

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

COIMBATORE | TUESDAY 27 | OCTOBER 2020

WEATHER



Max: 34°C
Min: 22°C
Rainfall: 1 mm

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Aippasi 11
Tithi: Ekadashi/ Dwadashi
Star: Sathayam/ Puratathi
Rahukalam:
3 pm to 4.30 pm
Yamagandam:
9 am to 10.30 am
PRAYERS
Fajar: 4.49 am
Zohar: 11.58 am
Asar: 3.14 pm
Maghrib: 5.46 pm
Isha: 6.58 pm

CORONA COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+33,920)	(+351)
79,43,765	1,19,403

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+2,708)
TN: 7,11,713 10,956

WORLD CONFIRMED CASES

4,35,73,944

DEATHS
11,61,932

COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES
215

worldometers.info

Kerala wants to procure onion directly from TN

Chennai: Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has urged his Tamil Nadu counterpart to facilitate agencies like SUPPLYCO, HORTICROP and CONSUMERFED of his State to procure vegetables like tomato, onion and potato directly from farmers or Farmers Producers Organisation (FPO) in Tamil Nadu with a view to reducing the volatility in the price movements and achieving stability in price. ■ **P3**

NASA confirms water has been spotted on the sunlit surface of the moon

Cape Canaveral: NASA announced it has discovered water on the sunlit surface of the moon.The water was spotted near the Clavius crater, one of the largest crater formations on the celestial satellite and one that can be seen with the naked eye, Paul Hayne, a planetary scientist at the University of Colorado, said on a conference call with the press. Hayne is the lead author of one of the studies published on the topic.

COUNTER POINT



Don't buy... our candidates are distributing masks and sanitisers free!

Scientists give arthritis medicine a booster dose

New Delhi, Oct. 26: Indian scientists have given a new lease of life to the arthritis medicine sulapyridine by employing an innovative drug delivery method to remove its side effects.

Sulapyridine is the third oldest drug still in use in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis, an autoimmune inflammatory joint disease, according to the researchers from Lovely Professional University (LPU) in Punjab.

However, long term use of the drug results in side

● **The prodrug exhibited better retention in liposomes, as compared to the drug, thus reducing the symptoms of inflammation**

effects such as nausea or vomiting, rashes, dizziness, anxiety and abdominal pain, they said.

“As the molecule has side effect due to its higher dose, we developed a formulation which can be delivered directly to the site of action and thus is safe,” said Bhupinder Kapoor, Associate Professor, School of Pharmaceutical Sciences, LPU.

In their study published in the peer-reviewed journal ‘Materials Science and Engineering C’, the researchers reported developing a prodrug of sulapyridine and then incorporated it into an innovative delivery system.

The prodrug exhibited better retention in liposomes, as compared to the drug, thus reducing the symptoms of inflammation.

Liposomes are spherical vesicles having at least one lipid bilayer which are used as a vehicle for administration of pharmaceutical drugs. The prodrug treatment is administered by injecting the affected area of the patient, and not through oral consumption, according to the researchers.

This means that the medication only remains in the affected area, without spreading to the rest of the body, they said.

The research team, including Kapoor, Monica Gulati and Sachin K. Singh from

LPU, successfully conducted the pre-clinical trials as well as the testing of the drug delivery mechanism.

“We conducted a study to understand the efficacy of sulapyridine-derived liposomes. In arthritic rats, prodrug liposomes were found to reverse the symptoms of inflammation, including the levels of biochemical markers,” Kapoor explained.

“Therefore, liposomes of bio-responsive prodrugs offer a revolutionary approach in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis,” he said.

—PTI



STATE | 3

Tamil Nadu is India's healthcare capital: CM



Trump's assault on Biden intensifies in Pennsylvania

WORLD | 5

Kings XI Punjab beat KKR by 8 wickets



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■ **No reservation in seats TN surrendered to Centre this academic year**

No 50% OBC quota in med seats: SC

PARMOD KUMAR | DC
With agency inputs
NEW DELHI, OCT. 26

The Supreme Court on Monday declined Tamil Nadu government's plea seeking to implement 50 per cent reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in admission to medical courses in the all India seats surrendered by the state.

A bench comprising Justice L. Nageswara Rao, Justice Hemant Gupta and Justice Ajay Rastogi dismissed the petition by Tamil Nadu government and the ruling All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam party.

Earlier, a number of political parties in Tamil Nadu including main opposition party DMK had moved the top court seeking 50 per cent reservation for OBCs in the all India seats surrendered by the Centre. However, the top court bench headed by Justice Nageswara Rao sent the matter to Madras High Court for determination.



● **As per the Medical Council of India (MCI) rules, each state allocates 15 per cent seats of undergraduate courses and 50 of postgraduate courses to the central quota**

The top court had on July 13 asked Madras High Court to “expeditiously” decide on petitions that were pending before it seeking 50 per cent OBC reservation in all India quota seats for admission to medical and dental courses.

In July this year, the High Court held that there

● **Politicos seek all-party meet on quota row**
● **Stalin writes to PM**

PAGE 3

was no impediment to providing 50 per cent OBC reservation in medical courses and had asked the Central government to take a decision in the matter within three months, subject to any further directions or orders of the apex court.

As per the Medical Council of India (MCI) rules, each state allocates 15 per cent seats of undergraduate courses and 50 per cent of postgraduate courses to the Central quota. The Tamil Nadu government and All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) challenged the Madras High Court order of July 27 on the limited point by which it had cleared the

decks for OBC reservation under All India Quota (AIQ) medical seats in non-central institutions and gave the Centre three months' time to take a decision on the percentage.

The state government and the ruling AIADMK party in their limited point had sought relief saying that the High Court had not specified that the OBC quota should be implemented in the current academic year itself.

The Centre contended that it would not be practically feasible to implement the 50 per cent quota in the current academic year.

The High Court had disagreed with the contention of the Medical Council of India that permitting reservation in AIQ seats would compromise merit and said that the argument gets diluted as NEET examinations are now clearly designed to allow only such candidates to be admitted, who secure a minimum merit. “Thus, application of any reserva-

tion rule, be at the instance of the state specific law or as per any reservation policy framed by the central government for AIQ seats will not affect merit,” the High Court had said.

It had, however, restrained itself from passing a mandamus against the Centre to provide the reservation as it relates to a policy decision.

The state government had moved the Supreme Court on July 2 seeking a direction to the high court to expeditiously decide its plea. The state government and various political parties have challenged the Centre's decision not to grant 50 per cent reservation to OBCs as per Tamil Nadu law.

Some of the petitioners, in their interim prayers before the High Court, had sought to stall the ongoing admissions for PG medical courses. The pleas had alleged that the Centre also did not follow its own policy of 27 per cent reserved seats for OBCs under the 2006 Act.

Sharp decline in India's Covid cases

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, OCT. 26

India on Monday recorded the sharpest decline in its fresh coronavirus cases and daily death figures with 45,148 new detections and 480 fatalities in one day.

India's total case tally has now reached 79.10 lakh while the total number of deaths is 1.19 lakh.

This is the first time in several weeks that the fatality figures have dipped below 500.

India's Covid-19 fatality rate has dropped to 1.50 per cent, the lowest since March 22, the Union Health Ministry said on Monday crediting the focused efforts of the Centre, states and Union Territories.

■ **Full report on P4**

● **TN agriculture minister in critical condition**
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Vaccine release likely on Nov. 2

London, Oct. 26: A major London hospital trust has been told to be ready to receive the first batches of the Covid-19 vaccine being trialled by Oxford University and AstraZeneca by early next month, according to a UK media report on Monday. The Sun newspaper claims that the country's state-funded National Health Service (NHS) is preparing for an initial roll-out of the vaccine from the week “commencing November 2”. Meanwhile, AstraZeneca said the vaccine produces an immune response in both young and old adults, raising hopes of a path out of the gloom and economic destruction wrought by the novel virus. The vaccine, developed by the University of Oxford, also triggers lower adverse responses among the elderly, the company said.—PTI

SATHANKULAM CUSTODIAL DEATHS

Blood stains match with DNA of duo

ARULOLI M | DC
MADURAI, OCT. 26

Blood stains found in Sathankulam police station matched with the DNA of the father-son duo killed there in custodial torture, according to the chargesheet filed by the Central bureau of Investigation (CBI) in the Madurai bench of Madras High Court.

A court source said the chargesheet was filed against nine policemen — inspector Sridhar, sub-inspectors Balakrishnan, Raguganesh and Murugan and constables Samadurai, Muthuraj, Chelladurai, Thomas Francis and Vellumuthu on September 25.

One of the accused,

Pauldurai, died due to corona during the course of investigations.

The DNA test was conducted at the Central Forensic Science Laboratory (CFSL), said the chargesheet which also confirmed that Jayaraj and his son were attacked by the police at the Sathankulam police station.

It said the victims were not properly examined by Dr Vinila, a doctor in the government service, who is also an accused in the case.

She did not issue certificates on the blood pressure and sugar levels of the duo and instead issued a fitness certificate for the two to be jailed at the Kovilpatti sub-jail.

NAYEAR AZAD | DC
PATNA, OCT. 26

Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) chief Chirag Paswan on Monday created a flutter in Bihar politics by alleging a major scam in state government's ‘Saat Nischay’ (seven resolves) scheme and promised to send all those who are found guilty to jail including Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar if his party is elected to power.

He also targeted Mr Kumar's pet project liquor prohibition by calling it a breeding ground for mafias and corruption in the state.

“How is it possible that he (Nitish Kumar) is not aware of the corruption and scam taking place in the state? There will be a probe and those who are found responsible will go to jail, no matter who the person is. I am not saying this but people in the state feel that Nitish Kumar is also involved and all these things will come out in the probe,” Mr Paswan said.

Continuing his attack on Mr Kumar, he said, “Bihar has also become a breeding ground for mafias and smugglers after liquor prohibition was imposed. Why

SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI | DC
NEW DELHI, OCT. 26

India and the United States on Monday evening discussed “shared concerns and interests including stability and security in Asia” ahead of the 2+2 Dialogue between the two countries on Tuesday in New Delhi at the foreign and defence ministerial level, that is expected to focus on Chinese military aggressive behaviour in the region, even as the two nations will ink the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) defence pact for “greater geospatial information-sharing” on Tuesday and are also expected to also boost maritime Intelligence-



Defence minister Rajnath Singh during a meeting with US Secretary of Defence, Dr Mark Esper to discuss India-US defence relations and mutual cooperation, in New Delhi on Monday.

— PTI

sharing in the Indo-Pacific region.

After a meeting between the US Secretary of Defense Mark T. Esper and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, the Ministry of Defence

(MoD) announced, “The two ministers expressed satisfaction that agreement of BECA will be signed during the visit of US secretary of state Michael R. Pompeo and US secretary of defense

Mark T. Esper reached New Delhi during the day. Mr Esper held a bilateral meeting with defence minister Rajnath Singh, while external affairs minister S. Jaishankar met with Mr Pompeo where he “shared concerns on stability and security” in Asia as well as the menace of the “completely unacceptable” cross-border terrorism from Pakistan.

On his bilateral meeting with Mr Esper, Mr Singh tweeted, “India is delighted to host the US secretary of defence, Dr Mark Esper. Our talks today were fruitful, aimed at further deepening defence cooperation in a wide range of areas. Today's discussions will add new vigour to India-US defence relations & mutual cooperation.”

Nitish is corrupt, will send him to jail: Chirag

● **Chirag Paswan also targeted Mr Kumar's pet project liquor prohibition by calling it a breeding ground for mafias and corruption in the state**

has there been no investigations into these irregularities? Powerful people have easy access to liquor and even people can get it home delivered.”

He also later tweeted, “Nitish free Bihar and Nitish Mukti Bihar”.

These statements from Mr Paswan have come just two days ahead of the first phase of polling in Bihar.

Mr Paswan who broke away from the NDA citing ideological differences with the chief minister has announced 42 candidates against JD(U) and NDA partner Hindustani Awam Morcha in the first phase of polls.

His party, the LJP, is contesting 143 out of 243 seats in Bihar. On many seats, he has fielded candidates against the JD(U).

Meanwhile, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav also lashed

out at the Centre for rising vegetable prices in the country. While flashing garland of onions outside his residence on Monday, he said, “The common man is suffering due to price rise, corruption and unemployment. There is no work available for youths. We will give this garland of onions to them (BJP),” Mr Yadav said.

Amid high pitched statements by political leaders the campaigning for the first phase of polling came to an end on Monday. 71 constituencies spread across 16 districts in Bihar will vote on October 28.

Wild gaur gores man to death in Ooty

B RAVICHANDRAN | DC
COONOR, OCT 26

A wild gaur which strayed into human habitation in Attadi village in the suburbs of Coonoor town, gored a man to death on Monday morning, adding one more casualty in the history of man-animal conflict. Soon after the incident, panicky villagers urged the forest department here to take serious steps in warding off the recurring menace in the region. ■ **P3**



PANDYA'S GESTURE

Mumbai Indians all-rounder Hardik Pandya takes a knee for 'Black Lives Matter' during an IPL match against Rajasthan Royals on Sunday. He is the first player in the ongoing IPL season to make this gesture.

— Twitter

SHORT TAKES

SSFB provides tabs to needy students

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, OCT. 26

The Suryoday Small Finance Bank (SSFB) on Monday distributed tabs to the needy students of Sarva Seva Martrication schools in Kannarapettai and Killai villages of Cuddalore district. The gadgets were distributed through a programme “Kanavu”, a project run by the NGO ASSEFA to help students from marginalised sections in the coastal villages.

With many students unable to attend online classes due to lack of gadgets like smartphones or tabs, the SSFB decided to provide tabs to the needy children. The bank partnered with ASSEFA, which runs five budget schools in coastal Cuddalore.

Baskar Babu, MD & CEO of SSFB, said “our endeavour is to bring a smile on the face of people through such initiatives. We have partnered with ASSEFA, to ensure that the children can avail these tabs for online learning ensuring continuity in their education. The CSR arm of SSFB focuses and works in areas of education, livelihoods, health and environment.

No death, 144 new cases in Pondy

Puducherry, Oct 26: In a welcome development, Puducherry reported no fresh fatality due to Covid-19 on Monday for the second time this month. No death was reported on October 18 and again no fatality has occurred on Monday. The union territory added 144 new coronavirus cases in the last 24 hours, director of health and family welfare S. Mohan Kumar said in a release. The 144 fresh cases were identified at the end of the examination of 1,059 samples pushing the overall tally to 34,336 after transfer of two cases to Tamil Nadu. PTI

TN govt offices to revert to 5-day week

Chennai, Oct 26: All government offices in Tamil Nadu would revert to a five-day work week with effect from January 1, 2021, the state government has said. A government order dated May 15, 2020, had ordered all its offices to function with 50 per cent strength for six days a week in view of the coronavirus pandemic. They were allowed to function with full strength from September 1. “The present six-day work week including Saturday be modified and reverted to five-day work week with 100 per cent strength... with effect from Jan. 1, 2021,” the Chief Secretary said.

