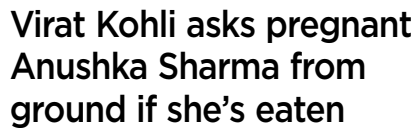
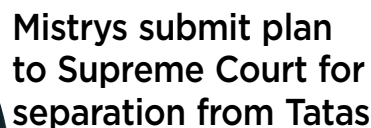


**NEW DELHI FRIDAY 30 OCTOBER 2020**



RNI No. 57290/94, Regd No: DL-SW-05/4189/15-17

Vol. 27 No. 254 | 16 PAGES | ₹5.00

Paris Jackson poses for a portrait in Beverly Hills, California, to promote her debut solo album *Wildest*, that will be released on November 13. Her new single *Let Down* will hit chart today (Friday). — AP

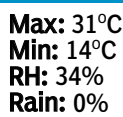
Ahmedabad: Former chief minister Keshubhai Patel, who led the first BJP government in Gujarat in 1995, passed away at 92 years at a hospital in Ahmedabad where he was rushed on Thursday morning following health complications. He had earlier tested +ve for Covid-19. His son Bharat said that although he had recovered from Covid-19, "some damage had been done to his health, as he also suffered from cancer of the prostate".

**Guwahati:** In what has come as a shocker, the topper of the Joint Entrance Exam (Mains) in Assam, his father and three others were arrested by the city police here on Thursday on charges of using a proxy to write the country's premier engineering entrance test.

**More on Page 4**

**New Delhi:** The national capital recorded a minimum temperature of 12.5 degrees Celsius on Thursday, the lowest in October in 26 years, according to the India Meteorological Department. The normal minimum temperature for this time of the year is 15 to 16 degrees Celsius, it said.

## Not IPL, they were betting on polls!



**Forecast:** Sunny

**Sarvari:** Dakshinayana  
**Tithi:** Nija Ashwayuja  
 dhya Chaturdasi till 5.45  
 pm  
**Star:** Revati till 2.56 pm  
**Varjyam:** Nil  
**Urmuhurtam:** 8.34 am to  
 12.22 pm; 1.08 pm  
**Shakalam:** 10.30 am to 12

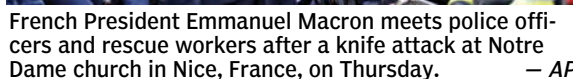
**SUNSET TODAY 5.37 PM**  
**SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.32 AM**  
**MOONRISE TOMORROW 5.41 PM**  
**MOONSET TODAY 5.11 AM**

Pakistan's foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi had at an important meeting last year pleaded to release Indian Air Force Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman, who was captured by the Pakistani Army on February 27, 2019, after his MiG-21 Bison jet was shot down in a dogfight with Pakistani jets.

"Legs were shaking and forehead perspiring, and the foreign minister (Qureshi) told us, 'For God's sake, let him (Varthaman) go back now because India is attacking Pakistan at 9 pm in the night'", Mr Sadiq said, recalling the high-level meeting which was also attended by Army chief Gen. Qamar Javed Bajwa, and added that "India was not planning to attack... They just wanted to kneel before India and send back Abhinandan." Mr

**Patna/Munger, Oct. 29:** The Election Commission has removed the district magistrate and the superintendent of police of Munger over the violence during a Durga Puja event early this week, even as a group of protesters went on the rampage in the town on Thursday, setting some police stations and outposts on fire and ransacking the SP and the SDO offices.

“We have decided that to defeat SP candidate in future MLC elections in UP, we will devote all our energies and even if we have to give our vote to a BJP candidate or any other party candidate, we will do it. Any party candidate who will be dominant over Samajwadi’s second candidate will get all BSP MLAs’ vote for sure,” Mr. Mayawati told news agency ANI. On Wednesday, six BSP MLAs reportedly met SP chief Akhilesh Yadav and later threw hints that they may switch sides. Four of the rebels also filed an affidavit, saying their signatures on the party candidate



also died. A male suspect was shot and detained. Anti-terror prosecutors have opened an investigation into the attack and

**New Delhi, Oct. 29:** In a bid to tackle the persistent problem of air pollution in Delhi-NCR, the Centre has introduced a new law through an ordinance which comes into force with immediate effect.

Under the ordinance released by the law and justice ministry Thursday, the Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA) has been dissolved and replaced by a commission of over 20 members. The members are yet to be selected.

Violation of its provisions entails punishment with a jail term of up to five years or with a fine up to ₹1 crore, or both.

“The ordinance may be called the Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas Ordinance 2020. It shall apply to the national capital region and adjoining areas insofar as it relates to matters con-

**New Delhi:** Delhi's air quality inched closer to the "severe" category on Thursday, primarily due to calm winds and spike in farm fires. The ministry of earth sciences' monitoring agency, SAFAR, said that the share of stubble burning in Delhi's PM2.5 pollution was 36 per cent on Thursday – the maximum so far this season. Delhi recorded a 24-hour average air quality index of 395. It was 297 on Wednesday, 312 on Tuesday, 353 on Monday, 349 on Sunday, 345 on Saturday and 366 on Friday.

**PAWAN BALI**  
NEW DELHI, OCT. 29

The Indian Army has developed a mobile messaging app similar to "WhatsApp" for secure voice, text and video calling. This app will be used within the Army to keep communications secure and was named "Secure Application for Internet" (SAI). "The application supports end-to-end secure voice, text and video calling services for Android platform over the Internet. It is quite similar to commercially available messaging apps like WhatsApp, Telegram, GIMS and SAM VAD, and utilises end-to-end encryption messaging protocols," the Army said in a statement.

**YUSUF JAMEEL**  
SRINAGAR, OCT. 29

A BJP youth leader and two associates were shot and critically injured by suspected militants in J&K's southern Kulgam district late Thursday. At least three succumbed to their injuries on their way to hospital.

**PARMOD KUMAR**  
NEW DELHI, OCT. 29

Giving major relief to Uttarakhand chief minister Trivendra Singh Rawat, the Supreme Court on

**T**hursday stayed the state high court's order directing a CBI probe against him on allegations of corruption.

Issuing notice to journalist Umesh Kumar Sharma, on whose petition the high court ordered the CBI probe against Mr Rawat, a bench comprising Justices Ashok Bhushan, R. Subhash Reddy and M.R. Shah, however, refused to interfere with the high court quashing the FIR against Mr. Sharma and the observations of mala fide in the registration of an FIR against him. The notice is returnable in four weeks.

While staying the part of the high court order on the registration of an FIR against the CM based on the allegation in the journalist's petition, Justice Bhushan noted the direction for a CBI probe by the high court was in exercise of its powers under Article 226 of the Constitution.

Appearing for Mr. Rawat, attorney-general K.K. Venugopal, addressing the question of law, cited three Supreme Court rulings which said courts must guard against ordering probes against elected representatives in key positions that may have a politically destabilising effect. The A-G said in this case demands were already being made for the resignation of the chief minister.

While senior counsel Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for Uttarakhand state, and P.S. Patwalla wanted the entire judgment stayed, the bench refused, saying it will block only that part directing a CBI probe against the CM.

**AGE CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI, OCT. 29

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi on Thursday lashed out at BSP supreme Mayawati for her remarks that her party will now look to defeat the Samajwadi Party candidates at all costs even if that requires “siding with the BJP”. Sharing a video of Mayawati on Twitter, M. Gandhi wrote, “Now is there anything more to be said?”

ly 'Allahu Akbar' (God is greatest)''

It was the third attack in two months in France that authorities have attributed to Muslim extremists — including the beheading of a teacher. It comes during a growing furore over caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad that were republished in recent months by the satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo* — renewing vociferous debate in France and the Muslim world over the depictions that Muslims consider offensive.

■ **More on Page**







## SHORT TAKES

## UP: Girl killed, 7 hurt in clash over affair

**Pratapgarh:** A 17-year-old girl was killed and seven others injured in a clash at Tala village under the Kandhai Police Station area here, police said on Thursday. According to police, the girl was reportedly in a relationship with her neighbour Rajkumar alias Raja (18) with whom she had gone to a fair and stayed at his house on Tuesday night. The incident had led to a dispute between the family members of the duo, SP Anurag Arya said. A panchayat was held in the village on Wednesday to resolve the matter. Though the girl returned to her house, a clash broke out between the two sides on Wednesday evening following which the girl and seven others were injured. They were rushed to the district hospital where the doctors declared the girl as dead. The others were referred to Allahabad for treatment, the SP said. — *PTI*

## Mumbai doc booked for raping colleague

**Palghar:** Police in Maharashtra's Palghar district have registered a case against a Mumbai-based doctor for allegedly raping his colleague, an official said on Thursday. The 30-year-old woman lodged a complaint at Dahanu police station alleging that the accused raped her multiple times between July 2018 and September 2020 on the false promise of marrying her, the official said. "She also said in her complaint that the accused impregnated her and forced her to go for abortion against her wish. He threatened her that he would make her objectionable videos public if she refused to do so. He also used to stalk and harass her," a Palghar police spokesperson said. — *PTI*

## C'gart: Woman Naxal killed in gunfight

**Sukma:** A woman Naxal was killed in an encounter with the security forces in Chhattisgarh's insurgency-hit Sukma district, police said on Thursday. The skirmish occurred on Wednesday in a forest between Duled and Minpa villages under Chintalnar police station area, where a joint team of security forces was out on an anti-Naxal operation, inspector general of police (Bastar range) Sundaraj P said. Personnel from the District Reserve Guard (DRG), Special Task Force (STF), Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and its elite unit CoBRA were involved in the action, he said. During a search following the gunfight, the team found the body of a woman ultra, a .303 rifle, a huge cache of explosive materials and items of daily use from the area, he said. — *PTI*

## SARANGI ATTRACTS LARGE CROWDS IN BYPOLL MEETINGS

**Balasure:** Aparajita Sarangi, a 1994-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS)-turned politician in Odisha, who surprised all by winning the prestigious Bhubaneswar Lok Sabha seat in 2019 Lok Sabha polls, has been the star attraction of voters in the ongoing Odisha Assembly bypolls. The ever-smiling, graceful and elegant saree-wearing lady is seen easily mingling with the crowd with consummate ease, striking an instant emotional chord with the people. In Balasure, while making the door-to-door campaign, she is spending quite substantial time with women, young voters and sharing lighter moments with them. Hailing from a rural background in Bihar and making it to the civil services with a lot of struggle, Ms Sarangi was a strict and firm administrator. She brought many reforms in all the departments, she also served in different positions in her career. Her reforms in the primary education system shot her to enviable fame and made her familiar household name in the state. Picked up by Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself ahead of the 2019 general elections, Aparajita proved that she was a different material. Her strong stand against the alleged "corruption", "nepotism" and "incompetence" of the ruling BJD made her instantly popular.

# BJP slams Rahul, calls him 'prince of Pakistan'

Nadda's dig came after Pak MP said Abhinandan was released fearing attack

AGE CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, OCT. 29

Calling Congress former president Rahul Gandhi as the "prince of Pakistan," the BJP on Thursday accused the opposition party leader of building his party's entire campaign against the Balakot airstrike by the Indian Air Force only to weaken the Indian Armed forces and alleged that the Congress leader "tried every trick" to ensure India does not get the latest Rafale planes.

After a video of a senior opposition party leader of Pakistan speaking in the

**Congress leader 'tried every trick' to ensure India does not get latest Rafale Planes**  
— J.P. Nadda, BJP president



country's national assembly surfaced, in which the PMN-L MP claimed that Pakistan's foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi and the country's Army Chief Gen Bajwa were "shivering and sweating" during a meeting over reports that India would attack "that night at 9 PM" if IAF officer Abhinandan Varthaman

was not released, the BJP, taking a dig at the Congress leader, said he should now believe as it has come from "most trusted nation."

Wing Commander Varthaman had landed in Pakistani custody following an aerial dogfight between Indian and Pakistani pilots after the Balakot airstrikes by

India in 2019.

BJP president J.P. Nadda said, "The Congress' princeling does not believe anything Indian, be it our Army, our government, our citizens. So, here is something from his 'Most Trusted Nation', Pakistan. Hopefully, now he sees some light..." The BJP president said the Congress "premised its entire campaign around keeping our armed forces weak" while its leaders "mocked our armed forces, questioned their valour and tried every trick to ensure India doesn't get latest Rafale Planes."

## Diggi asks SP man to back out from MP bypolls, audio leaks

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY  
BHOPAL, OCT. 29

An audio in which Congress veteran Digvijay Singh was heard persuading Samajwadi Party (SP) candidate from Gwalior Assembly constituency Roshan Mirza to withdraw his nomination by offering him party ticket in the upcoming local urban body elections in the state on Thursday went viral in social media, triggering a political row.

