


DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA
VISAKHAPATNAM | FRIDAY | 18 SEPTEMBER 2020

WEATHER



Max: 33.4°C
Min: 26.6°C
RH: 81%
Rainfall: Trace

Forecast: Mist.
 Max/Min temp.
 33/26°C

COVID-19 COUNT


CASES	DEATHS
(+93,332)	(+1,138)
52,05,760	84,346

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+2,159)	(+9)
TS: 1,65,003	1,005
(+8,702)	(+72)
AP: 6,01,462	5,177

CASES AROUND THE WORLD



3,02,30,511

DEATHS

9,48,226

COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES

213

worldometers.info/coronavirus

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Dakshinayana

Tithi: Adhika-Ashwayuja Shuddha Padyami till 12.50 pm

Star: Uttarahalguni till 6.59 am; Hasta till 4.06 am (Saturday)

Variyam: 2.22 pm to 3.47 pm

Durmuhurtam: 8.33 am to 9.21 am; 12.34 pm to 1.22 pm

Rahukalam: 10.30 am to 12 noon

HJRI CALENDAR

Muharram 29, 1442 AH

PRAYERS

Fajar: 5:50 am

Zohar: 1:30 pm

Asar: 4:45 pm

Maghrib: 6:15 pm

Isha: 8:15 pm

SUNSET TODAY 5:57 PM

SUNRISE TOMORROW 5:45 AM

MOONRISE TOMORROW 6:26 PM

MOONSET TODAY 6:54 AM

COUNTER POINT



What can I do?
It's an act of God!

IN BRIEF

Harsimrat quits over farm bills

New Delhi: In a major embarrassment to the NDA at the Centre, Union minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal resigned from the Cabinet over two contentious farm Bills passed in the Lok Sabha on Thursday. "Proud to stand with farmers as their daughter and sister," Harsim-rat Badal, who held the food processing industries portfolio, said in a post on Twitter. Harsimrat Badal is the only representative of the Shiromani Akali Dal in the Modi government.

■ Report on Page 4

TESTING | TIMES **6,450 students did not attend, Krishna dist sees most students**

16% students skip Eamcet in state

VADREVU SRINIVAS and MD ILYAS | DC KAKINADA/VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 17

As many as 34,994 students, including 1,320 from Telangana, out of 41,444 students, appeared for the AP Eamcet-2020 examination on the first day, on Thursday, for engineering stream and registered 84.44 per cent attendance. The Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University Kakinada (JNTUK) is conducting the examination in 118 centres, including 47

SEVERAL STUDENTS MISS EAMCET DUE TO ‘ONE MINUTE LATE’ RULE IN STATE

DC CORRESPONDENT KAKINADA, SEPT. 17

The stipulation that students will not be allowed to write AP Eamcet – 2020 examination even if they are late by “one minute” has left many aspirants

regional centres. The highest number of students, 4496, appeared from Kris-

heartbroken. The exams started on Thursday and will continue till September 25. Because of Covid-19 curbs, many students arrived late.

■ Page 3: Students who just missed exam unhappy

hna district and the lowest number,1154, were from Vizianagaram.

As many as 6,450 students did not attend the examination.

The Eamcet-2020 chairperson and JNTUK vice chancellor, M. Ramalinga Raju, said that 228 observers have been appointed and 102 students are appearing for the exam in the Urdu language.

Andhra Pradesh Eamcet-2020, convener, Prof. V. Ravindra, said that two Covid-19-positive cases from Krishna and Prakasam districts were not allowed to write the examination and were sent back in accordance with

Battleground Srinagar



Kashmiri protesters clash with the police after a gun battle between militants and security forces at Batamaloo of Srinagar on Thursday. Police used tear gas shells and pellet guns to disperse protesters.

— H.U. NAQASH

YSRC to use Parliament’s immunity to attack courts

N. VAMSI SRINIVAS | DC VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 17

In an unprecedented manner the executive and judiciary in AP are on a collision path. An uneasy calm that prevailed for months has ended and the ruling YSR Congress on Thursday launched a direct attack against the AP High Court.

Apparently following instructions of Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, the ruling party floor leaders in both Houses of Parliament, P. Mithun Reddy and V. Vijayasai Reddy, sought to draw the highest law-making body’s attention to what they described as injustice meted out in the hands of judiciary. “The

NAIDU DEFENDS HOUSE SITES GIVEN TO HIGH COURT JUDGES IN AMARAVATI

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 17

Telugu Desam chief N. Chandrababu Naidu on Thursday defended his government’s decision to allot house sites to 11 serving AP High Court judges in the proposed Amaravati capital region. Naidu was reacting to a

AP judiciary is not impartial and it has to be stopped,” said Vijayasai Reddy in Rajya Sabha. Though he was taking part in a debate on Covid, the Parliamentary party

startling revelation on social media that 13 judges, of whom two have retired and 11 are serving in the HC, were allotted house sites of 600 square yards each in April, 2019, a few weeks before he stepped down.

■ Page 2: Jagan source of viral video: Naidu

leader went on to describe the “onslaught of judiciary” on his party’s government.

■ Page 2: MPs seek CBI probe on land deal

No power can stop India from patrolling LAC: Singh

Says face-off with China after LAC patrols were disrupted

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, SEPT. 17

Defence minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday asserted in the Rajya Sabha that no power on earth could stop the Indian Army from patrolling.

“Patrolling patterns are traditional and well-defined. No force on earth can stop our soldiers from patrolling and our soldiers have sacrificed their lives for that. There will be no change in the patrolling pattern,” he said on the stand-off with China at the Line of Actual Control. “Face-offs happened because the patrols were interrupted,” Singh said. He said he could not say more due to operational sensitivities.

Singh was responding to a question from former defence minister A.K. Antony. Cutting across party lines, members in the Upper House expressed solidarity and support to the armed forces and the government in the stand-off. Singh said the country had fought many wars and, “however big the challenge, we stand united.”

He said that China had made “provocative military manoeuvres” on August 29/30 in an attempt to change the status quo in the south bank of the Pangong Lake at a time when the two sides were engaged in talks to de-escalate tensions. He said there is a mismatch between what China says and does. “*Unki kathani aur karni alag hai* (their actions are at variance with their words).”

The minister said India and China were yet to resolve their boundary

VIKRAM SHARMA | DC HYDERABAD, SEPT. 17

As India and China continue to be locked in a stand-off along the Line of Actual Control in Ladakh and a “war-like” intent being displayed by China, massive deployment of forces and increased supplies of arms and ammunition are not the only preparations underway in India.

In a clear indication of the tense situation prevailing between the two countries, residents, particularly women and children, of at least five border villages along the LAC in Uttarakhand have been advised to go to safer locations

■ Page 4: Men decided to stay back and assist Army

● THE MINISTER said India and China were yet to resolve their boundary question.

question. “China does not accept the customary and traditional alignment of the boundary between India and China,” he said.

He also apprised the house that China continues to be in illegal occupation of about 38,000 square kilometres of Ladakh. Besides it also holds 5,180

● IN A CLEAR indication of the tense situation prevailing between the two countries, residents, particularly women and children, of at least five border villages along the LAC in Uttarakhand have been advised to go to safer locations

Nepal.

Sources in Dharchula disclosed to *Deccan Chronicle* that the local administration had recently issued an advisory to the gram pradhans, or village heads, of the border villages of Kuti, Nabhi, Raung Kong, Napalachchu and Gunji, advising them to move the women and children from the respective villages due to the grave situation along the border.

■ Page 4: Men decided to stay back and assist Army

sq km of Indian territory in Pakistan occupied Kashmir that Pakistan had illegally ceded in 1963.

On the latest situation, he said India has noticed a build-up of troops and arms by China in the border areas adjacent to East-ern Ladakh since April. “In early May, the Chinese side had taken action to hinder the normal, traditional patrolling pattern of our troops in the Galwan Valley area, which resulted in a face-off,” he said.

CHINESE HACKERS HAD HIT INDIAN GOVT SITES: U.S.

Washington, Sept. 17: The US Justice Department has charged five Chinese citizens with hacking over 100 companies and institutions in America and abroad, including the Indian government’s networks, and stealing software data and business intelligence.

Deputy US Attorney General Jeffrey Rosen on Wednesday announced that three indictments had been unsealed in the matter that collectively charge five Chinese nationals with computer hacking and two Malaysians nationals with helping some of those hackers target victims and sell the fruits of their crime.

The Malaysians were arrested on Sunday and the Chinese nationals have been declared fugitive. Rosen severely criticised the Chinese government. “The Department of Justice has used every tool available to disrupt the cyber-attacks by these Chinese. Regrettably, China has chosen a different path — of making China safe for cyb-ercriminals so long as they attack computers outside China,” he said.

■ Page 5: Hackers targetted sites in US, UK, HK, Vietnam

● THE MALAYSIANS were arrested on Sunday and the Chinese nationals have been declared fugitive. Rosen severely criticised the Chinese government

STATE TO LEVY ₹1 ROAD CESS ON PETROL, DIESEL

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 17


The Andhra Pradesh government has decided to levy road cess on diesel and petrol. This will make the fuels costlier.

The state Cabinet in its recent meeting had approved the proposal to levy ₹1 per litre each on petrol and diesel.

The state government would come up with an ordinance for the purpose in a day or two.

Official sources told *Deccan Chronicle* that the additional burden on consumers on account of the cess would be around ₹600 crore per annum.

■ Page 2: Repair roads using cess money: CM




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SHORT TAKES

SPEAKER SAYS AP AHEAD IN WELFARE SCHEMES

DC CORRESPONDENT
SRIKAKULAM, SEPT. 17

The state is leading in the country in implementation of various kinds of welfare schemes, particularly for women, said Speaker Tammineni Sitaran, who was the chief guest at the concluding function of the weeklong celebration of Aasara scheme on Thursday.

Appreciating the efforts of the Chief Minister, the Speaker said that Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy is aiming at achieving financial independence for women. He said the CM has been fulfilling all the promises he made during his padayatra and completed 90 per cent of the Navaratna schemes which were announced.

CONGRESS BATS FOR AP STUDENTS FOR SEATS IN IIIT

NAGESWARA RAO
BALLEDA I DC
KADAPA, SEPT. 17

Congress committee working president, Dr N. Tulasi Reddy, asked the state government to discuss with the Telangana government in filling the 150 non-local category seats allotted to Andhra Pradesh at IIIT, Basara.

The students from Andhra Pradesh not allotted grade points in the SSC examination results are facing problems applying to IIIT, Basara. Dr Reddy held a press conference at Vempalli on Thursday where he said that the Congress government had setup IIITs at Idupulapaya, Nuziveedu and Basara to promote technical education among rural students in undivided AP.

After the division of state, the government started two more IIITs in the state at Ongole and Srikakulam. The AP government has announced its schedule for admissions in the state IIITs. He urged the government to take the necessary steps to assure the students in the state of the non-local seats.