Convocation: 2,346 pass out of IIT-M

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, OCT. 26

The Indian Institute of Technology-Madras (IIT-M) awarded 2,346 degrees during the 57th convocation held on Sunday. The event was conducted using a ‘mixed reality’ mode for the first time in the history of the institute.

Addressing the graduates from Santa Barbara, the U.S., Prof. David J Gross, Nobel laureate and Chancellor’s chair of the-oretical physics, University of California, said the world was undergoing a rapid change. “Life is not made up of years but of moments. As we look back on our life, what we remember is a collection of moments. None of us remember our beginning and none of us will remember our end. This moment is both a

beginning and an end for you. For many of you, it is the end of college tuition and the beginning of repayment of student loans. For many of you, it is the end of the process that enables you to absorb vast knowledge and the beginning of the process applying the acquired knowledge or pass it to the next generation. It is the end of formal education and the beginning of the so-called ‘real life. For many of you, it is the end of a period in life where you received from your parents and society and the beginning of the period where you give back to society. And there is much that you can give back, for you are a privileged lot”, said Prof. Gross.

Prof. Bhaskar Ramamurthi, Director, IIT-M, said the institute continued improved fund-

ing for its research and consultancy activities by 17 and 26 percent respectively during the past 5 years. In 2019-20, the institute received sanction for 294 ministry-sponsored projects for Rs. 333.1 crore, and 649 consultancy and industry-sponsored research projects worth Rs. 249.3 crore. We filed for 191 patents during the year of which 62 are international filings, and were granted 58,” said Prof. Ramamurthi.

The degrees distributed include highest number of PhDs awarded in an academic year, 353 (which includes PhDs, joint degree PhDs, and dual degree PhDs), MS – 103, MTech. – 431, web-based MTech – 14, PGDMRTM – 19, MSc – 122, joint degree MBA – 3, MBA – 48, EMBA – 37, MA – 33, dual degree – 680 and BTech – 406).

Women activists rally round Thirumala

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, OCT. 26

Expressing solidarity with Chidambaram MP and VCK leader Thol Thirumavalavan over his remarks about ancient text Manusmriti, women activists and organisations have welcomed the efforts to criticise the text and burn it.

In a statement they said: “We are appalled by the accusation against him that he had denigrated Hindu women and a case filed against him”.

V. Vasanti Devi, former commissioner, Tamil Nadu State Women’s Commission, V. Geetha, feminist historian and writer, Kalpana Kannabiran, professor & director, Council for Social Development, Hyderabad, Cynthia Tiphagne, women activist, Madurai, Anita Tiphagne, women activist, Madurai, Christina Samy, national vice-president, Swaraj India and Arockiamary of Tamil Nadu Women Movement have signed the statement among others.

They pointed out that chapter 9 of Manusmriti is objectionable, as it makes it evident that the author had no regard or respect for women, and stated quite clearly that women cannot be trusted, they were promiscuous and would throw themselves at any man, that their nature was low, and

‘India governed by Constitution, not Manusmriti’

Chennai: It is the Constitution and not the Manusmriti that governs the nation, and the era of deceiving people by trying to rake up controversy over such a “non-issue” is over, BJP Tamil Nadu unit chief L. Murugan has asserted. His remarks came a day after Viduthala Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) chief Thol Thirumavalavan staged a protest here seeking a ban on ‘Manusmriti’ alleging it denigrated women.

that they cannot access the shastras, and that they ought to be controlled and kept in check by their fathers, husbands and sons.

It has become customary for apologists who view Manusmriti as a divine Hindu text to point to stray quotations that praise women or call attention to their indispensability.

They said: “We welcome efforts to criticise the text and view acts such as consigning it to flames as a legitimate aspect of anti-caste struggles. We would also like to state here that this symbolic act is not to be read as a censoring act; we are not asking for a ban on the book.”

Southern Rly ferries mosquito nets to Odisha

Coimbatore, Oct 26: As part of improving commercial activities, the Salem division of Southern Railway on Monday transported mosquito nets from Karur in Tamil Nadu to Manchewar in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. The nets, loaded onto 42 wagons, cost Rs 47.8 lakh, a press release from the railways said here. Overcoming all odds caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the railways transports raw materials and finished products which help traders, businessmen and farmers, and thereby the economy, the release said. The business development unit of the division is always on the lookout to sustain and improve the commercial activities, it said. PTI

3.9 kg of ganja seized in Chennai, 2 arrested

Chennai, Oct 26: Over 3 kg of ganja have been seized and two persons held here in separate incidents, police said on Monday. A woman was found with 2.2 kg of the narcotic during a check at Triplicane on Sunday and was arrested, a police press release said. Similarly, a 28-year-old man carrying 1.7 kg of ganja in packets was held.

Vidyarambham



Teachers at Presidency Government Higher Secondary School in Egmore teach kids who had come to the school to join on Vijayadasami day. Parents take their kids to school and make them write on rice grains.

Parents who bring their kids to Mahalingapuram Ayappan temple on Vijayadasami day for he priest to write on their tongue with golden ring could not do it this year owing to pandemic curbs. The temple authorities requested parents to have darshan of the Lord and take His blessings without the gold ring ritual. —DC



Hindu Munnani opposes govt bid to ‘acquire’ temple land

Chennai, Oct 26: The Hindu Munnani on Monday alleged that the authorities intended to acquire 35 acres of land belonging to a temple to build a collectorate complex for the newly carved out Kallakurichi district in Tamil Nadu and strongly opposed the move. Rather than showing concern about the state of ruin of the Veera Cholapuram Sri Ardhanareeswara temple in Kallakurichi district, the Hindu religious and charitable endowments

department has placed advertisements in newspapers about the intended sale of that shrine’s land, the Hindu Munnani said in a statement.

According to the advertisement, ₹1.98 crore has been fixed as the price for 35 acres owned by the Shiva temple and the bid to acquire the land is to build a new collectorate complex for Kallakurichi district, state secretary of the Munnani, T. Manoharan said.

The government department has invited objec-

tions if any to the proposal and office-bearers of the Munnani from Kallakurichi district have forwarded representations to authorities opposing the ‘sell-off.’ The proposed alienation not only went against the intention of the donors of the land, which was to create an endowment to support the temple perpetually for its regular functioning but also a ‘betrayal,’ he alleged. Even according to the government’s guidelines, 35 acre land should fetch about Rs 100 crore

and fixing a value of Rs 1.98 crore is “fraud and an illegal move,” the Munnani alleged. “It is illegal for the government to take up construction activities in the site which is yet to become the property of the government. This is condemnable,” he alleged. He also urged the people to protest against the endowment department’s bid to sell the land belonging to the centuries-old temple. Authorities were not immediately available for comment. —PTI

Ripple effect



The road in front of MGR Central railway station junction in Chennai caved in after a container lorry capsized on Poonamallee high road in the early hours of Monday causing massive traffic jams and vehicle diversions. The stretch which caved in was already covered by steel set as Chennai metro rail was constructing a subway underneath which connects the Central station and the Central metro. The goods container truck was moving from Chennai Port Trust towards Central station. “The truck was supposed to weigh only 49 tonnes but had 90 tonnes. As a result, the front part of the truck crossed the stretch while the loaded back-part caused the cave in,” a Chennai Metro official said. No one was injured. —DC

Sastra launches 12 UG, PG online courses

G.SRINIVASAN | DC
THANJAVUR OCT. 26

The Sastra deemed university here has launched 12 under-graduate (UG) and Post-graduate (PG) programmes online on Monday (October 26), pursuant to the recent UGC online regulations. The programmes offer a wide array of choices for learners with diverse learning appetite, said a university press release issued here, on Monday.

The B.Com programmes in collaboration with reputed coaching academy ‘KS academy’ provides a dual-mode engagement for students to

pursue B.Com as well as undergo a foundation-inter-facial coaching by KS Academy. Similarly, the BBA in Logistics Management, is in collaboration with the ‘Logistics Skill Council’ of the Union Ministry of Skill and Entrepreneurship, and provides a focused approach to build capacity in the logistics sector.

The Master of Fine Arts (MFA) focuses on a variety of Indian arts and culture with courses in music, yoga, temple architecture, Harikata, Vaishnavism, Saivism, etc. Other programmes are BCA, B.A., M.Sc., MBA, M.Com and MA Sanskrit &

Divyaprabbandam. Online programmes are offered by the faculty of Sastra and also adjunct faculty and practising professionals with specialized expertise in a variety of disciplines using a MOOC platform, compliant with various norms and standards prescribed by the UGC. “Online registration for these programmes have started via www.sastra.edu and would continue till December 31 this year. After admissions, classes shall begin from the third week of January 2021,” said Dr S Gopalakrishnan, Director, Online and Distance Education Department, Sastra.

Enact a law on responsible news reporting



When news becomes synonymous with noise, and the goal is to sensationalise events at breaking news speed, without due diligence but with an eye on ratings, the fundamental canon of criminal jurisprudence - presumption of innocence, is often turned on its head. Investigation inevitably strays into adjudication. That’s the crux of the problem.

That weighing evidence and pronouncing guilt or innocence is the domain of the courts and the courts alone is often lost on sections of the media. So are the reasonable restrictions to free speech, like defamation and contempt of court, under Article 19(2) of the Constitution of India.

As a former television journalist turned lawyer, I do believe that the media has a right to not just report but also analyse, interpret and investigate happenings, in public interest. Investigative journalism is a reality today. But for a vigilant media, many scams would not have been exposed, or retrials ordered. Remember, the Contempt of Courts Act under Section 3(1) exempts innocent publication and Section 4 protects fair and accurate reporting of judi-

cial proceedings. But there is often a ‘Catch and a Clash’ of constitutional and statutory safeguards.

Every time, guilt is pronounced on TV or the social media, someone’s ‘Right To A Fair Trial’ is violated. This is inherent in Article 21 which protects personal liberty except ‘according to procedure established by law’. Procedure established by law cannot be an editorial agenda or trend on the social media! The Supreme Court in Zahira Habibullah Sheikh Vs State of Gujarat (2006) was categorical that a “fair trial obviously would mean a trial before an impartial Judge, a fair prosecutor and atmosphere of judicial calm.”

Every time, people are prematurely maligned in the media, their Right to Reputation is hit. The Supreme Court in Subramanian Swamy Vs Union of India (2016) which refused to criminalise defamation had held that Reputation was both a fundamental and human right. Every time an individual is hauled over the coals in the media, it could operate like an infringement of Art 22(2) as a punishment twice for the same offence or double jeopardy. Every time a person is grilled on tv debates and forced to give ‘yes’ or ‘no’ replies, it could affect his right under Art 22(3) on being compelled to be a witness against himself, although such statements do not have evidentiary value.



Don’t forget penal provisions on defamation under Sections 499 & 500 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). Or the prohibition on disclosure of identity of victims under Section 228A IPC or children in conflict with law under the Juvenile Justice Act. Or Section 2(c) of the Contempt of Courts Act, which bars acts that cause interference with the course of any judicial proceedings. Or Section 8(1)(j) of RTI Act e that exempts “the disclosure of personal information which has no relationship to any public activity or interest” even of those holding public office. Or even international laws on the presumption of innocence, such as Article 11 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 14(2) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Regulations of the News Broadcasters Association bar “intrusion of private spaces” unless there is a clearly established and larger identifiable public interest, state that sting operations should be “a last resort” and frown

upon “deliberate alteration of visuals” or editing to present only a portion of the truth.

Public figures are also entitled to privacy. Their families have a right to grieve in peace, when there is a death. Public curiosity is not the same as public interest. Under explanation 1 of Section 499 of the IPC, “it may amount to defamation to impute anything to a deceased person, if the imputation would harm the reputation of that person, if living, and is intended to be hurtful to the feelings of his family or other near relatives.”

The Law Commission of India, in its 200th Report had referred to the “prejudicial impact on the suspects, accused, witnesses, even judges.” It cautioned us that even if ultimately the person is acquitted, it may not help the accused to rebuild his lost image in society.” The Delhi high court in Swatanter Kumar Vs The Indian Express, opined that media coverage “can prejudicially affect the public mind and there is real and tangible risk of the plaintiff not getting a fair trial.”

If the suspect’s pictures are telecast or published, problems may arise during ‘identification parades’ conducted under the Code of Criminal Procedure. This issue was flagged by the Supreme Court in Siddhartha Vashist alias Manu Sharma Vs State of NCT. The Court observed that the “presumption of inno-

cence of an accused should not be destroyed at the very threshold through the process of media trial and that too when the investigation is pending.” If the identity of witnesses is revealed in the media, they run the risk of coming under pressure from the accused or accomplices or sometimes even the police. Without witness protection, many may be forced to retract their versions at the outset or turn hostile later.

I suggest a bar on reporting allegations till a First Information Report is filed. If the FIR is quashed, that should be reported with the same prominence. News reports on sensitive cases must be legally vetted. On live debates, equal time must be given to both sides, with a cap on the number of panelists, not the size of a cricket team! A credible TV ratings system with a bigger and more diverse sample size and surprise checks, is imperative. A reconstruction must be permitted only when there is an eyewitness. It cannot be fictional. As media regulatory bodies have no teeth, a statute on Responsible News Reporting of Pending Cases could be a relevant headline. The media is on trial today. Let it be a watchdog. Not a lapdog. Not a bloodhound.

(The writer is an advocate at the Madras high court, columnist & author)

SHORT TAKES

Kerala wants to procure onions directly from TN

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, OCT 26

Kerala Chief Minister Pinayari Vijayan has urged his Tamil Nadu counterpart to facilitate agencies like SUPPLYCO, HORTICROP and CONSUMERFED of his State to procure vegetables like tomato, onion and potato directly from farmers or Farmers Producers Organisation (FPO) in Tamil Nadu with a view to reducing the volatility in the price movements and achieving stability in price. Referring to the sharp rise in onion prices, Vijayan, in his letter to Edappadi K Palaniswami, the price rise trend was essentially due to supply side shocks and needed interventions through procurement.

Kerala had a robust procurement system through its agencies like SUPPLYCO, HORTICROP and CONSUMERFED that could ensure payment of remunerative prices to the farmers and FPOs and also help iron out the volatilities in prices faced by consumers, he said. Kerala, being a consumer state, depended substantially on the arrival of commodities from other states and stressed on the need to stabilize the prices to protect the consumers from an inflationary spiral, Vijayan added.

Renovated war memorial opened

DC CORRESPONDENT
KARUR, OCT 26

Declaring open the renovated war memorial here on Sunday, Transport minister M R Vijayabhaskar said the district has many interesting historical facts including a fort built by Chera Kings during first century AD, on the right bank of Amaravathi river. The minister congratulated and thanked the Rotaract Sangam which completed the renovation of the war memorial.

Idol immersion



A Durga idol being immersed in Palavakkam beach on Monday.