In the 1.57 minute-audio clip, the former chief minister was heard giving the offer to Mr Mirza to make him bow down from the contest in the November 3 by-elections to Gwalior assembly constituency. "Why are you contesting (in the by-elections)? Do you want to ensure the victory of BJP (candidate)? We will look into your interest. You withdraw your nomination today. We will give you a ticket in the coming local urban body elections" Mr Singh was heard



telling the SP candidate in the audio.

The audio-triggered a political row with chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan accusing Congress of indulging in electoral malpractices by asking the SP candidate to withdraw from the contest.

"The audio has exposed corrupt practices being resorted to by Congress to manipulate elections", Mr Chouhan said.

In his reaction, Mr Singh confirmed that he had contacted the SP candidate to persuade him to withdraw from the contest.

"I admit that it was my voice in audio. I have nothing to hide. I have done nothing wrong by persuading him (Mr Mirza) to withdraw his nomination. As a Congress leader, I have the right to ask a Congressman who has filed nomination as an independent candidate to withdraw his nomination in the interest of my party", Mr Singh said.

## Will dig out all corruption in Kamal Nath govt, says BJP

AGE CORRESPONDENT  
KOLKATA, OCT. 29

With barely five days left for the crucial by-elections to 28 Assembly constituencies in Madhya Pradesh, ruling BJP on Thursday exposed alleged corruptions in the 15-month-old Kamal Nath government that fell in March this year following resignation of 22 Congress MLAs.

State BJP president Vishnu Dutt Sharma said that a ministerial committee constituted by the Shivraj government was probing into various alleged omissions and commissions surfaced during the Kamal Nath government.

"Large scale corruptions during the Kamal Nath government have come to the fore. We will dig out all the corruptions in the previous Congress government in the state. A probe is ongoing," Mr Sharma told reporters here.

Congress, however, dismissed all the charges describing them as "utter lies."

AGE CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, OCT 29

The Union Cabinet on Thursday approved the second and third phases of the Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (Drip), which will initially cover 19 states, with an outlay of ₹10,211 crore. It entails funding physical rehabilitation of important dams as well as capacity building of dam operators in order to ensure the availability of trained and

## Will withdraw all political cases: Ghosh

AGE CORRESPONDENT  
KOLKATA, OCT. 29

West Bengal BJP president and Midnapore MP Dilip Ghosh, on Thursday, declared that cases against all political workers, irrespective of party lines, would be withdrawn once BJP comes to power in the state in the next year's Assembly election.

Referring to Trinamul Congress, he said at a rally in the city, "It is funny that each of the leaders of the party,

which has been in power here, has cases against them because if and when they quit, they will be sent to jail. Many people were rendered homeless and penniless here

after they were implicated in different cases. All of them were TMC supporters."

Mr Ghosh added, "I hereby announce that when BJP will form its government in May in Bengal, all the political cases will be withdrawn. Not only BJP, CPI(M), and Congress, we will make even TMC leaders free from their cases"

— Dilip Ghosh, BJP president



**I hereby announce that when BJP will form its government in May in Bengal, all the political cases will be withdrawn. Not only BJP, CPI(M), and Congress, we will make even TMC leaders free from their cases**

— Dilip Ghosh, BJP president

government in May in Bengal, all the political cases will be withdrawn. Not only BJP, CPI(M), and Congress, we will make even Trinamul Congress leaders free from their cases."

Puncturing his claim, CPI(M) leader Mohammad Salim alleged, "BJP plays politics of lies only. They are in power in Tripura. Have they withdrawn the cases or are they filing false cases? Have the people forgotten the Bhima Koregaon case?"

## 100% grains to be packed in jute bags

AGE CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, OCT. 29

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) on Thursday approved the proposal that 100 per cent of foodgrains and 20 per cent of sugar shall be mandatorily packed in diversified jute bags, a step which is aimed at promoting the jute industry.

The decision to pack sugar in diversified jute bags will give an impetus to the diversification of the jute industry.

AGE CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, OCT 29

skilled manpower for their better operation. According to official sources, the programme will run for 10 years and will be implemented in two phases. They added that in order to carry forward the momentum gained through the ongoing Drip and expand it vertically and horizontally, the new scheme DRIP phase II, co-financed by World Bank (WB) and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)

indents of jute bags for packing foodgrains would be placed through a reverse auction on the Gem portal. This will gradually usher in a regime of price discovery. The Government has expanded the scope of mandatory packaging norms under the Jute Packaging Material (JPM) Act, 1987.

In case of any shortage or disruption in the supply of jute packaging material or in other contingency/exigency, the Ministry of Textiles

and property located downstream of these selected dams, through structural as well as non-structural measures. India ranks third globally after China and the United States of America, with 5,334 large dams in operation. In addition, about 411 dams are under construction at present. There are also several thousand smaller dams. These dams are vital for ensuring the water security of the country. Indian dams and

reservoirs play an important role in the economic and agricultural growth of our country by storing approximately 300 billion cubic meter of water annually. The programme will enable states and dam owners to extend these safety protocols and activities beyond the selected dams to all other dams within their jurisdiction, overall enhancing the culture of dam safety in the country.

## UP CM urges Bihar voters during his rallies

## Ensure victory of Nitish for overall development: Yogi

NAYEAR AZAD  
PATNA, OCT. 29

Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday urged people of Bihar to ensure the victory of Nitish Kumar for the overall development of the state.

While addressing rallies in Siwan, Vaishali and Madhubani he said that the BJP, an alliance partner of the JD(U), has fulfilled its promises on emotive issues like Triple Talaq, Ayodhya, Kashmir and Pakistan.

He said, "Modi government has worked to uplift the poor and needy. The government also ended triple talaq to establish the dignity of women, taught Pakistan a lesson



Yogi Adityanath

through surgical strikes, removed article 370 and constructing a grand Ram Temple in Ayodhya".

He also used the occasion to criticize the opposition coalition being led by RJD for doing politics of appeasement and indulging in corruption. While addressing a rally

in Siwan Yogi Adityanath said that "the RJD, Congress and CPI (ML) are trying to bring back jungle raj in Bihar but they should know that after wiping out terrorism in Kashmir preparations are on to uproot Naxalism".

He continued saying that the opposition coalition is being led by leaders who have no vision or roadmap for the development. Targeting the RJD over the employment issue he said that "till 15 years ago, the youth of Bihar were forced to hide their identity and those who were responsible for the crisis are once again blowing the trumpet of employment and misleading them".

## Keshubhai Patel, former Gujarat CM, passes away

**Ahmedabad, Oct. 29:** Former Gujarat chief minister Keshubhai Patel, who played a pivotal role in strengthening the BJP in the state, died here on Thursday after prolonged illness, family sources said.

Patel (92), who recovered from coronavirus infection recently, was rushed to a hospital in Ahmedabad on Thursday morning following health complications, the sources said.

The BJP veteran was the state chief minister in 1995 and again during 1998-2001. Narendra Modi had succeeded him as Gujarat chief minister. The state government has declared a day's state mourning on Thursday, Gujarat chief minister Vijay Rupani told reporters. Keshubhai's last rites will be performed with full state honours, he added.

Hospital authorities said Patel died due to cardiac arrest. Patel was rushed to the hospital after his pulse and oxygen level dropped on Thursday morning, his son Bharat Patel said. "He recently recovered from



Keshubhai Patel

coronavirus, but his health kept deteriorating," he added. The ruling BJP has postponed all its bypoll related programmes, including public rallies, following Patel's death.

"All state government work was also put on hold today as a mark of respect," Gujarat deputy chief minister Nitin Patel said.

Rupani cut short a poll rally at Ghadhada and visited Keshubhai's residence in Gandhinagar, where the body was kept, to pay tributes.

"He was like BJP's Bhishma Pitamah in Gujarat. He had a tremendous socio-political acumen. He spoke less, but his every word was a command for BJP workers.

"Being a farmer himself, he worked for their welfare. We passed a resolution in the state cabinet meeting to express grief over this loss," Rupani told reporters. — *PTI*

| NORTHERN RAILWAY                    |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| NOTICE INVITING TENDER              |  |
| Name of work and its location       | 30-Elect-28-T-2020-21-E3<br>Repairing & rewinding of submersible & monoblock submersible pumps over Delhi division |
| Approx cost of the works in         | Rs. 49.28 lacs   |
| Address of the office               | Sr. Divl Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi.   |
| Earnest Money                       | Rs. 98600.00   |
| Date & time of submission of tender | 27.11.2020, 12.00 Hrs.   |
| Opening of tender                   | 27.11.2020, 12.00 Hrs  |
| Website & notice board              | www.ireps.gov.in & Sr. Divl. Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi.   |
| SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE      |  |

**New Okhla Industrial Development Authority**  
Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida-201301 (U.P.)  
Website: [www.noidaauthorityonline.com](http://www.noidaauthorityonline.com)

### E-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tender are invited from firms/contractors registered with UPLC Lucknow for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened/downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on NOIDA Authority's official website: [www.noidaauthorityonline.com](http://www.noidaauthorityonline.com) & <https://etender.up.nic.in> Please ensure to see these websites for any changes/amendments & corrigendum etc.

(A) 1. 41/GM/SM(WC-2)/2020-21, Name of work : M/o Road (Beautification of Entry Gate & Re-laying of Side Pairs of Film City, Sector-16A), Noida. Cost -Rs. 24.39 Lacs.

Which can be uploaded by date 12.11.2020 upto 5.00 PM. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on date 13.11.2020 at 11.00 AM.

(B) 1. 36/GM/SM(WC-10)/ET/2020-21, Name of work : M/o & D/o Village (Drain, Culvert and Sump Development works for Village Gulawali), Noida. Cost -Rs. 20.56 Lacs.

Which can be uploaded by date 05.11.2020 upto 5.00 PM. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on date 06.11.2020 at 11.00 AM.

General Manager, NOIDA

### CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA

#### NORTHERN RAILWAY

##### E-TENDER NOTICE

No. 256-Sig/SPL/TJKJ/219/TKD A&C Dated : 29.10.2020

Dy CSTE/SPL/TJKJ, Northern Railway, Tilak Bridge New Delhi acting for & on behalf of President of India invites E-tenders in Single packet system from the experienced & established contractors having sufficient experience in similar work and satisfying minimum eligibility criteria for the under noted work:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 Name of work   | "Outdoor and Indoor Work with part supply of Signalling materials in Connection with the work of replacement of signalling gears with EI at Tughlakabad A and C Cabin in DELHI Division of Northern Railway." |
| 2 Approximate cost of the work                             | Rs. 5,20,27,391.15<br>(Rs Five Crore Twenty Lakh Twenty Seven Thousand Three hundred Ninety One and Paise Fifteen Only)   |
| 3 Earnest Money  | Rs. 410100/- (To be submitted online)   |
| 4 Completion period  | 10 Months from the date of issue of letter of Acceptance  |
| 5 Website address and Date and Time where tender available | www.ireps.gov.in  |
| 6 Closing date   | 11.00 Hrs. on date: 23.11.2020  |
| 7 Date of Opening of tender                                | 11.30 Hrs on date: 23.11.2020   |
| 8 Validity of offer  | 45 days from the date of opening of tender.   |

(Tenders without earnest money will be summarily rejected). Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date & time only. Bids are to be submitted online only. Manual bids/offers are not allowed against this tender, and any manual offer received shall be ignored. The tenderers/s.e. must be registered on the Indian Railway E-Procurement system (IREPS) site i.e. [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) for participating in the e-tender system. Necessary changes, Corrigendum/addendum, if required, would be posted on this web site only.

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 2383/2020



## Court seeks probe into Kangana posts

**Mumbai:** A magistrate court in Mumbai on Thursday directed the police to conduct an inquiry into the statements allegedly made by Bollywood actress Kangana Ranaut and her sister Rangoli on social media platforms and file a report by December 5. The inquiry has been ordered on a private complaint filed against the duo by a city-based lawyer claiming that through their tweets the actress and her sister have caused disharmony among two religious groups. "Alleged video is not available on record. Allegations are based upon the comments of the accused on social media platforms. Evidence against the accused appears to be of electronic nature. Therefore, inquiry at the hands of police is necessary," said the metropolitan magistrate at Andheri court.

## EC removes SP, DM as violence erupts in Munger

■ **Continued from Page 1** department, while Mr Dhillon was a Special Task Force SP. During the day, Munger witnessed large-scale violence and arson over the Monday night incident. Alleging that no action was taken against the SP and other police personnel over the Monday night incident, the agitators allegedly torched muffasil and women police stations in the town. They also allegedly set police outposts at Purab Sarai and Basudeopur on fire, and ransacked the SP office and several other police stations and outposts.