Idol damaged in yet another temple in state

Opposition demands dismissal of endowments minister

MD ILYAS | DC
VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 17

In a fresh incident on Thursday, the ear of a Nandi idol in Kasi Visweswara temple at Makkapeta of Krishna district was damaged. While YSRC sees a Telugu Desam conspiracy, TD is alleging that YSRC is promoting such attacks to suppress Hindu religion.

Kasi Visweswara temple priest and locals of Makkapeta said that they observed that the lock of the main door was broken open and found that the ear of the Nandi idol was damaged, although other idols and items were untouched. They lodged a complaint with the police and endowment department officials. The police rushed to the temple and enquired about the incident.

The spate of incidents across temples has come as fodder for TD, BJP and Jana Sena, who are appearing as Hindutva saviours. TD chief N. Chandrababu Naidu expressed suspicion over the absence of a police complaint in the silver lions missing incident. He stated that endowment minister Velampalli Srinivas Rao lives near the temple but totally failed to provide protection to the Durga temple and demanded his dismissal.

However, the minister alleged that the three lions were missing during the TD tenure. He urged Opposition parties to stop playing politics with Hindu religion as it was not good for society.

Former minister Devineni Umamaheswara Rao, Alapati Rajendra Prasad, Varla Ramaiah, Bonda Umamaheswara

DURGA TEMPLE OFFICIALS LODGE COMPLAINT WITH POLICE ABOUT 3 MISSING LION IDOLS

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 17

The Kanaka Durga temple officials lodged a complaint with the police over three silver lion idols on the silver chariot on the Indrakeeladri going missing.

Temple's executive officer Suresh Babu lodged a complaint in one town police station seeking an investigation on Thursday.

In his complaint, Babu stated that the silver chariot was not used for the past 17 months after being used during the Ugadi festival last year. He said that

recently, during inspection, it was found that the three silver lions from the chariot were missing. The one town police started its investigation.

Durga temple committee chairman, P. Somi Naidu, said that the chariot was kept on the ghat road in 2016 and shifted to Mahamandapam in 2019, during the Telugu Desam government. He said that the chariot was used by the TD government in the Ugadi festival and not used by this YSRC government due to the pandemic. The temple committee decided to make three new silver lions.

COPS DENY PERMISSION TO BJP'S 'CHALO ANTARVEDI' PLAN, SECTION 144 IMPOSED

VADREVI SRINIVAS | DC
KAKINADA, SEPT. 17

East Godavari sub-collector Himanshu Koushik on Thursday announced that Section 144 has been imposed in Amalapuram division of East Godavari district. As such no processions or gatherings will be allowed in the region.

Imposition of Section 144 comes in the wake of Bharatiya Janata Party calling for a "Chalo Antarvedi" programme on Friday to protest against the gutting down of a chariot belonging to Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple at Antarvedi in Sakshinetipalle

Rao and Buddha Venkanna are blaming YSRC government for the attacks on temples and

mandal of EG district. Eluru Range DIG K. V. Mohan Rao explained that burning of the temple chariot on September 5 had been investigated with police deploying a dog squad and clues team. Some of the witnesses had also been questioned. Since then, the state government has decided to hand over the case to the CBI.

The DIG pointed out that the state government has taken steps to build a new chariot at a cost of ₹95 lakh. Some RSS activists, who had been arrested for agitating against the Antarvedi incident, had also been released on bail.

demanding Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy to break his silence and come clear on the subject.

BJP CHIEF VEERRAJU PUT UNDER HOUSE

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 17

State BJP president Somu Veerraju and several of his party leaders were put under house arrest to prevent them from undertaking 'Chalo Amalapuram' protest on Friday. BJP called for 'Chalo Amalapuram' protest against the attacks on temples.

When Veerraju started off for Amalapuram from his house here on Thursday, police foiled his attempt and put him under house arrest.

Mr Veerraju criticised the CM for 'denying' him to exercise his democratic right.

BJP FORMER MLA PUT UNDER HOUSE ARREST

K.M.P. PATNAIK | DC
VISAKHAPATNAM, SEPT. 17

The Dwarakanagar police put former BJP MLA P. Vishnu Kumar Raju under house arrest on Thursday. The arrest was made to prevent him from going to Amalapuram in East Godavari where the State unit of the party staged a dharna to demand withdrawal of cases against 37 BJP activists leaders at Antarvedi where they protested against the burning down of the sacred chariot. Mr Vishnu Kumar Raju said the preventive arrests were made all over the state.

Repair roads using cess money: CM

from page 1

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy gave instructions to the officials concerned to take up road repair works across the state using the sum. He is believed to have commented that the people wouldn't appreciate delay in road repairs and that the image of his government would be affected despite doing extremely well in

the welfare sector.

The officials blamed it on the empty coffers and suggested levying road cess and a mechanism wherein the fund raised would be exclusively spent to repair roads.

The AP Road Development Corporation had borrowed ₹3,000 crore in February last year but the amount was diverted for Chandrababu Naidu government's poll-time Pasu-

pu Kunkuma scheme.

Sources said it is doubtful if the amount pooled through the road cess could be used for repairs as the Road Development Corporation has to fulfil its debt service obligations for the loan raised last year. "The additional amount we intend to raise through the cess will be more or less equivalent to the debt servicing," a senior official said.

YSRC MPs SEEK CBI PROBE ON AMARAVATI LAND DEAL

From page 1

Party MPs also staged a dharna in front of the Mahatma Gandhi statue on Parliament premises, demanding a CBI probe into the Amaravati scam, a plea that had been rejected outright by the High Court.

"It is unfortunate that courts are hindering the investigation into scams. As law-makers, we have the right to raise the issue in Parliament and speak about the functioning of the judiciary in AP," he told mediapersons.

Back in Vijayawada, senior YSRC leader and municipal minister Botsa Satyanarayana termed the gag order of the High Court as unfair and wondered how courts could announce that incumbent governments have no right to probe the policy decisions their predecessors

sors particularly when the people in power had got pecuniary benefits out of those decisions.

The ruling party outbursts came a day after the High Court stalled the probe into the alleged Amaravati land scam in which some influential people, allegedly privy to confidential information, had acquired lands in the proposed capital region for a cheaper price.

The AP High Court was unhappy over the ruling party leaders criticising its judgments and even its sympathisers hurling abuses against judges. At one stage, the Registrar General highlighted in her affidavit in a case that the state government was not happy with the judgments. Later, she amended the affidavit replacing the word "government" with "some ruling party leaders".

JUDICIARY SHOULD NOT CROSS LIMITS: BOTS

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 17

Municipal administration minister Botsa Satyanarayana said the stay on SIT probe was not in tune with the spirit of natural justice and constitution.

Speaking to the media here on Thursday, he said the HC interim order staying the SIT investiga-

tions into irregularities in projects started by the previous Telugu Desam government between 2014 and 2019 was unfair. He stated that in democracy, there were instances of Prime Ministers, Chief Ministers and Ministers being named and tried by courts. He said it was Mr Chandrababu Naidu, Mr Lokesh and TD leaders who exploited farmers.

Participating in a TD Parliamentary Party virtual meeting, Naidu said his government had decided to allot house sites to bureaucrats, government employees, judges and media personnel with an intention to accelerate growth in the capital region. He took objection to the YSRC resorting to mudslinging against judges alone.

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IN BRIEF MP laid to rest with state honours

Nellore: The last rites of Tirupati MP Balli Durga Prasad were performed with state honours at Venkatagiri on Thursday. The body reached Venkatagiri late on Wednesday night from Chennai. MLAs Kakani Govardhan Reddy, Bhoomana Karunakar Reddy, Kileveti Sanjeevaiah, former legislator Nelavala Subhramanyam and YSRC leader Kodavallur Dhanunjay Reddy attended the last rites of the MP.

YSRC men pay tribute to MP

Vijayawada: YSR Congress leaders paid rich tributes to Tirupati MP Balli Durga Prasad Rao at the state party office here on Thursday. The MP died due to Covid-19 on Wednesday. Speaking on the occasion, government advisor (public affairs) Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy said the demise of Durga Prasad Rao was a loss to the party. "We have lost a senior member of the team of the MPs who are fighting in parliament for the interests of the state. He was well-known as minister, MLA and leader to the people of Nellore, Chittoor and Rayalseema prior to his becoming a YSRC MP," said Mr Ramakrishna Reddy.

Cases sprint past 6 lakh, death toll reaches 5,177

Least number of 367 cases were recorded in Krishna

**MD ILYAS | DC
VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 17**

The spree of 10,000 Coronavirus cases per day since the last week in AP was broken on Thursday with the state registering 8,500 new Covid-19 cases on the day. However, the state crossed six-lakh mark of virus cases with total positive cases reaching 6,01,462 on Thursday.

The overall total active cases in the state were 88,197, with 5,08,088 recoveries and 5,177 deaths. East Godavari district remains on top of the state in terms of registering Covid-19 cases when compared to other districts of the state. The single day highest cases of 1,383 were registered in East Godavari district on Thursday.

As many as 72 new Corona deaths were registered in the past 24 hours. The highest number of 12 deaths were registered in

Chittoor district, followed by 10 deaths in Prakasam, seven in Kadapa, six each in Guntur, Kurnool and Nellore, five each in East Godavari and Krishna, four each in Anantapur, Visakhapatnam and West Godavari, two in Srikakulam and one in Vizianagaram district.

As many as 77,492 Corona tests have been conducted in the past 24 hours in which 8,702 were diagnosed as Covid-19 positive. AP has tested a total of 48,84,371 samples for Coronavirus till date and is in top place of conducting Covid-19 tests in the country.

As many as 10,712 patients have recovered from Covid-19 in the past 24 hours and discharged from various hospitals in the state.

The single day highest number of 1,383 Coronavirus positive cases was registered in East

Godavari district, increasing the total to 82,447 in which 12,036 were active cases. The second highest number of positive cases of 1,064 was registered in West Godavari district, increasing the total to 54,635 in which 8,706 were active cases. Chittoor district is in third place with 905 new positive cases in the past 24 hours, increasing the total positive cases to 52,421 in which 7,850 were active cases.

Prakasam district registered 705 new Corona positive cases in the past 24 hours, increasing the total positive cases to 39,443 in which 12,411 were active cases. 637 new cases were registered in Kadapa district, increasing total positive cases to 38,325 in which 4,901 were active cases. 610 new Corona positive cases were registered in Nellore district, increasing total positive cases to 53,098 in which 3,902 were active

cases. 567 new cases were registered in Srikakulam district, increasing the total positive cases to 34,487 in which 5,965 were active cases. 550 new cases were registered in Guntur district in the past 24 hours, increasing the total positive cases to 47,880 in which 7,164 were active cases.