— DC

Tamil Nadu is India's healthcare capital: CM

Chennai, Oct 26: Tamil Nadu has made great strides in strengthening the public health infrastructure and it is the nation's healthcare capital and the hub of medical tourism, Chief Minister K. Palaniswami said here on Monday.

The state was a pioneer in providing top notch healthcare services, building public health infrastructure and nurturing human resources, he said. In 11 districts, including Ariyalur, Ramanathapuram and the Nilgiris, construction work was going on to set up government medical college hospitals following the Centre's approval, he said, unveiling a new hospital of the Fortis

Health Care here. The new institutions would provide 1,650 more graduate medical seats in the public sector, the Chief Minister said. Presently, according to the government, the state has 5,550 MBBS seats -- 3,600 in the government and 1,950 in private sector colleges -- and with the proposed additions, the total is set to go up to 7,200. The new colleges are expected to become functional in the next academic year. Palaniswami pointed to a slew of government healthcare schemes like the Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme, Amma Maternity Nutrition Kit and financial assistance of Rs

18,000 to pregnant women and said 99.9 per cent institutional deliveries showed the success of these schemes. Citing several other measures and honours like award to the Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital here by the Centre and to the state for being a leader in maximum number of organ transplants consecutively for five years, he said, "Tamil Nadu is India's healthcare capital and hub of the country's medical tourism". The state's healthcare infrastructure would be judged only by assessing the kind of amenities available for poor patients, he said. Last year, Tamil Nadu's Infant Mortality Rate

declined one point to 15 per 1,000 live births, he said. As many as 254 new Primary Healthcare Centres have been set up and 166 PHCs upgraded with more facilities, the chief minister said. In the past three years, various diagnostic equipment, including CT scan, have been provided to state-run hospitals and Cath Lab facilities (catheterisation laboratory with imaging equipment to detect heart related illness) established in 18 government institutions, he noted. Linear Accelerator devices have been provided to ten government hospitals at a cost of ₹ 190 crore for cancer treatment, CM added.

— PTI

BJP CRACKS WHIP ON 7.5% QUOTA OPPOSER

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, OCT 26

State BJP's education wing secretary K. R. Nandakumar was stripped of his post in the party by state president L. Murugan on Monday allegedly for writing a letter to the Governor urging him not to sign the Bill providing for 7.5 reservation in medical admissions to students of government schools.

Prior to issuing the notification on removing Nandakumar from the post, Murugan had issued a brief statement distancing the party from the education wing secretary's stand.

Murugan said Nandakumar had, in the letter, not mentioned BJP anywhere, and had written it on behalf of the Association of Tamil Nadu nursery, primary, matriculation higher secondary and CBSE schools, for which he is the state general secretary.

In the letter Nandakumar had urged the Governor not to sign the Bill and ensure that quality education was provided to all.

Since Murugan had earlier indicated his support to the Bill by saying that the Governor had taken enough time to look into it, Nandakumar letter seemed to contradict the party State chief's stand on an issue that had been raging in the State for some time with the DMK even organizing a protest in front of Raj Bhavan.

All political parties have expressed their support to the Bill passed by the Tamil Nadu Assembly.

Politicos seek all-party meet on quota row

‘SC VERDICT SHOCKING’
DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, OCT 26

Leaders of various political parties expressed shock and disappointment over the Supreme Court rejecting the plea to implement from this academic year itself the 50 per cent reservation in the all India quota seats in medical and dental colleges in Tamil Nadu.

Blaming the Centre's affidavit and the state government's lackadaisical attitude in dealing with the case for the Supreme Court order, some of the leaders urged the AIADMK government to call for an all-party meeting and organise a delegation to the Centre.

Pointing out that the Centre that showed extraordinary interest in implementing the 10 per cent reservation for economically weaker sections for forward castes on a war footing in 21 days, DMK president M. K. Stalin said the same interest was not shown in this case.

He said the Supreme Court order had dealt a severe blow to the interest of students from the backward classes and scheduled castes and blamed it on the BJP and AIADMK, who, he accused, had entered into a conspiracy to deprive the BCs and SCs of their rights.

The Centre had been denying 27 per cent reservation for BCs and 3 per cent reservation for SCS in the past three years, he said, blaming the AIADMK government of not arguing the case properly before the four-member committee constituted as per the earlier order of the

Stalin writes to PM

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, OCT 26

DMK president M. K. Stalin urged Prime Minister Modi to immediately intervene, in the interest of the OBC students, and ensure that the committee finalised the terms of implementation for the execution of the state-specific quota, in accordance with the judgment of the Madras high court so that reservation could be implemented during this academic year in medical college admissions.

In a letter to the Prime Minister, in the aftermath of Monday's judgment by the Supreme Court with regard to the implementation of OBC reservation in medical seats allotted by the state to All India quota, Stalin said "There is now a real concern that the students belonging to other backward classes will not benefit from the state-specific reservation policies during this academic year."

He said that without the implementation of reservation, thousands of students would not have a chance to pursue higher education in the field of medicine and urged the Prime Minister to intervene immediately and ensure that thousands of students and medical aspirants from disadvantaged and underprivileged communities are given an opportunity to study medicine during this academic year. "It was the Madras high court, in a case filed by the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, which had held that the OBC students have a right to reservation in all India quota seats and had further directed the Central and state government authorities to work out the procedure in 'terms of implementing state specific reservation,'" Stalin said.

The Centre should come forward to provide reservation from this year itself as the counselling for the medical courses had not yet started, said PMK founder S Ramadoss, urging the Chief Minister to lead an all-party delegation to the Centre. Among the others who reacted against the Supreme Court order were VCK general secretary Thol Thirumavalavan and DMKD founder Vijayakant. Thirumavalavan wanted the government to call for an all-party meeting to show the united stand of the state to the Centre.

Much honoured by PM, says hairstylist

ARULOLI M | DC
THOOTHUKUDI, OCT 26

Hair stylist Pon Mariappan here thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for speaking to him in Tamil on 'Mann ki Baat', the PM's radio programme that gave him nationwide recognition.

A class 8 dropout, Pon Mariappan, who had a penchant for reading, set up a

library in his 10x10 sq.ft saloon, for benefit of his customers. A key saloon instruction is avoiding use of mobile phones within the saloon, so that others engaged in reading while waiting for their turn for hair cut, would not be disturbed.

This novel endeavour of Pon Mariappan, known locally till October 25, received greater recognition

after Prime Minister Narendra Modi called him over his radio programme 'Mann ki Baat' and congratulated him for his service, on October 25. Enquiring about his noble initiative in Tamil, the Prime Minister enquired about the books he liked the most, to which Pon Mariappan responded saying, Tirukkural.

His response was lauded by the Prime Minister, who

in course of his speech, advised people to read Tirukkural.

"I am much honoured to speak to our prime minister, who chose me among the 136 crore Indians for my initiative," said Pon Mariappan, adding that the Prime Minister's appreciation encouraged him further to widen his service, of course with help from well-wishers and the public."

AGRI MINISTER IN CRITICAL CONDITION

DC CORRESPONDENT
WITH AGENCY INPUTS
CHENNAI, OCT 26

Agriculture minister R. Doraikkannu, undergoing treatment for "severe Covid-19 pneumonia and its complications", continues to be critically ill, the hospital where he is admitted said here on Monday. The 72-year-old minister is on "maximal life support", the Kauvery Hospital said. Maintaining the functions of his vital organs continues to be a challenge considering his comorbidities, Executive Director of the hospital Dr Aravindan Selvaraj said in a bulletin.

"He is on maximal life support and his response to the treatment over the next 24 hours will determine the prognosis (likely developments vis-a-vis the illness)," he said. Doraikkannu was admitted to the hospital on Oct. 13 after he complained of unease and breathlessness.

POLLS WILL ANSWER VCK CHIEF: RAJA

DC CORRESPONDENT
PUDUKKOTTAI, OCT 26

Senior BJP leader H Raja on Monday questioned the government as to why was hesitant to arrest Vidhuthalai Chiruthaikal Katchi president and Lok Sabha member Thol Thirumavalavan, and added that the BJP would pressure the AIADMK government to arrest him immediately, if needed. Talking to newsmen at Vaara appur near here, Raja said only Hindus were worshipping women.

‘BJP, AIADMK will get befitting reply in polls’

DC CORRESPONDENT
THOOTHUKUDI, OCT 26

The AIADMK will be given a befitting reply by the people in the 2021 assembly election for silently supporting the anti-people schemes of the BJP-led government at the Centre, said All India Congress Committee (AICC) secretary Sanjay Dutt.

Launching a signature campaign here on Monday against the farmers Act of the NDA government, the AICC secretary said his party was planning to organise tractor rallies across the nation from November 1 to 10, to express solidarity with farmers protesting against the BJP government.

Further, accusing the BJP of having secret links with anti-social elements that resulted in the increasing crime rate against women and Dalits in the country, Sanjay Dutt said that the Congress party would observe the Mahila and Dalit UtpidhanVirodhi Divas on November 5, to



expose the anti-women and anti-dalit policies of the Modi government.

Sanjay also accused the Edappadi-ruled TN government of implementing all anti-people and anti-Tamil schemes of the Centre without a question or even without a second thought.

"These two parties (AIADMK and BJP) will be given a befitting reply by TN people in the 2021 assembly election," added Sanjay.

Gaur gores man to death in Ooty

B. RAVICHANDRAN | DC
COONNOOR, OCT 26

A wild gaur which strayed into human habitation in Attadi village in the suburbs of Coonoor town, gored a man to death on Monday morning, adding one more casualty in the history of man-animal conflict here.

Soon after the incident, panicky villagers urged the forest department here to take serious steps in warding off the recurring menace in the region.

The victim was identified as K Ranjithkumar (37), resident of Attadi village. Forest sources said that Ranjithkumar, a welder, was on his way to work on

Monday morning when he happened to face the stray gaur in a narrow path in the village. He could neither find an escape route along the footpath which was surrounded by thickly grown tea gardens and woods, nor could he flee the place. The gaur quickly attacked him and flung him to the ground, killing him on the spot.

After a while, villagers chased off the gaur, even as foresters rushed to the spot and held an enquiry. The villagers wanted the foresters to evolve measures to employ special teams to track gaur movement in the village along the forest fringes, to avoid loss of human life



Due to dull business, traders dump unsold banana trees brought for sale for Ayudha puja at Koodal Nagar in Madurai on Monday.

— DC

Writer on cycle expedition

DC CORRESPONDENT
THANJAVUR, OCT 26

A thirty-year-old writer from Rajasthan, Ankit Arora, is on a cycle expedition around India to know about the rich culture, art and life styles of people of the country.

Peddalling his cycle from Jaisalmer, his native place in Rajasthan, he entered Tamil Nadu two months back. After visiting Karur and staying at Vanagaram to know about agriculture there, he came to Thanjavur on Monday and interacted with artisans producing 'Veena' and 'Thanjavur dolls', besides visiting the Big temple.

Arora aims to write a book on the culture, art and lifestyle of India. "I have travelled so far 19,000 kms covering 15 states and eight Union Territories. During Corona time, I stayed in Karnataka. Life of tribal people in states like Chattisgarh, Orissa and Tamil Nadu, attracted me a lot. I met 600 artisans and tribal people. I interacted with students of 150 schools and colleges," Arora added.

As per his tour schedule, it will take another three years before he reaches Rajasthan again. After that, I will write the book, he said. He started his cycle tour on August 15, 2017.

MORE MUSLIM YOUTH JOIN IUML

Tiruchy: A group of Muslim youths have joined the Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) in the presence of IUML state principal vice-president M Abdul Rahman, at a function held here on Sunday night. In a release here, party Tiruchy district (South) secretary, K M K Habibur Rahman, said the youths were greeted with shawls, and urged to work for strengthening the party base.

out that due to the continuous efforts and preventive measures adopted by the government to check Covid-19, the pandemic is now under control. In fact, the WHO and the ICMR had appreciated the government for checking Covid-19 spread.

A group of residents of Vasan Nagar led by their association president, Chezhiyan, adorned a shawl on the minister and thanked her for fulfilling their long-pending demand of a bitumen road in the locality.

Minister lauds CM for Corona fight

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUCHY, OCT 26

Amid the pandemic, Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami has propelled the state forward by attracting global investments among other states, said Backward Class and Minorities Welfare minister S Valarmathi, after inaugurating a corona special medical camp organised by a private Sidha clinic at Vasan Nagar, on the outskirts of the city on Monday.

The minister also pointed

1035th Sadhaya vizha observed

DC CORRESPONDENT
THANJAVUR, OCT 26

The 1035th 'Sadhaya vizha' (coronation day) of King Raja Raja Chola, who built the Big temple, a Unesco world heritage monument, was celebrated here, on Monday.

The otherwise two-day festival was held in one day due to the pandemic, with no cultural programmes this year.

The festival started with 'mangala isai' in the morning, followed by distribution of clothes to temple staff. Thirumurai were taken in procession inside the temple.



Thanjavur district collector M. Govinda Rao garlanding the statue of King Raja Raja Chola to mark the Sadhaya vizha at Thanjavur on Monday.

Later, M Govinda Rao, Collector, Babaji Rajah

Bhonsle, hereditary trustee of the palace devasthanam, and Durai Thirugnanam, chairman, sadhaya vizha committee, garlanded the statue of Raja Raja Cholan.

Special abishekams were performed to Lord Brahadeeswara and Goddess Periyannayagi using 40 types of materials including milk, sandal, turmeric, curd, fruits etc. Procession of pan-chamurthis were taken out inside the temple in the evening. Kattali Thambiran of Dharumapuram adheenam Chokkalinga Swamigal participated.

SHORT TAKES

NCB ARRESTS TV ACTRESS, TWO PEDDLERS

SAURABH JOSHI | DC
MUMBAI, OCT. 26

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) arrested three persons, including a television actress, in Mumbai while she was buying cannabis from a peddler in Versova at Andheri. The officials said that they laid a trap at the Machimar Colony and arrested Preetika Chauhan while procuring 99 gram of narcotic substance.

The officials said that they would probe if the arrested peddlers were in contact with any of the peddlers arrested in the actor Sushant Singh Rajput suicide case. Apart from the actor, those arrested were identified as Mohammad Faizal (20) and Dipak Rathor (42), officials said.

The investigations revealed that Faizal who was apprehended while handing over the banned narcotics substance to the actress. When he was questioned about the procurement, he revealed of getting it from Rathor, who was apprehended from Versova soon after, officials said. The officials later raided the residences of the three accused persons.

BHATT MOVES HC AGAINST LUVIENNA LODH

DC CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI, OCT. 26

Film producer and director Mahesh Bhatt and his brother Mukesh Bhatt have moved defamation suit against aspiring actress Luvienna Lodh for maligning their image in public and on social media. Bhatt brothers have also demanded Rs one crore in the form of compensation for damages.

Justice A.K. Menon, who heard the suit filed by the Bhatt on Monday, directed Ms Lodh to file a reply on the suit and adjourned the hearing for three weeks.

Ms Lodh's counsel assured the court that henceforth, Lodh would not publish or circulate any statement or video against the Bhatt.