The office of Sub Divisional Officer (SDO) was also allegedly targeted by the protestors, official sources said.

Witnesses said that finding themselves outnumbered, the police personnel at all these stations escaped from the premises.

Additional director general of police (headquarters) Jitendra Kumar said that extra police force has been sent to Munger.

Deputy inspector general of police, Munger, Manu Maharaj led a flag march in Munger town to bring the situation under control.

The RJD-helmed Grand Alliance has strongly criticised the Monday incident, likening the district police with General Dyer of infamous Jallianwala Bagh incident in Punjab during British rule on April 13, 1919.

IPS officer Lipi Singh is the daughter of R.C.P. Singh, the JD(U) leader in the Rajya Sabha.

Coming on the eve of the first phase of polling, the incident impacted voting as two of the three Assembly seats — Munger, Jamalpur — in the district witnessed lower voter turnout as compared to the 2015 polls.

While Munger constituency had witnessed a poll percentage of 54.26 in 2015, it recorded 47.89 Wednesday. Similarly, the decline was from 49.70 per cent to 47.24 per cent in Jamalpur this time. State minister and senior JD(U) leader Shailesh Kumar is in the fray from Jamalpur seat.

—PTI

## ‘Ghus Ke Maara’, Pak mantri brags about Pulwama

■ **Continued from Page 1** “when our planes target combat installations”. “We do not show bravery by killing innocents in we condemn terrorism,” he added.

In an apparent damage control act, Mr Sadiq too issued a clarification. On Thursday, Mr Sadiq in a video statement said that he was being “misquoted” regarding his statement in the National Assembly. He said that he wanted to say that the decision to release Wg Cdr Varthaman showed “a weakness of the civilian leadership”.

Commenting on Mr Sadiq’s remarks, Pakistan Army spokesman Major General Babar Iftikhar said on Thursday that his statement was an attempt to “distort history”.

Pakistan “want to make it clear, for the purpose of correcting the history, that Pakistan first demonstrated its capability and resolve and the actions taken on Feb. 27 were from the position of strength”, Maj. Gen. Iftikhar said while responding to queries at a press conference here.

The international community led by the US has pressed Pakistan to deny safe haven to terror groups operating from its soil and bring the perpetrators of the Pulwama attack to justice.

# NIA raids in J&K continue for 2nd day

9 more locations in Kashmir Valley, 1 in Delhi searched by probe agency over ‘terror funds’

**YUSUF JAMEEL**  
SRINAGAR, OCT. 29

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) continued its raids on the offices of various NGOs and some other aid agencies and the homes of their organisers across Kashmir Valley on the second day running on Thursday.

Premises owned or used by a similar organisation in Delhi were also searched by it in connection with a case pertaining to alleged misuse of funding received by these NGOs from across the country and abroad. The

case was registered by the NIA earlier this month under Sections 120B and 124 A IPC and sections 17, 18, 22A, 22C, 38, 39 and 40 of Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

The agency has claimed that it began investigations in the matter after receiving “credible information” that certain NGOs and trusts operating in J&K “are collecting funds domestically and abroad through so-called donations and business contributions, etc. and are then utilising these funds for secessionist and terrorist activities in J&K”.

■ **A DAY** earlier, the NIA had raided and searched the offices of *Greater Kashmir*, a couple of NGOs and the homes of several journalists and human rights and political activists

On Thursday, nine locations in the Valley and one in Delhi were raided by the NIA sleuths. Those whose premises were searched include Falah-e-Aam Trust, Charity Alliance in Delhi, Human Welfare Foundation, JK Yateem Foundation,

Salvation Movement and JK Voice of Victims.

A day earlier, the agency had raided and searched the offices of mass-circulated newspaper *Greater Kashmir* and a couple of NGOs and the homes of several journalists and human rights and political activists simultaneously in the Valley and Bangaluru.

The NIA had, however, said that the raids at *Greater Kashmir* office and the homes of some journalists were not in connection with their journalistic work and other professional pur-

suits but a case pertaining to alleged misuse of foreign contributions.

Those whose premises were searched on Wednesday include the residence and office of Khurram Parvez, co-ordinator of J&K Coalition of Civil Society, his associates viz. Parvez Ahmad Bukhari and Parvez Ahmad Matta and Bengaluru-based associate Swati Sheshadri, Parveena Ahanger, chairperson of Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons (APDP), and offices of NGO “Athrou” and Greater Kashmir Trust.

# Mufti, Omar vow to fight decisive battle as stir rages

**YUSUF JAMEEL**  
SRINAGAR, OCT. 29

Twin capitals of Srinagar and Jammu on Thursday witnessed more street protests against the Centre’s introducing a new set of land laws in J&K to make all Indian citizens eligible to own immovable properties in the Union Territory.

Meanwhile, former CMs Mehbooba Mufti and Omar Abdullah have pledged to fight a decisive battle against the Centre’s contentious moves which, they alleged, are aimed at looting land and resources of J&K and wreck its identity.

The police swung into action as dozens of PDP workers attempted to take out a procession from the party headquarters. The witnesses said that gun-wielding policemen assisted by the CRPF came in the way of the protestors and detained them.

Soon the party president tweeted, “PDP office in Srinagar sealed by J&K admin & workers arrested for organising a peaceful protest. A similar protest was allowed in Jammu so why was it thwarted here? Is this your definition of ‘normalcy’ that’s being showcased in the world?

## J&K LAND LAW

**PDP office in Srinagar sealed by J&K admin & workers arrested for organising a peaceful protest...**

— Mehbooba Mufti, PDP chief



@PMOIndia @HMOIndia @manojsinha.”

She claimed that some of the PDP workers were arrested by the police from their homes in the middle of (last) night so that they could not participate in the planned protest demonstration.

In Jammu, the workers of Apni Party, whose leadership is reported to be very close to the corridors of power at the Centre, held a protest demonstration against the new land laws and demanded an immediate rollback of these “so that the fears, anxieties and apprehensions of the people are removed.”

Later during the day, Ms Mufti while addressing a hurriedly called press conference at her residence here said she will not let anyone “loot” land and resources of J&K.



Apni Party activists clash with the police in Jammu on Thursday during their protest march against the amendment J&K land law.

— PTI

## India: In touch with China for mutual solution to row

**AGE CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI, OCT. 29

India on Thursday said it has “maintained communications” with China “to arrive at a mutually acceptable solution to the situation along the LAC in Eastern Ladakh and restore full peace and tranquillity” there.

In yet another veiled message to China, New Delhi said “the Indo-Pacific region was a particular focus” of the recent 2+2 Dialogue with the United States, and “reiterated the importance of

peace, stability and prosperity for all countries in this region”, adding that this was “possible only by upholding the rules based international order, ensuring the freedom of navigation in the international seas, promoting open connectivity and respecting the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all states”.

In a statement, the MEA said, “The last round of the senior commander talks held on October 12 enabled in-depth discussions between the two sides resulting in enhanced understanding of each other’s positions.”

## ■ Accused had scored 99.8% in Mains ■ Father, 3 others arrested JEE ’20 topper used proxy, held

**MANOJ ANAND**  
GUWAHATI, OCT. 29

In what has come as shocker, the topper of the Joint Entrance Exam (Mains) in Assam, his father and three others were arrested by the city police here on Thursday on charges of using a proxy to write the country’s premier engineering entrance test. The accused had succeeded in securing 99.8 percent in the exam, which is the basis for admission in India’s top engineering colleges, including the prestigious IITs.

The police said it has arrested the candidate, Neel Nakshatra Das, his father, Dr Jyotirmoy Das, and three employees of a

■ **THE POLICE** said that the entire racket came to light on social media after a phone call recording and WhatsApp chat in which the accused allegedly spoke about having used unfair means to top the exam went viral

testing centre — Hamendra Nath Sarma, Pranjal Kalita and Hirulal Pathak. They have been produced in a local court. Guwahati police commissioner M.P. Gupta told reporters, “An FIR has been registered with the Azara police against the topper of the Joint Entrance Examination

(JEE) Mains in Assam, allegedly for using a proxy to appear in the examination on his behalf. We investigated the case and have found that a proxy was used by the candidate through the help of another agency that acted as a middleman.”

Admitting that this could be a major racket and chances of many others also having resorted to such practice can’t be ruled out, the police said, “We are looking into all the aspects. The staff of the testing centre in Guwahati is also involved. We are searching for more people who are suspected to be the part of this crime. This might not be a one-off case but may be

part of a larger racket.”

The police said that the entire racket came to light on social media after a phone call recording and WhatsApp chat, in which the accused allegedly spoke about having used unfair means to top the exam, went viral.

Referring to the social media post, one Mitradav Sharma lodged a police complaint in this regard.

The police said that the invigilator had allegedly helped the JEE aspirant in cheating. The accused went inside the online testing centre on the day of the exam just to fill his name and roll number on the answer sheet, police said, adding the test was written by a proxy outside.

# BJP youth leader, 2 aides shot dead in J&K district

**YUSUF JAMEEL**  
SRINAGAR, OCT. 29

A BJP youth leader and his two associates were shot and critically wounded by suspected militants in Jammu and Kashmir’s southern Kulgam district later Thursday evening.

The reports said that all the three succumbed to their injuries on the way to hospital.

The police sources said that Fida Hussain Itoo, general secretary of the J&K unit of BJP Yuva Morcha, and his associates Umar Hajam and Haroon Rashid Beigh were targeted by gunmen in Kulgam’s Yaripora village. They were quickly

■ **A REPORT** said the BJP youth leader and his associates were taken to a nearby apple orchard where they were shot at from point blank range

evacuated to an emergency trauma hospital along the Srinagar-Jammu highway in Qazigund area. But doctors at the hospital pronounced them dead on arrival.

“All three of them were brought dead,” Dr Asima, Medical Superintendent Qazigund, was quoted as saying by local news agency GNS.

The officials said that senior Jammu and Kashmir district police

officers and also those of the CRPF have already reached the spot to begin investigations.

They also said that a vast area around the scene of the shooting has been cordoned off and a search operation launched to get the assailants dead or alive.

A report said that the trio was attending a wedding ceremony in the area when a group of masked gunmen arrived at the scene and forcibly took them along.

The report also said the BJP youth leader and his associates were taken to a nearby apple orchard where they were shot at from point blank range.

## India favours ‘increased predictability’ in H-1B visas

**AGE CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI, OCT. 29

India has conveyed its stand in favour of “increasing predictability” in the (American) visa regime” to the United States, adding that the “People-to-people relationship is an important foundation of the special relationship between India and the US which should be nurtured”, New Delhi said on Thursday, in the latest indication of concerns in India over any restrictions in grant of visas by the US that benefit Indian professionals, including in the IT sector.

At his weekly briefing, the MEA spokesperson said, “People-to-people relationship is an important foundation of the special relationship between India and the US. In our engagements, we have emphasised that this has been a mutually-beneficial partnership which should be nurtured. We are engaged with the US government for increasing predictability in the visa regime and to minimise the inconvenience being faced by those in the US or those who need to travel to the US for bonafide reasons.

The Government of India will continue to monitor any developments on this issue.”

In response to Iran issue, the MEA spokesperson said the US “appreciated” the trade linkages between Chabahar and Afghanistan.

# SC seeks govt reply on use of Covid drugs

**PARMOD KUMAR**  
NEW DELHI, OCT. 29

The Supreme Court on Thursday sought response from the Centre on a PIL seeking a restrain on prescribing Remdesivir and HCQ as medicines to cure Covid while making it clear that it was not going to adjudicate on as to which medicine should be provided to treat the highly-contagious disease.

Seeking response from the Centre, Chief Justice Sharad A. Bobde heading a bench also comprising Justice A.S.Bopanna and Justice V. Ramaswaramanian told the PIL petition advocate M.L. Sharma “We are telling you, we are only going to make the

government aware of it, we are not going to judge which medicine should be prescribed for Covid treatment.”

The court issued notice after PIL petitioner advocate Sharma referred to the October 15 WHO report which says that “the inter-im results from the solidarity therapeutics trial, coordinated by the World Health Organisation, indicate that remdesivir hydroxychloroquine, lopinavir/ritonavir and interferon regimens appeared to have little or no effect on 28-day mortality or the in-hospital course of Covid-19 among hospitalised patients.”

