


DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA
RAJAHMUNDRY | FRIDAY | 9 OCTOBER 2020

WEATHER



Max: 30.0°C

Min: 25.0°C

RH: 81%

Rainfall: 6.1 mm

Forecast: Humid and Partly Cloudy.

Max/Min temp. 30/25 °C

COVID-19

COUNT


CASES	DEATHS
(+70,229)	(+983)
69,02,875	1,06,534

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+1,896)	(+12)
TS: 2,06,644	1,201
(+5,292)	(+42)
AP: 7,39,719	6,128

CASES AROUND THE WORLD



3,66,37,005

DEATHS

10,64,283

COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES

213

worldometers.info/coronavirus

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Dakshinayana

Titthi: Adhika Ashwayuja Bahula

Saptami till 5.43 pm

Star: Arudra till 12.22 am

(Saturday)

Variyam: 7.44 am to 9.26 am

Durmuhurtam: 8.32 am to 9.19 am; 12.26 pm to 1.13 pm

Rahukalam: 10.30 am to 12 noon

HILIRI CALENDAR

Safar ul Muzaffar 21, 1442 AH

PRAYERS (ROYAL MOSQUE)

Fajar: 5.00 am

Zohar: 1.30 pm

Asar: 5.00 pm

Maghrib: 6.35 pm

Isha: 8.30 pm

SUNRISE TOMORROW 5:54 AM

SUNSET TODAY 5:45 PM

MOONRISE TODAY 23:23 AM

MOONSET TOMORROW 12:47 PM

COUNTER POINT



They are back after some break!

Airlines to fly 75% pre-Covid flights

New Delhi: Airlines may be permitted to operate maximum 75 per cent of their pre-Covid scheduled domestic flights if the passenger numbers continue to remain healthy during the next 7-10 days, civil aviation minister Hardeep Singh Puri said on Thursday. The government on September 2 had said Indian airlines can operate up to 60 per cent of their pre-Covid services in India. On June 26, the Ministry of Civil Aviation had allowed the airlines to operate a maximum of 45 per cent of their pre-Covid domestic flights. The ministry had restarted domestic passenger services from May 25, after a gap of two months due to lockdown. However, the airlines were allowed to operate not more than 33 per cent of their pre-Covid flights then.

Tech student dies in freak mishap

Hyderabad: An engineering student died of injuries suffered when her hair got entangled in a wheel of a go-kart she was riding at a play zone here, police said. The woman, in her early 20s, died at a hospital on Thursday, a day after the incident, a senior official said. Following the mishap, the police booked a case of negligence against the management of the play zone and closed the premises as its license has expired, the official said.



NATION | 4
Mumbai police busts 'TRP scandal'



WORLD | 5
2nd Prez debate may go virtual

SPORTS | 8
Djokovic storms into French semifinals



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Fun learning



Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy interacts with children and in joyful mood at the classrooms on the occasion of Jagananna Vidya Kankana launching at Punadipadu ZP high school near Vijayawada on Thursday.

— C. NARAYANA RAO

CBI probes MP in ₹826 cr default

N. VAMSI SRINIVAS | DC VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 8

In a major blow to K. Raghu Ramakrishna Raju, the maverick YSRC member of Parliament from Narsapuram, Andhra Pradesh, the Central Bureau of Investigation on Thursday registered a case against him and his company, Ind-Barath Thermal Power Ltd, on charges of siphoning of ₹826 crore lent by a consortium of

banks. The CBI has already been investigating into allegations that Raju and his firm had defrauded financial institutions of ₹926 crore. The CBI press release said searches were conducted in 11 locations including the office and residential premises of the borrower company and other accused in Hyderabad, Mumbai and West Godavari.

Lead banker Punjab National Bank had lodged



K. Raghu Ramakrishna Raju

a complaint with the CBI accusing Ind-Barath of siphoning off bank funds

and causing loss of ₹826.17 cr to PNB and other banks in the consortium. The CBI got a complaint from PNB six months ago, on March 5. The other accused include the MP's wife Rama Devi and daughter K. Indira Priyadarshini, who is the daughter-in-law of former Rajya Sabha member K.V.P. Ramachandra Rao.

■ **Page 2: Raju's bluff of being close to BJP exposed**

7 INDIANS IN LIBYA KIDNAPPED, SAFE NOW, SAYS MEA

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, OCT. 8

Seven Indians hailing from Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh were kidnapped on September 14 in Libya but are "safe and keeping well", the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Thursday.

The MEA said, "They were kidnapped from Asshwerif in Libya on their way to the Tripoli airport to catch a flight to India and were working at a construction and oil field supplies firm."

The kidnappers contacted the employer and showed photographs of the abducted persons who were safe, the MEA added. "The government is in touch with their family and assured them that they were making all possible efforts, in coordination with Libya and the employer to secure their release."

Wellpay Traders flee with ₹85 crore from depositors

D. SIVA RAMI REDDI | DC KURNOOL, OCT. 8

Even as the dust is yet to settle on the Agridoll scam, a new one also running into crores has surfaced with teachers, doctors, government servants and senior citizens among the victims. Money was swindled by a fly-by-night operator who floated an online platform.

Lured by the potential to double their investments, thousands of people put their money in Wellpay Traders and got ripped-off.

Wellpay Traders, a company floated by Ravikumar from Nandyal's YS Nagar, and Srinu of Chandrasekhar Nagar in Kurnool in association with Michael of Nellore, cheated 12,000 depositors in Rayalaseema and Nellore districts.

This online trading scam allegedly runs into ₹85

crore and came to light when Nellore police busted it after agitated depositors lodged complaints with them.

Meanwhile, another company, Betterways, collected huge amounts from investors in the Allagadda area. A case has been booked.

The three floated the online share trading business and attracted investors on the promise of doubling investments in just 100 days. To execute their plan, they appointed agents across Kurnool, Kadapa, Anantapur, Chittoor, and Prakasam districts. The agents were offered an attractive com-

mission of 0.5 percent of the amount deposited by the new members. The fraudsters chose Covid lockdown as most people were staying at home.

Nandyal Taluka Circle Inspector said a few people came from Kadapa with a complaint against Ravi Kumar. But they were directed to lodge it in Nellore where the case against the accused was already registered.

Krishna Murthy, a teacher at Nandyal, said "we were told that our money is being invested in the share market. And they promised to pay us two percent of the amount deposited on a daily basis for five days in a week. As the market movements are transparent, we thought we could easily calculate our returns."

■ **Page 3: Gullible investors still getting trapped**

HC slams Speaker 'anti-judiciary' talk

Questions why no cases against YSRC leaders

SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 8

The AP High Court has slammed Assembly Speaker Tammineni Sitaram for making contemptuous remarks on the High Court and the judges, and opined that they were uncalled for from a person holding a Constitutional position.

The High Court bench comprising Justice Rakesh Kumar and Justice Umadevi was dealing with remarks made on the judiciary on social media platforms by Speaker Sitaram, Deputy CM Narayana Swamy, MPs V. Vijayasai Reddy and others, undermining the democratic spirit.

The court opined that such remarks could be considered as an attack on the judiciary and asked why no case was being booked against those who were making such

● **THE HIGH** Court bench comprising Justice Rakesh Kumar and Justice Umadevi was dealing with remarks made on the judiciary on social media platforms by Speaker Sitaram, Deputy CM Narayana Swamy, MPs V. Vijayasai Reddy and others.

● **THE COURT** said such remarks could be considered an attack on the judiciary and asked why no case was being booked against those who were making such remarks

remarks when those who make unsavoury comments on government functionaries were being booked.

The court observed that two FIRs were registered on April 16 and 18 on unwarranted comments on the judiciary on social media platforms but no

action was taken so far.

The court said that the Registrar-General had filed a writ petition stating that the Crime Investigation Department was not taking up a proper inquiry into the cases of adverse remarks on the judiciary. The court said that if the CID could not take up the inquiry properly, they had to transfer the case to a Central investigation agency.

Advocate General S. Sriram said that the government respected the courts and the judges and felt the need to make those who passed such remarks a party in the case and provide an opportunity for them to give their version. He ruled out any conspiracy to undermine the judiciary. Sriram informed the court that the government had no role on the social media posts.

■ **Pg 2: No objection for AP if no adverse remarks on govt**

Paswan, minister, Dalit icon, dead

DC CORRESPONDENT With agency inputs NEW DELHI, OCT. 8

Union minister Ram Vilas Paswan, one of the most prominent Dalit leaders, died on Thursday, his son Chirag Paswan said. The minister was 74.

The Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) founder and minister for consumer affairs, food and public distribution, was admitted to a private hospital here for several weeks and had recently undergone a heart operation.

A stalwart of the social-ist movement who later emerged as Bihar's foremost Dalit leader with a following across the country, Ram Vilas Paswan was instrumental in the implementation of the Mandal Commission report in the 1990s.

Condoling his demise, President Ram Nath Kovind said, "the nation has lost a visionary leader. He was among the most active and longest-serving members of Parliament. He was the voice of the oppressed, and championed the cause of the marginalised."

Expressing grief at Paswan's demise, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said it was a personal loss. "I have lost a friend, valued colleague and someone who was extremely passionate to ensure



Ram Vilas Paswan

every poor person leads a life of dignity," Modi said in his condolence message.