Ms Lodh last week posted a video on social media claiming to be married to one Sumit Sabharwal, Mahesh Bhatt's nephew. In the video, Ms Lodh alleged that Sabharwal was in the business of supplying drugs and human trafficking. Ms Lodh also alleged that Mahesh Bhatt operates this business. After the video was posted, Mahesh Bhatt, through his counsel Ameet Naik, sent a legal notice to Ms Lodh asking her to stop making such false statements.

On Monday, the Bhatt filed a suit in the Bombay High Court seeking Lodh to be restrained from making, publishing and circulating any defamatory and slanderous comments against them.

"The suit is also seeking damages to the tune of Rs one crore from the Lodh for making various grossly defamatory, slanderous, distasteful and false allegations and statements against the Bhatt," the suit said.

'UDDHAV WORST PRODUCT OF NEPOTISM'

Mumbai, Oct. 26: Hitting back at Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray for his comments at a rally, actor Kangana Ranaut on Monday described him as the worst product of nepotism.

The actor, who has been vocal about her criticism of the state government's handling of the investigation into actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death and labelled Bollywood a drug haven, lashed out against Thackeray a day after his Dussehra address.

"People who have no means of livelihood in their home come to Mumbai and betray it. Calling Mumbai PoK is in fact the failure of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He had said he would get back PoK into India," Thackeray said on Sunday.

Ranaut, known for her provocative statements, struck back in a series of tweets and a video on the social media platform and said Thackeray had abused her in his speech by calling her 'namak haraam'.

"Shame on you, I am your son's age. This is how you speak to a self-made single woman. Chief minister, you are the worst product of nepotism."

The noted actress also took umbrage at Thackeray's reference to ganja fields in Himachal Pradesh and said it is actually 'dev bhoomi', land of the gods.

3 PDP LEADERS QUIT OVER MUFTI'S FLAG REMARKS

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC
SRINAGAR, OCT. 26

Three senior Jammu-based leaders of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), including a former MP, on Monday resigned from its basic membership, saying they felt "uncomfortable and suffocated" in the party.

The move comes amidst increasing outrage, mainly in Jammu, against PDP president Mehbooba Mufti's recent assertion that she won't raise any other flag unless the state flag of Jammu and Kashmir is restored.

At a press conference here on Friday, her first after her release from a 14-month-long detention, Ms Mufti had said, "I'm not going to raise any other flag till the flag of the Jammu and Kashmir state is returned."

Accusing Ms Mufti of hurting of nationalistic sentiments, three party leaders — former MP T.S. Bajwa, former MLC Ved Mahajan and former PDP state secretary Choudhary Hussain Ali Waffa — resigned from their posts as well as from the party membership. Mr Bajwa and Mr Mahajan were founding members of the PDP whereas Mr Waffa had joined it in 2008.

The joint resignation letter begins with, "We, your colleagues in Jammu region, most of whom remained associated with the party through every thick and thin since its formation are feeling quit uncomfortable over some of your actions and undesirable utterances especially which hurt the patriotic sentiments."

Meanwhile, the BJP took out a 'Tiranga rally' through Srinagar's Civil Lines on Monday, coinciding with the 73rd anniversary of the signing of 'Instrument of Accession' with the Indian union by J&K's last Dogra Maharaja Hari Singh.

The rally was also meant for sending a "strong message" to Mehbooba Mufti, that "it is the national flag alone which will now be raised in J&K till eternity", said one of the organisers of the rally.

The party's J&K unit chief Ravinder Raina said, "If such leaders (a reference to Ms. Mufti) want to stay in India they have to honour the national flag".

Seaplane to debut soon



India's first seaplane lands on Sabarmati river ahead of its inauguration by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Ahmedabad on Monday. The 19-seater seaplane will be used for flights between the Sabarmati riverfront and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's Statue of Unity as part of a first-of-its-kind service in the country. The service is likely to be launched on October 31.

— PTI

Covid fatality rate at lowest since March 22

India registers over 45,000 new cases and 480 casualties

DC CORRESPONDENT
With agency inputs
NEW DELHI, OCT. 26

India on Monday recorded the sharpest decline in its fresh coronavirus cases and daily death figures with 45,148 new detections and 480 fatalities in one day.

India's total case tally has now reached 79.10 lakh while the total number of deaths is 1.19 lakh.

This is the first time in several weeks that the fatality figures have dipped below 500.

India's Covid-19 fatality rate has dropped to 1.50 per cent, the lowest since March 22, the Union Health Ministry said on Monday crediting the focused efforts of the Centre, states and UTs on effective clinical management of hospitalised cases.

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar is among those who have tested positive for Covid-19 and has been hospitalised on Monday.

Delhi has recorded over 4,000 cases for the second day even as nationwide

● **THE RECOVERY rate has now reached 90.23 per cent as 59,105 new recoveries were added in last 24 hours. With this, the total number of recoveries has crossed 71 lakh.**

cases decline.

Union health ministry officials said that many states have conducted surveys to map and identify the vulnerable population like the elderly, pregnant women and those with comorbidities.

"This, with the help of technological solutions like mobile apps, has ensured keeping the high-risk population under continuous observation, thus aiding early identification, timely clinical treatment and reducing fatalities. At the ground level, frontline health workers like ASHAs and ANMs have done a commendable job of managing the migrant population and to enhance awareness at the community level. As a result, there are 14 states and UTs with CFR

lower than 1 per cent," officials said.

The recovery rate has now reached 90.23 per cent as 59,105 new recoveries were added in last 24 hours. With this, the total number of recoveries has crossed 71 lakh.

7,101 recoveries in Kerala: Kerala reported 7,101 recoveries from Covid-19 on Monday, taking the total number recoveries to 3.02 lakh, while 4,287 new cases pushed the count to 3.84 lakh. Twenty more fatalities took the death toll to 1,352. Currently 93,744 patients are undergoing treatment while 3,02,017 people have so far recovered.

AP active cases below 30K: Active cases of coronavirus fell below 30,000 in Andhra Pradesh on Monday as it added just 1,901 fresh positives, the lowest in more than three months. The state saw 3,972 Covid-19 patients recover in 24 hours ending 9 am on Monday while 19 more succumbed, according to the latest bulletin. The active cases came down to 28,770.

3130 cases in K'taka: Karnataka on Monday reported 3,130 new Covid-19 cases and 42 deaths, taking the infection count to 8,05,947 and toll to 10,947. The total cases comprise 7,19,558 discharges including 8,715 on Monday and 75,423 total active cases including 942 in the ICU. Health Minister Dr K Sudhakar said the recoveries were more than the fresh infections for the 12th consecutive day.

TS numbers dip further: Telangana state on Monday recorded one of its lowest daily Covid-19 cases on Sunday, though with fewer tests being conducted on the day that coincided with the weekend and Durgashtami.

As on Sunday, the state recorded 582 new cases and four more deaths due to Coronavirus, taking the total cases so far to 2,31,834 and fatalities to 1,311. Only 14,729 Covid-19 tests have been conducted in the state between Saturday and Sunday. On Saturday, the state recorded 978 new cases and four deaths, a health dept bulletin said.

RABINDRA NATH
CHOUHURY | DC
BHOPAL, OCT. 26

Leaders have found a potent weapon in profanity to settle their rivalry, turning the electioneering for the November 3 by-polls to 28 assembly constituencies in Madhya Pradesh, the bitterest one in electoral history of the state.

Foul language such as 'lucha', 'lafanga', 'item', 'rakhail' and 'bhooka nanga' were used liberally as leaders of both Opposition Congress and the ruling BJP tried to outsmart each other in the run up to the November 3 assembly by-elections, which may prove crucial for survival of Shivraj government.

"I have never seen the election campaign in the electoral history of MP reaching such low", Pradesh Congress Committee vice president and former minister Raja Pateria said.

It all started when Congress coined a slogan "Bikau nahin tikau chahiye" to target the candidates who quit Congress and joined the BJP ahead of the assembly by-elections, saying that they caused bypolls by resigning from the assembly.

The turncoats were dubbed as 'gaddars' (traitors) by the Congress.

The BJP has countered the Congress campaign by dubbing the Kamal Nath government which floundered in March following resignation of 22 former Congress MLAs as 'Looteras' (stealers), alleging that large scale corruptions marked the outgoing Congress regime in the state.

Temper ran high in the BJP when Congress veteran and former chief minister Kamal Nath termed state women and child development minister

SC STAYS MP HC ORDER ON VIRTUAL RALLIES

New Delhi, Oct. 26: The Supreme Court on Monday stayed the Madhya Pradesh High Court order asking political parties to conduct their campaign for the November 3 assembly bypolls virtually instead of holding physical rallies due to Covid-19.

A bench headed by Justice A.M. Khanwilkar asked the Election Commission of India to take an appropriate decision with regard to political rallies as per law and keeping in mind Covid-19 guidelines.

The top court was hearing pleas of the ECI and Madhya Pradesh Energy minister Pradyuman Singh Tomar challenging the high court's order of October 20.

The top court also asked senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for Tomar, to make a representation to the ECI for loss of time in electioneering due to HC's order.

— PTI

Leaders use foul language, find campaign bitter

Imarti Devi as an 'item' in one of his election speeches.

The BJP has made it an emotive issue to put Congress on the defensive. The party has portrayed it as insults heaped on a dalit woman by Mr Nath.

Ms Devi, however, tried to settle the score with Mr Nath by calling him 'lucha', 'lafanga', a colloquial language used to define a man who has gone astray.

Senior Congress leader and former minister Ajey Singh even went to the extent of saying that he would make Ms Devi a 'jalebi', which was seen as offensive by the woman minister.

Earlier, senior Congress leader Dilip Gurjar had called chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan 'bhooka-nanga' for hailing from a humble family background sparking furor in the ruling party.

Bisaul Singh, a member in Shivraj cabinet, had called the wife of his rival Congress candidate in Annupur assembly constituency, as 'rakhail', leading Congress to move the election commission for action against him.

"We have never seen such a bitter election campaign in MP", BJP spokesman here Rajneesh Agrawal said.

Meanwhile, Kamal Nath on Monday accused the ruling BJP of trying to poach his party MLAs due to the fear of a setback in the November 3 by-elections.

Mr Nath's allegations come a day after Congress MLA Rahul Singh Lodhi resigned from assembly as well as the party and joined BJP on Sunday.

It may be noted that he was the 26th Congress legislator to quit party and join the BJP in the last seven months in the state.

ACTRESS JOINS ATHAWALE'S PARTY

Mumbai, Oct. 26: Actor Payal Ghosh, who accused filmmaker Anurag Kashyap of raping her, joined the Republican Party of India (Athawale) on Monday.

She along with some others joined the party in the presence of its chief and Union minister Ramdas Athawale. Ghosh was appointed vice-president of the women's wing of the party. Athawale said the entry of Ghosh and others into the party would strengthen it.

He also claimed Kashyap would be arrested soon. — PTI

DRESS | CODE

This is second time that a lawyer has appeared on screen without a shirt

SC dismayed as lawyer appears without shirt

PARMOD KUMAR | DC
NEW DELHI, OCT. 26

A bench headed by Justice D. Y. Chandrachud was dismayed when a lawyer appeared on the screen without shirt raising eyebrows and screams in bewilderment from all those who were watching the court proceedings being held through video conferencing since Covid lockdown.

Though the screen showing lawyer without shirt was immediately blacked out by the control room, the bench comprising, besides Justice Chandrachud, Justice

Indu Malhotra and Justice Indira Banerjee disapproving of what they had seen a short while ago, raised the matter with Solicitor General Tushar Mehta on lawyers not abiding by the dress code.

"At least you (lawyers) should be properly dressed when you (lawyers) are appearing before the court even through video conferencing. Once you are already on the screen, you must be properly dressed", Justice Chandrachud told Tushar Mehta obviously suggesting that he should use his position as the senior most law officer of

the country after Attorney General K.K.Venugopal to inculcate some sense in the lawyers to be conscious of their dress code while appearing before the court even through video conferencing.

Describing what had happened as "unpardonable", the Solicitor General recalled a recent incident of an internal meeting of the judges in Florida where a judge when he appeared on the screen was not appropriately dressed.

Realizing his slip, the said judge instantly retreated to appear again in a proper attire.

Mehta also recalled a case before a court in the United States where a lawyer invoking his fundamental right sought freedom to dress the way he wanted and not to be restricted to a dress code.

The United States court, Mehta said, held that in the "interest of institutional decorum, your right to freely dress the way you like can be curtailed as everything you wear has the significance of the institution."

This is the second time that a lawyer has appeared on the screen to argue a matter without wearing a shirt.

GUJARAT HC BEGINS LIVE STREAMING OF PROCEEDINGS ON TRIAL BASIS

Ahmedabad, Oct. 26: The Gujarat High Court on Monday started live streaming of proceedings of its first court on an experimental basis.

Anyone willing to view the live proceedings could access the link of the Youtube channel from the homepage of the Gujarat High Court website, Chief Justice Vikram Nath said in an order.

The order said proceedings of the Division Bench No 1 [First Court] of the

High Court will be telecast live, purely on an experimental basis, and the "aspect of continuing with or adapting the modality of live court proceedings will be decided based on the outcome of this trial".

All HC benches have been functioning through video conferencing since March 24 amid the Covid-19 pandemic, in which advocates, parties, victims are made to participate in the video hearing.

IN BRIEF

Airstrike kills 50 fighters in Syria

Beirut: A Syrian opposition spokesman and a war monitor say an airstrike on a training camp in the last rebel enclave in northwestern Syria has killed over 50 fighters. Yousef Hammoud, a spokesman for the Turkey-backed Syrian opposition groups, said the airstrike on Monday is believed to have been carried out by Russia. Hammoud said it targeted a training camp in Idlib province run by Failaq al-Sham, one of the largest rebel groups in the Turkey-backed opposition. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which monitors the war in Syria, said the strike killed 56 fighters and wounded nearly 50. Rescue missions are still underway, the Observatory said.

Bodies of migrants found in shipment

Asuncion (Paraguay): Paraguayan officials say workers have discovered the remains of seven people — apparently would-be migrants — in a shipment of fertiliser from Serbia. Three of the men were Moroccan and one was from Egypt, the chief investigator, Marcelo Saldivar said. The other three had not yet been identified. Investigators said the shipment left Serbia along rivers on July 22 and the migrants apparently had hoped to get off at some point along the trip, which wound up in the South American nation.

UN: 11 drown in shipwreck in Libya

Cairo: At least 11 migrants trying to reach Europe, including a pregnant woman, drowned on Sunday when their boat capsized off the coast of Libya, the UN migration agency said, making it the third migrant shipwreck in the Mediterranean Sea in a week. Safa Msehi, spokeswoman for the International Organisation for Migration, said fishermen and the Libyan Coast Guard rescued at least 10 other migrants and returned them to shore. On Tuesday, at least 15 migrants drowned after their boat capsized off Libya. The IOM said five people also died when their boat capsized Thursday off the coast of Lampedusa, Italy.