Mr Sharma referred to various countries, includ-

## File objection to NGT panel report: SC to LG Polymers

**AGE CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI, OCT. 29

The Supreme Court on Thursday asked the LG Polymers to file its objections to the report of the joint monitoring committee set up by the NGT after the May 7 toxic gas leak incident at its Vizag plant, which is now shut. The NGT had constitut-

ed the committee on May 8, after after the incident, to go into the causes of the toxic gas leak at LG Polymers’ Vizag plant on May 7, 2020, and submit a report. The report was uploaded on the green tribunal’s website on May 28 and LG Polymers has not filed its objections to the report so far.

ing the UK and the US, which have held the same view, backing the WHO

conclusions. Earlier in April this year, an NGO People for Better

## ■ Banknote excludes J&K, Ladakh from India map India protests Saudis’ map distortion on currency note

**SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI**  
NEW DELHI, OCT. 29

India has conveyed its “serious concern” to Saudi Arabia at the diplomatic levels and asked it to “take urgent corrective steps” after a new Saudi currency banknote excluded the UTs of J&K and Ladakh from the territorial map of India.

New Delhi said the new currency note was a “gross misrepresentation of India’s external territorial boundaries on an official and legal banknote of Saudi Arabia”, “reiterating that the entire UTs of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh are integral parts

■ **THE NEW** Saudi banknote was ‘issued on October 24 to mark the occasion of Saudi presidency of the G20’

of India”. The issue has been raised both with the Saudi ambassador in New Delhi and by the Indian envoy in the Saudi capital Riyadh.

(MEA) said, “We have seen the banknote referred by you which gives an incorrect depiction of India’s external territorial boundaries.

“We have conveyed our serious concern to Saudi Arabia, both through their ambassador in New Delhi as well as in Riyadh, for this gross misrepresentation of India’s external territorial boundaries on an official and legal banknote of Saudi Arabia and asked the Saudi side for taking urgent corrective steps in this regard. I would like to further reiterate that entire Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh are integral parts of India.”

## Manohari Gold Speciality Tea sold at ₹75,000 per kg

**MANOJ ANAND**  
GUWAHATI, OCT. 29

The Assam tea industry is yet to overcome the setback of Covid-19 pandemic but it has started getting good news from the Guwahati Tea Auction Centre (GTAC) on Thursday where a lot of speciality tea was sold at a record price of ₹75,000 per kg, the highest this year.

However, this was the third time in the last one year when GTAC got another opportunity to sell Manohari Gold Speciality Tea in an auction sale at ₹75,000 per kg.

The director, Manohari Tea Estate, Rajan Lohia, told this newspaper, “This year, 2.5 kg of Handmade Gold Tea was produced, out of which 1.2 kg was sold in the auction on



Thursday and the remaining will be available at select outlets including GTAC lounge as demand for one of the rarest teas in the world continues to grow.”

He pointed out that Manohari Gold Tea is manufactured from the finest second flush colonel tea buds which are hand plucked only during the dawn. “Highly rich in antioxidants Manohari Gold Tea also offers aromatic, full-bodied, bright yellowish malty tea liquor to suit your taste buds perfectly,” he added.

## 49,881 fresh Covid cases in India, total now at 80.4L

**AGE CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI, OCT. 29

The overall coronavirus cases in India crossed 80.40 lakh on Thursday with 49, 881 fresh cases. However, out of these total cases 73.16 lakh have already recovered and little over 6 lakh people still remain infected. The total fatalities so far has been close to 1.21 lakh out of which 517 deaths took place in the last 24 hours.

However, Kerala, which is reporting the highest number of daily fresh cases, has become a major concern for health authorities as it is emerging as the country’s biggest Covid-19 hotspot now. In Maharashtra, though daily fresh detections has dropped substantially from what it was for the last few months it still has second highest cases after Kerala. Situation in Delhi too is worrisome which on Thursday had 5,739 fresh cases.

Union health secretary Rajesh Bhushan on Thursday reviewed the status of Covid-19 in West Bengal, Kerala and Delhi and their public health response measures. Health Secretaries of the states/UT and other senior health officials were present in the meeting during which concerns regarding rising cases in these states/UT were highlighted.

Delhi has 30,952 active cases with a fatality rate of 1.76 per cent.



# THE ASIAN AGE

30 OCTOBER 2020

## Land for all in Kashmir: Wait for SC to take call

A recent Union home ministry order, which opens the door for any Indian to buy non-agricultural immoveable property in Jammu and Kashmir, deals a grievous blow to the aspirations — and to the psyche — of the people of Jammu, the Kashmir valley, and Ladakh, the three regions which until August 5, 2019 formed the state of J&K.

The legal status of this order shall remain dubious until the Supreme Court has dealt with the challenge before it to the law through which was whittled the constitutional autonomy of the erstwhile J&K state and whose long-term consequences for India appear far from happy. The long delay in the top court pronouncing on one of the most consequential matters brought before it in Independent India has occasioned considerable surprise.

Since constitutionally downgrading J&K, the Centre has taken a series of steps that have negatively impacted the lives of ordinary people in the UT and bred resentment. Among these are the hampering of the study of ordinary students by not permitting high-speed Internet, virtually killing journalism through the harsh treatment of media personnel, placing severe restrictions on the movement of people, banning protests, filling top positions in the UT administration by non-Kashmiri officers — to say nothing of putting thousands of non-BJP politicians in jail.

In addition, in the name of quelling terrorism (and instilling patriotism by fiat) there is the egregiousness of troop deployment on an extensive scale not seen even in the intense militancy-affected years of the late 1980s-the early 1990s. To place matters in perspective — all policy actions derive from executive orders alone, as in the colonial era, and there is the denial of election to the UT legislature.

The Centre gave itself the luxury to do all of these things while the Supreme Court has delayed beyond comprehension hearing the case of the reading down of Article 370 of the Constitution and the re-fashioning of an adjunct provision, the Article 35-A. It is the latter which had made ownership of immoveable property, government employment, and state scholarships, the exclusive preserve of permanent residents of the state.

In May this year, new domicile rules were devised to let some people from outside J&K to apply for permanent resident status. This has now been widened to let anyone at all own immoveable property. Such a situation does not obtain in other special category states such as Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh.

In 1950, the Sheikh Abdullah government had brought the Big Estates Abolition Act to permit the tillers of land of big zamindars beyond certain ceiling prescriptions to become owners, and it is this which had made the former state among the top performers on social and economic indices. Under the new land orders, this Act stands revoked, probably opening the door for corporate houses.

Jammu and Ladakh — like the Valley — have also reacted negatively to the new land rules though the Centre may have hoped for support from those quarters on religious grounds. The heart of the matter is the taking away of the former J&K's autonomy, a condition laid down by Maharaja Hari Singh, and endorsed by Sheikh Abdullah, for joining India in 1947, rather than go with Pakistan.

## Heed ASER's red flag

There has been a shift from private to government schools between 2018 and 2020, says the Annual Status of Education Report. The reasons include financial distress in households due to loss of income and shutdown of private schools. There has been an unregulated mushrooming of private schools all over the country in the past decades.

Alarmingly, however, India is among the few countries in the world where the ratio of private to public schooling is the highest. That's because the coverage of the government school network is patchy at best and the quality of learning dispensed there abysmal. The ASER study showed, for instance, that during the survey week, only one in three rural children had engaged in a learning activity. And only 36 per cent of schools provided them with textbooks.

In urban centres, there has been a boom in the edutech industry in pandemic times. However, exposing the criminally negligent logic behind the government's great e-education push is a well-anticipated outcome. Although smartphone ownership almost doubled from 2018, a third of children with smartphone access still did not receive any learning materials. Significantly, less than 15 per cent of rural Indian households have Internet. The poorest homes cannot afford a smartphone or a computer. Some were found selling their only assets during the pandemic merely so the children could continue learning in a Covid year.

Though it is highly iniquitous, the much-vaunted National Education Policy is silent on this yawning academic divide. The government, in its unseemly haste to pacify the influential middle classes, was loath to drop the JEE and restarted lessons for older students. But it paid scant regard to the increase in dropouts at the elementary and secondary levels.

It is a fact that 90 per cent of brain growth occurs by age five, meaning that the quality of early childhood schooling has a crucial impact. The ASER report shows that factors determining the quality of education received at this stage include the mother's education and the type of school, government or private. There is, therefore, a need to strengthen the government school system in India urgently.

India is going through an education emergency, which has only been exacerbated by Covid.

### THE ASIAN AGE

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Subhani



## Death talk: Euthanasia tales amid Covid times



Karan Thapar

As I See It

I started reading Arun Shourie's new book *Preparing for Death* whilst in quarantine after I happened to meet someone who subsequently tested positive. Had I an inkling that in a couple of days I would follow suit I doubt if this would have been my first choice. But since I had started it, I decided to continue. The fear that suddenly loomed ahead seemed to add macabre interest. At least, during daylight hours!

It's not an easy book to read. Written in a deliberate stream-of-consciousness style, it is often erudite and learned but there are occasions when it's prosaic and even pedestrian. Like his other work, this book can be repetitive or, to be more accurate, Arun argues his case so thoroughly that you feel he's nailed the point long before he's finished with his hammer blows. Consequently, you need to read it in stages. Bit by bit. To make it easier, don't read in chronological sequence. Flip forward and back as curiosity guides you.

Well, that's what I did and thus stumbled upon five pages that tell a story that I find hard to describe. Perhaps my personal Covid affliction added to my fascination but I feel certain it would grip anyone who reads it. It's the most excruciatingly honest but also deeply disturbing and distressing account of a father's death told by his son. I admire Arun for sharing it with strangers and outsiders — because that's what readers are — but I also question why he wanted to do so or what purpose it

serves. It left me feeling uncomfortable. Actually, unsettled. I felt I was intruding into someone's privacy where I had no right to be.

The question this mesmerising account raises — actually explicitly though it shies away from an answer — is did Arun's father, Hari Dev Shourie, the founder of Common Cause, commit euthanasia? Everything in your head and heart tells you the answer is yes. Even the way Arun relates the story suggests this conclusion is unavoidable. In fact, there are a couple of sentences that, particularly for the suggestive or intuitive, could clinch the issue. "He was a strong advocate of euthanasia", writes Arun. "He had even written a book on the subject: *Life's Finale: Voluntary Exit*."

Arun's account of his father's death begins on the morning it happened. H.D. Shourie, who was 91 and had recently lost his wife, asked for tea at 8 am. When Ganesh, his trusted attendant, served it he was told to come back in an hour and a half. "When he went at 9.30, our father was gone."

A note written in his hand was found on the table by his bed. "I have led a full life", H.D.

**It's not an easy book to read. Written in a deliberate stream-of-consciousness style, it is often erudite and learned but there are occasions when it's prosaic and even pedestrian**

**By making convincing forensic use of the letter his father left, Arun presents a compelling case that drives one to the conclusion that his father committed euthanasia**

Shourie began. "My time has come... I have no regrets... today, the three of you are in town." It was that last sentence that shook Arun, his brother Deepak and their sister Nalini. "We used to travel a lot", writes Arun, "and often Nalini, Deepak or I would be out of town: he had clearly chosen a day when we were all in Delhi — none of us would have to rush back."

As the three siblings read and reread their father's last letter, their grief and shock mounting, they discovered it contained further evidence to suggest that H.D. Shourie had committed suicide. Arun writes that whenever he gave advice to others, the elder Shourie would say: "When you write the final note or your will, as far as possible write it in your own hand... and include in it some detail which no one but you know about... this will help establish the authenticity of the document." And that is precisely what he had done. The letter mentions "a souvenir" hidden in an "almirah". None of his children knew it was there.

If you still have doubts this was a case of death by euthanasia there is, right at the end of the five pages, a sentence spoken by Arun's mother-in-law that will simply blast them away. Malti, as Arun refers to her, lived her life with the Shouries, looking after their son Adit. Consequently, she got to know his father well.

She also shared a birthday with H.D. Shourie. It's what she suddenly said a few months after his death that seems to erase all doubts of how it happened. "*Bhai Sahib* had even written the recipe in his book, she told us one day — she was the only one in the family to have read the book."

So, doesn't that seem to suggest that H.D. Shourie put something in his morning tea which took his life? Something that would take 90 minutes to work, which is why he asked his trusted Ganesh to return an hour and a half later?

This is where Arun's account of his father's death stops. He doesn't answer the question — did H.D. Shourie take his own life? But then he doesn't really need to. By making a convincing forensic use of the letter his father left, Arun presents a compelling case that drives one to the conclusion that his father committed euthanasia. It's hard to come to any other. In fact, you sense that is also what Arun believes — though, understandably, he can't bring himself to say so — when he writes of this father's book... "though years have passed since he went, I haven't had the courage to read it to this day".

Yet Arun has had the courage to tell us this story and share its harrowing impact on himself and his siblings. Speaking out is often a way of coming to terms with terrible tragedy or inexplicable mystery. Perhaps that was his reason for revealing something most people would, almost certainly, have kept to themselves. But it's not easy for the rest of us to handle. It not only left me full of questions and conflicting emotions but also quite shaken.