Paswan was selected as a police official but chose politics and became MLA for the first time in 1969 on a Samyukta Socialist Party ticket. He was elected to Lok Sabha eight times and also held the record of winning his constituency, Hajipur, with the highest margin for several years.

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, his deputy Sushil Kumar Modi and RJD president Lalu Prasad condoled his death. A host of Congress leaders including Rahul Gandhi condoled his death saying the poor and Dalits have lost a strong political voice. AP Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy and TDP president N. Chandrababu Naidu expressed grief.

VACCINE | SAGA

Drugs authority cites lack of data on Indians, tells firm to hold trials for Phase 2, 3

Centre rejects DRL's big Sputnik trial

KANIZA GARARI | DC HYDERABAD, OCT. 8

The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) has rejected Dr Reddy's Laboratories Ltd's petition for conducting large-scale human trials of Russia's vaccine Sputnik-V against Covid-19, as there is little data on the vaccine candidate.

CDSCO noted that safety and immunogenicity data of phase 1 and phase 2 studies is small. There is no data available on Indian subjects. The CDSCO subject committee, after detailed deliberation, stated that Dr Reddy's Labs should follow regulatory requirements and conduct ph-

ase 2 and phase 3 trials with proper monitoring for humoral and cell mediated immune response.

Dr Reddy's Laboratories was asked to submit the data to the committee, which will further evaluate the stability data. Dr Reddy's refused to comment on the development.

Last month, it had stated that they will begin trials for the vaccine in India after clearance from regulators. The company had planned 100 million doses of the vaccine that was to be supplied by Russia.

Meanwhile, the panel has also reviewed data of Covaxin, developed by Bharat Biotech Limited. The data of phase III clinical trial was termed as sat-

isfactory except for clarification on definition of

asymptomatic. It asked for initiation of an appropriate dose from the phase II



immunogenicity data. Covaxin is an indigenously developed vaccine and drug controllers state that its development is being closely monitored.

Covaxin is an inactivated vaccine derived from a strain of SARS CoV-2 isolated at National Institute of Virology in Pune.

Of the 14 vaccine candidates, nine are in experimental stages. According to sources, Covaxin holds promise and the government is ensuring that all data collected from the developers are evaluated for safety and efficacy.

While Sputnik V is being administered in Russia, their data of human trials in phase 3 was only on 76

participants with most being men. In phase 1 and 2 trials carried out on primates, Syrian hamsters and transgenic mice it was found to be 100 per cent protective.

Meanwhile, the Centre has begun a massive exercise to map out cold chain storage facilities to ensure the vaccine is delivered quickly across the country.

A national expert group is talking to public and private sector entities in the pharma sector, food processing industry and agro businesses and food delivery start-ups to identify cold storages or fridges at the taluka level that can stock and distribute the vaccine, sources said.

Centre eases crowd rules for campaigns

New Delhi, Oct. 8: The Centre on Thursday permitted political gatherings with 200 people in a close space or a hall while in an open space, it will depend on the area. This applies to poll-bound Bihar and in constituencies where by-polls will be held, including Dubbaka in Telangana. The order issued by Union home secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla is a slight modification of the reopening guidelines issued on September 30 where the political gatherings were allowed from October 15.

"Now, therefore, in exercising the powers conferred under Section 10(2)(1) of the Disaster Management Act 2005, it is decided that the state governments may permit political gatherings outside containment zones beyond the existing limit of 100 persons on any date," the order said.



Louise Glück

CENTRE EASES CROWD RULES FOR CAMPAIGNS

SHORT TAKES

Jagan mourns death of Paswan

Vijayawada: Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has expressed deep grief over the passing away of Union minister Ram Vilas Paswan.

The Dalit leader and Lok Janshakti Party (LSP) Chief with over five decades of public life has been the voice of down-trodden, the Chief Minister said and offered condolences to the bereaved family members.

CM RELEASES ₹2,168 CRORE FOR REPAIRS OF ROADS

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 8

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on Thursday directed officials to ensure that all state highways are spick and span. He instructed that repairs to roads should be carried out wherever necessary on a war-footing. Further, roads in all municipal limits should be completed.

Presiding over a review meeting on roads, the Chief Minister directed the finance department to release ₹2,168 crore for their repairs. He said patch works on all roads should be completed on a priority basis to make movement of vehicles in the state easier and safe.

Jagan Mohan Reddy ordered officials to prioritise repairs to highways depending on the density of traffic on them. He said all bridges, approach roads and road-over bridges should be improved on a priority basis.

Officials informed the Chief Minister that ₹900 crore are required to repair highways to an extent of 3,000 km. The CM directed officials to complete the works with the help of funds provided by NDB.

JAGN SOUGHT CENTRAL AID FROM MODI: AMBATI

MD ILYAS | DC VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 8:

YSRC official spokesperson and legislator Ambati Rambabu scoffed at the Opposition claims about the visits of Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy to Delhi and asserted that the meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi was to foster the interests of the state and seek funds.

Speaking to the media here on Thursday, he said it was ridiculous on the part of Telugu Desam leaders to claim that Jagan Mohan Reddy went to Delhi to get cases against him quashed. He wondered whether the Prime Minister could interfere in judicial processes.

Rambabu claimed that the Chief Minister had met Modi to discuss release of funds for the state and there was no personal agenda to the meeting.

He said, "Despite Covid, and other pressing issues, Modi spoke to Jagan Mohan Reddy for over 40 minutes as there were several issues that had to be addressed. The speculative stories planted in the media by TD need not be answered and there is no need to give a detailed account of the discussions held at Delhi between the two leaders. The salient features of the discussions were already told several times."

NO OBJECTION FOR AP IF NO ADVERSE REMARKS ON GOVT

From page 1

In response to the court observation that the inquiry be shifted to a Central investigation agency, the AG said the government had no objection provided there were no adverse comments on the state government and the CID on the issue.

High Court standing counsel N. Ashwani Kumar said that the High Court Registrar-General was forced to file the writ petition as the CID was not taking up the inquiry properly.

CID counsel S. Niranjan Reddy told the court that the CID was discharging its duty in accordance with the law and made it clear that it did not have any objection for transfer of the inquiry to an investigative agency working under the control of the Centre.

The court observed that all the three pillars of the state should work within the framework of the law and opined that if they try to target one another it may lead to a constitutional breakdown. The court pointed out that the state government did not disapprove of the adverse remarks and said that it was unacceptable.

CM launches Jagananna Vidya Kanuka

The kits would be distributed to about 42.32 lakh students studying in government schools

MD ILYAS | DC VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 8

Chief Minister, Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, launched the Jagananna Vidya Kanuka by presenting kits to the students in the zilla parishad high school in Punadipadu, Kankipadu mandal on Thursday.

Recalling the words of Nelson Mandela 'Education is the most powerful weapon which can be used to change the world,' Jagan Mohan Reddy asserted the need of acquiring a good education and said that the government is reforming the education sector to give a bright future to the children of AP. He stated that education/knowledge is a wealth which would not decrease and cannot be stolen. "Our children will compete with the world in the coming days with the power of quality education," he said.

The Vidya Kanuka kits, comprising cloth for three uniforms, one pair of shoes, two pairs of socks, a belt, textbooks, notebooks and a school bag, were formally handed over to students at the zilla parishad school here on Thursday and the distribution will continue for three days all over the state. The kits at a cost of ₹650 crore would be distributed to about 42.32 lakh students studying in government schools and the stitching charges for uniforms would be credited to their mothers' accounts directly so that the children will be ready for the re-opening of schools on November 2.

"Our thrust is to provide a level playing field to children from poor families to face the competitive world along with all other students. English medium from primary level was introduced keeping this in mind," said Jagan Mohan Reddy.

Indicating that education was a priority, Jagan Mohan Reddy said, "We have introduced welfare schemes to improve enrolment and bring down the illiteracy rate which is at 34 per cent. The packaging is done with eight important schemes that will take care of the child's education. It starts from the moment the child is in the womb of the mother with YSR Poshana and YSR Poshana plus which provide nutritious food to pregnant women, lactating mothers and children up to six years."

About the new shape of anganwadis, Jagan Mohan Reddy said, "Anganwadis are being revamped under Nadu Nedu along with schools and they will now serve as pre-primary schools to provide initiation into basic education and a very interesting curriculum has been drafted. Much care was taken in the drafting, as studies reveal that the child's brain is fertile and easily adaptable to knowledge in the formative years till six. YSR pre-primary schools will serve as an education hub for the budding minds."

On the subject of nutrition, Jagan Mohan Reddy said, "While in school, the child needs a balanced, nutritious midday meal and we have brought in

several mandals in Srikakulam, Vizianagaram and Visakhapatnam districts are likely to be declared drought-affected. Towards this, agriculture authorities are preparing proposals based on several criteria so that farmers raising crops in such mandals would be entitled for crop-wise financial relief to raise crops.

In Vizianagaram district, out of 34 mandals, 21 mandals have been proposed for being declared drought affected. Farmers raise paddy, maize, sugarcane and cotton in the district.

In Visakhapatnam district, out of 43 mandals, only 39 mandals are having cultivable areas and among them, three mandals are to be declared as drought hit.