POPE DECLARES FIRST PERSON OF COLOUR CARDINAL

Vatican City, Oct. 26: Pope Francis on Sunday named 13 new cardinals, including Washington D.C. Archbishop Wilton Gregory, who would become the first person of colour US prelate to earn the coveted red hat.

In a surprise announcement from his studio window to faithful standing below in St. Peter's Square, Francis said the churchmen would be elevated to a cardinal's rank in a ceremony on Nov. 28.

Francis asked for prayers so the new cardinals "may help me in my ministry as bishop of Rome for the good of all God's faithful holy people."

The selection of Gregory won praise from LGBTQ advocates in the United States, days after Pope Francis grabbed headlines for voicing support for civil unions for gay couples.

Other new cardinals include an Italian who is the long-time papal preacher at the Vatican, the Rev. Raniero Cantalamessa, who is a Franciscan friar; the Kigali, Rwanda, Archbishop Antoine Kambanda; the Capiz, Philippines, Archbishop Jose Feurte Advincula, and the Santiago, Chile, Archbishop Celestino Aós Braco.

In 2010, while preaching at a Good Friday service attended by the then-pontiff Benedict XVI, Cantalamessa upset both Jewish and sex abuse survivors' group when he likened allegations that the pope had covered up sex abuse cases against clerics to the "more shameful aspects of anti-Semitism." The Vatican quickly distanced Benedict from Cantalamessa's remarks. Another Franciscan who was tapped is Friar Mauro Gambetti, in charge of the Sacred Convent in Assisi. The pope, when elected in 2013, chose St. Francis of Assisi as his namesake saint.

Earlier this month, the pontiff journeyed to that hill town in Umbria to sign an encyclical, or important church teaching document, about brotherhood.

Gambetti was so surprised, at first he thought the pope was joking when he heard he was named, convent spokesperson the Rev Enzo Fortunato said.

Over 58.7 mn votes cast, but wait for results could be long

In 2016 polls, around 58.3 million pre-election ballot were declared

Trump's assault on Biden intensifies in Pennsylvania

Harrisburg (US), Oct. 26: In a late gambit to win the battleground state of Pennsylvania, President Donald Trump and his GOP allies have intensified attacks on Joe Biden over fracking, hoping to drive a wedge between the former vice president and the white, working-class voters tied to the state's booming natural gas industry.

The report in the *CNN* said that according to a survey of election officials in all 50 states and Washington DC conducted by the US-based network, Edison Research and Catalist, more than 58.7 million Americans have voted so far in the election, with still 9 days left for November 3. The report said in 2016, around 58.3 million pre-election ballots were cast, including ballots in the three vote-by-mail states that year. That early vote accounted for about 42 per cent of all ballots cast in the 2016 presidential election.

"Pre-election voting for the November election has surpassed all 2016 early ballots cast with 9 days left until Election Day," the report said. "Pre-Election Day voting is skyrocketing nationwide amid the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic, and states are reporting record-breaking turnout as voters are energised to vote by mail or early in person before November," it said.

There are more than 257 million people in the US who are 18 or older, and nearly 240 million citizens are eligible to vote this year, according to the American daily USA Today.

CHINA IMPOSES SANCTIONS ON TOP U.S. DEFENCE FIRMS

Beijing, Oct. 26: China said on Monday it will impose sanctions on top US defence firms, including Boeing and Lockheed Martin, for supplying weapons to Taiwan, amid deepening tensions between Beijing and Washington over increasing American arms sales to Taipei.

China's retaliation followed after the US State Department approved the sale of 135 Standoff Land Attack Missile Expanded Response (SLAM-ER) missiles and related equipment estimated to be worth over USD one billion. The US, a major arms supplier to Taiwan, also approved 11 High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems M142 Launchers and related equipment for an estimated USD 436.1 million and six MS-110 Recce Pods and related equipment for an estimated USD 367.2 million.

"China has pointed on multiple occasions that the US arms sales to Taiwan would severely undermine One-China policy besides sovereignty and security interests. We strongly oppose it and condemn it," Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian told a media briefing here on Monday.

It is not yet clear what impact this will have on these firms as there is not much defence cooperation between the US and China.

—PTI

WHITHER | JUSTICE

Montgomery, Oct. 26: Anthony Ray Hinton, an innocent man, spent 30 years on death row in Alabama because, he says, he was "person of colour and poor." His name finally cleared, he now campaigns for justice — which he says can only be achieved by beating Donald Trump at the ballot box.

The 64-year-old African-American, his hair and beard graying, has mixed

memories of the fateful day of April 3, 2015.

After three decades behind bars — and under constant threat of execution — he regained his freedom on that day to start the second phase of his life.

"It was like I was walking on clouds" as he fell into the arms of welcoming relatives, he recalled.

But his sense of joy was tempered. "It was good



Donald Trump

national gas extraction, although that is not the Democrat's official position.

Trump's fracking play comes as polls show the president is struggling to overtake Biden in Pennsylvania and in need of a boost from the rural and exurban white voters

who helped him to a narrow victory in Pennsylvania in 2016.

It also shoots to snap the tightrope that Biden is walking between the Democratic Party's left wing, which is hostile to fossil fuels, and its bedrock blue-collar union base that is building an expanding network of gas pipelines, power plants and processing facilities in Pennsylvania.

Biden's climate change plan aims to reach net-zero greenhouse gases emissions by 2050, and does not involve banning fracking, the process formally named hydraulic fracturing that along with horizontal drilling made the United States an oil and gas superpower over the past decade.

DON LEAVES INTERVIEW, CLIP GOES VIRAL

Footage of the US president abruptly walking out of a CBS 60 Minutes interview has been released by the network, in a row that has been rumbling since the interview was taped on Tuesday.

Donald Trump had already posted clips on his own social media, in an effort to show he had been mistreated by the interviewer, Lesley Stahl. He had called the segment "fake" and "biased" in advance, according to *The Guardian*.

Trump had told Stahl: "You brought up a lot of subjects that were inappropriately brought up." She replied: "Well, I said, I'm going to ask you tough questions." After a question about whether his use of social media and name-calling was "turning people off", Trump brought the recording to an end.

FBI to probe Boston ballot box that was set afire

Boston, Oct. 26: A fire was set Sunday in a Boston ballot drop box holding more than 120 ballots in what appears to have been a "deliberate attack," Massachusetts election officials said.

The state has asked the FBI to investigate the fire that was set around 4 am in a ballot drop box outside the Boston Public Library downtown, Massachusetts

Secretary of the Commonwealth William Galvin's office said.

In a joint statement, Galvin and Boston Mayor Marty Walsh called it a "disrespect to democracy, a disrespect to the voters fulfilling their civic duty, and a crime."

"Our first and foremost priority is maintaining the integrity of our elections process and ensuring

transparency and trust with our voters, and any effort to undermine or tamper with that process must be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law," they said in the emailed statement.

There were 122 ballots inside the box when it was emptied Sunday morning, and 87 of them were still legible and able to be processed, Galvin's office said.

Students take to the streets in Belarus



Riot police officers detain students who took part in a nationwide strike pressing for the resignation of the country's authoritarian leader Alexander Lukashenko, in Minsk on Monday.

—AFP

WHO calls for solidarity on vaccine

Berlin, Oct. 25: The head of the World Health Organization (WHO) on Sunday called for global solidarity in the rollout of any future Coronavirus vaccine, as the number of cases soared across the world.

In a video address at the opening of the three-day World Health Summit in Berlin, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the only way to recover from the

pandemic was together and by making sure poorer countries had fair access to a vaccine.

"It is natural that countries want to protect their own citizens first but if and when we have an effective vaccine, we must also use it effectively. And the best way to do that is to vaccinate some people in all countries rather than all people in some countries,"

he said.

"Let me be clear: vaccine nationalism will prolong the pandemic, not shorten it." Scientists around the world are racing to develop a vaccine against Covid-19, which has killed over 1.1 million people.

Several dozen vaccine candidates are currently being tested in clinical trials, ten of which are in the most advanced "phase 3"

stage involving tens of thousands of volunteers.

The European Union, the United States, Britain, Japan and a slew of other nations have already placed large orders with the companies involved in developing the most promising vaccines.

But concerns are growing that countries with smaller wallets could be left at the back of the queue.

Imran accuses Macron of 'attacking Islam'

Islamabad, Oct. 26: Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan accused French President Emmanuel Macron on Sunday of "attacking Islam", after the European leader criticised Islamists and defended the publication of cartoons depicting the Prophet Mohammed.

Khan's comments follow statements Macron made last week after a French teacher was beheaded near Paris after he had shown cartoons of the Prophet during a class he was leading on free speech.

Macron said the teacher "was killed because Islamists want our future." In a series of tweets, Khan said the remark would sow division.

"This is a time when Pres Macron could have put healing touch & denied space to extremists rather than creating further polarisation & marginalisation that inevitably leads to radicalisation," Khan wrote.

"It is unfortunate that he has chosen to encourage Islamophobia by attacking Islam rather than the terrorists who carry out violence, be it Muslims, White Supremacists or Nazi ideologists." Macron already sparked controversy earlier this month when he said "Islam is a religion that is in crisis all over the world".

The French teacher became the target of an online hate campaign over his choice of lesson material — the same images that sparked a bloody assault by Islamist gunmen on the offices of satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo*, the original publisher, in January 2015.

Caricatures of Mohammed are forbidden by Islam. Blasphemy is an explosive issue in ultra-conservative Pakistan, where anyone deemed to have insulted Islam or Islamic figures can face the death penalty.

"By attacking Islam, clearly without having any understanding of it, President Macron has attacked & hurt the sentiments of millions of Mus-

ERDOGAN DOUBLES BACKLASH AGAINST FRENCH PREZ

Istanbul, Oct. 26: The backlash against President Emmanuel Macron's comments on Islam intensified on Sunday, with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan again urging him to have "mental checks" and protests in Muslim-majority nations.

The French foreign ministry meanwhile called on authorities in affected countries to ensure the security of French citizens.

It described some social media calls for protests as "heinous", lamenting manipulations "by a radical minority" and dubbing nascent boycotts of French goods "groundless".

Speaking after teacher Samuel Paty was beheaded for showing caricatures of the Prophet Mohammed to pupils in a lesson on free speech earlier this month, Macron vowed France would "not give up cartoons" and said Paty "was killed because Islamists want our future".

But Erdogan on Saturday urged Macron to have "mental checks" for treating "millions of members from different faith groups this way" — comments which prompted Paris to recall its envoy to Ankara.

The Turkish leader doubled down on Sunday, again contending that Macron "really needs to have checks" and this time also accusing him of being "obsessed with Erdogan day and night".

—AFP

Sharif attacks Pak Army, ISI chief

Karachi, Oct. 26: Pakistan's deposed prime minister Nawaz Sharif has blamed Army chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa and ISI chief Lt. Gen. Faiz Hameed for the current political situation in the country, as the Opposition parties held their third massive joint rally against Prime Minister Imran Khan-led government.

The Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), a coalition of 11 Opposition parties, was formed to oust Khan from power on September 20. The alliance held two massive back-to-back gatherings in Gujranwala and Karachi this month. The third rally was held in Quetta, capital of the restive Baluchistan province, on Sunday. Addressing the gathering via video link from London, the three-time prime minister and chief of the Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) again blamed Army chief Bajwa and ISI Director General Hameed for Pakistan's current situation.

"Gen. Bajwa, you will



Nawaz Sharif

have to answer for record rigging in the 2018 elections, for horse-trading in Parliament, for making Imran Niazi prime minister against people's wishes and [by] tearing apart the Constitution and laws, for pushing people towards poverty and hunger."

70-year-old Sharif, who is entangled in a number of corruption cases, has been in London since November last year after the Lahore High Court granted him permission to go abroad for four weeks for treating the heart disease and an immune system disorder.

—PTI

Sentenced to death in 1986, freed African American wants Trump to be defeated at polls

Wrongly jailed for 30 yrs, POC says justice needs voting

Montgomery, Oct. 26: Anthony Ray Hinton, an innocent man, spent 30 years on death row in Alabama because, he says, he was "person of colour and poor." His name finally cleared, he now campaigns for justice — which he says can only be achieved by beating Donald Trump at the ballot box.

The 64-year-old African-American, his hair and beard graying, has mixed

memories of the fateful day of April 3, 2015.

After three decades behind bars — and under constant threat of execution — he regained his freedom on that day to start the second phase of his life.

"It was like I was walking on clouds" as he fell into the arms of welcoming relatives, he recalled.

But his sense of joy was tempered. "It was good

that I was finally free. It was bad that my mother was no longer here on this Earth to see her baby boy walk out of prison."

That day — which he had dreamed of so often before waking up, innocent, in a claustrophobic "five by seven" foot cell — finally ended his judicial nightmare.

Arrested in July 1985, Hinton was sentenced to death the following year, at

the age of 29, for allegedly murdering two employees of fast-food restaurants, killed in separate armed hold-ups in Birmingham, the largest city in the southern state of Alabama.

His court-appointed lawyer, Hinton later told talk-show host Oprah Winfrey, had rejected his protestations of innocence, telling him "All of y'all is always doing some-

thing, and then saying you didn't do it." There was no fingerprint evidence against Hinton and the testimony of a ballistics expert hired by his attorney was torn apart when it emerged the man was half-blind. Nor did an alibi from Hinton's employer help.

He was convicted largely because bullets recovered at the scene appeared to come from a gun owned by

Hinton's mother, with whom he lived.

"The state of Alabama, in one word, kidnapped me," he said firmly, speaking in his deep, sonorous voice. "Because we have a system that, if you are born person of colour and poor in America, the system can pretty much do with you as it pleases."

It was not until 1999, when lawyer Bryan Stevenson — founder of the Eq-

ual Justice Initiative (EJI) — took up Hinton's case that the truth began to emerge. Very, very slowly.

Hinton was to spend another 16 years on death row, saved only by a new ballistics test, an intervention by the US Supreme Court and a second trial.

For years in prison he obsessed over the thought of gaining revenge for his wrongful conviction.

—AFP

DECCAN Chronicle

27 OCTOBER 2020

Govt needs its critics, can't trample rights

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was on the list of the 100 most influential people drawn by *Time* magazine last month but the honour came with a strong indictment of the leader of the world's largest democracy. Underlining the importance of the rights of those who did not vote for the winner in a democracy, it said Mr Modi has governed by othering the dissenters or even those who did not subscribe to his ideas.

The pattern of events that preceded Mr Modi's selection has not changed since; in fact, it continues in a virulent form. It is very plain: use the teeth of the law to incarcerate people who voice their protest against the government or those who support the government's opponents. Fr Stan Swamy, the 83-year old Jesuit priest working among the tribals in Jharkhand, has not been the last. The Parkinson's disease patient has been held in connection with the Elgar Parishad case of 2018. The government has jailed a number of poets, activists, intellectuals and academics on the premise that they were all in league with the people who were behind the violence in Bhima Koregaon, a Maharashtra village. A journalist who works for a Malayalam portal has been picked up on his way to Hathras in Uttar Pradesh where a dalit teenager was gangraped and killed. Many university students across the country, especially those in the national capital, who protested against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 face the same fate. In almost all these cases, the victims have been slapped with sections in the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, which has strict and impossible conditions for bail.