The writer is a television commentator and anchor

### LETTERS

SURYA SHINING

It was a Suryakumar Yadav show at the Zayed Cricket Stadium as Mumbai Indians pulled off a spectacular win against Royal Challengers Bangalore. After opener Devdutt Padikkal came up with a fine 74 for the vanquished and Jasprit Bumrah excelled with the leather scalping 3 for 14, Suryakumar lit up the stadium blazing an unbeaten 79 to carry his team home. With an outstanding record in domestic cricket and the IPL, one wonders what more this talented batsman needs to do to earn the national selectors' nod.

N.J. Ravi Chander  
Bengaluru

### DON'T TRUST USA

**THIS REFERS TO** your editorial, "India must not put all eggs in US basket" (Oct. 29). India shouldn't rely solely on American friendship and look to exert diplomatic pressure through other channels as well. It should not overlook historical fact. Indeed, the US completely sided with Pakistan in the 1965 and 1971 wars against India. In 1971, it almost sent the Seventh Fleet to help Pakistan Navy. Even in the 1962 war with China, it did not accede to Prime Minister Nehru's request for air support.

D.B. Madan  
New Delhi

### TURKEY'S U-TURN

**THE RISE OF** militant Islam, the causes of which are yet to clearly emerge and one that would need extensive research, has been impacting the very image of this otherwise pacific religion. France too now seems to be as perplexed as many other nations around the globe in its bid to understand and deal with increasing Islamic radicalism. What is worrying is that the famously secular Turkey of Kamal Atatürk should get mired in a politico-ideological conflict with France, subsequent to the dastardly beheading of the French teacher that has ignited worldwide revulsion.

R. Narayanan  
Navi Mumbai

Every Monday the best letter of the week wins ₹500. Email: [asianage.letters@gmail.com](mailto:asianage.letters@gmail.com).

Abhijit Bhattacharyya



## Stop Dragon's free ride, don't let it exploit our democracy

It has been long-term Chinese policy, almost since the inception of the People's Republic, to try and mock India's democracy as the Dragon, deep down, is convinced it is democracy which makes this country weak, and its leaders ineffective and inefficient. This has driven the Chinese Communist Party's strategic thinking for decades.

The CCP's mission to humiliate India has become more diabolical by the day. In association with its allies in the Pakistan Army and its ISI, the Chinese are going all out in a bid to internationalise India's internal issues, though with little success, at the United Nations and elsewhere. President Xi Jinping is, of course, only continuing a tradition set long back by Chairman Mao Zedong.

The Dragon's diplomatic deception now borders on the ludicrous. You don't need a trained Sinologist to uncover duplicity and the plot to attack India from within. Thus, when Beijing's man in Delhi, ambassador Sun Weidong, parrots the one-liner "the common interests of the two countries (India and China) far outweigh the frictions and differences", he's either hallucinating or trying hard to convince his bosses that he's working hard in Delhi to mislead gullible Indians, and take them for a

ride!

Therefore, one should seek some clarifications from Mr Sun, and put forward some pertinent questions to him: "Mr Ambassador, please define the common interests of the two countries". Specifically, with facts and figures, without airy semantics. In what way do the "common interests", if any, "far outweigh the friction and differences"? Does it imply that India, for the sake of the so-called "common interests", be silent and succumb to the CPC's blandishments despite all the unilateral violence, killings, invasions, forced occupation of Indian territory since the 1950s, setting the tribal areas of Northeast India on fire, destroying West Bengal through the treacherous anti-national Naxalites and other marauding Communists, the unprovoked killing of Indian border personnel at Longju (August 1959), Hot Springs (October 1959), the 32-day invasion of India (October-November 1962), Nathu La (September 1967), Cho La (October 1967), Pangong Tso Lake (May 2020), the China-Pakistan CPEC through India's J&K, and now the Galwan Valley massacre (June 2020)? Should India forget and forgive President Xi, who has made himself China's lifetime dictator, and his cohorts for the sake of what Beijing hypocritically

calls "common interests"?

Does the recurring murder of Indian soldiers by the CPC-controlled private militia called the People's Liberation Army constitute the "common interests" of Beijing and New Delhi? Does the loss of limbs of Indian officers and men and the forced occupation of Indian territory by the CPC constitute "common interests"? Or do the Chinese hope to tire out the Indian soldiers standing guard on the banks of Pangong Lake and force their commanders to talk from 10 to 14 hours a day in a diplomatic engagement with PLA generals? Is this why India maintains a standing army? Soldiers aren't diplomats, and it isn't their role to resort to Gandhi-like "ahimsa" to counter the CPC's "hinsa"!

Sorry, Ambassador Sun, that's the job of the foreign office and its diplomats, who should "enter the dragon" and play hardball, telling Beijing that there is a limit to how long such gross violations of India's sovereignty can continue.

It's time for the Chinese to forget about access to India's market of 1.3 billion people. It's time their spies operating under garb of companies, investors and tourists stop interfering in India's internal affairs. Let them not issue brazen threatening

"advisories" to India's independent media, ordering it to "desist" from writing about Taiwan, Xinjiang, the Dalai Lama, Hong Kong, Uighurs and human rights violations. One wonders what the battalions of Chinese diplomats have understood about this country that they would think India's media would follow the foreign ministry's lead in its reports and comments?

It's also time for Beijing to stop instigating India's neighbourhood through its cash, threats, deceit, deception and lies.

The Indian State should seriously go back to basics of the Constitution to deal with the Chinese assault on Indian territory and revisit Article 1(3) - "The territory of India shall comprise" ... and "(c) such other territories as may be acquired". Simply put, India's Constitution doesn't have any provision to cede territory to any foreign power/country. It permits acquisition only... "as may be acquired". If at all, India can only cede its own territory subject to an amendment of the Constitution. Thus, with the passing of Constitution (119th Amendment) Bill 2013, for example, for operationalising the Land Boundary Agreement with Bangladesh, notified as "100th Amendment Act" after the assent of

the President, the border readjustment between New Delhi and Dhaka took place peacefully and with mutual respect and honour. India cannot otherwise cede an inch of its territory to any foreign country. That's the bottomline.

It is clear as daylight that the Chinese are bent on hurting and humiliating democratic India. There is no chance of any change in the congenial psyche of hostility and aggression by the CPC. That's the reason attempts are being constantly made to dishonour and discredit this country before the comity of nations. If an India of 1.3 billion people cannot safeguard its sovereignty, Constitution and territorial integrity, and allow its trade, commerce, banking, economy and strategic sectors to be penetrated by the CPC, it's time for Delhi to snub the wayward ambassador publicly. Enough is enough! Without any further ado, India must decisively abort the Chinese geo-economic strategy which is penetrating and slowly poisoning the very fabric of our republic.

The writer is an alumnus of the National Defence College. The views expressed are personal.



## IN BRIEF

**8 inmates dead after prison riot**

**Kabul:** Rioting at a prison in western Afghanistan has left at least eight inmates dead, provincial officials said Thursday. The violence erupted on Wednesday night at the prison in Herat, the capital of western Herat province, said Mohammad Rafiq Shirzai, spokesman for the provincial health department. He said 12 others — eight inmates and four prison guards — were wounded in the outbreak at the facility, which holds around 2,000 prisoners. It wasn't immediately known if there are any Taliban at the penitentiary. The rioting started after guards began clearing some partitions created by prisoners, said Jelani Farhad, spokesman for the provincial governor.

**Pak seminary blast probe ends**

**Peshawar:** The investigation team probing the bomb blast at a religious seminary in northwestern Pakistan's Peshawar city has completed its initial report and arrested one student in connection with the attack that killed eight persons, officials said on Thursday. The investigation team that included officials of counter-terrorism department, police and law enforcement agencies, recorded statements of several eye witnesses and obtained the record of the students of the seminary and the labourers engaged in a construction work there. One student of the seminary has been arrested over his alleged links to the blast, suspected to have targeted a senior cleric from Afghanistan, officials said. The blast occurred around 8:30 am on Tuesday at a local mosque, which also serves as a religious school in Dir Colony in Peshawar, while students were reading the Quran. There was no claim of responsibility for the blast in the city, bordering war-torn Afghanistan. Law enforcement agencies on Wednesday detained several people in connection with the bomb blast.

**59 bodies found in Mexican pits**

**Mexico City:** A Mexican search group said that it found 59 bodies in a series of clandestine burial pits in the north-central state of Guanajuato and that more could still be excavated. The head of the official National Search Commission, Karla Quintana, Wednesday said excavations began a week ago based on a tip from relatives of missing people. Given the deficiencies of local law enforcement in Mexico, relatives of missing people in many states have formed their own search groups, collecting information and exploring possible body dumping sites and clandestine graves. Quintana called it "a sad and terrible discovery." She added that there were more "possible positive sites" where more bodies could be found, and that work would continue. The bodies were extracted over the last week from 52 pits at a property on the outskirts of the Guanajuato city of Salvatierra. The scene was considered dangerous enough that the army and National Guard provided security for the excavations. Guanajuato has the largest number of homicides of any state in Mexico.

**JALLIANWALA BAGH STORY SHORTLISTED**

**London, Oct. 29:** British Indian journalist and author Anita Anand's book that tells the story of a young man caught up in the 1919 Jallianwala Bagh massacre in Amritsar has been shortlisted for a prestigious history-literary prize in the UK. 'The Patient Assassin: A True Tale of Massacre, Revenge and the Raj' will compete with six others for the PEN Hessel-Tiltman Prize for History 2020, awarded annually for a non-fiction book of specifically historical content.

Entries are required to be works of high literary merit — that is, not primarily written for the academic market — and can cover all historical periods. "Modern history is well-represented with Anita Anand's 'The Patient Assassin' showing us how empire continues to haunt us," said Rana Mitter, Professor of the History and Politics of Modern China at the University of Oxford, who is the chair of this year's judging panel. In the shortlisted book, Anand tells the dramatic story of an orphan Udhram Singh's 21-year quest for revenge.

# France knife attack: 3 dead

## Third attack in 2 months; attacker wounded by cops, hospitalised

**Paris, Oct. 29:** An attacker armed with a knife killed three people at a church on Thursday in the Mediterranean city of Nice, authorities said. It was the third attack in two months in France.

The assailant was wounded by police and hospitalised after the killings at the Notre Dame Church, less than a kilometre from the site in 2016 where another attacker plowed a truck into a Bastille Day crowd, killing dozens.

Thursday's attacker was believed to be acting alone and police are not searching for other assailants, said two police officials, who were not authorised to be publicly named.

France's anti-terrorism prosecutor's office opened an investigation into the killings, which marked the third attack since the opening in September of a terrorism trial in the January 2015 killings at the satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo* and a kosher supermarket.

"He cried 'Allah Akbar' over and over, even after he was injured," said Nice Mayor Christian Estrosi, who told *BFM* television that three people had died, two inside the church and a third who fled but was mortally wounded.

"The meaning of his gesture left no doubt." In Nice, images on French media showed the neighborhood locked down and surrounded by police and emergency vehicles.

Sounds of explosions could be heard as sappers exploded suspicious objects. The lower house of parliament suspended a debate on France's new virus restrictions in the wake of spurt in cases and held a moment of silence Thursday for the victims.

The prime minister rushed from the hall to a crisis centre overseeing the aftermath of the Nice attack. French President Emmanuel Macron was headed to Nice later in the



French President Emmanuel Macron (2nd-L) visits the scene of a knife attack at the Basilica of Notre-Dame de Nice in Nice on Thursday. — AFP



day.

Less than two weeks ago, an assailant decapitated a French middle school teacher who showed caricatures of the Prophet for a class on free speech. Those caricatures were published by *Charlie Hebdo* and cited by the men who gunned down the newspaper's editorial meeting in 2015.

In September, a man who had sought asylum in France attacked bystanders outside *Charlie Hebdo*'s former offices with a butcher knife.

— AP

## FRENCH PM RAISES ATTACK ALERT TO EMERGENCY AFTER CHURCH KILLINGS

**Paris, Oct. 29:** France's prime minister Jean Castex says the country's threat level will be raised to its maximum after an attack near a church killed three people Thursday in Nice.

The move comes just hours before the country was going into its second coronavirus lockdown.

An attacker armed with a knife killed three people at a church Thursday in Nice, French authorities said. It was the third attack in two months in France amid a growing furor over caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad that were re-published by the satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo*.

— AP

## SAUDI MAN STABS, WOUNDS GUARD AT FRENCH CONSULATE, ARRESTED

**Dubai, Oct. 29:** Saudi Arabia's state-run news agency is reporting that a Saudi man has been detained after stabbing and slightly wounding a guard at the French Consulate in the city of Jiddah.