In Srikakulam district, out of 38 mandals where



Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy speaks to a girl while distributing Jagananna Vidya Kanuka kits to children at Punadipadu ZP high school near Vijayawada on Thursday. — C. NARAYANA RAO.

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Jagananna gorumudda which provides a nutritious, tasty and menu with variety."

Pointing to the re-vamping of public schools, Jagan Mohan Reddy said "Nadu Nedu, Mana Badi" will change the look and feel of government schools, with running water; toilets, furniture, fans, green board, compound walls, paintings to improve the ambience, kitchens, English labs, the change in the state schools will put government school children on par with private school students."

Quality education is priority, says Suresh

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 8

The YSRC leaders lauded Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy for bringing in reforms in the education sector and criticised the Opposition for neglecting government schools during the Telugu Desam tenure.

At the launch of Jagananna Vidya Kanuka in ZP High School, Punadipadu in Kankipadu mandal of Krishna district on Thursday, minister for education Adimulapu Suresh stated that the previ-

ous government was least bothered about government schools, midday meals and neglected development of government institutions.

He said, "Jagananna Vidya Kanuka initiative is the brainchild of the Chief Minister and is aimed at providing quality education and increasing enrolment rate in government schools. It is also aimed at boosting the self-confidence of students from government schools and residential schools and to minimise the school dropouts. This will also lessen the

financial burden on parents."

He said that the Chief Minister initiated various schemes in the education sector like Nadu Nedu focusing on bringing a new look to government schools with all facilities and infrastructure in place.

MLA Kolusu Parthasarathy said the Chief Minister has been giving priority to the education sector and thus implemented many welfare schemes for the poor and backward classes.

He stated that fulfilling Gandhi's dream of Grama

Swaraj, the Chief Minister brought in the Village Secretariat system.

He stated that similarly, through the Nadu Nedu project, all the government schools are being revamped.

Parthasarathy said, "While the Chief Minister is striving to implement welfare schemes for the poor, Opposition leader Chandrababu Naidu is trying to stall the novel initiatives through litigation. Chandrababu is conspiring to stop distribution of house-sites to the poor."

Chief Minister turns 'Jagan Mamayya' for students

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 8

Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy's eye for detail came to the fore during the launch of "Jagananna Vidya Kanuka" at Zilla Parishad High school in Punadipadu of Kankipadu mandal in Krishna district on Thursday.

A Class IV girl student, Sk. Tasleem, enthralled the audience during her speech when she referred to the Chief Minister as "Jagan Mamayya".

Tasleem said she wanted to become a collector and wanted Jagan Mamayya to continue as CM of state till her dream is fulfilled and she starts work for his government. She stated that with Jagan Mamayya being there, she will not have to worry about pur-

chase of essentials like textbooks, notebooks and shoes.

The Chief Minister looked very happy when referred to as "Jagan Mamayya". He blessed the little girl and kissed her forehead after she completed her speech.

Before the launch of Jagananna Vidya Kanuka programme, the Chief Minister went around classrooms and interacted with students. He put them at ease by sharing their bench and checking whether they were comfortable for studies.

The CM personally checked the drinking water facility. He carried a bag on his shoulder to assess its weight. He helped a young girl put her bag on her back. He taught another student how to

carry the bag on a single shoulder.

The school, revamped under Nadu Nedu programme, displayed pictorial material from various subjects. Classrooms were painted, there was a bright green board, with sturdy new furniture.

The Chief Minister wrote Vidya Kanuka on the green board in a classroom. He went around looking at newly established English lab, RO water plant and toilets. He also examined the kitchen sheds on the school premises from where mid-day meals will be supplied.

The CM paid tributes to portraits of Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan and Dr. Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy installed at the school.

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TTD-run schools included in Vidya Kanuka scheme

AVINASH P. SUBRAMANYAM | DC TIRUPATI, OCT. 8:

TTD JEO (Medical and Education) Sada Bhargavi informed that seven aided TTD schools will benefit from Jagananna Vidya Kanuka Scheme with immediate effect. The JEO launched the program and distributed kits to students and their parents at Sri Govindaraja Swamy High School here on Thursday.

Speaking on the occasion, the JEO said that they have taken measures to ensure that 1,600 students studying at the remaining three unaided schools run by the TTD will also get the scheme's benefits under S.V. Vidyadana Trust. "The unique scheme of the state gov-

ernment would go a long way in achieving 100 % results and also stalling the dropouts rate. It is an extension of the set goals of TTD in the realm of education", she maintained.

She said that Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has understood the difficulties of poor parents in spending on uniforms and other educational materials for their wards.

Underlining that Vidyadana is one of the most sacred and pious among all charities mentioned in Hindu Dharma, she appealed to all students of TTD educational institutions to achieve high positions and also urged them and their parents to make good use of the facilities.



Queen Mary's High School students carry their kits after they were distributed under the Jagananna Vidya Kanuka scheme in Visakhapatnam on Thursday.

— P. NARASIMHA MURTHY

It's old scheme with a new name, says TD

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 8

Telugu Desam leader Nakka Anand Babu on Thursday slammed the Jagan Mohan Reddy government for splurging crores of public funds on publicity while neglecting the real educational needs of poor students.

He said that Vidya Kanuka was not a new scheme but an old one being projected with a new name. He contended that all such schemes were being used only for self-trumpeting purposes and nothing was being done on the ground to the real issues confronting the people.

Addressing a press conference here, Anand Babu recalled that the Chandrababu Naidu regime spent ₹400 crore for giving two pairs of uniforms,

textbooks, shoes and socks to schoolchildren. He stated that an additional ₹140 crore was also spent for providing bicycles to students. He alleged that the YSRC government has deliberately undermined this scheme and has not distributed the cycles that were procured during the TD regime.

Anand Babu deplored that the Jagan Mohan Reddy administration had scrapped nearly 15 schemes and programmes that were earmarked for students from SCs, STs and weaker sections. Even worse is that the pre and post-matric scholarships have also been cancelled by the incumbent government. This has affected prospects of students from top schools, who now have no other option but to go back to their local schools.

The PNB alleged that ₹267 crore received by Ind Barath for the sale of power was diverted to "related parties" instead of being used to repay loans.

(engineering, procurement and construction) contractor, and withdrew cash of ₹577 crore over a period of time. A recommendation was made to the Reserve Bank of India to declare the MP as a wilful defaulter in December 2018.

The PNB alleged that ₹267 crore received by Ind Barath for the sale of power was diverted to "related parties" instead of being used to repay loans. About ₹40 crore shown as receivables from a third party was transferred to related parties through book adjustment.

Excess cash flow of ₹140 crore was also diverted. The bank also suspected foul play in coal purchase, majority of which were shown as transactions having taken place on the high seas.

Account without intimating the lenders.

Incidentally, Dr P.V. Ramesh, additional chief secretary to CM, had lodged a complaint with the CBI about the financial mismanagement when he was heading the REC in 2018.

Sources said Raju's company diverted ₹357 crore to Tokyo, a Japanese EPC

than ₹3,000 crore," a senior energy official said adding that the project has remained a non-starter.

With regard to the TN plant, the company raised ₹2,389 crore, and the Rural Electrification Corporation (REF) and Power Finance Corporation (PFC) found that about ₹900 crore was diverted from the Trust and Retention

Raju's bluff of being close to BJP exposed

From page 1

The searches also called the bluff of Raju being close to the Bharatiya Janata Party central leadership. In an apparent bid to win over the sangh parivar and avoid disqualification, for which the ruling YSR Congress has already pressed in the Lok Sabha, the MP had of late had been aggressively targeting the state government on series of incidents of theft in temples

and desecration of idols.

Sources told *Deccan Chronicle* that his tiff with an industrialist duo from the state which also has a large stake in the power sector and wields enormous power in the present dispensation at the Centre added fuel and eventually led to the CBI searches. Raju is said to have been coming in the way of investment in a power project in which the industrialist duo had interests.

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N. VAMSI SRINIVAS | DC VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 8

K. Raghu Ramakrishna Raju, the rebel Lok Sabha member of the YSRC, seems to have been perpetually cheating banks and financial institutions for personal gains.

The FIR issued by the Central Bureau of Investigation on Thursday and inquiries by *Deccan Chronicle* revealed that Raju diverted hundreds of crores of rupees that were borrowed to construct and operate a thermal power plant in Tamil Nadu. The lead banker, Punjab National Bank, in its complaint alleged that Raju's Ind Barath raised ₹300 crore towards working capital but diverted the money to related parties instead of clearing its debt.

"The CBI has so far been looking into misappropriation in Ind Barath's Tamil Nadu power plant alone. The group commissioned another plant, Ind Barath Utikal, in Odisha at an estimated cost of ₹6,000 crore and borrowed more

than ₹3,000 crore," a senior energy official said adding that the project has remained a non-starter.

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Several mandals likely to be declared drought-hit

SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 8:

Several mandals in Srikakulam, Vizianagaram and Visakhapatnam districts are likely to be declared drought-affected. Towards this, agriculture authorities are preparing proposals based on several criteria so that farmers raising crops in such mandals would be entitled for crop-wise financial relief to raise crops.