With the courts opting to be silent spectators, save the occasional intercession, all those who have been picked up by the National Investigation Agency have been languishing in jails for varying periods. The Supreme Court directive to Dr Sudha Bharadwaj, a trade unionist, that the she was entitled to proper bail but needed to approach a lower court perplexed even people who served in the judicial service. Poet Varavara Rao's family has now moved the apex court seeking humane treatment of the octogenarian suffering from a series of diseases including early symptoms of dementia during the time of the pandemic.

The people who man the NDA dispensation need no lecture on democratic rights, including the right to dissent, as most of them, including Mr Modi and law minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, were leaders of the anti-Emergency agitation in the 1970s seeking restoration of human and democratic rights and the right to dissent. They also know how totalitarian regimes that smother human rights have ended up in history but the NDA government has shown no signs that it has a plan to learn from history. It's sad that a leader who got an unequivocal mandate from the people on the promise of a better tomorrow for all his people is being rated as being partisan and that his fellow citizens have to fear for their liberties for speaking up against the powers-that-be. The government must rethink its policy on dealing with legitimate voices of dissent and adopt one that suits the spirit of democracy.

Power shift in Parivar

The traditional Vijayadashami address of the RSS *sarsanghchalak* or organisational head, delivered by Mohan Bhagwat on Monday, in which he backed even the recently passed controversial Central laws on farmers' remuneration and markets for their produce, touchy subjects on which BJP's oldest North India ally Akali Dal quit the Narendra Modi government, besides endorsing the Modi government's policy on foreign investment while all along RSS has stood for *swadeshi* that was indistinguishable from autarky, can cause amusement in RSS and BJP circles or possibly even some consternation among the old school.

This is because Mr Bhagwat's speech is suggestive of the fact that the balance of power between the BJP and the RSS would appear to have tilted heavily in favour the of the former, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi being not only head of government but also the de facto Pied Piper of the BJP.

The annual Vijayadashami speech was once a much-anticipated event in the RSS calendar. This was when the chief gave the tactical line to the rank and file. The BJP and its earlier incarnation heard it with attention and shaped its own positions to be in line with the mother-body. However, the positions Mr Bhagwat has taken on a range of issues makes his peroration a repeat of official policy, in effect something akin to what the Press Information Bureau does.

It is unusual for the RSS's top leader to be critical of the BJP's political opponents since Hindutva's mother outfit has, for the sake of form, held that it is non-partisan and concerns itself with social issues and those relating to the propagation of ancient 'Hindu' culture and there is no discrimination on party lines. But, abandoning caution, Mr Bhagwat reportedly noted that the Opposition parties and the "*tukde-tukde* gang" were "trying to weaken Indian society by creating social strife".

DECCAN CHRONICLE

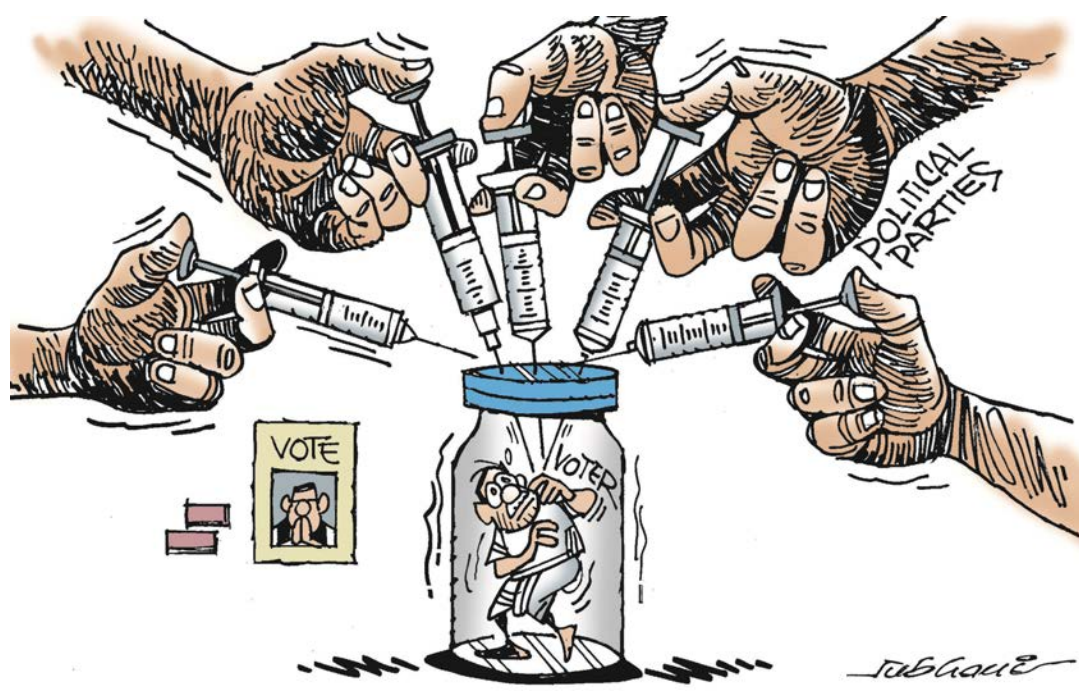
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Subhani



Talk ties mindfully, do not squander options



Manish Tewari

State of the Union

On October 27, the foreign and defence ministers of India will sit down with their US counterparts for what is called a 2+2 dialogue. The dialogue would take place exactly one week before the US Presidential elections scheduled for 3rd of November 2020. Former Vice-President Joe Biden has a 10-point lead over the incumbent President Donald Trump in the national polls. However, given the manner in which the US electoral college system is structured, it does not guarantee a victory on election night. Hilary Clinton and much of the world's liberals realised it much to their peril despite Mrs Clinton leading in the polls by a wide margin in 2016.

The 2+2 dialogue is taking place when the Sino-Indian border situation remains tense and peace is at best fragile. On the agenda is the signing of the last of the foundational agreements — BECA (Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement). It will enable the sharing of advanced geo-spatial intelligence between the US and India and enable better targeting of armed drones and missiles.

Earlier in August 2016, The Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) was signed between the two nations that gave basing facilities to each other's militaries, especially both the navies. Later in September of 2018 India and the US signed The Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) that allows for encrypted communications between the defence establishments of the two nations — a la dedicated WhatsApp or Telegram.

This troika of foundational agreements marks the conclusion of a process that commenced three decades back when the Agreed Minute on Defence Relationship was signed in 1995. It was followed by

extended continent hopping dialogue between Late Jaswant Singh and Strobe Talbot post the nuclear tests of 1998. That conversation set the tone for the reset of the Indo-US relationship. It was followed by the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP) in 2003, New Framework for the Indo-US Defence Relationship in 2005 and the Indo-US civil nuclear deal in 2008, Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) in 2012, the Joint Strategic Vision for the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean Region in 2015 and the US-India Knowledge Partnership in Defense Studies to flag but a few key milestones of this momentous journey.

Out of all these agreements, the 2005 New Framework for Defence Cooperation was seminal. Signed on the 28th of June 2005 between the US defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld and the Indian defence minister Late Pranab Mukherjee it crossed the rubicon of distrust and ushered in a new era in defence cooperation. Its objectives were as follows — maintaining security and stability; defeating terrorism and violent religious extremism; preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction and associated materials, data, and technologies; and protecting the free flow of commerce via land, air and sea lanes. The agreement envisaged that the Defense Policy Group shall continue to serve as the primary mechanism to guide the US-India strategic defence relationship.

The reason why this agreement is important — it surmounted a trust deficit that had bedeviled the Indo-US strategic paradigm despite the US helping India in the Sino-India border war of 1962. At that critical point in time India reached out to the US when the erstwhile Soviet Union winked, nudged, looked the other way and essentially greenlighted the Chinese aggression in 1962 so that the Chinese would

not break ranks with the broader Communist bloc over the Cuban missile crisis.

However the roots of the Indo-US mistrust pre-date this brief period of cooperation if not bonhomie in 1962. It had everything to do with Pakistan. There was a sizeable body of opinion in India that believed that the creation of Pakistan had less to do with the Chowdhary Rehmat Ali, Iqbal and Jinnah combine and more to do with the Anglo-American alliance looking for a reliable buffer in West and Central Asia against Soviet expansionism post World War-2. This theory gained credence when Pakistan in the May of 1954 signed the Mutual Defence Assistance Agreement with the United States. Later in that year it became a member of the South-East Asian Treaty organisation SEATO along with United States, Britain, France, Thailand, the Philippines, Australia and New Zealand.

On 24th February 1955, it joined the Baghdad Pact-Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO), another mutual defence organisation along with Britain, Turkey, Iran and Iraq. The United States was the linchpin of this arrangement. Early in 1959, Pakistan signed (as did Turkey and Iran) a bilateral Agreement of Cooperation with the United States, which was designed further reinforce CENTO. In December 1971 at the height of the war to liberate Bangladesh the US attempted to intervene in Pakistan's favor when the US Navy's Task Force-74 of the Seventh Fleet steamed into the Bay of Bengal in conjunction with a British naval group led by the aircraft carrier, *HMS Eagle* with commando carrier

HMS Albion, several destroyers that headed into India's territorial waters from west.

India requested Moscow for help under the August 1971 treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation. Responding to India's request with alacrity Moscow on December 13, 1971, dispatched a nuclear-armed flotilla, the 10th Operative Battle Group (Pacific Fleet) from Vladivostok, under the Command of Admiral Vladimir Kruglyakov. Russia deployed two task groups; in total two cruisers, two destroyers, six submarines, and support vessels. A group of Il-38 Anti Submarine Warfare aircraft from Aden air base in Yemen provided support. India's relationship with two super powers had traversed the whole nine yards in the nine years between 1962 and 1971.

With the People's Liberation Army of China menacing India's northern borders it is quite natural for India to look for military allies. The US by far remains the most powerful outside power balancer even today in every part of the world. The quad is also anchored by the US for all intents and purposes. However, defence relationships define a country's foreign and strategic policies in the global arena. It would have implications qua Russia and even the other mid-sized powers around the world. Moreover, if Joe Biden were to become the US President, the US may look for a reset of its relationship qua China. The Democrats have a far different worldview from the current incumbent of the White House. India should evaluate its options with open eyes and not without a full debate in Parliament. For the only logical step after this would be to become a non-Nato ally of the US, just as Pakistan and 16 other countries are. Incidentally, despite leading the US up the garden path post 9/11, the Pentagon and the Pakistani deep state remain very close.

The author is a lawyer, Member of Parliament and former Union information and broadcasting minister. Twitter handle @manish Tewari.

If Joe Biden were to become the US President, the US may look for a reset of its relationship qua China. The Democrats have a far different worldview from the current incumbent of the White House.

LETTERS

FOUL MOUTHED TRUMP

The cartoon by Subhani depicting the foul mouth of US President Donald Trump spoke volumes about his arrogance and Big Brother attitude. Trump seems to have doubts about his chance of winning the Presidential election and his speech and debate (second and final) were blasphemous and it is unbecoming of a President ever seen in the history of US elections. He may have hatred/animosity seeing the popularity of Kamala Harris (vice presidential candidate) as she is of Indian origin, but calling India 'filthy' reveals the true identity of Trump who is racial and a hypocrite.

M.C. Vijay Shankar, Chennai

DON'T POLITICISE NEET

THE DMK is surely justified in its demand for Governor Banwarilal Purohit to give his approval for provision of 7.5 per cent reservation for Neet qualified government school students in medical colleges. However, DMK president Stalin also reportedly says that he will do away with Neet when DMK comes to power. It is time he spelt out clearly how exactly Neet would be done away when the Supreme Court has already long since given its final decision in the matter and the all India exam is now being conducted every year. Qualifying well in Neet has become extremely crucial for lakhs of aspiring students towards fulfilling their dreams of becoming doctors. It would be in the best interest of the students to refrain from politicising this issue especially at a time when the Assembly elections are fast approaching with some political parties listing out a lot many promises to the voters.

A. Mohan, Chennai

WELCOME RELIEF

THE CENTRAL government has informed banks and other lenders how to handle the reimbursement of the "interest on interest" charged under the RBI's loan moratorium scheme. The lenders have to return the difference between the compound interest and simple interest for the period between March 1 and August 31 for loans with outstanding amounts under ₹2 crore. This scheme covers non-banking financial institutions and credit card bills as well. In March, the RBI had allowed lending institutions to offer borrowers a holiday on EMI payments for three months considering the difficulties of the coronavirus pandemic. This moratorium was later extended by 3 more months. The finance ministry had early in October acceded in court to waiving the "interest on interest" for loans up to ₹2 crore. This move comes as a welcome relief to borrowers.

C.K. Subramaniam, via e-mail

Aakar Patel



Draw lessons from US, make voting in India better & safer

India's electoral system, run by the Election Commission of India, is one of the world's wonders. It was not too long ago (and in fact many of us can remember those days) when Bihar's elections were associated with violence and booth-capturing. A series of innovations from the Election Commission under T.N. Seshan and his successor M.S. Gill resulted in violence reducing considerably. And also the introducing of machines ensured that voting happened smoothly and counting quickly.

Many things have changed in the democratic space in India but it is still the case that almost all parties believe or assume that the autonomous Election Commission run by 300 officials in New Delhi is independent of the government. The EC also has an international reputation because of its accomplishments, and officials from Russia, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Indonesia, South Africa, Bangladesh, Thailand, Nigeria, Namibia, Bhutan,

Australia, Afghanistan and even the United States have visited it to see how they can improve their own systems better.

Voting systems in older democracies come from tradition and are difficult to change both from the point of view of the State and the voting citizen. It is for this reason that the broad and quick reforms and their wide acceptance in India is all the more remarkable.

Having accepted all this, it must be asked if we cannot further reform the process and also learn from practices that other nations follow that might help us. Bihar is going to the polls in three phases between October 28 and November 7. This splitting of voting will help the state machinery manage its resources such as security personnel better and reduce the load on the EC.

However, the phase-wise voting will not be of any use in reducing the risks of Covid-19 transmission. The number of people queuing up to vote in any given polling station will remain the same.

Is there a way that this can be addressed? We could look at what is happening in the United States, which is going to the polls on November 3 to elect the President, one third of the Senate and the entire House of Representatives. As of October 24, about 5.5 crore Americans had already voted in that election. This was a figure that was 40 per cent of the total votes that had been polled for the 2016 presidential election. This means that these 40 per cent voters would not have to show up in the queue on November 3, greatly reducing the risk of the coronavirus' spread overall.