Anantapur district registered 545 new Corona positive cases in the past 24 hours, increasing the total positive cases to 51,358 in which 3,537 were active cases. 526 new cases were registered in Vizianagaram district, increasing total positive cases to 30,029 in which 9193 were active cases. 449 new cases were registered in Visakhapatnam district, taking the total positive cases to 45,686 in which 5,788 were active cases. 394 new cases were registered in Kurnool district, taking the total positive cases to 53,098.

SERUM INDIA TEAM TO VISIT KGH NEXT WEEK

**K.M.P. PATNAIK | DC
VISAKHAPATNAM,
SEPT. 17**

A special team from Serum Institute of India will visit King George Hospital on Tuesday to inspect the lab and other facilities for conducting trials for its vaccine.

After the inspection and approval of the facility, a notification will be published in the newspapers calling for volunteers who would undergo the trial, said the principal of Andhra Medical College and KGH superintendent Dr P.V. Sudhakar.

The century-old 1,100-bed hospital recently added the CSR block with 500 beds for specialised treatment of Covid-19 patients.

The hospital had already begun a clinical trial of the drugs developed by Navitas Life Sciences in association with the DRDO. This is a phase II clinical trial of a drug developed by Navitas Life Sciences in the acute treatment of moderate to severe Covid-19 cases.

Centre focuses on BlackRock malware

**D. SIVA RAMI
REDDI | DC
KURNOOL, SEPT. 17**

Union minister for electronics and information technology Sanjay Dhotre told Rajya Sabha that the government has taken note of warning about BlackRock malware being circulated that exploits vulnerability in Android mobiles across the country.

The Union minister warned that the malware can steal credentials from more than 300 Apps, including email, e-commerce, messaging/social media, entertainment, banking, and financial apps, by targeting mobile devices running on the Android operating system.

In his written reply to MP T. G. Venkatesh, the Union minister pointed out that the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) has published an alert on this virus in July 2020, so that users can take precautionary measures to ward off the virus. Sanjay

Dhotre said the government is taking following measures to check malicious apps and help users protect their mobile phones:

Measures like alerts and advisories about threats, vulnerabilities and malware affecting mobile phones, along with countermeasures, are being issued regularly by CERT-In. Security tips have been published, so that users can secure their mobile/smart phones.

Government has operationalised Cyber Swachhta Kendra to enable detection and cleaning of malicious code in close coordination with Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and industry.

The Union minister pointed out that users can check out tips about information security, including securing of their mobile phones, through websites "https://infosecawareness.in"/, "https://www.cert-in.org.in/" and "https://www.cyber-swachhtakendra.gov.in/".

Students who just missed exam unhappy

From Page 1

But severe disappointment faced those who were just on the border of in-time. EAMCET authorities denied entry to students who were just a minute late.

A tearful P. Vara Prasad said, "I have prepared for two years at a private college in Kakinada with the ambition of becoming a computer engineer. I had reached the examination centre one and a half hours ahead. But I had to take my online hall ticket with photographs from an internet centre. I got delayed there. I reached just a minute late but authorities denied me entry," Vara Prasad lamented while his tears were dropping. He is the son of an auto driver.

Another student J. Mahendra of Tuni said due to lack of transportation, he had to hire a car to reach his centre at Kakinada. But he was denied entry even though he was almost on

■ Many students reached the centres late and even if they were late by a minute, they could not write exam

time. There were many such students seen waiting despondently outside the examination centres hoping for a miracle that never happened.

AP EAMCET – 2020 convenor V. Ravindra underlined that students had been adequately cautioned about the rule. Still the students came late.

Parents of students have, however, alleged that delay was due to inexperienced supervisors taking a long time in checking hall tickets. They have appealed to Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy as well as officials to relax the rule and enable all those who were late to write their EAMCET on the last day of the examination. The parents attributed the late arrival to restriction because of Coronavirus.

EAMCET PUTS MORE FINANCIAL BURDEN ON PARENTS

From page 1

Parents, A.V. Ramana and K. Sagar who came from Jaggaipet to drop and pick up their children said that this year EAMCET put extra financial burden on the students due to arrangement of their own transportation as a result of the pandemic.

They said that they used private vehicles to reach the examination centre situated at Patamata of Vijayawada city due to the absence of buses, including city services. They lamented that the private vehicles are charging ₹5,000 for a to and fro journey. They expressed satisfaction over the Covid-19 protocol implementation in the exam centres to protect the students.

■ Private vehicles took advantage of lack of public bus services and made money

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The Power to Surprise

SHORT TAKES

2 BOYS BEAT MOTHER TO DEATH IN ODISHA

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC BHUBANESWAR, SEPT. 17

Two minor boys, apparently fed up with continuous torture, beat their mother to death in an apartment at Sundarpada under Airfield police station here on Wednesday night. The deceased was identified as Binodini Mishra. An altercation reportedly broke out between the mother and her sons late Wednesday night over some family issue. In a fit of rage, the two minor boys aged 12 and 15 years started beating Binodini, 40, with an iron rod killing her on the spot. Later, they kept the body in the bathroom and went outside after locking the flat. On Thursday morning, the security guard of the apartment called up Airfield police, who reached the spot and found the body lying in the bathroom. The police seized the body and sent it for post-mortem. The cops also detained the two accused for interrogation. Police sources, quoting the boys, said the deceased had been torturing her children under the influence of liquor. Fed up with this, the two children beat their mother to death. The deceased's husband, an employee posted in Rourkela, was informed about the incident.

BSY IN DELHI TO DISCUSS CABINET EXPANSION

New Delhi, Sept. 17: Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa arrived in the national capital on Thursday to discuss cabinet expansion in the state with the BJP top brass. During his two-day visit, the chief minister is scheduled to call on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, BJP national president J.P. Nadda as well as Union Ministers to discuss the state's issues. "I have come to Delhi to discuss with several Union Ministers about developmental works of the state. At the same time, I will also discuss the cabinet expansion with the party leaders to ascertain their views," Yediyurappa told reporters here. He is likely to meet Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday, and Modi, Nadda and other Union Ministers on Friday. The chief minister's son and BJP state vice-president BY Vijayendra is accompanying him. Yediyurappa is under pressure to expand Karnataka's cabinet at the earliest to appease disgruntled legislators although he is not keen to make any such changes right now.

MP MANTRI THRASHES CONGRESSMAN

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC BHOPAL, SEPT. 17

A video showing a senior minister in Shivraj cabinet thrashing a Congress worker in Gwalior on Thursday went viral causing huge embarrassment to the ruling BJP. State energy minister Pradyumna Singh Tomar was caught on camera advancing menacingly towards a group of Congress workers who were shouting slogans against BJP leader Jyotiraditya Scindia at Phulbag square in Gwalior. He was then seen in the video clip delivering punches on a Congress worker. The incident took place on Wednesday. According to official sources, the Congress workers were staging a demonstration in Gwalior to protest against the move by Gwalior Municipal Corporation to remove hoardings featuring Congress veteran and former chief minister Kamal Nath erected at some places in the city. The demonstrators stopped the minister's cavalcade and then started shouting slogans against Mr Scindia provoking Mr Tomar to disembark from his vehicle and confront the Congress workers. He first had heated exchanges with them and later gave blows to Mr Khan while snatching the Congress flag from him. Mr Tomar was known to be a staunch loyalist of Mr Scindia. He was among 22 former Congress MLAs who resigned from assemblies as well as Congress in March to pull down the 15-month-old Kamal Nath government.

A bit different this time



A devotee performs rituals on the occasion of Mahalaya Amavasya at Marina Beach in Chennai on Thursday. Mahalaya is an auspicious occasion celebrated at the end of Pitri Paksha, a 16-day period when Hindus pay homage to their ancestors. It is believed that it is the time when goddess Durga descends from Kailasha to the earth, her maternal home. On Mahalaya, the sculptors usually draw the eyes of Devi Durga, a ritual known as 'Chokkhu Daan'. However, it did not happen this year as Durga Puja starts over a month later. Durga Puja will begin on October 22 instead of the traditional seven-day gap from Mahalaya as the Bengali month of Kartik starting on Friday is a 'mala mash' or lunar month, considered inauspicious for any religious or social festivity.

— PTI

Old trick: PLA borrows leaf from 2,200 years old battle

Chinese troops play Punjabi songs on loudspeakers at the LAC

PAWAN BALI | DC NEW DELHI, SEPT. 17:

While Indians are amused over Chinese troops playing Punjabi songs on loudspeakers at Line of Actual Control (LAC) at Eastern Ladakh where for the first time in 45 years shots have been fired, it seems PLA is using the tactics employed by Chinese Han generals some 2,200 years ago during so called "Battle of Gaixia". In this battle, Han King Liu Bang beat his Chu rival Xiang Yu and established the Han Dynasty in China. Chinese state run *Global Times* on Thursday talking about Chinese army playing Punjabi songs at LAC said that the Indian army is in a situation of "hearing the Chu songs on four sides." The *Global Times* said that the move of playing Punjabi songs sends a message to India that the Indian army is isolated and besieged on all sides. "Hearing the Chu songs on four sides" is a Chinese idiom, which is said to have originated from the supposed "Battle of Gaixia". After the fall of the Qin Dynasty, the state of Chu and the State of Han fought for control of China around 206 BC to 202 BC. As per the legends around 202 BC, Chu king Xiang Yu was trapped and surrounded by the rival Han forces in hills at Gai Xia. The legends say to weaken the morale of the Chu forces and King Xiang

● **IT SEEMS** foolish if PLA assumes that Punjabi songs played at the LAC will have the same impact on a professional and battle hardened Indian Army as what happened with Chu soldiers some thousands of years back.

who was a ferocious fighter, Han soldiers started singing Chu songs from all sides. After listening to these songs, Chu soldiers thought that Han people had captured their homeland and brought Chu people to the battlefield. As per these stories, Chu soldiers became worried about their family members, homesick and lost the will to fight. Many Chu soldiers deserted. Even Chu King is said to have become desperate after listening to the Chu songs and is said to have cried. Xiang Yu committed suicide after his forces tried to break the trap. However, it seems foolish if the PLA assumes that Punjabi songs played at the LAC will have the same impact on a professional and battle hardened Indian Army as what happened with Chu soldiers some thousands of years back. Only last week Indian army's Sikh Regiment observed the 123rd Saragarhi Day where 22 soldiers of 4 Sikh in a famous 'last-stand' fought thousands of Pathans in North West Frontier Province on September 12, 1897.