In Vizianagaram district, out of 34 mandals, 21 mandals have been proposed for being declared drought affected. Farmers raise paddy, maize, sugarcane and cotton in the district.

In Visakhapatnam district, out of 43 mandals, only 39 mandals are having cultivable areas and among them, three mandals are to be declared as drought hit.

In Srikakulam district, out of 38 mandals where

● **A senior agriculture department official said, "We are receiving proposals to declare a few mandals in Srikakulam, Vizianagaram and Visakhapatnam districts as drought affected. This is aimed at bailing out aggrieved farmers."**

● **Proposals are being sent to the state disaster management authority, which takes a final on drought affected areas.**

● **The criteria includes deficit rainfall, sowing in less than 75% targeted area, soil moisture, quantum of water stored in reservoirs or tanks, status of ground water tables, among other factors.**

there is 2.38 lakh hectares of cultivable area, the district agriculture authorities have proposed to declare 15 mandals as drought affected.

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With regard to horticulture crops 62 mandals in Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam, East Godavari, West Godavari, Prakasam and Anantapur districts are also likely to be declared as drought affected.

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OTHER STORIES

IIT TIRUPATI TRAINING GOVT. ENGINEERS

MD. ILYAS | DC VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 8

A four-day online training programme for Andhra Pradesh housing department engineers on quality of work in the government's 30 lakh housing programme scheme on Thursday.

The department of Civil Engineering at IIT, Tirupati would conduct the online programme giving suggestions to the engineers for the completion of Pedalandariki Illu.

Principal secretary of the Housing Department, Ajay Jain, said that an MoU was signed with IIT, Tirupati to conduct the training programme, which, he said, will be most useful to the engineers in constructing houses following government norms with safety measures.

Mr Jain asked engineers to make good use of the training at the field level.

Mr Jain said that a total of 30 lakh houses would be constructed in two phases and the government is planning to start the first phase in the coming days.

Managing director of the state housing corporation, G. S. Naveen Kumar, said that the training programme is more useful to young engineers. Prof. K. N. Satyanarayana, director, IIT Tirupati, addressed the inaugural session and said that all the senior IIT faculty will participate in this training programme.

SCR TO OPERATE 8 MORE SPL TRAINS FROM OCTOBER 13

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 8

The South Central Railway to run eight more special trains for the benefit of passengers between various destinations from October 13.

Train No. 02784 Secunderabad-Visakhapatnam weekly special will depart Secunderabad at 5.50 pm every Saturday with effect from October 17 and will arrive Visakhapatnam at 6.50 am the next day. In the return direction, train No. 02783 Visakhapatnam-Secunderabad weekly special will depart Visakhapatnam at 6.15 pm every Sunday with effect from October 18 and will arrive Secunderabad at 7.40 am the next day.

Train No. 02776 Lingampalli-Kakinada Town tri-weekly special will depart Lingampalli at 7.55 pm every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from October 26 and will arrive at Kakinada Town at 7.15 am the next day. In the return direction, train no. 02775 Kakinada Town-Lingampalli tri-weekly special will depart Kakinada Town at 8 pm every Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday from October 25 and will arrive at Lingampalli at 7.30 am the next day.

Train No. 02708 Tirupati-Visakhapatnam Trinadha-weekly special will depart Tirupati at 9.50 pm every Wednesday, Friday and Sunday from October 14 and will arrive at Visakhapatnam at 11 am the next day. In the return direction, train no. 02797 Visakhapatnam-Tirupati tri-weekly special will depart Visakhapatnam at 10.25 pm every Thursday, Saturday and Monday from October 15 and will arrive at Tirupati at 11.35 am the next day.

Train No. 02774 Secunderabad-Shalimar weekly special will depart Secunderabad at 05.40 am every Tuesday from October 13 and will arrive at Shalimar at 9.05 am the next day.

In the return direction, train No. 02773 Shalimar-Secunderabad weekly special will depart Shalimar at 4.05 pm every Wednesday from October 14 and will arrive at Secunderabad at 6.30 pm the next day.

FAKE | COP

The accused attempted to extort money from the Chittoor MLA

Man poses as ACB officer in Chittoor, held

AVINASH P. SUBRAMANYAM | DC TIRUPATI, OCT. 8

Chittoor police on Thursday arrested a person who posed as DSP, anti-corruption bureau, (ACB) and demanded money from the Chittoor MLA, Arani Srinivasulu. The accused was identified as Uthpathi Hari Krishna, 35, an old offender and a native of Gangavaram in Chittoor district.

Disclosing the case details to mediapersons on Thursday, Chittoor in-charge DSP, Thippe Swamy said, that on October 4, Srinivasulu

received an anonymous call from a person who introduced himself as DSP, ACB.

“The accused Krishna contacted the MLA on phone and asked him to send some money through an UPI app. He told the MLA that ACB officials are going to conduct raids at the houses of big wigs and public representatives in the city in a couple of days. He also assured the MLA that he will be saved from the raids and to do this he demanded a hefty amount,” the DSP explained.

Srinivasulu contacted the special branch police and informed them about the call

AP records 5,292 new Covid cases, 42 deaths

Chittoor has registered the highest number of 784 cases

SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 8

Andhra Pradesh has registered 5,292 new Covid-19 positive cases scaling up tally to 7,39,719 and 42 deaths taking toll to 6,128 in the last 24 hours.

The state health authorities have released Covid-19 bulletin here on Thursday reporting that out of 66,944 samples tested, 5,292 individuals have been found infected with Covid-19. Out of a total of 63,49,953 samples tested so far in the state, 6,84,930 patients have been discharged from various hospitals after recovery while 48,661 patients are still active with the virus and are undergoing medical treatment.

Among the daily new confirmed Coronavirus cases, Chittoor has registered the highest number of 784 followed by 652 in East Godavari, 612 in West Godavari, 591 in Prakasam, 493 in Guntur, 399 in Krishna, 362 in Anantapur, 323 in Kadapa, 311 in Nellore, 204 in Srikakulam, 198 in Visakhapatnam, 188 in Vizianagaram and 175 in Kurnool.

East Godavari continues to report the highest number of total Covid-19 positive cases with 1,03,898 followed by 72,529 in West Godavari, 68,146 in Chittoor, 60,000 in Anantapur, 58,599 in Guntur, 57,600 in Kurnool, 55,758 in Nellore, 53,002 in Prakasam, 51,878 in Visakhapatnam 46,745 in Kadapa, 41,184 in Srikakulam, 36,775 in Vizianagaram, 30,710 in Krishna, 2,461 from other states and 434 from other countries.

The rate of recovery of Covid-19 infected patients has been good in East Godavari with 94,726 followed by 66,443 in West Godavari, 61,002 in Chittoor, 57,945 in Anantapur, 55,474 in Kurnool, 53,164 in Nellore, 52,983 in Guntur, 48,601 in Visakhapatnam, 47,896 in Prakasam, 43,151 in Kadapa, 38,602 in Srikakulam, 34,569 in Vizianagaram, 27,479 in Krishna, 2,461 from other states and 434 from other countries.

Among daily cases of death of Covid-19 infected patients, Prakasam has reported six followed by five in Chittoor and East Godavari, four each in Anantapur, Nellore and Visakhapatnam, three each in Guntur, Kadapa and Krishna, two each in Kurnool and West Godavari and one in Vizianagaram.

With regard to cumulative cases of death of Covid-19 infected patients, Chittoor has registered the highest number of 692 followed by 558 in



Health workers conducting Swab Test to women after two days at the IGMC Stadium in Vijayawada on Thursday.

NAIDU WARNS YSRC ABOUT SECOND WAVE OF COVID-19

MD ILYAS | DC VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 8

Telugu Desam chief, N. Chandrababu Naidu, on Thursday stressed the need for the Andhra Pradesh government to make more serious efforts in order to save the people from the impending second wave of Coronavirus epidemic.

Terming it as unfortunate that while Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, was raising awareness on physical distancing and mask-wearing, the AP Chief Minister, Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, was not talking at all on preventive measures, Naidu said the AP government was more interested in re-opening schools, theatres and liquor shops regardless of the threat of infection.

Making his opening remarks at the ‘apfights-corona’ online forum with Covid-19 warriors and those affected financially, Naidu said that the government should give equal emphasis to the fight against the deadly virus along with the

EG, 554 in Guntur, 517 in Anantapur, 512 in Prakasam, 484 in Krishna, 474 in Kurnool, 468 in WG, 465 in Nellore, 463 in Visakhapatnam, 391 in Kadapa, 327 in Srikakulam and 223 in Vizianagaram.

economy revival measures. He deplored that AP stood number two in the number of infections in the country and number one in virus cases per lakh population.

A more focused, cluster-based approach would be necessary to effectively prevent the disastrous impact of the second wave of infections, said Mr Naidu, adding that there were reports of serious health complications and greater number of deaths in the second attack. He further stated the future socio-economic recovery of any community, state or country would depend solely on how best they would take post-Covid-19 management steps.

Seeking a weekly audit of the status of infections that would allow the state effectively counter the epidemic, Mr Naidu demanded that the government come forward and initiate confidence-building measures among the masses by stating facts and standing by the people through the virus.

The authorities have discharged 6,102 Covid-19 infected patients after recovery in last 24 hours.

