. Negi) b Chahal 14, S. Yadav c de Villiers b Udana 0, Ishan Kishan c Padikkal b Udana 99, H. Pandya c sub (P. Negi) b Zampa 15, K. Pollard (not out) 60, K. Pandya (not out) 0. **Extras: (w 5) 5. Total: (for 5 wkts, in 20 overs) 201.**

FoW: 1-14, 2-16, 3-39, 4-78, 5-197.

Bowling: Isuru Udana 4-0-45-2, Washington Sundar 4-0-12-1, Navdeep Saini 4-0-43-0, Yuzvendra Chahal 4-0-48-1, Adam Zampa 4-0-53-1.

Super Over: Mumbai Indians (7/1) lost to Royal Challengers Bangalore (11/0).

Pooran reacts in Nich of time

Dubai, Sept. 28: Nicholas Pooran stunned the cricket world and social media with a gravity-defying piece of fielding to prevent a six on a record-breaking night in the IPL.

Pooran dived cat-like to grab the ball at full stretch six feet over the boundary before twisting in mid-air and backhanding it over the rope a split-second before he hit the ground.

The West Indian's acrobatics to deny Rajasthan Royals batsman Sanju Samson a six weren't enough, however, to stop his Kings XI Punjab side losing to the biggest run chase in IPL history in Sharjah on Sunday.

Cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar called it "the best save I have seen in my life. Simply incredible!!" — prompting thanks to the "sgod-of-cricket" from Punjab's fielding coach Jonty Rhodes.

"(There) really is NO



Kings XI Punjab's Nicholas Pooran makes a gravity-defying save in their IPL match against Rajasthan Royals in Sharjah on Sunday.

question about it being 'The best save, EVER. Fantastic work by @nicholas_47 who inspired the rest of the @lionsdenkxip fielders to put on 1 of the best defensive fielding displays I have ever seen,' Rhodes tweeted.

Former England batsman Kevin Pietersen, commenting on television, was blown away by

Trinidad-born Pooran's "unbelievable" exploit, which resulted in two runs being taken instead of six.

"No way, no way, no way. That is unbelievable! The save of T20 cricket ever; that is the best I have seen," Pietersen said.

The video of the spectacular effort lit up social media. "Pooran save for the

boundary was inhuman extraordinary, he has redefined the human thinking capability, take a bow," said one Twitter user.

Another said: "Wowza, superman Nicolas Pooran".

Pooran's effort came after his eight-ball 25 with the bat as King's XI scored 223/2 after batting first in the match. — *AFP*

DELHI LOOK
TO CONTINUE
MOMENTUM

Abu Dhabi, Sept. 28: Off to the best possible start with two wins on the trot, a confident Delhi Capitals will hope to keep the juggernaut rolling when they take on the winless Sunrisers Hyderabad in an IPL match here on Tuesday. Both sides have endured contrasting campaigns so far.

Delhi head in to the game after two morale-boosting victories. The Shreyas Iyer-led side edged past Kings XI Punjab in a thrilling Super Over before thrashing Chennai Super Kings comprehensively to jump to the top of the points table.

On the other hand, SRH are the only side yet to register a win in the tournament, having lost both their games and David Warner and his men will be desperate to turn things around. — *PTI*

Self-belief behind
Tewatia's high 5

Sharjah, Sept. 28: Rahul Tewatia, who became an overnight star by smashing West Indian pacer Sheldon Cottrell for five sixes in an over, says his self-belief did not waver despite the "worst 20 balls" he ever played early in his roller-coaster knock.

His sensational effort helped Rajasthan Royals beat Kings XI Punjab in an incredible IPL match on Sunday night. Early on his his innings, he was struggling to put bat to ball.

"The dugout knows I can hit the ball long. I knew I had to believe in myself. It was a matter of one six," the 27-year-old Tewatia said after the Royals' 4-wicket win.

"Five (sixes) in the over, that is amazing. I tried to hit the leg-spinner, but unfortunately I couldn't. So I had to hit other bowlers."

He hit those big hits in the 18th over off Cottrell, four of them on the trot, to turn the match on its head after the Royals needed 51 runs from the last three overs.

Tewatia struggled to connect with the ball initially after he was sent at Steve Smith's fall ahead of the likes of Robin Uthappa. However, with he wasting the deliveries at the crucial juncture, pressure was building on Sanju Samson.

Asked about it, the player from Haryana said, "Now I



Rahul Tewatia of Rajasthan Royals in action against Kings XI Punjab in an IPL match at Sharjah Cricket Stadium on Sunday. — *BCCI*

am better. The worst 20 balls I have ever played. After then I began to hit so I kept going. I will never forget this knock." — *PTI*

TEWATIA ASKED FOR 'PAT
ON THE BACK' LAST SEASON

New Delhi, Sept. 28: Rahul Tewatia had to request for a "pat on the back" last year but this season he has earned it.