Men have decided to stay back and assist the Army

From Page 1

The move comes even as the Army and ITBP soldiers are being deployed ahead of these villages in large numbers. The villages, located at an altitude of over 10,000 feet, are not very far away from Mount Kailash, close to where the People's Liberation Army of China is said to have deployed surface-to-air missiles. People belonging to these villages live there for about six months, between May and November. Once the winter gets harsh when temperatures fall below minus-20° Celsius, they move to the lower reaches in Dharchula town by November or December. The five villages are located a few kilometres from the tri-junction between India, China and Nepal. "The villagers have been informed about the advisory and some of them are packing up and will leave soon. We have requested that women and children be sent down as early as possible. In case the situation takes a turn for the worse, most men have decided to stay back and assist the Army and the ITBP," one of the village heads told this newspaper. These villages used to be pit stops for trekkers,

- **OF THE FIVE** villages in Dharchula of Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand, Kuti has a population of about 365 people living in 115 houses.
- **NABHI HAS** 78 people and 32 houses, Raung Kong about 120 living in 35 houses, Napalachchu 74 in 25 houses and Gunji about 335 in 194 houses.
- **LOCATED AT** an elevation of about 10,000 feet, locals stay there for six months every year and then migrate to the plains
- **ALL THE** villages are few kilometres away from the tri-junction between India, China and Nepal
- **CHINA HAS** deployed surface-to-air missile near Mount Kailash — not very far away from the villages
- **ABOUT 975** people including 395 females reside across the five border villages, leading tough lives.

tourists and those travelling to Adi Kailash; they would be offered homes-

tays by the locals. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the people have been hit hard. Most of them sell various products including herbs which they painstakingly collect from mountains at the annual trade between India and China but even that did not take place this year. "Our main earnings are through the trade every year. When we return from China, we buy some products which we sell when we go down to the town. This time around, we do not know how to survive," said a local. The villagers are worried that if tensions continue to rise between India and China, they will permanently lose their source of income and in the worst scenario, even their houses. About 975 people including 395 females reside across the five border villages, leading tough lives. "During the 1962 war, our ancestors assisted the Indian Army and stood by them in the most difficult times. We even gave our rations to them and transported their equipment, arms and ammunition on our backs. We will do the same even now if there is a repeat of 1962," Virendra Singh Nabiyal, a local of Nabi village, said.

Harsimrat quits as mantri as LS passes farm Bills

DC CORRESPONDENTS NEW DELHI, SEPT. 17



Harsimrat Kaur Badal

In a major embarrassment to the NDA government at the Centre, Union minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal resigned from the Cabinet over two contentious farm Bills passed in Lok Sabha on Thursday. "I have resigned from Union Cabinet in protest against anti-farmer ordinances and legislation. Proud to stand with farmers as their daughter and sister," Badal, who held the food processing industries portfolio, tweeted. The resignation was, however, first announced by her husband and MP Sukhbir Singh Badal in Lok Sabha during discussion before the passage of the two Bills that seek to liberalise the agriculture sector. While announcing the SAD's decision to withdraw their minister from Narendra Modi's Cabinet, Badal said the SAD would continue to support the government and Bharatiya Janata Party, but will oppose its anti-farmer policies. Badal is the only SAD representative in the Modi government. The party is the oldest BJP ally. The SAD was under tremendous political pressure after the Congress government in Punjab passed a resolution in the Vidhan Sabha against the ordinances, prompting the NDA ally to fiercely oppose the Bills after initially supporting it. The Badals — party patriarch Parkash Singh Badal, former deputy CM Sukhbir Badal and Badal — had not opposed the government's move in June when it had brought ordinances for the same. The SAD, sources said, had told the BJP that they will not be able to support the Bills as there is massive unrest among farmers in Punjab. The Bills in question are the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020, and the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020, which were passed on

- **THE SAD** president said the Bills, including the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, which has been passed by Lok Sabha, are going to affect 20 lakh farmers and 15-20 lakh farm labourers in Punjab alone.
- **THE STATE** with 2.5 per cent of the country's landmass produces nearly 50 per cent of food grains for the country, he added.

Thursday. The two Bills were passed by a voice vote. Minister of agriculture and farmers welfare Narendra Singh Tomar while replying to the debate said that as claimed by Opposition the Bills were farmer friendly and would be revolutionary for the agriculture sector. Opposing the legislation, Congress Party said the BJP government is hell bent on destroying the "Anndata" farmer to benefit a handful of crony capitalists. "62 crores farmers and farm labourers are agitating across India. Over 250 farmers organisations are sitting in dharna, on hunger strikes and demonstrating across the length and breadth of India. Drunk with power and determined to serve crony capitalists friends, Prime Minister Narendra Modi continues to be blind to the agony of the farmers and suppress every voice of protest. Modi government is dictatorially subverting the voice of farmers' representatives inside the Parliament and has unleashed a draconian 'Lathi-Danda Regime' on protesting farming community," the party said in a statement.

India: No progress in Jadhav's case

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, SEPT. 17

India on Thursday said that the Pakistan government has not been able to fulfill its obligations to implement International Court of Justice (ICJ) orders in the Kulbhushan Jadhav case and is yet to address the core issues which include allowing India to hire a counsel of choice to defend Jadhav in Pakistani courts. "The government of Pakistan has not been able to fulfill its obligations on implementation of the ICJ judgment in letter and spirit. It has

not yet addressed the core issues, which includes provision of all documents related to the case, providing unconditional and unimpeded consular access to Jadhav and appointment of an Indian lawyer or a Queen's counsel to ensure free and fair trial," spokesperson for ministry of external affairs Anurag Srivastava said. India has proposed to hire Harish Salve, who is also the Queen's counsel lawyer, to defend for Jadhav during the review of his death sentence in Pakistan. Pakistan is yet to respond to India's proposal.

Chart your own course: What one can learn from Modi's life

SYED ZAFAR ISLAM



their lives. The common thing that I see is the stark confusion people have about what they wish to do going forward. There is always this dilemma that today's youth has in their minds. Should they follow what they feel like doing or should they follow popular trends? To those young citizens of our country, I always say that one should study the life of our Prime Minister Narendra Modi and derive an important lesson — must follow the path that

you truly believe in, and do not get distracted by the fashionable trends of the day. At a time and age in his life when most people around him would have been thinking of securing prized government jobs or even looking to become lawyers, doctors or teachers, Narendra Modi decided to be his own man and work for society. While the methods may vary in today's day and age, what Narendra Modi did is today fashionably called a sabbatical. He paused to think of what he wanted to do in his life and the path that he wanted to traverse. One must therefore learn the important lesson to take away from this incident - clean the cobwebs of your mind so that you can think rationally and clearly. Pause, even take a break

if necessary, to figure out exactly what you want to do with your lives. Choose after detailed deliberation the path that you can put your heart into, I repeatedly tell the youth of today. Mr. Modi's life teaches us a lot about this important aspect of life. One sees the sharpness of mind and the intellect of the man and wonders — what if the man had charted a conventional, perhaps more different trajectory in his life? Would we have witnessed him as India's Prime Minister today? It is clear by now that Mr. Modi is among the sharpest minds around, and that he could have been a successful person in any other field. And yet, he chose something that was very different from prevalent trends. He dared

to be different because he pursued something with passion and vigour, and today's youth can draw inspiration from this just as much. The path should be one that gives your heart joy and utmost satisfaction, just as Narendra Modi chose to serve the people of India for it satiates his soul to no end. Life, like in politics, often sees people dragging you down. You will see people mocking your initiatives when it starts, only to realize their own follies later. However, that should not deter you from sticking to the path. Had Mr. Modi hesitated to pursue his goal of making India open defecation free or to roll out the world's largest financial inclusion program of the Jan Dhan Yojana, the successes we see today on the

two fronts would not have manifested themselves. Do not be swayed by the gimmickry of these naysayers in life; instead, view their gimmickry for what it is - a gimmick. Because they do not truly believe in anything that they say necessarily; they are instead seeking perceived momentary benefits without seeing the larger picture. Their myopic vision should not be allowed to overpower your ambition and desires ever. Let your work speak for itself, even as you may face opposition similar to what Mr. Modi has seen coming at him for believing and holding onto his way of doing things. Just like Mr. Modi, you may be called names, may be misrepresented deliberately and attacked as well. However, do not fear

attacks and face them bravely, and see how the malevolent force crumbles by itself just as the opposition has scattered into the wind when faced resolutely by Mr. Modi. Doing your own thing can make you stand out of the crowd in life just as in politics, and people will try to imitate you. These days, some people have rediscovered their roots even in politics, and think they can benefit by being imitators. Some of them suddenly started visiting temples like Mr. Modi, while some others suddenly start chanting shlokas to show that they are perhaps bigger Hindus than Mr. Modi. Never forget though that imitation is the best form of flattery. Take this copycat behaviour in your own stride as a compliment and brush

off the emotional baggage that such imitators bring along with them. Notice how Mr. Modi does not imitate anyone, and is his self - always - be your true self just like that. We can go on and on about Mr. Modi's life as an example for the youth of New India. Being his own man comes naturally to Mr. Modi much like it is a feature of New India and its youth, a key reason why the two gravitate towards each other so naturally. To sum up though, Mr. Modi has only done what Frank Sinatra meant when he sang - I did it my way. (The writer is a BJP's Raja Sabha MP, its national spokesperson and former Managing Director, Deutsche Bank, India)



SHORT TAKES

WORLD LEADERS
GREET PM MODI
ON HIS 70TH B'DAY

Moscow/London, Sept. 17: Russian President Vladimir Putin, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and German Chancellor Angela Merkel were among the world leaders who extended greetings to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on his 70th birthday on Thursday and lauded his personal contribution to the strengthening of ties with their countries.

Prime Minister Modi, born on September 17 in 1950, turned 70 on Thursday. In a letter to Modi, Putin praised him and said his activity as India's head of the government has earned him the well-deserved respect of compatriots and high international prestige.

WORLD'S SMALLEST
ULTRASOUND
SENSOR DEVELOPED

Berlin, Sept. 17: Scientists have developed the world's smallest ultrasound detector, which is 100 times tinier than an average human hair, and can visualise features that are much smaller than previously possible, an advance that may lead to better ways of studying ultra-fine details in tissues and materials

According to the researchers from the German Research Center for Environmental Health, the core detection technology for these very low frequency sound waves has for decades focused on using piezoelectric detectors which convert the pressure from sound waves into electric voltage. They said the imaging resolution achieved using this process depends on the size of the piezoelectric detector employed, with reduction in size leading to higher resolution and an improved ability to discriminate features in the imaged tissues.

U.S. TO DECLARE
UN SANCTIONS ON
IRAN ARE BACK

Washington, Sept. 17: In defiance of overwhelming opposition, the United States is preparing to declare that all international sanctions against Iran have been restored. Few countries believe the move is legal, and such action could provoke a credibility crisis at the United Nations.

Virtually alone in the world, the Trump administration will announce on Saturday that UN sanctions on Iran eased under the 2015 nuclear deal are back in force.

But the other members of the UN Security Council, including US allies, disagree and have vowed to ignore the step. That sets the stage for ugly confrontations as the world body prepares to celebrate its 75th anniversary at a coronavirus-restricted General Assembly session next week.

The question is how the Trump administration will respond to being ignored. It already has slapped extensive sanctions on Iran, but could impose penalties on countries that don't enforce the UN sanctions it claims to have reimposed.