AP has carried out Covid-19 test on 1,18,913 samples per one million population and has registered

ised thrice the amount after 90 days. However, a month after floating it on August 27, the company shut shop and the promoters vanished on September 27, he said.

Pothu Raju said nothing is known about Betterways as it was not registered anywhere and had no legal sanctity.

“Only based on Google Pay or Phone Pay transactions we identified bank numbers and put a request for freezing those

and asked them to initiate a probe.

Based on the complaint, Chittoor I town police registered a case under sections 419 and 506 of the IPC and launched an investigation into the matter.

“A special police team, comprising chief inspector, Yugandhar, and subinspec-

tors, N. Vikram, Naga Soujanya and Anil Kumar, was formed to trace the accused. Based on the mobile number, the technical team tracked down the caller's location and passed on the information to the team. The team arrested Krishna on Thursday when he was at the Venganapalli crossroads,”

COVID HOSPITAL VIMS EMPTY, OFFERS GENERAL TREATMENT

K.M.P. PATNAIK | DC VISAKHAPATNAM, OCT. 8

Major COVID hospital of coastal Andhra Pradesh Visakhapatnam Institute of Medical Sciences (VIMS) has no patients and now offers general treatment which the people are not able to get from other hospitals.

Since the beginning of the increase in positive cases, VIMS, designated as the Regional Covid State Hospital, has been playing a significant role with 400 beds catering to the need of patients from three north coastal Andhra districts of Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam and East Godavari. The hospital has 250 doctors and 200 medical supporting staff and 150 nurses to serve the patients. All the critical cases were treated in this hospital, which also reported the maximum number of deaths.

Most of the patients shifted to the CSR block in King George Hospital, which has all the facilities on par with corporate hospitals with 500 beds, of which 150 are ICU.

“People prefer King George Hospital CSR block due to the facilities that are available on par with any corporate hospital in the country. Yet half of the beds are empty,” said OSD for Covid in north Andhra and principal of Andhra Medical College Dr P.V. Sudhakar.

KGH GETS NEW SUPERINTENDENT

DC CORRESPONDENT VISAKHAPATNAM, OCT. 8

Professor of General Surgery Dr P. Mythili assumed charge of the post of Superintendent, King George Hospital, Visakhapatnam on Thursday.

Orders to this effect were issued by the Director of Medical Education. She replaced Dr P.V. Sudhakar, principal of Andhra Medical College, who was officiating as in-charge superintendent after superannuation of Dr G. Arjuna.

tered Covid-19 positive rate at 11.65 while Maharashtra has tested 58,640 samples with positive rate at 20.21 and Telangana has tested 85,152 samples with positive rate at 6.12.

accounts,” he said.

In respect of Wellpay traders, the greed of the people was such that each individual took three to four IDs for opening an account and invested money ranging from ₹10,000 to ₹one lakh, said a police officer. In a way, Nandyal division is prone to frequent financial frauds. Be it Agri Gold, Akshay Gold, or Keshava Reddy schools, the roots can be traced to this commercial town, he said.

the DSP said.

During the course of interrogation, the police also found that several cases were filed against him at various locations like Byreddipalli, Punganur, Tirupati, Madanapalli Taluk, Thamballapalle and Bangarupalyam police stations.

“The accused was sent to Madanapalle sub-jail in a case and released in July this year. He was also found to have cheated several unemployed youths by collecting money from them on the pretext of offering them jobs in the government sector,” the DSP added.

Case booked against tainted officer's wife

DC CORRESPONDENT VISAKHAPATNAM, OCT. 8

Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) has booked a case against the wife of a tainted government official for trying to destroy evidence. ACB officials said Vasantha, wife of M. Ramesh Kumar, a Forest Department section officer, was trying to burn currency notes the official had received as bribe at their residence in Dev-arapalle on Wednesday evening.

Vasantha's attempts proved futile as ACB officials caught up with her when she was trying to burn the money in her kitchen.

It may be recalled that Ramesh Kumar, working with Devarapalle Division of Forest Department in Vizag district, had demanded a bribe of ₹10,000 from B. Srinu, who had purchased some teak trees axed in Sammidi village on September 29. On coming

to know about it, Ramesh Kumar called Srinu over phone and threatened to book a case if he did not pay ₹10,000. The forest official offered to also issue permission for transporting the teak logs.

Upset with this, Srinu approached ACB officials, who laid a trap on Wednesday evening. Ramesh Kumar accepted the bribe from Srinu at his home but realised that some people had surrounded his home. He immediately instructed his wife to take the currency notes into the kitchen and burn them. ACB officials intercepted and stopped her, though a ₹500 got half burnt by then.

ACB DSP Sheik Shakila Bhanu said that they have registered a case against Vasantha under section 201 r/w 511 of IPC and have issued a notice to her. The tainted officer Ramesh Kumar has, however, been arrested and remanded to judicial custody on Thursday.

MAN MURDERS LIVE-IN PARTNER SUSPECTING HER FIDELITY

DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUPATI, OCT. 8

The Manubolu Police on Thursday arrested a 40-year-old man on the charges of attacking and killing his live-in partner. The accused was identified as Chedimala Seenaiah (40), as a resident of Madamanuru village under Manubolu mandal of Nellore district.

According to Gudur DSP M. Rajagopal Reddy, the victim Chalamcharla Chenchamma (36) and her partner Seenaiah

were staying at a rented house in Madamanuru village and the incident took place on October 5. The couple was in a relationship for the last few years and had been living together for a while now.

Seenaiah used to quarrel with the victim often, suspecting her character. After one such quarrel, she left him a while ago for 20 days, only to return on October 5. They had an altercation on the same day when Seenaiah attacked her with a weapon, killing her on the spot.

Masons turned thieves, steal 108 motorbikes

DC CORRESPONDENT KAKINADA, OCT. 8

Two masons turned thieves and stole 108 bikes. They sold these bikes at very less cost to four youth. Alamuru police have arrested the six accused and recovered all the bikes worth ₹48 lakhs from them. Superintendent of police Adnan Nayeem Asmi told reporters at Alamuru police station on Thursday that this is the biggest case of theft solved by police in recent times.

Giving details of the case, the SP said Kavadi Nani Singam alias Laser (21) and Bandi Siva (22) of Madiki

Real estate brokers circulate fake currency

DC CORRESPONDENT KAKINADA, OCT. 8

Real Estate Brokers who turned to fake currency circulation were arrested. The Bikkavolu police arrested six accused, including one woman and seized items worth ₹50,000. When the two persons were making cash transactions, the fake currency notes were spotted.

The Superintendent of Police Adnan Nayeem Asmi told reporters at Alamuru Police Station on Thursday that Jasti Ramesh Chakravarthi of Undrajavaram of West Godavari district was working as real estate broker, but, he was facing a huge financial crisis due to lack of land transactions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. He went to

TWO YOUTH DROWNED IN THE SEA

DC CORRESPONDENT KAKINADA, OCT. 8

Two youth missed in the sea at S. Yanam in Uppalagupam mandal on Thursday.

According to the Uppalagupam police, the two youths went to S. Yanam sea coast to take bath. But, they

67-YR-OLD MAN RAPES 9-YR-OLD GIRL

DC CORRESPONDENT KAKINADA, OCT. 8

A 67-year-old kirana merchant allegedly raped a 9-year-old girl in Anaparthi on Thursday.

According to Anaparthi Circle Inspector N.V. Bhaskara Rao, the girl went to the shop to buy chips packets.

LOW PRESSURE IN BAY, RAINS FOR AP, TELANGANA STATE

DC CORRESPONDENT VISAKHAPATNAM, OCT. 8

A low-pressure area is very likely to form over the north Andaman Sea and adjoining East Central Bay of Bengal on Friday.

It is very likely to concentrate into a depression over the central Bay of Bengal during next 24 hours and move west-north-westwards and cross north Andhra Pradesh and adjoining south Odisha coast as a depression around October 11 afternoon.

Under its influence, light to moderate rainfall at most places with heavy to very heavy rainfall at isolated places very likely over Andaman and Nicobar Islands on October 9 and heavy rainfall from October 10 to 12.

Fairly widespread to widespread rainfall with isolated heavy fall likely over Coastal AP with isolated heavy to very heavy falls over Odisha around the same time. Heavy falls are also likely over Telangana on October 9, over Rayalaseema and North Interior Karnataka on October 10 to 11.

Squally winds with speed reaching 45-55 kmph would occur over Central Bay of Bengal and the north Andaman Sea and gusting to 65 kmph would occur over west-central and adjoining north Bay of Bengal and along and off AP and Odisha coast commencing from October 10 night for the next 36 hours.

Sea condition will be rough to very rough over the north Andaman Sea, east-central and adjoining southeast Bay of Bengal on October 9 and 10; west-central Bay of Bengal on October 10 and 11, adjoining north Bay of Benl and along and off Andhra Pradesh and Odisha coast on October 11.

Fishers are advised not to venture into these areas.

SHORT TAKES

BIRAJA RATH
YATRA GETS
ODISHA HC NODAKSHAYA KUMAR
SAHOO | DC
BHUBANESWAR, OCT. 8

Odisha High Court on Thursday gave its nod for the age old rath yatra rituals of Goddess Biraja in Jajpur. Hearing two public interest litigations, the court has directed the Collector of Jajpur district to make arrangements for holding of rath yatra adhering to Covid-19 guidelines.