In a debriefing video of the 2019 season that has gone viral following his match-winning six-hitting spree on Sunday, Tewatia, who played for Delhi Capitals last year, can be seen walking up to head coach Ricky Ponting to remind the legendary Australian about his four catches in the win against the mighty Mumbai Indians.

Tewatia stops Ponting in his stride after he concludes his post-match dressing room speech, patting the likes of Rishabh Pant, Shikhar Dhawan,

Colin Ingram and the bowlers for their match-winning effort at the Wankhede Stadium.

With Tewatia yearning for recognition for his four catches, Ponting obliges by telling the entire squad, albeit in a lighter vein.

"Boys Tewatia took four catches and wants a pat on the back," Ponting tells the dressing room much to everyone's amusement and walks away with a grin on his face.

Axar Patel then chides Tewatia in lighter vein for asking for recognition. "Apne haq ke liye ladenge (I will fight for what I am owed)," Tewatia says at the end of the footage. — *PTI*

Coach confident of
Rahul's IPL success

New Delhi, Sept. 28: "I always told Rahul (Tewatia) that he will have his day in the IPL and it would be because of his batting," the excitement and satisfaction was palpable in childhood coach Vijay Yadav's voice while talking about his ward's match-defining 31-ball 53 for Rajasthan Royals in an IPL encounter.

IPL throws up unlikely stars and Sunday was a "day of Rahuls" when the lesser known Tewatia from Haryana's Sihi village in Faridabad district stole the thunder from India star K.L. Rahul, striking five sixes in an over.

And icing on the cake was Royals Brand

Ambassador Shane Warne's praise. "Firstly what courage and heart shown by Tewatia, especially after his poor start with bat, well done young man awesome," Warne summed it up in a tweet that Tewatia would remember for a long time.

Yadav, a former hard-hitting India wicketkeeper-batsman remembers a shy kid who came at his "Cricket Gurukul" in 1998-99 as an eight-year old.

"His father is a lawyer in a Faridabad court and they are a middle-class family. But what struck me was his family's enthusiasm even though he was a shy kid," Yadav remembers. — *PTI*

I didn't get what I deserve, says Amit Mishra

Abu Dhabi, Sept. 28: His India career never really took wings like it did in the IPL but veteran Delhi Capitals leg-spinner Amit Mishra says he has stopped thinking about why he didn't get what he "should have", content with the name he made for himself.

Mishra is second behind Lasith Malinga in the list of highest wicket-takers in the IPL with 157 scalps in 148 matches. "I don't know if I am underrated. I used to think too much earlier, so mind used to get diverted, now I just focus on my job," he said in an online press conference ahead of the clash against Sunrisers Hyderabad here on Tuesday.

"To be honest, I didn't get what I should have but it's okay. People know who is Amit Mishra. That's is

enough for me. I have to focus on my cricket and bowling so that is what I do," he conceded, touching upon the disappointment of not turning up more for India. Despite being one of the most highly rated leg-spinners in the country, Mishra has played just 22 Tests, 36 ODIs and 10 T20Is for India.

His last Test and ODI appearance was back in 2016. The 37-year-old also congratulated fellow Haryana-lad Rahul Tewatia for the hurricane half century that helped Rajasthan Royals to an improbable win on Sunday and became a talking point.

Mishra said Tewatia surpassed expectations with his magical knock. The two played together for the Capitals in the 2018 season.



"He has been focussing on his batting. The way he played yesterday it is good for the future of Haryana.

I want him to keep performing like this in future," Mishra said. "I had a little bit of

expectation that he can but I didn't expect that he will go on to play the innings he actually did.

Sometimes your focus is so much, things start happening as you want. It was an innings which we don't see often. It is one of the best innings of his life so far."

On Tuesday's match, Mishra said the Abu Dhabi cricket will favour batsmen. "It is a bit slow. Batsmen are getting the time to play shots. Batsmen have an advantage, bowlers also are planning accordingly. It will be a slow wicket," he said.

The tweaker said his team will have to plan more for the matches which will be held in Sharjah. "For Sharjah, we have to plan better because it is a small ground. Compared to Dubai and Abu Dhabi, the match in Sharjah will be more important match. If

you win there, it will help the team."

Asked about coach Ricky Ponting's influence so far, Mishra said: "He has played the game for such a long time, so he knows the mentality of the players. If someone is low or over-confident, he knows what to say."

"He always talks positive. He is so jolly, I also learn a lot from him how he handles players depending on their individual nature."

On how he managed to make leg-spin such a potent weapon in a format which is dominated by batsmen, he said: "I was always told that it is not a game for leg-spinners but it only motivated me further." "Leg-spinners have more variety than others, so they are wicket-taking option but you have to work hard for it." — *PTI*