UK DEFENDS BREXIT
DEAL AS BIDEN
SLAMS MOVE

London, Sept. 17: The British government struggled on Thursday to overcome American opposition to its plans to breach the Brexit withdrawal agreement with the European Union, after Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden became the latest US politician to express alarm.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson's move to break parts of the EU divorce deal relating to Northern Ireland has triggered fears it could undermine the 1998 Good Friday peace accord that ended decades of violence between Irish nationalists and British unionists. "We can't allow the Good Friday Agreement that brought peace to Northern Ireland to become a casualty of Brexit," Biden tweeted.

"Any trade deal between the US and UK must be contingent upon respect for the Agreement and preventing the return of a hard border. Period," he wrote. Britain and the EU jointly promised in the Brexit agreement to ensure there are no customs posts or other obstacles on the Northern Ireland-Ireland border.

The open border is key to the stability that underpins the peace settlement. British Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab is in Washington this week.

Second wave in Czech Republic



People wearing face masks ride an escalator in subway in Prague, Czech Republic, on Thursday. The Czech Republic has been facing the second wave of infections. The number of new confirmed Coronavirus infections has been setting new records almost on a daily basis, currently surpassing 2,000 cases in one day for the first time. — AP

Defying China, top US
official visits Taiwan

Taiwan Prez to host dinner for American delegation today

Taipei, Sept. 17: A top US diplomat landed in Taiwan on Thursday, the highest-ranking State Department official to visit in 40 years, in a further sign of Washington's willingness to defy China and its campaign to isolate the self-ruled island.

Keith Krach, undersecretary of state for economic growth, energy and the environment, is visiting to attend a memorial service for late president Lee Teng-hui on Saturday, the US State Department said.

The trip, the second high-ranking US visit in as many months, sparked an immediate rebuke from China, which balks at any recognition of Taiwan and has mounted a decades-long policy of marginalising

the democratic island.

Beijing considers Taiwan part of its territory, to be absorbed into the mainland — by force if necessary.

"China strongly opposes this," foreign ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin told reporters on Thursday, saying the trip "encourages the arrogant attitude of Taiwan independence separatist forces".

Relations between the United States and China are at their lowest point in decades, with the two sides clashing over a range of trade, military and security issues, as well as the Coronavirus pandemic.

Washington's increased outreach to Taiwan under US President Donald Trump has become yet another

flashpoint between the two powers.

"The United States honours President Lee's legacy by continuing our strong bonds with Taiwan and its vibrant democracy through shared political and economic values," spokeswoman Morgan Ortugas said in a statement announcing Krach's trip.

Taiwan's foreign ministry said Krach, accompanied by assistant secretary Robert Destro, would also discuss "how to strengthen bilateral economic cooperation" during his three-day visit.

It described him as the highest-ranking State Department official to visit Taiwan since 1979, when Washington switched diplomatic recognition to Beijing

from Taipei.

Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen will host a dinner for the US delegation on Friday.

"We look forward to more exchanges and discussions between Taiwan and the US to solidify the foundation for further collaborations, including economic cooperation, through undersecretary Krach's visit," her office said in a statement.

Beijing discourages any official exchanges with Taiwan but in recent months Washington has dramatically increased its outreach.

Last month, US cabinet member and health chief Alex Azar visited to highlight Taiwan's widely praised efforts to stop Covid-19.

Chinese hackers breached
Indian government servers

From page 1

"In about 2019, the conspirators compromised Government of India websites, as well as virtual private networks and database servers supporting the Government of India. The conspirators used VPS Provider servers to connect to an open VPN network owned by the Government of India," the indictment said.

In the attacks, the conspirators installed 'Cobalt Strike' malware on Indian government-protected computers, it added.

According to the charges, the computer intrusions affected over 100 companies in the United States and abroad.

The victims ranged from software development, computer hardware, telecommunication, social media and

video game companies. Non-profit organisations, universities, think-tanks, foreign governments, pro-democracy politicians and activists in Hong Kong were also targeted. Security researchers have tracked the intrusions using labels like APT41, Barium, Winnit, Wicked Panda, and Wicked Spider.

These intrusions facilitated the theft of source code, software code signing certificates, customer account data, and valuable business information, the researchers said. These intrusions also facilitated the defendants' other criminal schemes, including ransomware and crypto-jacking schemes, the latter refers to the group's unauthorised use of victim computers to mine cryptocurrency.

The Chinese hackers targeted government

computers and networks of Vietnam and the United Kingdom. The hackers were not successful in compromising the government computer networks in the United Kingdom.

The racketeering conspiracy pertained to the three defendants' conducting the affairs of Chengdu 404 Network Technology (Chengdu 404), a Chinese Government company, through a pattern of racketeering activity involving computer intrusion offenses affecting over 100 companies, organisations, and individuals in the United States and around the world, including in Australia, Brazil, Chile, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Pakistan, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam, the justice department said. — PTI

Fierce storm hits Finland,
80,000 homes powerless

Talinn, Estonia, Sept. 17: A fierce fall storm has battered Finland, leaving over 80,000 households without electricity, disrupting ferry traffic on the northern part of the Baltic Sea and prompting authorities to issue a warning for citizens to stay inside.

The storm, dubbed 'Aila', first hit the Nordic nation's west coast late Wednesday and swept on Thursday through the central and southwestern parts of the country of 5.5 million, causing trees to fall and other material damage complete with

heavy rain and winds of up to 125 kph (77 mph). The storm is expected to move further south later Thursday, reach the Finnish capital, Helsinki, in the afternoon and move further across the Baltic Sea to neighboring Estonia where strong winds of

up to 115 kph (71 mph) have already been recorded in coastal areas. Estonian authorities said more than 3,500 households had power cut off as of midday. The Baltic country's weather service also issued a warning of extremely strong winds for Thursday.

Ferry companies operating between Finland and Sweden in the Gulf of Bothnia, the northernmost arm of the Baltic Sea, and Finland and Estonia had canceled most departures on Thursday. — AP

Rich nations buy half of
promised vaccine stocks

Washington, Sept. 17: Rich nations representing a fraction of the global population have already bought up over half the promised Covid-19 vaccine stocks, a study showed, as US President Donald Trump pledged to begin inoculating Americans within weeks.

Big pharma is racing to produce an effective jab to counter a virus that has now killed more than 9,35,000 people around the world and infected almost 30 million.

European Union chief Ursula von der Leyen on Wednesday warned against "vaccine nationalism" that she said could put lives at risk by depriving the most vulnerable in poorer nations of immunity.

But a study released by Oxfam showed a group of wealthy countries representing just 13 percent of the world population has already secured the lion's share of doses.

"Access to a life-saving vaccine shouldn't depend on where you live or how much money you have," said Robert Silverman of Oxfam America.

"Covid-19 anywhere is Covid-19 everywhere." The five leading vaccine candidates currently in late-stage trials will be able to supply

Alarm across Europe
over virus surge: WHO

Copenhagen, Sept. 17: The World Health Organisation on Thursday warned of "alarming rates of transmission" of Covid-19 across Europe and cautioned against shortening quarantine periods as countries in the region scrambled to find ways to reduce infections without resorting to new lockdowns.

The WHO's regional director for Europe Hans Kluge said a September surge — Europe set a new record last week, with some 54,000 cases recorded in 24 hours — "should serve as a wake-up call for all of us."

"Although these numbers reflect more comprehensive testing, it also shows alarming rates of transmission across the region," he told an online news confer-

ence from Copenhagen.

In Britain, new restrictions will take effect Friday, with Prime Minister Boris Johnson warning that pubs may have to close earlier to help avoid a "second hump" of Coronavirus cases.

Residents of northeast England, including the cities of Newcastle and Sunderland, will no longer be allowed to meet people outside their own homes or immediate social circles.

The government already imposed rules across England on Monday limiting socialising to groups of six or fewer, as daily cases reached levels not seen since early May. Britain has been Europe's worst-hit country, with the government registering nearly 42,000 deaths. — AFP

5.9 billion doses, enough to inoculate about three billion people, the Oxfam report said. Some 51 percent of those jabs have been snapped up by the wealthy world, including the United States, Britain, the European Union, Australia, Hong

Kong and Macau, Japan, Switzerland and Israel.

The remaining 2.6 billion have been bought by or promised to developing countries including India, Bangladesh, China, Brazil, Indonesia and Mexico. — AFP

Gilgit-Baltistan to
be full-fledged
province in Pak

Islamabad, Sept. 17: Pakistan has decided to elevate Gilgit-Baltistan's status to that of a full-fledged province, a Pakistani media report on Thursday quoted a senior minister as saying. India has clearly conveyed to Pakistan that the entire union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, including the areas of Gilgit and Baltistan, are an integral part of the country by virtue of its fully legal and irrevocable accession.

According to a report in the Express Tribune, Minister for Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan Affairs, Ali Amin Gandapur, on Wednesday said that Prime Minister Imran Khan would soon visit the region

and make the formal announcement to elevate Gilgit-Baltistan to the status of a full-fledged province with all constitutional rights.

Gandapur said Gilgit-Baltistan would be given adequate representation on all constitutional bodies, including the National Assembly and the Senate. "After consultation with all stakeholders, the federal government has decided in principle to give constitutional rights to Gilgit-Baltistan," the minister told reporters. India has said the Government of Pakistan or its judiciary has no locus standi on territories illegally and forcibly occupied by it. — PTI

OBAMA'S MEMOIR
'PROMISED LAND'
TO BE RELEASED IN NOV.

Washington, Sept. 17 : Former US president Barack Obama on Thursday announced the publication in November of the first half of his memoirs, "A Promised Land" — two weeks after the election pitting Donald Trump against Joe Biden.

Publisher Penguin Random House said the book will be released in 25 languages simultaneously on November 17. "There's no feeling like finishing a book, and I'm proud of this one," Obama tweeted.