Last week, the High Court had sought response from the state government on conduct of the 9-day-long rath yatra scheduled from October 17.

Earlier, two PILs had been filed by Mukti Mandapa Sevyat Parishad of Maa Biraja Temple and Jajpur district lawyers' association in the court seeking permission for holding of the chariot festival of Goddess Biraja.

In a PIL, the servitors of the Biraja Temple Mukti Mandap had stated that rath yatra of the Goddess is an age-old ritual of the deity and it must be allowed to be observed this year also. Discontinuance of the religious observance will hurt religious sentiment of thousands of devotees.

ABDULLAH BRIEFS
PM ON TALKS
WITH TALIBANDC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, OCT. 8

Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, Afghanistan's Chairman of its High Council for National Reconciliation — who is currently on a visit to India — met Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday and briefed him on the talks in Doha that are going on with the Taliban and the Afghan peace process.

Modi reaffirmed India's long term commitment to further deepening ties between the two nations, "reiterated India's commitment towards sustainable peace and prosperity in Afghanistan and welcomed efforts towards a comprehensive and permanent ceasefire in Afghanistan", the MEA said in a statement.

Meanwhile, at a "special address" on "The Future of Afghanistan" at defence thinktank "Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses" in the capital, Dr. Abdullah Abdullah urged India to play a greater role in the ongoing intra-Afghan talks, adding that India can play a vital role in establishing lasting peace in Afghanistan and the region, the IDSA said in a statement on the event.

The Afghan leader reportedly described India as an important "strategic partner" of Afghanistan.

BTC ELECTIONS
TO BE HELD
IN DECEMBERMANOJ ANAND | DC
GUWAHATI, OCT. 8

A day after holding an all-party meeting, Assam cabinet has approved the holding of the deferred Bodoland Territorial Council elections in December. The polls, scheduled for April 4, were postponed indefinitely in view of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The decision came a day after chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal chaired an all-party meeting to review the prevailing scenario at Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR), where the council election has been long due after it was put on hold following the pandemic.

The elections to the 40-member autonomous council covering four districts of Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa and Udalguri, which collectively is known as Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) under 6th Schedule of the constitution, was scheduled to take place in April.

"The cabinet also passed resolution that Bodo will be the associate official language for the state of Assam and decided to form — Bodo Kachari Autonomous Welfare Council outside 6th schedule area for welfare of Bodo community," health minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said.

These two decisions are part of the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) accord that the Centre and the state signed with All Bodo Students' Union and four factions of NDFB last year. Earlier before the cabinet decision Mr Sonowal stressed the need of taking forward the democratic system by all the stakeholders.

He called upon all the political parties to work with the 'Team Assam' spirit cutting across political affiliations.

NCP ANNOUNCES
40 STAR
CAMPAIGNERS
FOR BIHARSONU
SHRIVASTAVA | DC
MUMBAI, OCT. 8

Even though the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) has still not decided the number of seats it will contest in Bihar Assembly elections and who will be its candidates, the party on Thursday announced a list of its 40 star campaigners.

NCP chief Sharad Pawar will be its chief star campaigner in Bihar along with his daughter Supriya Sule and former Union minister Praful Patel.

When asked about the number of seats and names of candidates, a party official said it will be announced soon.

The NCP is one of the principal political parties in Maharashtra but small player in Bihar politics. However, the party has decided to contest the election as they were denied even three seats by the RJD-led grand alliance in Bihar.

Confirming the decision to contest the Bihar elections, party spokesperson Mahesh Tapase said, "Party's national spokesperson Nawab Malik will announce the details of seats and candidates in coming days."

However, NCP general secretary and Bihar Assembly election in-charge K.K. Sharma said that the party has decided to contest 145 seats in Bihar.

Of these, the party has given AB form to 40 candidates, who had filed their nomination papers on Thursday, he said.

"We had demanded three seats from the grand alliance. But they did not give us even one. Therefore, being a national party, we are bound to contest the Assembly election," Mr. Sharma added.

When asked whether the division of anti-BJP votes will benefit the BJP or not, Mr Sharma said, "It is not the responsibility that solely lies with the NCP."

The NCP general secretary claimed that his party had demanded three seats including two Pranpur and Kadwa assembly seats from Katihar district and Kewati seat from Darbhanga district.

Interestingly, the NCP was offered three seats by the JD(U)-RJD-Congress alliance in 2015 elections.

However, the Sharad Pawar-led party found the offer insulting and contested 41 seats on its own, losing all of them. Party candidate's election deposit was forfeited in 40 seats in 2015.



AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi, RLSP chief Upendar Kushwaha, Samajwadi Janata Dal Democratic chief Devendra Yadav and BSP leaders join with hands after announcing their Grand Democratic Secular Front alliance for upcoming Bihar assembly elections in Patna on Thursday. — PTI

Paswan always read
writing on the wall

He wanted to write about the history of socialist politics

SREEPARNA
CHAKRABARTY | DC
NEW DELHI, OCT. 8

Ram Vilas Paswan was already in hospital when his son Chirag Paswan decided to leave the NDA ahead of the Bihar Assembly polls. We will never find out whether junior Paswan's decision had the stamp of approval from his father the *Mausam Vigyanik*.

For had the socialist leader vetted his son's decision we would have known which side the wind was blowing in the Bihar Assembly polls.

Mr Paswan, who was the Union Minister for Food and Consumer Affairs was considered to be one of the smartest politicians who along with Sharad Yadav and Lalu Prasad emerged as the young socialist brigade of Bihar as part of Jayaprakash Narayan's movement.

Born in Khagaria in Bihar in 1946, he was first elected to the Bihar state legislative assembly in 1969 as a member of the Samyukta Socialist Party from a reserved constituency. In 1974, Mr Paswan became the general secretary of the Lok Dal.

He was personally close to the prominent leaders of anti-Emergency like Raj Narain, Karpoori Thakur and Satyendra Narayan Sinha. He parted



ways with Morarji Desai and joined Janata Party-S led by Lokbandhu Raj Narain as party's president and later as its Chairman.

He spent the entire period of Emergency beginning 1975 in jail. When he was released in 1977, the Dalit leader became a member of the Janata Party and won election a Lok Sabha election with the highest margin ever.

What also can make into the world records is the fact that he has been a Union minister in almost all the governments since then.

Paswan was re-elected to the 7th Lok Sabha in 1980 and 1984 from Hajipur constituency. In 1983, he established the Dalit Sena, an organisation for Dalit emancipation and welfare. It was from this juncture that he modeled himself as a Dalit face.

He was instrumental in implementation of the Mandal Commission report in 1990s.

The Dalit Sena was later headed by his brother Ram Chandra Paswan, who passed away a couple of years before.

Mr Paswan was re-elected to the 9th Lok Sabha in 1989 and was appointed Union Minister of Labour and Welfare in the Vishwanath Pratap Singh government. In 1996, he even led the ruling alliance or Proposition in the Lok Sabha as the Prime Minister was a member of the Rajya Sabha.

This was also the year when Paswan first became the Union Railway Minister. He continued to hold that post till 1998. Thereafter, he was the Union Communications Minister from October 1999 to September 2001 when he was shifted to the Coal Ministry, the portfolio he held till April 2002.

In 2000, Mr Paswan broke from the Janata Dal, to form the Lok Janshakti Party (LJP). Following the 2004 Lok Sabha elections, he joined the United Progressive Alliance government and was made the Union Minister in Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers and Ministry of Steel.

But with Narendra Modi's advent in 2014, he was quick to read the writing on the wall and joined the NDA becoming the Union Minister for Food and Consumer Affairs.

However, before the 2019 General Elections, Mr Paswan handed over the baton of his party to son Chirag and devoted himself just to the ministry.

In Delhi, his official residence 12 Janpath, which he retained most of his life, was an open House for party workers and journalists.

An old school politician, Mr Paswan maintained a personal relationship with the media. Rarely would a call or request for an interview go unanswered.

Many a times, reporters would sit late in his drawing room with Mr Paswan sharing political anecdotes from his over four decade old career.

In a recent interaction with this reporter, he had expressed interest in writing about the history of socialist politics in India.

Despite changing sides with political exigencies, he maintained a good personal rapport with politicians. The Union Minister never failed to send his greetings on her birthday to his long-time next door neighbour Sonia Gandhi.

With his death, Mr Paswan takes away a section of India's politics which was tolerant, rooted to the grassroots and remained modest till the very end. It remains to be seen whether Chirag Paswan can keep his father's legacy alive.

UDDHAV TO
CAMPAIGN
IN BIHARBHAGWAN PARAB | DC
MUMBAI, OCT. 8

In an indication that Shiv Sena has decided to contest the upcoming Bihar assembly polls with all the might, it has named party president and Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray as its star campaigner. The Sena will be sending several of its top leaders to campaign in the northern state.

On Thursday, it released a list of 20 leaders who will campaign in Bihar. Along with Uddhav, his son and Maharashtra tourism minister Aaditya Thackeray will also be one of Sena's prime campaigners in Bihar. Other party leaders, who would campaign, include Maharashtra industries minister Subhash Desai, MPs Sanjay Raut, Anil Desai, Vinayak Raut, Arvind Sawant, Rahul Shewale and Priyanka Chaturvedi.