In the days that lead up to the election, it is possible that another 30 per cent or more people will also have voted in advance, or have mailed in their ballots, and that will reduce the stress and risk at the polling booth for officials and for voters. Voting rules in the US are a state and not federal subject and so each of the 50 US states has its own rules. They allow for voting by mail

(voters have to request for a mail-in ballot which is sent to them, and which they can then post back) or voting in person at the designated voting booth, which opens three weeks before the official voting day.

The counting of votes does not begin till the last day, as it would in other countries. This ensures that there is no advantage or perception of one side appearing to be so far ahead in early voting as to discourage the other side's voters from showing up. Though this is not a new system and has been around for many years, it is without doubt that it is going to help American voters and officials reduce the Covid-19 transmission risks in a way that Bihar will not be able to.

A record number of people are expected to vote in this year's US election and even with that it is indisputable that the mail-in ballots and the in-person advance voting system gives America a great advantage. Indeed, the safety of the voting process is also one reason why the numbers of those showing

up to vote is so high.

The hope is that the Bihar election also passes safely, but we are entering into a fairly long election season when large states like West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh are going to vote. India needs to examine some way in which, assuming that there is either no vaccine or a delay in administering it to everyone, voting can be made safer. This will have to be done with the consent of all parties, but it needs to be considered. It is one of the things that America does better and can be examined.

Of course it is the case that our system is superior to most in some ways. In a part of the world where there was endemic electoral violence and controversy, the most important element — counting — has been comprehensively solved. But the times we are in require even this great and proven system to be more flexible in the interest of public safety.

The writer is a columnist and a senior journalist

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	40,145.50	-1.33
Nifty 50	11,767.75	-1.36
S&P 500*	3,384.81	-2.33
Dollar (₹)	73.85	-0.32
Pound Sterling (₹)	96.14	0.31
Euro (₹)	87.28	-0.14
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	50,965.126	0.25
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	40.49	-1.28
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.834	-0.010
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.809	-0.032

* As of 9:30 PM IST

Oil drops on rising virus cases, more Libyan output



Oil prices fell on Monday, extending last week's losses, as increasing coronavirus cases in the United States and Europe raised worries about energy demand, while Libya's fast growing production also weighed on prices. Brent was down 80 cents, or 1.9%, at \$40.97 by 1121 GMT. U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) dropped 82 cents, or 2.1%, to \$39.03. Both contracts fell almost 2.5% last week.

Future, Reliance to move ahead with deal despite interim order

SIAC's interim order asks Future Group to hold its deal with Reliance

SANGEETHA G. CHENNAI, OCT. 26

Future Group and Reliance Industries have claimed that they will go ahead with the proposed deal unhindered by the interim order from the Singapore arbitration panel. While Future hinted at approaching Indian arbitration forum, both Future and Amazon seem to have agreed upon the Singapore panel in its 2019 agreement.

On Monday, Future group acknowledged that Future Retail has received an interim order from the Singapore International Arbitration Centre under shareholders' agreement between Amazon, Future

STOCK MARKET SINKS ON INTERNATIONAL WORRIES

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, OCT. 26

The Sensex fell over 700 points intra-day on weak global cues as Covid-19 second wave in US and Europe is leading to high rise in fresh cases and fresh US fiscal stimulus hopes are fading.

Reliance Industries' 3.97 per cent fall also weighed on the market as Reliance-Future Group deal was put on hold by Singapore based single bench arbitration panel after Amazon questioned the deal.

Sensex finally settled 540

points or 1.33 per cent lower at 40,145. Nifty-50 closed 162.60 points or 1.36 per cent down at 11,767.75. Only eight of the Sensex 30 pack managed to close in the green while in the Nifty-50 only 11 advanced and 39 declined. The top losers in the Nifty-50 pack were Hero MotoCorp (-6.2 per cent), Bajaj Auto (-6.01), Hindalco (-5.29), Mahindra & Mahindra (-4.68) and JSW Steel (-4.44).

Shrikant Chouhan, executive vice president-Equity Technical Research, Kotak Securities said, "After the massive

struggle for the last five days to sustain and close above 11850 levels, finally, the Nifty gave up. The Nifty closed below the level of 11800 following hefty selling in index giants namely Reliance Industries, ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank and Infosys Technology."

The broader market fell sharply too with the Mid-cap index down by 1.77 per cent and Small-cap index down by 0.88 per cent. BSE Metal (-3.37 per cent) & Auto indices (-3.28 per cent) fell the most among the sectoral indices.

legally advised that actions taken by the company or its board, which are in full compliance of the relevant agreements and eminently in the interest of all stakeholders cannot be held back in arbitration proceedings initiated under an agreement to which Future Retail is not a party," it said.

As part of the deal agreement entered while buying 49 per cent stake in Future Coupons, Amazon would have a call option to acquire all or part of the promoters' shareholding in Future Retail of 47.02 per cent between the third and tenth year of the transaction and this would be subject to law. In future, Amazon could own 47.02 per cent in Future Retail apart from 3.6 per cent through Future Coupons.

"The agreement had also mentioned that the approval of Amazon, Premji Invest and Blackstone has to be taken for any further development regarding the deal," said a source.

Mercedes-Benz announces record sales of its cars

MICHAEL GONSALVES PUNE, OCT. 26

Mercedes-Benz, India's largest luxury car maker, on Monday announced record sales of its range of cars during the auspicious occasion of Navratri and Dussehra, delivering over 550 Mercedes cars to customers across the country, repeating the record sales achieved during the same festival period last year.

The Pune-headquartered automaker expects robust demand for the upcoming Diwali and Dhanteras period.

Strong demand came from across key markets like Delhi NCR, Mumbai, Gujarat and other Northern markets which saw a resurging customer demand, owing to the return of normalcy and stabilisation of businesses.

In Delhi-National Capital Region alone, 175 new Mercedes-Benz cars were handed over to their owners.

The C-Class, E-Class sedans and the GLC, GLE and GLS SUVs were the vehicles customers preferred the most.

Mercedes-Benz earlier witnessed a sequential growth in its monthly sales in third quarter of 2020, growing 25 per cent M-o-M sequentially and four-times over the second quarter of 2020 sales amidst the current market challenges prevalent owing to the raging pandemic.

"The festive season this

● **THE PUNE**-headquartered automaker expects robust demand for the upcoming Diwali and Dhanteras period.

● **STRONG DEMAND** came from across key markets like Delhi NCR, Mumbai, Gujarat and other Northern markets which saw a resurging customer demand, owing to the return of normalcy and stabilisation of businesses.

● **MERCEDES-BENZ** earlier witnessed a sequential growth in its monthly sales in Q3 2020, growing 25 per cent M-o-M sequentially and four-times over Q2 2020 sales amidst the current market challenges prevalent owing to the raging pandemic.

year has begun on a very strong note and we are glad to witness this positive customer sentiment," Martin Schwenk, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer at Mercedes-Benz India, said. "This impressive sale numbers makes us confident of a good festive season despite facing multiple challenges," he pointed out. Schwenk said the exciting quarter ahead would see new product line-up to keep exciting the market and continuing the recovery of sales for the rest of the year.

Gold slips on strong dollar, US stimulus doubts

New York, Oct. 26: Gold fell below the key psychological level of \$1,900 on Monday to its lowest in more than a week, pressured by a firmer dollar and stalled progress in talks for a new U.S. coronavirus aid package.

U.S. gold futures fell 0.3% to \$1,900.50. "There seems to be a

lack of impetus to find extra buyers (for gold)... A lot of it is because we're trading in the looming shadow of the U.S. elections and stimulus speculation," said IG Markets analyst Kyle Rodda.

The dollar rose 0.3% against a basket of other currencies.

U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi on Sunday said the Trump administration was reviewing the latest plan for more COVID-19 relief and that she expected a response on Monday.

But with the presidential elections fast approaching, analysts said a victory for

Democrat rival Joe Biden could help gold rally on a potential large stimulus package, especially amid COVID-19 cases surging in the United States.

France registered a record increase in infections over the weekend and Spain announced a state of emergency as cases surged through

Europe.

Widely viewed as a hedge against inflation and currency debase-ment, bullion has gained 25.1% this year as central banks and governments unveiled unprecedented stimulus to cushion the economic fallout from the pandemic.

—Reuters

COFFEE-BREAK

Your day today By Dr C.V.B. Subrahmanyam

Aries: Financial and business deals will close satisfactorily. Curb the tendency to overspend. You will resolve conflicts with love and understanding.

Taurus: Big deals may be difficult to close. Friends and well-wishers will prove a boon to academic pursuits. Domestic quarrels are indicated.

Gemini: Money due to you will not arrive in time. A project may be freed from long-pending controversy. Status quo in career matters.

Cancer: Those in debt will soon be out of trouble. Some of you may fall ill. You may burn your fingers on the stock market. Funds for an event may be difficult to get.

Leo: A journey carries the threat of an accident. Social activities are well indicated. You are likely to spend time and effort to improve finances.

Virgo: Make the best use of testing times by nurturing love. You will get ample opportunities to make a mark at work. You may learn how to fall in love without losing your identity.

You share your b'day with

Irfan Pathan, Indian former cricketer. He played all formats of the game and was a bowling all rounder. He was a member of the India team that won the 2007 ICC World Twenty20 and 2013 ICC Champions Trophy.



Libra: Focus on important issues. Erratic behaviour could jeopardise a love affair. Take care of your luggage while travelling. Devote quality time to your work.

Scorpio: Family time will lift your spirits. Avoid financial dealings as far as possible today. Clear all misunderstandings with your partner. Don't hesitate to ask for help.

Sagittarius: Appreciating the achievements of family members will restore domestic peace. A crisis on the romantic front needs careful handling.

Capricorn: Guard against hurting relatives' sentiments. Repairs on your property are indicated. You need to strive to bring harmony to your relationships.

Aquarius: An incident that discredits your academic career is also likely. Work-in-progress projects may be delayed. Your secret affairs may be revealed.

Pisces: The workplace could be disturbing. Rising expenses will cause financial problems. You may not be able to recover outstanding dues on time. Home loans may be delayed. New projects are on the horizon.



LONG SUITS WORK OPPOSITE FIT

This was a wild deal at a Bridge Base Online duplicate. What do you think of the auction? What happened in five diamonds doubled after West led the heart seven? The basic principle for North is that if he is willing to bid five diamonds, he should get there immediately. Bidding four then gives the opponents a fielder's choice—double or bid higher—after they have already exchanged some information. Here, though, if

North had jumped to five diamonds, would East have bid five hearts (ending the auction) or doubled (after which West might have advanced with six clubs)? Note that five hearts has to fail unless South strangely leads a spade. But six clubs is unbeatable! Against five diamonds, West would have done best to lead his singleton. Double dummy, the contract goes down two if East wins with the spade

Word Mine

V
S
R
L
P
E
E
U
I

TODAY'S RATINGS: 19 AVERAGE; 20 GOOD; 24 OUTSTANDING

How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown in today's puzzle? In making a word, each letter may be used once only. Each word must contain the letter at the top of the pyramid. There should be at least one nine letter word. Plurals, foreign words and proper names are not allowed.

SOUTH		NORTH	
♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2		♠ K 8 6 4 3	
♥ A 4		♥ A 4	
♦ K 7 3		♦ K 7 3	
♣ 7 5		♣ 7 5	
WEST		EAST	
♠ 10		♠ A Q 7 5	
♥ 7 2		♥ K Q 10 8 5 3	
♦ 9 8		♦ —	
♣ J 10 9 8 6 5 4 3 2		♣ A K Q	
SOUTH		NORTH	
♠ J 9 2		♠ —	
♥ J 9 6		♥ —	
♦ A J 10 6 3 2		♦ —	
♣ —		♣ —	
Dealer: South			
Vulnerable: North-South			
SOUTH		NORTH	
West		East	
Pass		4♠	
Pass		1♠	
Pass		Pass	
Pass		Pass	
Opening lead: ♠ 7			

SHORT TAKES

Leon wins chess title in Hungary

Chennai: Young Indian International Master Leon Luke Mendonca earned his maiden Grandmaster norm after winning the title in Rigochess International Festival tournament in Hungary. The 14-year old Mendonca won six games, drew two and lost one to emerge winner in the 10-player field which included three GMs and was played over the board. He secured seven points from nine rounds in the tournament.

The Goa-based player (Elo 2499) won his opening round match against fellow IM William Paschall before going down to lower-rated Alex Krstulovic (Elo 2341). He drew his third round match and then won five games on the trot, beating two GMs — Nguyen Huynh Minh Huy and David Berce — on the way. — PTI

Entire S. African board resigns

Johannesburg: Cricket South Africa's 10-member Board of Directors has resigned, clearing the decks for an interim administrative structure in the crisis-ridden body as sought by the country's olympic committee. Six directors, including former acting president Beresford Williams, had stood down following a meeting on Sunday. The remaining four quit on Monday. "After the Members' Council had deliberated and resolved that in order to best serve the interest of cricket in South Africa, the entire Board should resign — which they did. All Independent and Non-Independent Directors have now resigned," CSA said. The development comes just days before the start of the domestic season on November 2. England's men's team also arrives next month to play three ODIs and three T20Is. — PTI

Vardy hurts Arsenal again

London: Jamie Vardy kept up his brilliant scoring record against Arsenal by coming off the bench to earn Leicester a 1-0 win at Emirates Stadium in the Premier League. Restricted to just the final half-hour while he manages his return from a calf injury, Vardy had enough time to net his 11th league goal against Arsenal the most he has scored against a single opponent in the competition. It was an excellent goal, too, with a fine pass over the defense by Youri Tielemans setting free substitute Cengiz Under, who crossed for Vardy to stoop and head home from close range in the 80th minute. Leicester bounced back from home losses to West Ham and Aston Villa to record a first win away to Arsenal since 1973. — AP

Masia gets 800th GP win for Honda

Aragon, Spain: Jaume Masia on the NSF250RW took a thrilling win at the Teruel GP of the 2020 MotoGP World Championship, the 800th win for a Honda mounted rider in Grand Prix history. Honda has written an incredible story from the first win of Australian Tom Phillis on the Honda RC143 in the 125cc Spanish GP of 1961, to Sunday where Jaume Masia rode a masterful race to cross the line for Honda's 800th win.

Live on TV

CRICKET

IPL: Sunrisers Hyderabad vs Delhi Capitals from 7:30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

FOOTBALL

Champions League: Lokomotiv Moscow vs Bayern Munich from 11:25 pm on Sony Ten 2; Shakhtar Donetsk vs Inter Milan from 11:25 pm on Sony Six; Atletico Madrid vs Salzburg from 1:30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 3; Borussia Monchengladbach vs Real Madrid from 1:30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Six; Marseille vs Manchester City from 1:30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 2; Liverpool vs Midtjylland from 1:30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 1

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Kings crush Knights

Punjab put up all-round show in big win over Kolkata

Sharjah, Oct. 26: Kings XI Punjab beat Kolkata Knight Riders by eight wickets in an Indian Premier League game here on Monday. Chasing 150, Chris Gayle (51, 29b) and Mandeep Singh (66 not out, 56b) posted half century each as Punjab reached the target in 18.5 overs and grabbed the fourth spot on the points table. Punjab skipper K. L. added 28 to complete the rout. This was the fifth win in a row for KXIP.