"In A Promised Land, I try to provide an honest accounting of my presidency, the forces we grapple with as a nation, and how we can heal our divisions and make democracy work for everybody," Obama, America's first POC president, served two terms in the White House from January 2009 through January 2017, when he was succeeded by Trump. — PTI

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY ATOMIC MINERALS DIRECTORATE FOR EXPLORATION AND RESEARCH SOUTHERN REGION, BANGALORE - 560 072				
Tender Notice No: 1. AMD/SR/D/KDR-600(1)/TENDER(VEHICLE)/2020-21/T-8				Date: 07.09.2020
NOTICE INVITING TENDER				
Regional Director, AMD, SR, Bangalore - 560 072 on behalf of President of India, invites sealed item rate tenders as per detailed NIT available at aforesaid address and on the website, http://www.amd.gov.in from eligible contractors for the following works:				
Sl. No.	Description of work	Estimated cost (Rs)	E.M.D. (Rs)	Period of completion
(A)	Hiring of 01 (one) vehicle (Scorpio/Sumo/Bolero or equivalent - 6+1 seating capacity for transportation of drilling crew from Camp to drill site and back also other incidental trips, essential administrative work of Officer incharge of drilling unit in the following places:			
1	KDR-600(1) Drilling Unit, AMD, Camp M.C. Palli, Dist- Kadapa, Andhra Pradesh - 516349	Rs. 5,45,623/-	Rs. 10,912/-	01-10-2020 to 30-09-2021 or Twelve months from the date of commencement of work.
Tenderers who have executed successfully similar nature of works of required magnitude as per eligibility criteria given in detailed NIT in AMD's website only will be considered for issue of tender documents.				
Sale of tender documents : 18.09.2020 to 24.09.2020 (14:00 to 16:00 hrs during working days only). Tenders will be sold at camp M.C. Palli, Dist- Kadapa, Andhra Pradesh - 516349.				
Last date of receipt of sealed tenders : 28.09.2020 upto 14:30 Hrs. (Tenders will be Received at AMD, Regional Head Quarters, SR, Bangalore)				
Date of opening of tenders : 28.09.2020 at 15:00 Hrs. (Tenders will be opened at AMD, Regional Head Quarters, SR, Bangalore)				
Cost of tender documents : Rs. 500/- (non refundable)				
Tender documents will be sold in the Office of Officer Incharge KDR 600 (1) D/Unit, AMD, Camp M.C. Palli, Dist- Kadapa, Andhra Pradesh - 516349, during working days from 18.09.2020 to 24.09.2020 from 14:00 to 16:00 hrs.				
Tenders will be received on 28-09-2020 up to 14:30 hrs & opened in AMD, Regional Head Quarters, SR, Bangalore on 28-09-2020 at 15:00 hrs.				
For any clarifications, please contact Officer incharge, Drilling Section, AMD, SR, Bangalore. Ph No: 080-23210715/269.				

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY ATOMIC MINERALS DIRECTORATE FOR EXPLORATION AND RESEARCH SOUTHERN REGION, BANGALORE - 560 072				
Tender Notice No: 1. AMD/SR/D/WAIIIC(2)/TENDER(DSS)/2020-21/T-6 2. AMD/SR/D/KDR-600(5)/TENDER(DSS)/2020-21/T-7				Date: 07.09.2020
NOTICE INVITING TENDER				
Regional Director, AMD, SR, Bangalore - 560 072 on behalf of President of India, invites sealed item rate tenders as per detailed NIT available at aforesaid address and on the website, http://www.amd.gov.in from eligible contractors for the following works:				
Sl. No.	Brief Description	Estimated cost (Rs)	E.M.D. (Rs)	Period of completion
(A)	Hiring of Drilling Support Services for conducting Drilling operations in extended working hours in the following drilling units on contract at the following places:			
1	WAIIIC(2) Drilling Unit, AMD, Camp M.C. Palli, Dist- Kadapa, Andhra Pradesh - 516349	Rs. 11,16,495/-	Rs. 22,330/-	01-10-2020 to 30-09-2021 Or Twelve Months from the date of commencement of work
2	KDR 600(5) Drilling Unit, AMD, Camp M.C. Palli, Dist- Kadapa, Andhra Pradesh - 516349	Rs. 11,16,495/-	Rs. 22,330/-	
Tenderers who have executed successfully similar nature of works of required magnitude as per eligibility criteria given in detailed NIT in AMD's website only will be considered for issue of tender documents.				
Sale of tender documents : 18.09.2020 to 24.09.2020 (14:00 to 16:00 hrs during working days only). Tenders will be sold at camp M.C. Palli, Dist- Kadapa, Andhra Pradesh - 516349.				
Last date of receipt of sealed tenders : 28.09.2020 upto 14:30 Hrs. (Tenders will be Received at AMD, Regional Head Quarters, SR, Bangalore)				
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DECCAN
Chronicle
18 SEPTEMBER 2020

Covid shot: Cautious hope, but policy key

For a month now, India has been consistently recording the highest daily infection rate in the world for the Coronavirus pandemic. Thursday's tally of 97,894 topped all such records and by an unfortunately thin margin, adding to the prevailing atmosphere of fear and anxiety. The death toll is 83,198. The virus has reached the heartlands and ICMR's recently released sero-survey results suggest that for every infection spotted India missed 81 cases.

Independent trackers are reporting a slightly higher death tally than the health ministry. According to Worldometer, India has 5,118,253 confirmed cases and 83,230 people have died due to Covid-19. This is in addition to an independent estimate of 906 people who lost their lives amid a poorly enforced lockdown. The government has denied data on this last count, even as families of these individuals in greatest distress pinned their hopes on relief arriving in the form of a financial compensation.

There will be no financial compensation. The economy has shrunk massively and the government is struggling to pay states GST compensation. West Bengal finance minister Amit Mitra alarmingly opined that the shrinkage is 32-33 per cent rather than 23.9 per cent as stated.

The only hope for citizens lies in the quick discovery and distribution of a Coronavirus vaccine. On this account, Hyderabad-based drug maker Dr Reddy's Laboratories is ready for clinical trials of Russia's Sputnik V vaccine while AstraZeneca has resumed trials for the "Oxford vaccine" in India and the UK. In the US, it is Pfizer that has assumed the lead in the vaccine race, which is now nearing its finish line, even as numbers at home stack up overwhelmingly. Though experts believe a vaccine will at best have 40-50 per cent efficacy, it will lead to the building up of herd immunity, which has now emerged as the best bet for our hapless populations. India needs a comprehensive Coronavirus vaccine strategy that will mobilise its fairly successful pharmaceutical industry to mass produce shots so that their price — initially astronomical — comes down and they can be administered to the last man quickly and efficiently, after first covering the elderly and most vulnerable. With a crashing economy and a collapsing healthcare, this strategy will be tricky not only to formulate but also to implement. Advance planning can perhaps save the day, advises the Opposition, and the government must pay heed. It cannot afford to while away its time and needs must take its bitter lessons from its failure to build capacity during its very costly lockdown.

Science and politics are being conflated in a sickeningly familiar manner in India as also elsewhere. It is hype and wordplay against fact and smart decision-making. A day after Union health minister Harsh Vardhan said a vaccine against the Coronavirus disease would be ready by early next year, Adar Poonawalla of the Serum Institute which is participating in the AstraZeneca vaccine trials rightly warned that there won't be enough doses till 2024. Over in the US, an election-bound Donald Trump contradicted his own expert by declaring that a vaccine will reach his country's population by about the same time. But even if a vaccine for Covid-19 were released now, it would take six to nine months for enough people to receive it to create immunity, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention director, Robert Redfield, has held. Amid the gloom and doom, a tiny glimmer, that governments need to rally.

As Neros fiddle

So in another 21 months India will have a new Parliament? Well, not a new set of members but a modern building that will replace the over 90-year-old monumental circular edifice. Coming up at the cost of a whopping ₹861.9 crore, quite close to the existing 144-column structure, the new Parliament is indeed a grandiose plan of the present-day government. When the country is going through a dark patch, economically and otherwise, if a government is keen on moving parliamentarians to a new House with modern amenities, it only reveals a mix up in priorities.

The ostentatious project, which will be given concrete shape by Tata Projects Ltd, also brings to memory stories of ancient monarchs who revelled in building fanciful structures even when their subjects suffered in penury and hunger. In recent times, too, democratically elected leaders had displayed such grandiosity, costing only the exchequer needlessly. The swanky state capital, envisaged at Amaravati, for Andhra Pradesh is one example of one chief minister's grand plan not getting the grants from the next, thus leaving the capital idea remaining an unrealized dream for six years. It had been worse in neighbouring Tamil Nadu, where a resplendent highrise, designed with care by a chief minister to house the Secretariat and Assembly, was turned into a multi-specialty hospital, where Coronavirus patients are now being treated with care. That, however, was not the first new secretariat project in the state that went bust since successive chief ministers had been unsuccessfully trying to shift out of the historic Fort St George for long.

Hope such a fate doesn't befall the new Parliament that the Tata's would build in 21 months, perhaps before another government takes charge. We also hope that Parliamentary Democracy regains its lost vigour and verve in the new premises, ushering in better times for the country with parliamentarians protecting people's rights.

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Subhani

Kashmiris respond to Centre with 'Gupkar II'

Anand K. Sahay

Far & Near

On August 5, 2019, the Narendra Modi government embarked on a dangerous and destabilising course by tearing up the delicate arrangement Free India entered into with Maharaja Hari Singh on the morrow of Independence. The compact, in the shape of Article 370 of the Constitution, gave Kashmir considerable autonomy (as is now being negotiated with the Nagas). On August 22 this year, just 12 months after constitutional havoc was wreaked, accompanied by unremitting repression, Kashmir announced its riposte.

The riposte was resoundingly peaceful. It was contained in a document that its authors called "Gupkar Declaration II". The manifesto, which holds the promise of a fightback by ordinary people in Kashmir, relying only on constitutional means, if the parties that are signatory to it can hold their nerve in the face of both repression and allure, the twin instruments that go with the orchestration of tyranny.

Not to put too fine a point on it, the basis of the promise of Gupkar II is, as of now, no more than a piece of sophisticated political imagination. Its defining feature can be summed by a phrase in it: "nothing about us without us", which seems to constitute a direct challenge to the militaristic, semi-fascistic, style of governance in Kashmir. On the practical side, Gupkar II underscores that all political activities to be undertaken by the six signatory parties will be "subservient" to the restoration of Kashmir's autonomy as captured in Article 370. At this stage, there is nothing specific about public participation in taking the Gupkar II message forward.

The fundamental rea-

son for this is the disdain for mainstream parties that has developed among ordinary people since the August 5, 2019 crackdown. These parties are now held guilty of having sided all these years with New Delhi which trifled with Kashmir's dignity — indeed, even putting mainline politicians themselves in jail in the same manner as the separatists and the extremists, as if to the BJP rulers they were all the same.

It is the irony of the situation that is sought to be underlined, and it is an irony which, subtly conveyed by interested actors, transmutes into disgust for New Delhi, which gets easily transferred to those who are seen as having represented it in the Valley.

For all that, however, a very negative mood against the BJP sweeps the Valley, and it is this that is likely to sway people's behavior when Assembly elections are held — whenever they are held, and especially if the authorities perversely go on delaying it.

The BJP was once a welcome name in Kashmir due to former Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's solicitude toward it. The goodwill was transferred to Prime Minister Narendra Modi until his party's true colours were revealed, ending in the stripping of J&K's autonomy and Kashmir's downright derogation and false depiction — for communal motives — as a land of Pakistan-inspired terrorists.

In the past three decades, Kashmir has seen extremist and terrorist violence, principally an aspect of Pakistan's covert and overt war against India, but also lately developing an indigenous component. But now, if Gupkar II can take off, New Delhi could face two very separate battlefields in Kashmir — one constituting the extrem-

ist-terrorist-separatist variety and, in addition, the newly created second front comprising mainstream political parties.