To strike a chord with the local voters, the party has also named north Indian leaders like Yograj Sharma, Kaushalendra Sharma, Vinay Shukla, Gulabchand Dubey, Akhilesh Tiwari and Ashok Tiwari to campaign in Bihar.

The Sena has announced that it will contest nearly 50 seats in Bihar. The party had contested the 2015 assembly polls too, in which it had polled more than two lakh votes.

Mumbai police busts 'TRP scam',
Republic TV under scannerDC CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI, OCT. 8

Mumbai police commissioner Param Bir Singh on Thursday personally held a press conference to announce an investigation into the alleged "Television Rating Points (TRP) scam" by some television channels.

The commissioner named three TV channels, including *Republic TV* that claims to have the highest TRP among news channels, for their involvement in the alleged scam.

Republic TV's editor-in-chief Arnab Goswami dismissed the allegations and said the channel will file a criminal defamation case against the police commissioner.

According to Mr Singh, the police acted on a complaint filed by Hansa Research, a firm appointed by the Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) to monitor barometers used for determining TRP ratings of TV channels. Mr Singh said about 30,000 such meters had been installed across the country including 2,000 in Mumbai.

Information about the households where the meters are installed is

● **Republic TV's** editor-in-chief Arnab Goswami dismissed the allegations and said the channel will file a criminal defamation case against the police commissioner.

● **Mr Singh** said that a set of households where barometers were installed were paid money to tune to a particular channel. In one case, Mumbai's top police officer said, investigators found that a household comprising people who were not literate always had an English news channel switched on.

treated as confidential so that the data isn't manipulated. Hansa Research approached the police against some of their employees who could have influenced households where barometers were installed in order to manipulate TRP data.

It is a cheating (breach of trust) complaint turned into an FIR, the police commissioner told reporters.

Police have arrested owners of two Marathi channels — *Fakt Marathi* and *Box Cinema* — and two former employees of

Hansa Research under sections 409 and 420 of IPC. Mr Singh claimed that *Republic TV* was also named in a BARC analytical report as a suspect. He said that owner, directors and promoters of Republic TV will also be probed in the case.

However, *Republic TV* dismissed the allegations as "false" and said it will file a criminal defamation case against the Mumbai police commissioner.

In a statement, Mr Goswami said, "There is not a single BARC report that mentions *Republic TV*. The people of India know the truth. Mr Parab Bir Singh's investigation in the Sushant Singh Rajput case is under a cloud and this a desperate measure because of *Republic TV's* reportage on Palghar (mob lynching of two Sadhus), the Sushant Singh Rajput case or any other case. This kind of targeting only strengthens the resolve of everyone at *Republic TV* to push for the truth even harder. Param Bir Singh stands completely exposed today, since BARC has not mentioned Republic in any single complaint. He should issue an official apology and get ready to face us in court."

"We suspect that if this was happening in Mumbai then it could be happening in other parts of the country as well," Mr Singh added.

ONE-FIFTHS OF
JD(U)'S PICKS
ARE WOMENNAYEAR AZAD | DC
PATNA, OCT. 8

The ruling JD(U) has landed into a controversy by fielding former social welfare minister Manju Verma from Cheria-Bariyarpur Assembly constituency of Begusarai district.

Ms Verma, who was the state's social welfare minister till a few years ago, had to step down in disgrace when it was alleged that her husband had close ties with Brajesh Thakur, the prime accused in the Muzaffarpur shelter home sex scandal surfaced in July 2018.

Call data records revealed her husband Chandrasekhar Verma and Brajesh Thakur spoke to each other more than 17 times between January and May 2018. While Mr Thakur was arrested along with others in June 2018, Mr Verma had gone into hiding, causing embarrassment for the JD(U)-BJP government in Bihar.

The former minister was also arrested under the arms act case for the illegal procession of ammunition in November 2018. She was later suspended from the party.

Muzaffarpur shelter incident was perhaps the first case in the state where 35 minor girls were physically and sexually abused.

Ms Verma is among the 22 women candidates being fielded by the JD(U).

JD(U) leaders in Patna said that the party has fielded around 20 per cent women candidates for this year's Assembly elections.

While the JD(U) and BJP remained tight-lipped over the development, sources said that the Opposition RJD may use it against the NDA during their poll campaign.

Assembly elections in Bihar for 243 seats are to be held in three phases, beginning October 28, and results will be declared on November 10. Besides, quite a few candidates happen to be wives of those with criminal backgrounds, whom the party may stand accused of trying to accommodate while appearing to maintain a distance.

One such candidate is Manorama Devi — a sitting MLC from Gaya district — whose late husband Bindeshwari Prasad Yadav was a local musclem. Her son's involvement in a road rage case four years ago had caused the JD(U) to suspend her from the party. She is now the party's official candidate from Sherghati in Gaya.

IN BRIEF

Kyrgyzstan leader missing

Bishkek: The whereabouts of Kyrgyzstan's pro-Russia president were unknown Thursday as a power vacuum persisted after disputed parliamentary elections plunged the Central Asian country into a new bout of political chaos. Sooronbay Jeenbekov has not been seen in public since unrest began over Sunday's vote which was won by his supporters but opponents as well as monitors said was marred by widespread vote-buying. Clashes have already left at least one dead and hundreds injured, with a decision to annul the results of the polls doing little to ease the tensions. The crisis is the latest political turbulence to sweep through the volatile ex-Soviet state bordering China which has seen two revolutions and three of its presidents either jailed or sent into exile since independence. Jeenbekov has called for a return to a rule of law.

Kuwait's crown prince sworn in

Kuwait City: Kuwait's new crown prince, Sheikh Meshal al-Ahmad al-Jaber Al-Sabah, took his oath of office before parliament on Thursday, after being nominated by his half-brother, the new emir. Sheikh Meshal, 80, a long-serving top security official, was unanimously approved by the National Assembly. He swore to "defend the liberties, interests and properties of the people" and to safeguard the country's independence and integrity. Kuwait's new emir, Sheikh Nawaf al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, was appointed on September 30 after his own half-brother, Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, died at the age of 91 while being treated in hospital in the US. Sheikh Meshal, 80, has been deputy chief of the Kuwait National Guard since 2004, largely staying out of the political scene and away from disputes within the royal family. His appointment, rather than the selection of a next-generation candidate, is seen as a conservative choice.

Don: Afghan troop pullout by X'Mas

Washington: US President Donald Trump on Wednesday sought withdrawal of all American troops from Afghanistan by Christmas this year. "We should have the small remaining number of our BRAVE Men and Women serving in Afghanistan home by Christmas!" Trump said in a tweet Wednesday night. After an agreement with the Taliban on February 29 this year, the US reduced its force level to 8,600 and turned five bases over to its Afghan partners. This August, the president made a determination that the conditions in Afghanistan were sufficient to reduce the force presence to between 4,000 and 5,000 by November end. Assistant Secretary of Defence for Indo-Pacific Security Affairs, David F. Heilve, told lawmakers last month that Pentagon is making "prudent planning" to withdraw all troops from Afghanistan by May next year.

OPEN PUBLISHER PAYMENT TALKS, GOOGLE TOLD

Paris, Oct. 8: A French appeals court upheld an order for Google to open negotiations with French publishers over payments to use their news content. The Paris Court of Appeal sided with France's competition authority, which had ordered the US tech company to discuss compensation with publishers and news agencies for reusing their material online.

French regulators had argued that Google must sit down for talks under a "neighbouring rights" law adopted after the European Union overhauled the bloc's copyright rules, which include allowing news companies to demand payments when search engines display snippets of their stories.

Google had balked and threatened last year to stop displaying snippets and thumbnail photos in its search results but French regulators said in April that the company was likely abusing its dominant position.

Google argued it shouldn't have to pay because news companies benefit from the millions of readers it sends to their websites. The company also unsuccessfully argued that the competition watchdog overstepped its authority. Google has at the same time been in more narrowly focused talks on digital copyright.



Democratic vice-presidential nominee and Senator from California, Kamala Harris and US Vice-President Mike Pence (R) stand after participating in the vice-presidential debate in Kingsbury Hall at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City, Utah on Wednesday.

Second debate going virtual

Move on debate a fallout of the President contracting Coronavirus

Washington, Oct. 8: The second presidential debate between President Donald Trump and Democratic nominee Joe Biden will take place virtually amid the fallout from the president's diagnosis of Covid-19. The nonpartisan Commission on Presidential Debates debates made the announcement Thursday morning, a week before the two were scheduled to face on in Miami.

The candidates will "participate from separate remote locations," while the participants and moderator remain in Miami, the commission said. Trump was diagnosed with the Coronavirus a week ago and said he looked forward to debating Biden on stage in Miami, saying, "It will be great!" Biden, for his part, said he and Trump "shouldn't have a debate" as long as the president remains Covid positive.

Biden told reporters in Pennsylvania that he was "looking forward to being able to debate him" but said "we're going to have to follow very strict guidelines." The Russia probe is back in the political spotlight. President Donald Trump this week ordered the declassification of all documents related to how the FBI and US intelligence agencies investigated Russian interference in the 2016 presidential race.