The Saudi Press Agency report on Thursday offered no motive for the attack. However, it comes amid heightened tensions

after an assailant decapitated a French middle school teacher who showed caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad for a class on free speech.

Those caricatures were published by *Charlie Hebdo* and cited by the men who gunned down the newspaper's editorial meeting in 2015.

— AP

## TURKEY CONDEMNS SAVAGE ATTACK

**Istanbul, Oct. 29:** Ankara strongly condemned Thursday's "savage" knife attack in southern France that left three people dead, offering its "solidarity", despite a running diplomatic spat with Paris.

"We strongly condemn the attack committed today inside the Notre-Dame church in Nice," a foreign ministry statement said, while offering condolences to the victims' relatives after the incident that shook France. — AFP

## POPE DENOUNCES TERROR, VIOLENCE

**Vatican City, Oct. 29:** Pope Francis prayed for the victims of an attack by a knifeman in a Nice church Thursday, as the Vatican said "terrorism and violence can never be accepted". "Today's attack has sown death in a place of love and consolation. The Pope is aware of the situation and is close to the mourning Catholic community."

Vatican spokesman Matteo Bruni said in a statement. "He prays for the victims and their loved ones, so that the violence may cease, so that we may return to look upon ourselves as brothers and sisters and not as enemies, so that the beloved French people may unite to combat evil with good", he said.

The Pope expressed his solidarity with the Catholic community in France. An attacker armed with a knife killed three people. It was the third such attack in recent weeks following furor over caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad that were republished by the satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo*.

— AFP

# Anti-Semitism row: Labour Party suspends Corbyn

**London, Oct. 29:** The UK's Opposition Labour Party on Thursday suspended former leader Jeremy Corbyn from its ranks after a report by the country's human rights watchdog held the party "responsible for unlawful acts of harassment and discrimination" during his time in charge.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), which had launched an investigation into antisemitism within the party following a string of complaints, found that Labour had broken the law in its failure to handle antisemitism, or anti-Jewish, complaints and there were "serious failings" by its leadership at the time.

However, in his reaction to the report, Corbyn said that the number of complaints made during his tenure were "dramatically overstated". "One antisemitic is one too many, but the scale of the problem was also dramatically overstated for political reasons by our opponents inside and outside the party, as well as by much of the media. That combination hurt Jewish people and must never be repeated," said Corbyn, in reference to the report.

A Labour Party spokesperson issued a statement soon after to announce that Corbyn had been suspended from the party. "In light of his comments made today and his failure to retract them subsequently, the Labour Party has suspended Jeremy Corbyn pending investigation. He has also had the whip removed from the Parliamentary Labour Party," the spokesperson said.

In his reaction to the EHRC report, current Opposition leader Keir Starmer had indicated that a denial stance to the report would not be tolerated,

● THE EHRC had served the Labour Party with an unlawful act notice after an investigation into antisemitism by the Equality and Human Rights Commission found it responsible for unlawful acts of harassment and discrimination. The BJP was quick to hit back.

without any specific references to Corbyn.

Starmer said: "And if — after all the pain, all the grief, and all the evidence in this report, there are still those who think there's no problem with antisemitism in the Labour Party. That it's all exaggerated, or a factional attack. "Then, frankly, you are part of the problem too. And you should be nowhere near the Labour Party either."

Earlier, the EHRC had served the Labour Party with an unlawful act notice after an investigation into antisemitism by the Equality and Human Rights Commission found it responsible for unlawful acts of harassment and discrimination. Its investigation, launched in May last year, identified serious failings in the party leadership in addressing antisemitism and an inadequate process for handling antisemitism complaints. The party was found responsible for three breaches of the UK's Equality Act (2010) relating to political interference in antisemitism complaints; failure to provide adequate training to those handling antisemitism complaints; and harassment. "The equality body's analysis points to a culture within the party which, at best, did not do enough to prevent antisemitism," the EHRC said.

— PTI

# Computerised lottery scheme for H-1B may go

**Washington, Oct. 29:** The Trump administration has proposed to scrap the computerised lottery system to grant H-1B work visas to foreign technology professionals and replace it with a wage-level-based selection process, a move that is expected to counter the downward pressure on the wages of US workers.

A notification on the new system is being published in the Federal Register on Thursday. Stakeholders have 30 days to respond to the notification, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) said on Wednesday, less than a week before the US presidential election.

Replacing the computerised draw of lots to decide on the successful H-1B applicants, the DHS said it is expected to help counter the downward pressure on the wages of American workers that is created by an annual influx of relatively lower-paid, new cap-subject H-1B workers. The H-1B visa, most sought-after among Indian IT professionals, is a non-immigrant visa that allows US companies to employ foreign workers in speciality

occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise.

If finalised, US Citizenship and Immigration Services would first select registrations (or petitions, if the registration process is suspended) generally based on the highest Occupational Employment Statistics prevailing wage level that the offered wage equals or exceeds for the relevant Standard Occupational Classification code and areas of intended employment. "Prioritisation and selection based on wage levels better balances the interests of petitioners, H-1B workers, and US workers," the DHS said. "The Trump administration is continuing to deliver on its promise to protect American workers," said Acting DHS Deputy Secretary Ken Cuccinelli. — PTI

## POWER | PANGS

## Some regions have been unable to report details of damage and casualties

# Typhoon, landslides leave 35 dead in Vietnam

**Hanoi, Oct. 29:** A typhoon that officials said was the most powerful to hit Vietnam in 20 years blew away from the country on Thursday after setting off landslides, sinking boats and knocking out power to at least 1.7 million people. At least 35 people were killed and more than 50 were missing, state media said.

The immediate focus for rescuers was on three villages in the country's central region where landslides killed at least 19 people and are suspected of

burying more than 40 others in thick mud and debris.

Deputy Prime Minister Trinh Dinh Dung travelled to the site of one landslide where soldiers were working to clear debris with bulldozers and he ordered officers to urgently send more troops to help with the efforts. "We must reach the landslide site the fastest way. First, send in more soldiers before we can get the big machine there. We have to reach the area by all means, includ-

ing by using helicopters," he said.

Also among the dead were 12 fishermen whose boats sank Wednesday as Typhoon Molave approached with winds of up to 150 kilometres (93 miles) per hour. Another 14 fishermen were still missing.

Officials said the death toll across the country may rise as some regions have been unable to report details of damage and casualties. Rescuers dug up eight bodies Thursday morning in Tra Van village in

Quang Nam province where a hillside collapsed on houses. The victims had taken shelter in the community as the typhoon approached, the official *Vietnam News Agency* reported.

In Tra Leng village, about 45 kilometres (28 miles) from Tra Van, another landslide buried a community with several houses occupied by about 45 people. Four people escaped, while rescuers recovered eight bodies and pulled out four villagers alive.

— Agencies



A landslide triggered by Typhoon Molave leaves a trail of rocks and mud as it swamps a village in Phuoc Loc district of Quang Nam province, Vietnam on Thursday. — AP



Mike Pompeo

## POMPEO, IN INDONESIA, BLASTS CHINA

**Jakarta, Oct. 29:** US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo renewed the Trump administration's rhetorical onslaught against China in Indonesia on Thursday as the American presidential election looms.

With China a central theme in President Donald Trump's campaign to win a second term in just five days time, Pompeo took aim at Chinese aggressiveness in the South China Sea, where it has advanced maritime and territorial claims over the objections of its smaller neighbors, and over its handling of the coronavirus pandemic.

Speaking in Jakarta, the headquarters of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Pompeo praised Indonesia's leadership in ASEAN for pushing back on what he called China's "unlawful" claims and lauded Jakarta's protection of its own territory. "We respect freedom of the seas, sovereignty and the rule of law," he said, standing beside Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi. Marsudi agreed, saying "international law must be respected," although she did not specifically mention China.

"Our law-abiding nations reject the unlawful claims by Chinese Communist Party in the South China Sea as is clear from Indonesia's courageous leadership on this subject within ASEAN and at the United Nations," Pompeo said.

"It's a cause worth pursuing in multilateral settings and the Trump administration very much supports this."



quick BITES

| INDICATORS             |            | %     |
|------------------------|------------|-------|
| Sensex                 | 39749.85   | -0.43 |
| Nifty 50               | 11670.80   | -0.50 |
| S&P 500*               | 3,303.20   | 0.98  |
| Dollar (₹)             | 74.10      | 98.9  |
| Pound Sterling (₹)     | 96.27      | -0.20 |
| Euro (₹)               | 86.94      | -0.14 |
| Gold (10gm)* (₹)       | 50,309▼186 | 0.37  |
| Brent crude (\$/bbl)*  | 37.46      | -1.66 |
| IN 10-Yr bond yield    | 5.881      | 0.023 |
| US 10-Yr T-bill yield* | 0.803      | 0.022 |

\* As of 9:30 PM IST

P&G to set up ₹400 cr 'India Growth Fund'

FMCG major Procter & Gamble (P&G) on Thursday announced a Rs 400 crore fund to help its existing and new suppliers in India to build capacities. Through the 'India Growth Fund', P&G will collaborate with suppliers to build capacities that will further localise the manufacturing of finished products, procurement of raw materials and packaging materials, and adopt go-to-market innovations and technology, P&G said in a statement.

DPIIT's new quality control norms for leather footwear



The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade has come out with quality control norms for different leather foot-wear including anti-riot shoes with a view to contain imports and production of sub-standard products in the country. The products would have to conform to the specified standards and bear the standard mark under a licence from Bureau of Indian Standards. The items cannot be produced, sold/traded, imported, stocked unless they bear BIS mark.

IndiGo posts ₹1,194 crore loss for Sept quarter

Budget carrier IndiGo on Thursday reported a net loss of ₹1,194 crore for the second quarter ended September 30. It had posted a net loss of ₹1,062 crore in the September quarter of the previous financial year. In the April-June period this year, the airline had incurred a net loss of ₹2,884 crore. The airline's total income stood at ₹3,029 crore in the second quarter of 2020-21, a decrease of 64.5 per cent over the year-ago period, it said.

BP pitches for infra sharing with cos like ONGC

Ahead of starting the next wave of gas production from the KG basin, UK-based supermajor BP Plc has pitched for oil and gas producers sharing their infrastructure to help cut costs and monetise small and marginal discoveries. BP, which in partnership with Reliance Industries Ltd is investing USD 5 billion in developing three sets of discoveries in the Krishna Godavari basin block KG-D6, also wanted sanctity of contracts to be honoured and policy stability.

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Gold demand in India plunges to 25-year low

SANGEETHA G. CHENNAI, OCT. 29

India's gold demand in 2020 might be the lowest in 25 years as the pandemic has already dragged down consumption in the first three quarters by almost half. Central banks have turned net sellers in the September quarter after a gap of 10 years. In the first three quarters of 2020, gold demand stood at 252 tonnes, which was 49 per cent down from 496 tonnes in the same period last year. With one more quarter to go, the World Gold Council expects that India's gold demand would be the lowest since 1995.

"The year 1995 had seen one of the lowest yearly demand of 462 tonnes. In Q4 of last year, the demand stood at 194 tonnes. Even if we assume that the country consumes 200 tonnes in the festive quarter of Q4 this, which though is unlikely, the total consumption for the calendar year will touch 452 tonnes and will be lesser than 1995 demand," said Somasundaram PR, Managing Director, India, World Gold Council.

According to him, some of the organised jewellers have reportedly seen 60 – 80 per cent of the demand recovering in the month of October.

The September quarter saw gold demand falling by 30 per cent to 86.6 tonnes on the back of Covid-19 related disruptions, bleak consumer sentiment and high prices accompanied by volatility.

RBI in gold buying spree

SANGEETHA G. CHENNAI, OCT. 29

While central banks turned net sellers after a gap of 10 years, the Reserve Bank of India bought 6.8 tonnes of gold during the pandemic-hit September quarter. In fact India has bought a total of about 30 tonnes since March this year.

India was among the six central banks that increased their reserves in Q3 by a tonne or more. India bought 6.8 tonnes of gold in the quarter when the gross purchases by all the banks totaled a modest 33 tonnes. United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan and Cambodia were the other buyers.

Earlier in February, RBI had bought 6.8 tonnes taking the total gold reserves to 641.8 tonnes. As on October 9, gold reserves have increased to 670.1 tonnes, as per the data of RBI. In the past seven months, RBI has bought close to 30 tonnes of gold in staggered purchases. India has been buying

gold in smaller tranches since 2017. In 2019, the bank had bought 34.5 tonnes and in 2018, 42.5 tonnes. In 2017 it had bought 0.3 tonnes. Prior to that, RBI had purchased 200 tonnes in 2009.