The latter campaigning for the restoration of Article 370, and not only J&K's statehood, are likely to get to be quite a handful unless, in the coming weeks and months, they are forcibly prevented from campaigning. So there could be greater repression, helping the extremist cause psychologically and politically, and, indirectly, Pakistan, in the process infusing greater strategic uncertainty into a region already beset with hostile Chinese military activity.

Should this materialise, few will miss locating its origins in the ideology-laden hubris which has been the hallmark of Modi, Shah & Associates, a partnership that has been so blind as not to see that the mainstream parties of Kashmir have been made victims of terrorist violence because they were seen as accomplices of Indian democracy, which has shown up in Kashmir in badly faded colours.

Gupkar II was preceded by the original Gupkar Declaration of August 4, 2019, enunciated just a day before the constitutional stripping of J&K. Leaders of the mainline Valley parties, who intuitively knew that the omens were all bad, had assembled at the Gupkar Road residence of National Conference chairman Farooq Abdullah, although they were regional rivals of the NC. They resolved, just before being imprisoned, that they would remain "united" to preserve Kashmir's constitutional status.

Gupkar II is a reaffirmation and a resolve for further action. But its distin-

guishing feature is that in addition to the regional parties that had met in 2019, two national parties — Congress and CPI(M) — also joined them at Dr Abdullah's residence on August 22 this year. A few days later, the CPI in Kashmir extended unqualified support. This makes Gupkar II not only a document of Kashmir but a document for the nation. This makes it unique in Kashmir's annals.

It is instructive that its arch opponents are the BJP and the Narendra Modi government, the suave professionals who spread the Jamaat-e-Islami narrative in the Kashmir Valley, and Pakistan's military establishment if the signals are read right. This is an impressive array of foes for a group that espouses peaceful and constitutional means to return to the old normal.

Can history be re-injected? It is hard to say. But it is worth remembering that the official move to break Kashmir's spirit constitutionally was stoutly opposed in Parliament in August 2019 by the Congress leadership, the Left parties, the DMK, RJD, and Trinamul Congress. The BJP's important Bihar ally, the JD(U), also opposed it. Another BJP ally, Akali Dal, spoke against the bill but was obliged to vote with the government.

This is an impressive number of parties standing up with Kashmir in Parliament. In addition, the principal sections of the mainline media too disapproved of the government's action. The Forum for Human Rights in Kashmir, comprising a retired Supreme Court judge, several retired high court judges, a retired home secretary, a retired foreign secretary, and retired military officers published a sharply critical report on the ending of Kashmir's autonomy and the government's subsequent actions in Kashmir. And yet, regrettably, there seems a concerted effort in some quarters in the Valley to spread the disinformation that India slept soundly through the process of Kashmir's belittling by the Modi government.

A few days later, the CPI in Kashmir extended unqualified support. This makes Gupkar II not only a document of Kashmir but a document for the nation. This makes it unique in Kashmir's annals.

LETTERS

FREEDOM MISUSED

The SC has rightly put its foot down on Sudarshan TV from airing programmes that incite people's passions leading to clashes on the streets (*A welcome ruling, DC, Sept. 17*). Both audio and visual media are frequently crossing the limits under the guise of freedom of speech and expression.

Parthasarathy Mandadi
Tirupati

WELCOME MOVE

The Supreme Court and the Centre's initiative of trials against sitting and former lawmakers was long overdue (*SC to frame rules for timely prosecution of lawmakers, DC, Sept. 17*). It's a fact that our tardy justice system emboldens leaders to indulge in every possible crime with impunity. Only criminals of the underprivileged class languish in prisons for years as undertrials without bail. The politically privileged class fearlessly rules the roost. This should end.

Udatha Rama Chandra Rao
Yeleswaram, East Godavari

SIT PROBE

Of late, out of helplessness, it has become a "practice" for AP government to approach the apex court for one thing or the other as the AP HC is almost 'negating' every case of the state that came up for hearing before it. But the latest SIT probe into the alleged Amaravati land scam could be termed as the ultimate. More so because the said stay order seemingly ignored prima facie evidence in the case (FIR).

Govardhana Mynedu
Vijayawada

50 YEARS AGO IN

DECCAN
Chronicle

Fierce fighting erupts in Jordan

BEIRUT, Sept. 17.

Fierce fighting erupted in Jordan today between King Hussein's army and Palestine Commandos, with both sides claiming immediate successes in conflicting versions of the struggle.

But Beirut observers believed the numerically stronger and better armed Royalist army had had the better of things in the initial stages of what seemed to be a final showdown for control of the Hashimite Kingdom.

As army tanks swept into Amman, Syria came out on the guerrilla's side, appealed to Royalist troops to mutiny against their officers, and warned that it would not stand idly by while the Fedayeen were crushed.

M. Mohibul
Haque



The curious case of Urdu in NEP 2020

The Union Cabinet approved the new National Education Policy 2020 (hereafter NEP 2020) on 29 July, which proposes drastic changes in the Indian education system. While there are several changes, reforms and policies that are being widely appreciated there are many ambiguities, gaps and contradictions that are creating apprehensions in the minds of many in general and linguistic and religious minorities in particular.

NEP 2020 has given birth to apprehensions in the minds of Urdu lovers due to its unique status. It should be borne in mind that Urdu is a pan-Indian language but it lacks the patronage of any state as official language. Strangely, Urdu has not been mentioned anywhere in the 66 pages NEP 2020 released by the Union government. This conspicuous absence of Urdu drew widespread criticism across the country.

The government tried to alley the apprehensions of Urdu lovers and Secretary of Higher Education is reported to have said: "Para 4.12, 22.6

and 22.18 of NEP 2020 talk of all languages mentioned in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution, which includes Urdu. Incidentally, what is being deliberately and mischievously suppressed is that the paras do not talk of Hindi also, rather all languages of the Eighth Schedule are mentioned". Despite clarifications by the government the controversy is not dying. It calls for analysis of the NEP 2020 from the perspective of the status of Urdu.

NEP 2020 declares that "wherever possible, the medium of instructions until at least Grade 5, but preferably till Grade 8 and beyond, will be home language/mother tongue/local language/regional language". (para 4.11, p.13) This emphasis on the mother tongue arouses hopes that many languages of India facing the challenge of survival due to deliberate design of the colonial masters and later on the apathy of the successive governments may be saved from extinction.

Under the sub-heading, Multilingualism and the Power of Language, the government recognises the fact

that "young children learn and grasp nontrivial concepts more quickly in their home language/mother tongue". While emphasis on primary education in mother tongue is praiseworthy the determination of home-/local language will be problematic because the NEP 2020 does not mention what will be the unit of determination of local or home language. For example, what is the home language of the people living in cities like Lucknow, Delhi, Moradabad, Meerut or states like UP, Bihar, Telangana, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and so on is indeed very difficult to determine. Under these circumstances, the role of the central and state governments will become crucial in implementation of the three-language formula and Urdu in the absence of patronage and lacking job opportunities will certainly be marginalised.

Another important dimension of the language policy under NEP 2020 is the promise that "there will be a greater flexibility in the three-language formula, and no language will be imposed on any state. The three

languages learned by children will be the choices of states, regions, and of course the students themselves, so long as at least two of the three languages are native to India." (para 4.13, p.14) However, determination of a 'region' for the purpose of the implementation of the three-language formula needs clarification. Besides, three entities — states, regions and students — are created for exercising the freedom of choice in selection of three languages to be taught. The question is what will happen if there is a clash in choice between states and students. For instance, a group of Urdu speaking students want to study Urdu while state emphasizes on Hindi, Sanskrit, Bangla, Odia, etc.

The apprehensions of Urdu-lovers are not unfounded because NEP 2020 besides especially promoting Sanskrit makes reference to other classical languages like Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Odia, Pali, Persian and Prakrit but Urdu is not mentioned as a classical language as it seems that only ancient and not the medieval language/languages

are recognised as classical under NEP 2020.

While the allegation of deliberate exclusion of Urdu is doing the rounds the government decided to introduce the Jammu and Kashmir Official Languages Bill 2020 in Parliament under which Urdu is set to lose its status of the sole official language of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir.

The anxiety can also be understood from the fact that according to Census of India 2011 Urdu is showing a steady decline as mother tongue since 1981(5.25), 1991(5.18), 2001 (5.01), and 2011(4.19). Unlike other languages of the Schedule 8 of Indian Constitution whose speakers enjoy strong regional or state backing, people who speak Urdu are spread all over the country and therefore, it needs special consideration by the government for its survival and promotion.

The writer is a professor of political science at Aligarh Muslim University

SHORT TAKES

Hari slips, Carlsen roars into lead

Chennai: Indian Grandmaster P. Harikrishna slipped to fifth spot from a share of lead after a win-less day at the Saint Louis Rapid and Blitz online chess tournament, where he lost to Ian Nepomniachtchi and world No. 1 Magnus Carlsen. Harikrishna, who shared the lead with Lev Aronian after three rounds, lost the fourth round of the Rapid event to Nepomniachtchi, then drew with Armenian Aronian before losing the sixth to Carlsen. Meanwhile, Carlsen bounced back after a below par opening day to record three wins and jumped to sole lead with nine points. The Norwegian outplayed the India No.2 in 31 moves to wrap up a successful day on which he also defeated Aronian and Leinier Dominguez (USA). Hari held Aronian to a draw in 58 moves after a 45-move defeat at the hands of the Russian. — PTI

NSFs gets SC nod for recognition

New Delhi: The Sports Ministry on Thursday welcomed the Supreme Court's go-ahead to it on grant of recognition to National Sports Federations (NSFs) and said it would intimate the court about the process in a week's time. The Supreme Court said the ministry and the Indian Olympic Association are not required to seek the nod of the Delhi High Court before granting recognition to sports federations in the country. The apex court was hearing the sports ministry's appeal against the High Court order which prohibited it from taking decision on granting recognition to NSFs without its prior approval. A total of 57 NSFs were rendered de-recognised because of the HC order. "As per the Honourable Supreme Court's order today, the sports ministry can now give recognitions to NSFs which will help in the preparations for our Olympic-bound athletes," a source said. — PTI

Fed Cup named after Billie Jean

London: The Fed Cup is changing its name to honour tennis great Billie Jean King, the woman whose lifelong battle for equality and social justice laid the foundation for generations that followed. The Billie Jean King Cup will become the first major global team competition to be named after a woman, the International Tennis Federation said Thursday. "I'm still in shock, the 76-year-old King said of the tribute. It's really a privilege, and it's also a responsibility. It's wild, it's great, it's wonderful." The rebranding follows earlier changes to bring prize money in line with the men's Davis Cup and coincides with the 50th anniversary of King's pioneering effort to launch a women's pro tennis circuit. "We feel it's long overdue," ITF president David Haggerty said. — AP

Djoker, Nadal off to winning starts

Rome: Defending champion Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic made winning returns at the Italian Open on Wednesday with the top two men's seeds easing into the third round of the clay-court tournament in Rome. Nine-time winner Nadal swept aside fellow Spaniard Pablo Carreno Busta 6-1, 6-1 in his first match in over six months, played behind closed doors at the Foro Italico. The world number two has not played since winning in Acapulco at the end of February, opting to skip the US hard court tour amid coronavirus concerns. Earlier, Djokovic eased past Italian wild card entry Salvatore Caruso 6-3, 6-2 after his unbeaten record this season was ended with a US Open last 16 default for accidentally striking a line judge with a ball hit in frustration. — AP

Live on TV

TENNIS

Rome ATP Masters: Matches from 2.30 pm on Sony Six, HD

FOOTBALL

Spanish League: Getafe vs Osasuna from 12.30 am (Saturday) on LaLiga page on Facebook

WWE SMACKDOWN

Bouts from 5.30 am (Saturday) on Sony Ten 1, HD

BASKETBALL

NBA Western Conference Finals (Game 1 of best-of-7): Los Angeles Lakers vs Denver Nuggets from 6.30 am (Saturday) on Sony Six, HD

WRAP AND ROLL

MI look for more finishers to reduce Hardik's load

Abu Dhabi, Sept. 17: Monitoring comeback man Hardik Pandya's workload is paramount for Mumbai Indians coach Mahela Jayawardene as he intends to groom a "few more finishers" for the upcoming edition of Indian Premier League starting here on Saturday.