Earlier, Kings XI Punjab dished out a disciplined bowling show, especially at the back-end, to restrict Kolkata Knight Riders to a modest 149/9.

Mohammed Shami (3/35) was the pick of the Kings XI Punjab bowlers while leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi (2/20) and Chris Jordan (2/25) claimed two wickets apiece to put brakes on KKR who were invited to bat first.

After a familiar jittery start, KKR got the momentum going with opener Shubman Gill (57 off 45 balls) and skipper Eoin Morgan (40) firing all cylinders inside the Powerplay.

But KXIP's last match hero Jordan pulled things back for his team by brilliantly mixing up his slow deliveries, while Bishnoi took the prized scalp of Morgan after KKR reached 54/3 inside the Powerplay. — PTI



Chris Gayle of Kings XI Punjab en route to his 51 against Kolkata Knight Riders in an IPL match at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium on Monday. — BCCI

SCORECARD

Kolkata Knight Riders: Shubman Gill c Pooran b Shami 57, Nitish Rana c Gayle b Maxwell 0, Rahul Tripathi c Rahul b Shami 7, Dinesh Karthik c Rahul b Shami 0, Eoin Morgan c M Ashwin b Bishnoi 40, Sunil Narine b Jordan 6, Kamlesh Nagarkoti b M. Ashwin 6, Pat Cummins lbw b Bishnoi 1, Lockie Ferguson (not out) 24, Varun Chakravarthy b Jordan 2, Prasidh Krishna (not out) 0. Extras (lb-3 w-3) 6. **Total (for 9 wks, in 20 overs) 149.**
FoW: 1-1, 2-10, 3-10, 4-91, 5-101, 6-113, 7-114, 8-136, 9-149.
Bowling: Glenn Maxwell 2-0-21-1, Mohammed Shami 4-0-35-3, Arshdeep Singh 2-0-18-0, Murugan Ashwin 4-0-27-1, Chris Jordan 4-0-25-2, Ravi Bishnoi 4-1-20-2.
Kings XI Punjab: K. L. Rahul lbw b Varun 28, Mandeep Singh (not out) 66, C. Gayle c Prasidh Krishna b Ferguson 51, N. Pooran (not out) 2. Extras (lb-2, w-1) 3. **Total (for 2 wks, in 18.5 overs) 150.**
FoW: 1-47, 2-147.
Bowling: P. Cummins 4-0-31-0, M. Prasidh Krishna 3-0-24-0, C. Varun 4-0-34-1, S. Narine 4-0-27-0, L. Ferguson 3.5-0-32-1.

IPL POINTS TABLE

Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
Mumbai Indians	11	7	4	0	14	+1.252
Delhi Capitals	11	7	4	0	14	+0.434
Royal Challengers Bangalore	11	7	4	0	14	+0.092
Kings XI Punjab	12	6	6	0	12	-0.049
Kolkata Knight Riders	12	6	6	0	12	-0.479
Rajasthan Royals	12	5	7	0	10	-0.505
Sunrisers Hyderabad	11	4	7	0	8	+0.029
Chennai Super Kings	12	4	8	0	6	-0.602

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

SUPER KINGS ARE FIRST TO BE ELIMINATED

Dubai, Oct. 26: Three-time champions Chennai Super Kings have been knocked out of the race to secure an IPL play-offs' berth for the first time in 13 years after Rajasthan Royals defeated Mumbai Indians by eight wickets in Abu Dhabi.

The M.S. Dhoni-led side had made it to the play-offs in each of the 10 IPL seasons that they participated since the league started in 2008. However, CSK endured an inconsistent run in this IPL.

Dhoni's men on Sunday notched up an eight-wicket win over Royal Challengers Bangalore on Sunday to keep their slim chances alive for a few hours but all hopes ended when RR beat MI later in the day. The win over RCB took CSK to 8 points from 12 matches but they can only achieve a maximum of 12 points if they win their last two games, which won't be enough. — PTI

DC eye playoff berth in clash against Sunrisers

Dubai, Oct. 26: Delhi Capitals would look to complete the unfinished business and seal their place in the playoffs when they take on Sunrisers Hyderabad in a crucial IPL match here on Tuesday.

Two back-to-back defeats against Kolkata Knight Riders and Kings XI Punjab must be hurting but DC need to shrug it off and add two points to take their tally to 16, which will elevate them to the top of the table.

On the other hand, Sunrisers' hopes to reach the playoffs are hanging by a thread. David Warner and his men occupy the penultimate spot with eight points from 11 outings.

To reach the qualifiers they must win their remaining three games and hope all other results go their way. The Capitals possess

NUMBERS GAME

HEAD TO HEAD

OVERALL:

- Matches: 16
- Hyderabad: 10
- Delhi: 6

MEETING IN 2019

- Sunrisers Hyderabad beat Delhi Capitals by 5 wickets in Delhi.
- Delhi Capitals defeated Sunrisers Hyderabad by 39 runs at Hyderabad.
- Delhi Capitals beat Sunrisers Hyderabad by 2 wickets at Visakhapatnam (Eliminator).

MEETING IN 2020

- Sunrisers Hyderabad beat Delhi Capitals by 15 runs in Abu Dhabi

FOR THE RECORD

- David Warner is the only batsman who made fifty 50 plus scores in IPL. He scored 4 hundreds and 46 fifties in 137 innings of as many matches.
- Kagiso Rabada is highest wicket taker in this IPL with 23 wickets at an average of 14.52 in 11 innings of as many matches.

— S. PERVEZ KAISER

— S. PERVEZ KAISER

an explosive batting department as well as a formidable bowling unit. They have not been dependent on any one person, as different players have raised their hands at different

HARDIK TAKES A KNEE IN IPL FOR A CAUSE

Abu Dhabi, Oct. 26: Mumbai Indians all-rounder Hardik Pandya has become the first player in the ongoing Indian Premier League to take a knee in support of the 'Black Lives Matter' movement.

Pandya's gesture came during the game against Rajasthan Royals here on Sunday.

The Mumbai Indian all-rounder smashed 60 run from just 21 balls.

After reaching his half century in the 19th over, he went down on a knee with his right arm raised to show solidarity with the movement against racism.

West Indies all-rounder and Mumbai's stand-in skipper Kieron Pollard responded by raising his right fist.

After the match Pandya even tweeted a picture of himself with the caption "#BlackLivesMatter". — PTI

Sunny praises KL's Kings XI captaincy

Dubai, Oct. 26: The legendary Sunil Gavaskar has attributed Kings XI Punjab's impressive turnaround of fortunes in the IPL to the captaincy of KL Rahul and the fighting spirit of head coach Anil Kumble.

Down in the dumps after five successive losses, KXIP scripted a remarkable comeback, notching up four wins on the trot to grab the fifth place with 10 points in the IPL standings.

They are in with a chance to make the playoffs with three more games to go. "You know, they have just found the winning way! They seem to have lost that at the start of the tournament," the former India skipper said.

"Remember, every time they were close to winning and they went into the super over in their first-ever game and then again, after that they were losing in the final overs. "Then, somewhere down the line, they found that key, that takes them to a win and the last few games, they have played exceptional cricket."

KXIP were simply sensational in their last game

when they defended 126 for a 12-run victory over Sunrisers Hyderabad on Saturday.

"Last match, to defend a 126 takes a lot of doing, takes a lot of self-belief and that's what they showed. They have been brilliantly led by KL Rahul," Gavaskar said.

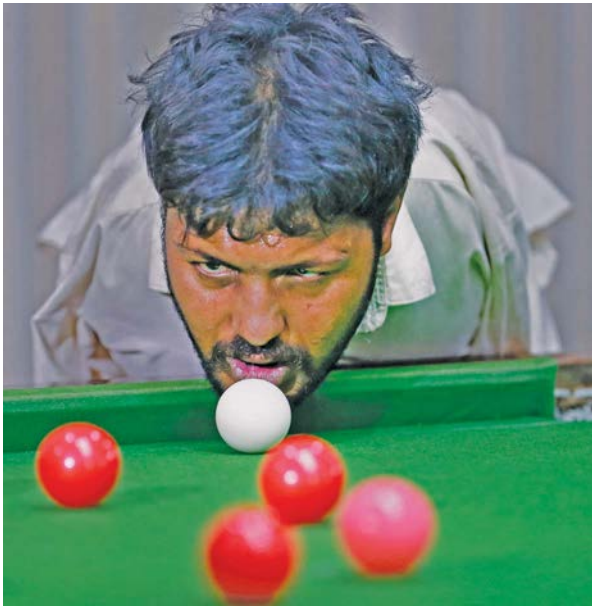
"KL Rahul has grown into the captaincy role...he made sure, with his field placing, with his bowling changes, even giving Chris Jordan that 19th over and then trusting Arshdeep (Singh) to defend 14 in the final over is fantastic."

Gavaskar also lauded the role played by head coach Kumble, who joined the franchise this season.

"Do not forget the role of Anil Kumble! Anil Kumble has been a fighter all his cricketing career, you could see when he went out with a broken jaw and bowled, and that spirit is seen in the KXIP," he said referring to the 2002 Test series against the West Indies.

"That is the reason why they have comeback from impossible situations and are now in the hunt for the place in the playoffs."

— PTI



Mohammad Ikram plays snooker with his chin at a local club in Samundri town in Pakistan on Sunday. — AP

No arms, no issue for snooker player

Samundri, Oct. 26: Mohammad Ikram leans over the snooker table, his face at almost touching distance behind the white ball as he assesses his options, then knocks it with his bearded chin.

At the other end of the table a moment later, a red ball sinks into the corner pocket.

With a twist of the neck this way, or a lighter nudge another, the 32-year-old Ikram has worked out how to pot snooker balls without the use of a cue stick.

He was born without arms. He lives in a dusty rural town in the northeast of Pakistan in Punjab province. He hasn't let anything stop him from fulfilling his childhood dream of playing the game of snooker.

Ikram remembers watching other children playing on dusty pool tables outside his home when he was a 10-year-old kid. He always wished one day he could also play the game, but just needed to work out how.

"At that time I wished I

● **Ikram lives in a dusty rural town in the northeast of Pakistan in Punjab province. He hasn't let anything stop him from fulfilling his childhood dream of playing the game of snooker.**

had arms so that I could play the game, too," Ikram told The Associated Press.

Eventually he devised his own style and later went to a nearby club, looking for a game.

"People didn't believe me in the club that I could play with my chin," he said, "but they gradually started admiring my skills when I started hitting the cue ball with the chin."

Mohammad Nadeem, owner of the Cue Club in Samundri, recalled the time about 10 or 12 years ago when Ikram approached him with a request to play snooker. — AP

TN's Varun, Natarajan in India contingent for Oz tour

Sachin impressed with Varun

DC CORRESPONDENT

CHENNAI, OCT. 26

Tamil Nadu's mystery spinner Varun Chakravarthy who has been performing well in the IPL has got his maiden India call-up. Varun has been named in the T20 squad for the forthcoming Australia tour.

TN left-arm pacer T. Natarajan has also been named in the touring contingent as one of the additional bowlers. Off-spinner R. Ashwin and Washington Sundar have retained their spots in the Test and T20 squads respectively.

The biggest surprise was the decision to leave out Rohit Sharma from all three squads. He has suffered a hamstring injury which is likely to rule him out of the Indian Premier

League as well.

In Rohit's absence, the in-form K.L. Rahul will be Virat Kohli's deputy in the white ball teams and is also back in the Test squad after a considerable period of time.

"The BCCI Medical Team will continue to monitor the progress of Rohit Sharma and Ishant Sharma," BCCI secretary Jay Shah said in a press release announcing the squads.

The tour of Australia comprises three T20 Internationals, as many ODIs and four Tests. It is set to get underway from November 27.

Wicketkeeper-batsman Rishabh Pant failed to make the cut for the limited overs even though he retained his place in the Test squad.

The story of Monday's

THE SQUADS

■ **T20:** Virat Kohli (captain), Shikhar Dhawan, Mayank Agarwal, K. L. Rahul (vice-captain and wicketkeeper), Shreyas Iyer, Manish Pandey, Hardik Pandya, Sanju Samson (wicketkeeper), Ravindra Jadeja, Washington Sundar, Yuzvendra Chahal, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohd Shami, Navdeep Saini, Deepak Chahar, Varun Chakravarthy.

■ **ODI:** Virat Kohli (captain), Shikhar Dhawan, Shubman Gill, K. L. Rahul (vice-captain & wicketkeeper), Shreyas Iyer, Manish Pandey, Hardik Pandya, Mayank Agarwal, Ravindra Jadeja, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohd Shami, Navdeep Saini, Shardul Thakur.

■ **Test:** Virat Kohli (captain), Mayank Agarwal, Prithvi Shaw, K. L. Rahul, Cheteshwar Pujara, Ajinkya Rahane (vice-captain), Hanuma Vihari, Shubman Gill, Wriddhiman Saha (wicket-keeper), Rishabh Pant (wicket-keeper), Jasprit Bumrah, Mohd Shami, Umesh Yadav, Navdeep Saini, Kuldeep Yadav, Ravindra Jadeja, R. Ashwin, Mohammed Siraj.

selection was undoubtedly Rahul, who is also now India's first-choice keeper in both T20 Internationals and ODIs as selectors finally ran out of patience with Pant. "Rahul is being looked as India's first choice white-ball keeper

till the 2021 World T20 and beyond. Also he has impressed everyone with his leadership skills and that's why this elevation as vice-captain," a source told PTI. Sanju Samson will be the second wicket-keeper in T20 squad.

Mumbai, Oct. 26: Cricket icon Sachin Tendulkar showered praise on Varun Chakravarthy, who on Monday earned his maiden India call-up for T20 Internationals against Australia, saying he has been impressed by the mystery spinner's variations and calm head during the ongoing IPL in the UAE.

"Varun has been bowling well throughout this tournament (IPL). And very rarely he has given a little more runs at this level," Tendulkar said in a video shared on 100MB.

"... what happens is everybody is seeing how well Sunil Narine bowl, so normally when Narine



Varun Chakravarthy

bowls, there is more pressure on the bowler from the other end and batsman try and attack him more."

The 29-year-old Chennai born Chakravarthy, who plays for Kolkata Knight Riders, has picked up 12 wickets to be the leading wicket-taker for his side. He has also picked up the

first five-for of this IPL. In domestic circuit, he plays for Tamil Nadu.

According to Tendulkar, Chakravarthy has not rattled despite bowling most of the times in pressure situations. "Varun has been extremely successful and the variation which I am seeing, the confidence which I am seeing, he is able to disguise the balls, googlies," said Tendulkar. "He has been a consistent performer and I am impressed with his performance because he has bowled in many pressure situations and he has not been rattled in those situations. He looked pretty balanced and confident," said the batting maestro. — PTI