However, in the September quarter, Central banks turned net sellers of gold for the first time since Q4 2010. Against a net purchase of 141.9 tonnes in the same quarter last year, banks made a net sale of 12 tonnes.

Turkey and Uzbekistan accounted for the bulk of the sales. Central banks of the two large buyers- Russia and China - also have not been buying gold for some time.

According to the World Gold Council, Covid-19 continued to inflict widespread economic hardship, and this pre-occupied central banks and governments around the world.

"Uncertainty has been elevated by the pandemic, motivating many investors – including central banks – to seek assets

This is the third lowest quarter since 2000 when the World Gold Council began publishing quarterly demand.

This is, however, higher than Q2 which saw a 70 per cent drop – 64 tonnes - and the second lowest in World Gold Council's quarterly series.

While jewellery demand was down 48 per cent in Q3 against the year-ago quarter, investment demand was 51 per cent up to 33.8 tonnes compared to 22.3 tonnes in the Q3 2019. In value terms, investment demand went up by 107 per cent to Rs 15,410 crore.

that will diversify and protect the value of their portfolios in times of crisis. Central banks have been particularly hard hit by the low and negative interest rates on sovereign bonds, which make up the largest proportion of reserve assets for many," said WGC.

According to Rahul Bajoria, chief India economist, Barclays, increasing gold holdings is part of RBI's long-term strategy of diversifying foreign reserves. "Given the increase in foreign reserves of RBI for the past one-and-half years, gold holdings too might continue to grow. RBI has been buying bonds of developed nations, making deposits with other central banks and IMF as well as increasing gold holdings," he said.

While Reserve Bank of India has been increasing gold holdings in smaller tranches, the government has been issuing sovereign gold bonds. In the past few months, it has been issuing bonds every month.

Due to higher prices, recycling increased by 14 per cent to 41.5 tonnes and imports were up 8 per cent to 90.5 tonnes, mostly in anticipation of the festive season and speculative buying. Globally, the gold demand was 19 per cent down.

Mistrys seek to split Tata Sons' shareholding

Mumbai, Oct. 29: The Shapoorji Pallonji Group on Thursday said it has submitted a plan to Supreme Court to end its seven decades-old association with the Tata Group.

The Mistrys have valued their holding in the Tatas at ₹1.75 lakh crore, it informed the apex court, which is hearing the long-drawn legal battle between the two groups that began after the Tatas in a boardroom coup on October 28, 2016 sacked Cyrus Mistry as the Chairman.

"Tata Sons is effectively a two-group company, with the Tata Group comprising Tata Trusts, Tata family members and Tata companies holding 81.6 per cent of the equity share capital, and the Mistry family owning the balance 18.37 per cent," the Shapoorji Pallonji Group said in a statement quoting from its submission to the apex court.



The group has submitted a plan for separation from Tatas to the Supreme Court.

Tata Sons is the core investment company and is the holding company for the Tata Group and its value arises from its stake in listed equities, non-listed equities, the brand, cash balances and immovable assets. The value of 18.37 per cent stake of the SP Group in Tata Sons is over ₹1,75,000 crore, it said. — PTI

Centre rejigs norms for PLI scheme

SANGEETHA G. CHENNAI, OCT. 29

Making the production-linked incentive schemes more attractive for bulk drugs and medical devices manufacturing, the government has replaced "minimum threshold investment" criterion with "committed investment".

The government has replaced the criterion of 'minimum threshold' investment with 'committed' investment by the selected applicant. The change has been made to encourage efficient use of productive capital. Further, the amount of investment required to achieve a particular level of production depends upon choice of technology and it also varies from product to product. However, the verification of the actual investment for incentives under the scheme continues.

Global trade to shrink by 20%

SANGEETHA G. CHENNAI, OCT. 29

Revising its earlier estimate, the UNCTAD has predicted global trade to plummet by 20 per cent or by about \$6 trillion in 2020.

In 2019, global trade stood at about \$25 trillion, with estimates then predicting a 3 per cent rise in 2020. Without a swift recovery in the second

half of 2020, the consensus now is that trade will instead plummet by about 20 per cent this year, or by about \$6 trillion. Such a decline would be unprecedented, being significantly larger than the \$4 trillion fall seen during the 2009 recession, said Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary-General, UNCTAD in a recent article.

In early October, UNCTAD had said that it

expected global trade to fall by about 7 per cent in 2020 under the assumption that the trend observed in Q3 continues into Q4. The lower bound for 2020 is at about 9 per cent and considers the possibility of a resurgence of the pandemic and the prospect of a deteriorating policy environment with sudden increases in trade restrictive policies, the article had said.

M&M's new electric 3-wheeler cargo

MICHAEL GONSALVES PUNE, OCT. 29

Mahindra Electric on Thursday announced the launch of its new electric 3-wheeler cargo model Treo Zor at starting price of ₹2.73 lakh at Delhi showroom which includes the FAME 2 and state subsidies.

The Mahindra Treo Zor electric 3-wheeler, built on the Treo platform, will be available in pickup, delivery van and flat bed variants at Mahindra small commercial vehicle dealerships in select cities across the country from December.

The vehicle will be retailed through Mahindra's SCV dealerships in select cities with deliveries commencing in December 2020.

With a best-in-class payload capacity of 550 kg, the Treo Zor is suitable for last mile transport and is claimed to offer savings of around ₹60,000 per year (fuel cost saving of ₹2.10/km) compared to a diesel model. The goods carrier is claimed to have a maintenance cost of 40 paise per km. The certified driving range on a full charge stands at 125 km. "The Treo Zor will provide a clean, sustainable and affordable solution for last-mile delivery," Mahindra & Mahindra's MD and CEO Pawan Goenka said at the launch.

ants at Mahindra small commercial vehicle dealerships in select cities across the country from December.

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"The Treo Zor will provide a clean, sustainable and affordable solution for last-mile delivery," Mahindra & Mahindra's MD and CEO Pawan Goenka said at the launch.

DRL ties up with BIRAC for vaccine trials

New Delhi, Oct. 29: Drug major Dr Reddy's Laboratories on Thursday announced its partnership with the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council, set up by the Department of Biotechnology, for advisory support on clinical trials of Russian Covid-19 vaccine, Sputnik V, in India. "The partnership will allow Dr Reddy's to identify and use some of BIRAC's clinical trial centres for the vaccine, which are funded under the National Biopharma

Mission (NBM), implemented by Project Management Unit-NBM at BIRAC. Further, the company will have access to good clinical laboratory practice labs to conduct immunogenicity assay testing of the vaccine," Dr Reddy's Laboratories said.

Earlier this month, Dr Reddy's and Russia Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) received approval from the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) to conduct an adaptive phase 2/3 human clinical trial for Sputnik V vaccine in

India. On August 11, the Sputnik V vaccine developed by the Gamaleya National Research Institute of Epidemiology and Microbiology was registered by the Ministry of Health of Russia and became the world's first registered vaccine against Covid-19 based on the human adenoviral vector platform. Currently, there are two indigenously developed vaccine candidates for Covid-19. — PTI

Hiring in e-commerce, retail bouncing back

Mumbai, Oct. 29: The retail segment, which has been badly hit due to the lockdown restrictions, is bouncing back gradually with an uptick in hiring of 15 per cent in September when compared with the previous month, according to a report.

However, the hiring activities are still down by 50 per cent compared to the corresponding month a year ago, according to a report by Naukri.com.

The sector is showing a slow but steady sequential recovery but the sector is likely to bounce back further during the festive season in the country, it added.

"As more public spaces have opened up keeping social distancing in mind, we see movement pick up in retail spaces. Hiring is also picking up accordingly," the report added.

"The Naukri retail hiring report is based on hiring activities in the sector on the job site's platform."

Top roles that recruiters are hiring for include retail store manager, sales or business development manager, merchandiser,



software developer, tech architect, designer and accountant.

Roles such as logistic manager, interior designer, warehouse assistant and tech lead have seen 100 per cent, 66 per cent, 44 per cent and 42 per cent growth in demand year-on-year.

Keywords like logistics and retail sales executive are up by 247 per cent and 500 per cent in recruiter searches for the sector, it added.

Meanwhile, the report further stated that there has been an upward trend in hiring activities in the Internet sector with a sequential recovery since July onwards.

"This is backed by various phases of unlocking

along with the huge demand from consumers for daily essentials through online channels.

Major hiring to prepare for the festive season is indicative in August but has become flat through September, it added.

Even though the internet or e-commerce industry started seeing a decline in hiring since the start of the year, when compared with the pre-Covid-19 period, we see a high recovery; the sector is down by only seven per cent in September compared to February.

Even digital marketing and pay per click specialist roles have seen an annual growth of over 40 per cent, it added.

— PTI

SUN | RISE Brouillette was addressing a virtual press conference of India energy forum

US pitches cheaper solar power tech to India

Chennai, Oct. 29: The United States wants India to explore manufacturing a cheaper alternative to silicon solar cells, United States. Energy Secretary Dan Brouillette said on Wednesday, amid high dependence on Chinese technology.

Brouillette, who was addressing a virtual press conference at the conclusion of the India energy forum at the IHS CERA Week, said India was "perfectly positioned as a potential manufacturer" of perovskite cells, on which the United States was conducting research at its national laboratory in Colorado.

"We have seen recently with this pandemic, supply chain issues have aris-



en with countries like China and in certain cases we have become overly dependent upon one country," Brouillette said.

India has an ambitious plan to increase its renewable energy capacity to 175 gigawatts (GW) by 2022, nearly three-fifths of

which will be solar power. India, an energy hungry nation, which imports over 80 per cent of its solar cells and modules from its neighbour, wants to increase domestic manufacturing but has so far had little success. "It is a technology we

want to share with India, we think it is better done there than other parts around the world," Brouillette said.

Perovskite solar cells (PSCs) are considered by scientists as a potential cheap alternative to silicon cells.

● INDIA HAS an ambitious plan to increase its renewable energy capacity to 175 gigawatts (GW) by 2022.

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● SCIENTISTS are also exploring using perovskite in tandem with silicon to increase efficiency.

efficiency has improved dramatically," said Sandeep Ravishankar, a scientist researching Perovskite solar cells at the Institute of Energy and Climate Research, Forschungszentrum Jülich, Germany.

"However, Perovskite solar cells are still not stable enough to be considered as a commercial competitor of silicon," Sandeep said.

Scientists are also exploring using perovskite in tandem with silicon to increase efficiency, and research on the technology is being carried out in countries including the United States, Saudi Arabia and Federal Republic of Germany.



## SHORT TAKES



Novak Djokovic gestures after defeating Borna Coric in the Vienna Open pre-quarterfinal.

## Djokovic seals 2020's top spot

**Vienna:** Novak Djokovic virtually ensured equalling Pete Sampras's record of ending the year as world number one for the sixth time on Wednesday when he reached the Vienna ATP quarterfinals. Djokovic defeated Croatia's Borna Coric 7-6 (13/11), 6-3 and will secure the year-end top spot as long as Rafael Nadal does not take an unlikely wild card into the Sofia event next month. If Novak wins the Vienna title on Sunday, he will make sure of the landmark regardless of whether or not Nadal plays in Bulgaria. Djokovic, who now has 39 wins and just two defeats in 2020, has been the top-ranked player at the end of a season five times: in 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015 and 2018. He shares that mark with career rivals Roger Federer and Nadal. Sampras achieved the feat six years in succession between 1993 and 1998. — *AFP*

## Green in Oz squad for India series

**Melbourne:** Australia on Thursday included young all-rounder Cameron Green in their T20 and ODI squad for the limited-overs series against India while Moises Henriques returned to national fold after three years following his exploits in the Big Bash League. India will play three One-day Internationals (November 27, 29, December 2) and as many T20Is (December 4, 6, 8) against Australia before the much-awaited Test series. "Cameron's domestic form has been outstanding and he has carried it through for Western Australia this summer. As a potential player of the future this is an opportunity for him to be part of the squad and build on his experience," national selector Trevor Hohns was quoted as saying by Cricket Australia. Australia have focussed on batting all-rounders while picking their limited overs squad. — *PTI*

## Man U dismantle Leipzig, Barca win

**Paris:** Marcus Rashford was again the star for Manchester United in the Champions League with a hat-trick in a 5-0 thumping of RB Leipzig on Wednesday as Barcelona put their off-field troubles to one side to win 2-0 away to a Ronaldo-less Juventus. Rashford came on as a second-half substitute and scored three times from the 74th minute on in what was a fine win against last season's semifinalists. Mason Greenwood and Anthony Martial also scored for the team. Meanwhile PSG got their campaign up and running by beating Istanbul Basaksehir 2-0 in Turkey, although they lost Neymar to an adductor injury in the first half. Both PSG's goals were scored in the second half by Moise Kean. **RESULTS:** Manchester United 5 (Greenwood 21, Rashford 74, 78, 90+2, Martial 87-pen) bt RB Leipzig 0; Juventus 0 lost to Barcelona 2 (Dembele 14, Messi 90-pen); Borussia Dortmund 2 (Sancho 78-pen, Haaland 90+1) bt Zenit Saint Petersburg 0; Istanbul Basaksehir 0 lost to Paris Saint-Germain 2 (Kean 64, 79).