Defending champions Mumbai Indians will take on last year's runners-up Chennai Super Kings in the opening encounter on Saturday, which will be Hardik's first game in a year having undergone back surgery for stress fracture last year.

"Hardik is coming back from an injury. So we will have to be mindful of that but he is looking very good in the nets. Both the players (Pandya brothers) have been fantastic for MI over the last three or four years. It brings a lot of energy to the group," Jayawardene said during MI's virtual media conference on Thursday.

The Sri Lankan legend was asked whether Hardik will again be assigned the finisher's job.

"We have used him (Hardik) in different roles in the past and we will look into that. We will have quite a number of other players who can fix into that role as well, so whenever the opportunity is there we ask anyone to finish the game off," said the former Sri Lanka captain.

"It doesn't just fall on Hardik but it is one of his responsibilities, so we want to try and challenge players in different ways in this camp, so we will continue to do that," he said.

Australian dasher Chris Lynn is an opening option but Jayawardene made it clear that Rohit Sharma-Quinton de Kock opening pair wouldn't be tinkered with.

"Having options is always great. Chris Lynn is a great addition to the squad but the combination of Rohit and Quinton has been there for us, last season they complement each other well," he said.

The MI coach is also aware that Jasprit Bumrah's workload management, just like Hardik's, need to be precise, considering that India will be playing a gruelling four-match Test series against Australia Down Under later in the year. — PTI



David Warner

Maxwell, Carey hit tons as Oz clinch series

Manchester, Sept. 17: Glenn Maxwell and Alex Carey both hit brilliant hundreds as Australia sealed a dramatic series win over world champions England in the third one-day international at Old Trafford on Wednesday. Australia, chasing a target of 303, were all but out of the game at 73-5 when Maxwell came to the crease.

But an Australia record sixth-wicket stand of 212 between Carey (106) and Maxwell (108) helped give the tourists a 2-1 success as England suffered their first home ODI series defeat in five years.

Earlier, Jonny Bairstow had revived England from the depths of 0-2 with a superb hundred that saw them to 302-7 after the opener watched from the

other end as left-arm quick Mitchell Starc removed Jason Roy and Test captain Joe Root with the first two balls of the game.

Sam Billings (57) and Chris Woakes (53 not out) also hit valuable fifties.

Maxwell's hundred was just his second century in 113 matches at this level, with Carey's innings the wicketkeeper's maiden century in his 39th ODI.

But when Maxwell holed out off leg-spinner Adil Rashid, Australia still needed 18 off 15 balls. That became 10 off six when Carey, whose century came off 106 balls, was superbly caught by a diving Mark Wood at third man off Jofra Archer.

New batsman Starc, however, hit his first ball, from Rashid, for six and



Mumbai Indians' Hardik Pandya at a net session in Abu Dhabi.

Malinga will be missed, rues Rohit

Abu Dhabi, Sept. 17: Mumbai Indians captain Rohit Sharma on Thursday conceded that "incomparable" Sri Lankan pace legend Lasith Malinga, who has opted out of this year's IPL, will be severely missed by his defending champion team given his "unbelievable" past performances.

The 37-year-old Malinga, who is IPL's highest wicket-taker with 170 scalps to his credit, has pulled out

citing personal reasons in a major blow to the four-time champions. MI will take on the Chennai Super Kings in this season's lung-opener on September 19 here.

"I don't think it is easy to come and fill his boots. He has been a match-winner for Mumbai. I have said it many times, whenever we sort of find ourselves in trouble, Malinga was the one to bail us out from that," Rohit said in an online press conference.

"His experience will be missed, what he did with MI is unbelievable and it is unfortunate that he is not a part of the team this year."

"We have got likes (James) Pattinson, Dhawal Kulkarni, Mohsin (Khan) and these are the names that we are looking to replace Malinga with. But obviously what Malinga did for Mumbai, it is not just comparable," he added. Talking about his own

role, Rohit said he will continue to open.

"I opened the entire tournament last year and I will continue to do that. Again I keep all the options open, whatever the team wants, happy to do that."

"Even when I play for India, message from my side to the management has always been the same 'do not close any doors' keep all the options open and I will do the same here as well." — PTI

Archer, Jos Buttler will arrive in the UAE late on Thursday night (UAE time) from the UK and on arrival will undergo RT-PCR test for Covid-19.

"They have undergone one rapid test before boarding (the flight) and will undergo another on arrival. Otherwise, the robust testing protocols will be followed as usual. The rationale behind the move is that all the players are entering from one bio-bubble to another," the veteran BCCI official said. — PTI



Australia's Glenn Maxwell (left) celebrates with Alex Carey after scoring a century during their third ODI against England in Manchester on Wednesday. — AP

sealed victory with two balls to spare with a four. "It probably wasn't the

ideal situation when I came in but being the last batter, I suppose I had a

FRENCH | LEAGUE

Draxler gifts PSG season's first win

Paris, Sept. 17: Julian Draxler scored in added time on Wednesday night to give depleted Paris Saint-Germain their first league win of the season, 1-0 at home against Metz.

PSG, shorn of many stars before kick off, were playing with nine men when Draxler pounced on a rebound to nod home PSG's first goal of the league season.

"I'm very proud, it's incredible, honestly. I still have to think about it because I still can't believe it," PSG coach Thomas Tuchel said after the game.

PSG, who started the game seriously depleted, were reduced to 10 men after 65 minutes when central defender Abdou Diallo collected a second yellow card and his club's fourth of the season.

In the dying seconds, defender Juan Bernat, a 63rd minute replacement, limped off with a knee injury, leaving PSG, who had used all their replacements with nine men.

"All the fans can be proud, we still deserved to win, at 9 against 11," said Tuchel.

While the game was in progress, the French league announced bans of two games for Neymar and

● **PSG, shorn of many stars before kick off, were playing with nine men when Draxler pounced on a rebound to nod home PSG's first goal of the league season.**

Leandro Paredes and six games for Layvin Kurzawa after their red cards during a home loss to Marseille on Sunday that ended in a brawl.

Another star attacker, Kylian Mbappe, remains in coronavirus quarantine while Thilo Kehrer and Marco Verratti are injured.

But striker Mauro Icardi, centreback Marquinhos and goalie Keylor Navas returned after spells in quarantine.

"We made a lot of effort, we had a lot of changes, we used a lot of players who have not trained for a while...With players who haven't played for a long time," said Tuchel. "But the effort is still there."

PSG had opened the season with two defeats for the first time since 1984/85, losing by one goal to Lens and then Marseille. — AFP

Messi brace takes Barca past Girona

Barcelona, Sept. 17: Lionel Messi scored twice on Wednesday as Barcelona beat second-division Girona 3-1 in a preseason friendly.

Messi helped set up Philippe Coutinho, back from his loan at Bayern Munich, for the first goal after 21 minutes.

The Argentine scored his first after 45 minutes, spinning on the edge of the penalty area and drilling a shot in off the base of the far post. He scored his second, with a deflected shot, after 50 minutes.

He went off after an hour. Messi only returned to training at the start of last week after saying he wanted to leave the club.

Messi started Barcelona's first friendly on Saturday, playing 45 minutes without scoring in a 3-1 victory over third-tier Gimnastica Tarragona.

Earlier on Wednesday, La

Liga president Javier Tebas said he was pleased Messi had stayed at Barcelona.

"Messi is important for our competition," said Tebas, at an event to promote the Liga sticker collection. "He is a player who was born in our competition... And hopefully he will finish his career in our league."

Barcelona used 20 players in Wednesday's game at the club's training centre but neither Uruguayan forward Luis Suarez nor Chilean midfielder Arturo Vidal appeared.

Manager Ronald Koeman said after the game he had talked to Suarez and acknowledged Barcelona might not be able to sell him.

"If finally he does not find a team and ends up staying, he will be one more player for the squad," said Koeman. — AFP

BELGIUM TOP FIRST FIFA CHART SINCE SHUTDOWN

Zurich, Sept. 17: The first FIFA men's world rankings for five months were still led by Belgium on Thursday after the shutdown of European teams during the coronavirus pandemic ended in September.

Belgium lead an unchanged top four nations from 2018 World Cup winners France, Brazil — who have yet to play in 2020 — and England.

Portugal, the reigning European and Uefa Nations League champions, rose two places to No. 5.

Rankings after the November international break will decide seedings when FIFA draws the European qualifying groups for the 2022 World Cup in early December. The 10 highest-ranked European teams will be top-seeded in groups where only the winners will advance directly to the finals tournament in Qatar. Three more teams will qualify through playoffs scheduled in March 2022. — AP

Leeds, Saints crash out of League Cup

London, Sept. 17: Leeds and Southampton were the Premier League casualties in the second round of the League Cup on Wednesday as League One Hull won a Yorkshire derby 9-8 on penalties at Elland Road, while Saints lost 2-0 at home to Brentford.

On their first appearance in the top-flight for 16 years, Leeds were unlucky not to hold Liverpool to a thrilling draw at Anfield on Saturday, but Marcelo Bielsa's decision to make 11 changes backfired as his side were far less clinical against a team two divi-

sions below them. Mallik Wilks's early deflected effort gave the Tigers something to hold on to and, despite handing club Spanish international forward Rodrigo his first start, Leeds failed to muster a response until deep into stoppage time when Ezgjan Alioski fired home.

A marathon shootout followed with both sides missing just one of their first eight penalties before Jamie Shackleton's spot-kick was saved and Alfie Jones sent Hull into round three. — AFP

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