## Live on TV

## CRICKET

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

**Women's Big Bash League:** Sydney Thunder vs Adelaide Strikers from 6.45 am (Saturday) on Sony Six

## WWE

**Smackdown:** Bouts from 5.30 am (Saturday) on Sony Ten 1

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## Gaikward off KKR

## Jadeja cracks whip as CSK beat Knights in thriller

**Dubai, Oct. 29:** Chennai Super Kings beat Kolkata Knight Riders by six wickets in a thrilling IPL match here on Thursday.

Ravindra Jadeja scored an unbeaten 31 off just 11 balls which included two boundaries and three sixes, the last of which was struck on the last ball of the match to overhaul KKR's total of 172 for 5. Needing 30 runs off the last two overs, CSK smashed 20 off the penultimate over bowled by fast bowler Lockie Ferguson, thanks to Jadeja, who hit two more sixes in the last over bowled by pacer Kamlesh Nagarkoti.

Earlier, opener Ruturaj Gaikwad set a solid foundation for the chase by scoring 72 in 53 balls (4x6, 6x2).

For KKR, opener Nitish Rana made 87. Following Rana's 61-ball effort, cameos from skipper Eoin Morgan (15 off 12) and Dinesh Karthik (21 not out off 10) allowed KKR to put up a competitive total.

CSK, who pulled things back in the middle overs, leaked 66 runs in the last five overs.

Lungi Ngidi (2/34) was the best bowler for CSK while Sam Curran also bowled well early on.

The KKR innings was built largely on Rana's knock which comprised 10 fours, four sixes.

Rana hit three consecutive sixes off Karn Sharma in the 16th over to up the ante as the Kolkata side looked for quick runs.

— *PTI*



Ruturaj Gaikwad of Chennai Super Kings plays a shot against Kolkata Knight Riders during their IPL match at Dubai International Cricket Stadium on Thursday.

— *BCCI*

## SCORECARD

**Kolkata Knight Riders:** Shubman Gill b Karn Sharma 26, Nitish Rana c Sam Curran b Lungi Ngidi 87, Sunil Narine c Ravindra Jadeja b Mitchell Santner 7, Rinku Singh c Ambati Rayudu b Jadeja 11, E. Morgan c Gaikwad b Ngidi 15, D. Karthik not out 21, R. Tripathi not out 3. Extras (LB-1, W-1) 2. **Total (for 5 wickets 20 overs) 172.**

**CSK:** 1-53, 2-60, 3-93, 4-137, 5-167. **Bowling:** Chahar 3-0-31-0, Curran 3-0-21-0, Ngidi 4-0-34-2, Santner 3-0-30-1, Jadeja 3-0-20-1, Karn Sharma 4-0-35-1.

**Chennai Super Kings:** Shane Watson c R. Singh b Varun Chakravarthy 14, RD Gaikwad b Cummins 72, Ambati Rayudu c Narine b Cummins 38, M. S. Dhoni b Varun 1, Sam Curran not out 13, Jadeja not out 31. Extras (NB-1, W-8) 9. **Total (for 4 wickets in 20 overs) 178.**

**FoW:** 1-50, 2-118, 3-121, 4-140. **Bowling:** Pat Cummins 4-0-31-2, Kamlesh Nagarkoti 3-0-34-0, Sunil Narine 4-0-23-0, Lockie Ferguson 4-0-54-0, Varun Chakravarthy 4-0-20-2, Nitish Rana 1-0-16-0.

## IPL POINTS TABLE

| Teams                       | P  | W | L | N/R | Pts | NRR    |
|-----------------------------|----|---|---|-----|-----|--------|
| Mumbai Indians              | 12 | 8 | 4 | 0   | 16  | +1.186 |
| Royal Challengers Bangalore | 12 | 7 | 5 | 0   | 14  | +0.048 |
| Delhi Capitals              | 12 | 7 | 5 | 0   | 14  | +0.030 |
| Kings XI Punjab             | 12 | 6 | 6 | 0   | 12  | -0.049 |
| Kolkata Knight Riders       | 13 | 6 | 7 | 0   | 12  | -0.467 |
| Sunrisers Hyderabad         | 12 | 5 | 7 | 0   | 10  | +0.396 |
| Rajasthan Royals            | 12 | 5 | 7 | 0   | 10  | -0.505 |
| Chennai Super Kings         | 13 | 5 | 8 | 0   | 10  | -0.532 |

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

## SHASTRI URGES SURYAKUMAR TO BE PATIENT

**New Delhi, Oct. 29:** National coach Ravi Shastri has urged Suryakumar Yadav to "stay strong and patient" after the MI batsman impressed with an unbeaten 43-ball 79 in the IPL despite the heart-break of being ignored for India's tour of Australia. His consistent run in domestic cricket and the IPL notwithstanding, Yadav did not feature in India's white-ball squad named for the series against Australia. "Surya namaskar. Stay strong and patient @ s u r y a \_ 1 4 k u m a r #MivsRCB," Shastri tweeted.

His innings earned praise from several former stars with Virender Sehwag saying it won't be long before Yadav dons the Indian jersey. — *PTI*

## Powerful Punjab face languishing Rajasthan

**Abu Dhabi, Oct. 29:** A rampaging Kings XI Punjab would look to extend their exceptional run and inch closer to a Play-offs berth while Rajasthan Royals would be desperate to stay alive in the tournament when the two sides clash in an IPL match, here on Friday.

It has been a dramatic turnaround for the KL Rahul-led side after a string a losses earlier in the tournament.

They have managed to weave together five consecutive wins against the top four sides in the tournament, infusing life into their campaign. They are in fourth position with 12 points from as many games, while the Royals have slumped to the penultimate spot with 10 points having

| NUMBERS GAME  |  |
|---|--|
| HEAD TO HEAD  |  |
| <b>OVERALL:</b>   | ● Matches: 20 ● Rajasthan: 11 ● Punjab: 8 ● Tied: 1 (Kings XI Punjab beat Rajasthan Royals in Super over after match ended in a tie)               |
| MEETING IN 2019   |  |
| ● Kings XI Punjab beat Rajasthan Royals by 14 runs at Jaipur.   | ● Kings XI Punjab beat Rajasthan Royals by 12 runs at Mohali.  |
| MEETING IN 2020   |  |
| ● Rajasthan Royals beat Kings XI Punjab by 4 wickets at Sharjah.  |  |
| FOR THE RECORD  |  |
| ● Mayank Agarwal made 106 runs off 50 balls with 10 fours and seven sixes against Rajasthan Royals in first meeting at Sharjah. | ● Rajasthan Royals' 226 for six in 19.3 overs against Kings XI Punjab in first meeting at at Sharjah was the highest successful run-chases in IPL. |
| — S. PERVEZ KAISER  |  |

suffered seven defeats from 12 outings.

The Royals can't afford to slip up, if they lose on Friday they will be out of the reckoning while a defeat for Punjab will

dent their chances for a top-four finish.

The Royals will be high on confidence after their win over Mumbai Indians in their list outing. — *PTI*

## HARDIK, CHRIS REBUKED FOR ALTERCATION

**Abu Dhabi, Oct. 29:** RCB all-rounder Chris Morris and his MI's counterpart Hardik Pandya have been reprimanded for a verbal altercation during their teams' IPL clash here.

The incident took place in the 19th over of MI chase when Pandya struck Morris for a massive six and gestured towards the South African.

Morris got his revenge when he dismissed Pandya in the fifth ball of the over and gave him a send off. MI won the match by five wickets.

A press release from the IPL said that both of them admitted to breaching the Code of Conduct.

"For Level 1 breaches of the Code of Conduct, the match referee's decision is final and binding," said the release. — *PTI*

## India for Kiwi as ICC's chairman

**New Delhi, Oct. 29:** The BCCI is likely to back the candidature of New Zealand's Greg Barclay over Singapore's Imran Khwaja in the elections for the ICC chairman, a post vacated by India's Shashank Manohar after two terms in July this year.

Barclay and Khwaja are the only two candidates contesting for the chairman's post and the 16-member all-powerful ICC Board is set to vote in the first week of December.

While hectic back-channel talks are on to find a unanimous candidate and put up a picture of unity among the Board of Directors (mostly comprising of member nations), it is highly unlikely that Khwaja will have the backing of the Indian cricket board.

"The BCCI is more aligned with New Zealand Cricket (NZC) and those who matter in Indian cricket board find Barclay as a more suitable candidate for the post. Also Khwaja's policy position-

ing isn't exactly in favour of Indian cricket," a senior official, privy to developments in ICC board said. There are a few issues due to which current ICC deputy chairman Khwaja won't find favour with the BCCI.

Firstly, the role played by him along with Manohar to roll back the proposed revenue model in which India, England and Australia stood to gain more.

The matter was up for vote and Khwaja and Manohar, had back then, gathered enough votes to crush the BCCI.

Secondly, the ICC in 2019, had drawn up a rough calendar for the 2023 FTP cycle and till 2028, each and every year; there was a senior men's flagship event kept in that, the revenues from which would have benefitted the smaller nations.

It is understood that the white paper that ICC prepared had Khwaja's tacit support. In fact, BCCI had strong objections to such a proposal. — *PTI*

## KAPIL SHARES HIS WELL BEING IN VIDEO MESSAGE

**New Delhi, Oct. 29:** A week after undergoing angioplasty, the legendary Kapil Dev on Thursday greeted his former India teammates from the 1983 World Cup, saying he is "feeling very good" and eager to meet everyone soon.

The 61-year-old underwent the procedure after suffering a heart attack. He was discharged from the hospital a couple of days later.

"My family 83. The weather is very pleasant and I am very eager to meet you all. I am feeling very good. Thanks to all for your wishes and concern."

"I am hoping that we all will meet pretty soon. I will try to meet you all as early as possible. We have approached the end of the year and I am confident that we will have a great start to next year. Love you all," an enthusiastic Kapil, dressed in a purple T-shirt, said in a video which he shared with his 1983 teammates.



A screengrab of Kapil Dev from a video released by him.



In this file picture taken on December 6, 2008 Argentina's national team coach and football star Diego Armando Maradona gestures as he attends a felicitation programme at Salt Lake Stadium in Kolkata, India. — *AFP*

## Maradona turns 60 in self-isolation

**Buenos Aires, Oct. 29:** Notorious for his wild lifestyle, Argentina great Diego Maradona turns 60 on Friday in far more sober circumstances sheltered in self-isolation to protect him from the Coronavirus pandemic.

Having suffered two heart attacks in the last 20 years and contracted hepatitis, Maradona's precaution after a bodyguard started displaying Covid-19 symptoms earlier this week is understandable.

A life of excesses with cocaine and alcohol have taken their toll on the mercurial talent's health.

Born in a poor Buenos Aires neighborhood on October 30, 1960, Diego Armando Maradona quickly marked himself out as special talent. Defiant and ingenious, macho, a loyal friend and spiteful enemy, Maradona has always been magnetic.

## IDOLIZED LIKE A GOD

First came the highs. Having made his name helping Boca win the Argentine title, he earned a move to Catalan giants Barcelona at just 21.

At 25 he dragged Argentina to World Cup glory at Mexico 86. In the quarterfinal against England he displayed both

the devil in him, and his genius, first scoring a goal with his hand — which he later dubbed the "Hand of God" — and then embarked on a mazy run, bamboozling the England defence to score one of the greatest goals in World Cup history.

## THE LOWS OF LIFE

Maradona broke down in floods of tears in 1990 after he failed to inspire an ill-disciplined Argentina to retain the World Cup, losing 1-0 to West Germany in the final. The next year his Napoli career ended in disgrace after he was handed a 15-month ban for taking cocaine.

He'd scored 346 goals in 679 matches over a 21-year career. As a coach he never enjoyed the same success, and certainly did not have the same flair.

Put in charge of the national team with a Lionel Messi in his pomp, Maradona's charges slumped out of the 2010 World Cup in South Africa with a 4-0 quarterfinal drubbing by Germany.

But his name ensured he was rarely short of offers, whether from clubs in the UAE, Mexico or his homeland, where he is currently the coach at Gimnasia y Esgrima La Plata. — *AFP*