Democrats quickly called the move a political stunt in the middle of the president's heated campaign to defeat Democrat Joe Biden in the November 3 election.

Moreover, intelligence professionals blasted John Ratcliffe, the director of national intelligence and a Trump loyalist, for going along with the declassification, saying it was a flagrant example of using intelligence for political purposes. Ratcliffe has been working to declassify details about the Russia investigation, which culminated in the 2019 report by former special counsel Robert Mueller. Mueller's report found no criminal conspiracy between the Trump campaign and Russia to tip the outcome of the 2016 presidential election in Trump's favour, but there was ample evidence of Russian interference favouring Trump. Trump remains irritated by the Russia probe because he thinks it delegitimizes his presidency.

TAIPEI REACTS TO CHINA NOTE TO INDIAN MEDIA

New Delhi, Oct. 8: China was accused by Taiwan of trying to impose censorship in India after its embassy in New Delhi advised journalists to observe the "one-China" principle after newspapers carried advertisements for Taiwan's national day. Coming just months after deadly clashes between Indian and Chinese troops on the disputed Himalayan border, the row has flared at a time when Indian sentiments toward China are filled with antipathy and doubt. — Agencies

NOT GOING TO DO VIRTUAL DEBATE WITH BIDEN: DON

Washington, Oct. 8: Donald Trump vowed Thursday not to participate in next week's debate with Democratic nominee Joe Biden after organisers announced that it will take place virtually because of the president's diagnosis of Covid-19.

"I'm not going to do a virtual debate" with Biden, Trump told *Fox News*, moments after the Commission on Presidential Debates announced the changes due to Trump's diagnosis. That cast serious doubts on whether the event will go forward, even as Biden's campaign vowed that its candidate will participate.

"Vice President Biden looks forward to speaking directly to the American people," deputy Biden campaign manager Kate Bedingfield said in a statement. It is more evidence that the race remains defined by the virus, even as Trump has attempted to underplay it.

The announcement from the nonpartisan Commission on Presidential Debates cited a need "to protect the health and safety of all involved with the second presidential debate." The candidates will "participate from separate remote locations" while the participants and moderator remain in Miami. — AP

Washington, Oct. 8: The vice presidential debate on Wednesday had plexiglass barriers to prevent the spread of Covid-19, but they couldn't stop the night's most talked-about intruder — a giant stray housefly that perched on Vice President Mike Pence's cropped white hair for over two minutes, generating buzz online.

While US President Donald Trump's handling of the Coronavirus was the elephant in the room during the debate between Pence and his Democratic rival Senator Kamala Harris, it was Pence's six-legged companion and the pinkness in his left eye that lit up Twitter.

Covid, China, jobs dominate

Washington, Oct. 8: The much-awaited vice presidential debate between Kamala Harris and Mike Pence saw the duo sparring on US President Donald Trump's handling of the Covid-19 pandemic, jobs, China, racial tensions and climate change, less than four weeks ahead of the election.

Harris, the Democratic Party's vice president nominee described the Trump's handling of the Covid-19 pandemic as the "greatest failure of any presidential administration in the history" of America as she opened the vice debate with a sharp attack on Vice President Pence, who leads the president's Coronavirus task force. Wednesday night's live debate at The University of Utah in Salt Lake City was a civil one between the two leaders, separated by plexiglass barriers, compared to last week's showdown between President Trump and his Democratic challenger and former vice president Joe Biden, which degenerated into insults and name-calling.

Pence, did not interrupt as much as Trump last week during the first presidential debate, but

when he did Harris interjected: "Mr Vice-President, I'm speaking, I'm speaking." During the 90-minute one-off debate before the November 3 presidential election, Harris, 55, and Pence, 61, stuck to their known campaign positions on major topics. Pence, who entered the debate as an underdog, was seen vigorously defending the actions of the Trump Administration during the past nearly four years.

Harris, who scripted yet another history, by becoming the first person of Indian descent to be on the stage of a vice presidential debate, charmed with her smiling face throughout while responding to answers to Pence with facts and figures with the same assertiveness as she started her career as a district attorney in San Francisco. "This administration has forfeited their right to re-election," she asserted at the start of the debate. "Biden wants to go back to the economic surrender to China that when we took office, half of our international trade deficit was with China alone," Pence fired back. — PTI

HARRIS' 'I'M SPEAKING' ON T-SHIRTS

Washington, Oct. 8: Anything sells, if your business idea is one of a kind.

And this is unexpectedly becoming increasingly evident just after US Vice-Presidential Debate. Democratic vice-presidential nominee Kamala Harris' snub to US Vice President Mike Pence during the debate is quickly becoming a buzzword online and people are already selling mugs and T-shirts.

"Mr Vice President I am speaking, I am speaking," was Kamala Harris' warning for Mike Pence to stop interrupting her.

Such was the force in her words and her gaze that Pence promptly stopped talking.

"I am still speaking" is appearing to be the buzzword everyone craves in the age of social media. Within minutes of Kamala Harris' snub, sellers started selling merch with the words printed on it.

Websites like Etsy were offering mugs, T-shirts and even coronavirus masks with words "I am still speaking" printed on them.

Kamala Harris was criticising Trump administration's handling of coronavirus pandemic. — Agencies

Fly atop Pence head steals show

Pence never reacted to the fly taking up residence on his perfectly coiffed white hair and spent most of the 90-minute live debate answering questions posed by moderator Susan Page of *USA Today*, but the fly brought up a slew of questions of its own.

On social media, the fly, which sat atop Pence's head for 2 minutes and 3 seconds, became the biggest star. On Twitter, an account named @MikePenceFly swiftly gained thousands of followers.

Harris' running mate, Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden, posted a picture of himself with a fly swatter on

Twitter, asking supporters to "Pitch in \$5 to help this campaign fly." His campaign set up a website, flywillvote.com, to register voters. Within the hour, it was selling a "Truth over Flies" fly swatter for \$10. Some Democrats took the opportunity to bring up President Trump's Covid-19 infection.

"The fly needs to be quarantined," Democratic Representative Ilhan Omar wrote. Republican Senator Rand Paul, a Trump ally, joked: "The deep state planted a bug on @VP. This illegal spying is really out of control." Setting aside the issue of the vice-president having a fly on his head, people also pointed

to the condition of his left eye. Numerous viewers spotted that Pence's left eye had a distinctly pinkish tone, prompting widespread discussion about pink eye. "Is he OK," Indian-American actor-model Padma Lakshmi wrote in a tweet accompanying a video of Pence where his eye is noticeably bloodshot.

"He was terrible and amazingly stiff and fake. And looked sick with the pink eye AND the fly was attracted to s**t," said a tweet from another user. Pink eye, or conjunctivitis, can be a symptom of coronavirus. Pence tested negative for Covid-19 ahead of the debate. — PTI

Glück wins literature Nobel prize

Stockholm, Oct. 8: American poet Louise Glück won the Nobel Prize in Literature on Thursday for her "candid and uncompromising" work, which looks unflinchingly and with biting humour at the losses and traumas of family life. She joins a handful of American poets who have received the prize, which has been dominated by novelists throughout its 112-year history. The last American to win was Bob Dylan in 2016. She is also one of the few women — the 16th female Nobel Literature laureate.

The Nobel Committee praised Glück "for her unmistakable poetic voice that with austere beauty makes individual existence universal" in the citation read during the announcement in Stockholm by Mats Malm, the permanent secretary of the Swedish Academy. New York-born Glück, 77, who is a faculty member at Yale University, made her debut in 1968 with "Firstborn," and "was soon acclaimed as one of the most prominent poets in American contemporary literature," the committee said.

Anders Olsson, chairman of the Nobel literature committee, said Glück's 12 collections of poetry were "characterized by striving for clarity." They include "Descending Figure," "The Triumph of Achilles" and "Ararat." Olsson said her verses, which often draw on classical influences



Louise Glück

and examine family life, were marked by an "austere but also playful intelligence and a refined sense of composition."

Raised in a family with Hungarian Jewish origins, Glück has spoken of how a teenage struggle with anorexia, and the therapy she received for it, influenced her incisive writing. "Louise Glück's voice is unmistakable. It is candid and uncompromising, and it signals that this poet wants to be understood. But it is also voice full of humor and biting wit," Olsson said.

"This is a great resource when Glück treats one of our great topics, radical change, where the leap forward is made from a deep sense of loss," Glück is the recipient of Guggenheim and National Endowment for the Arts fellowships, the American Academy of Arts and Letters' Gold Medal in Poetry and the National Humanities Medal. She won the Pulitzer Prize in 1993 for "The Wild Iris" and the National Book Award. — AP

Dems flay Don for H-1B curbs

Washington, Oct. 8: The Democratic Party has criticised President Donald Trump for announcing "sweeping changes" to the H-1B nonimmigrant visa programme in decades without public scrutiny, saying it is clearly an attempt to score last-minute political points ahead of the November 3 presidential election. In a move which will affect thousands of Indian IT professionals, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) on Tuesday announced the interim final rule, which, the Trump administration said, is aimed at protecting American workers, restoring integrity and to better guarantee that H-1B petitions are approved only for qualified beneficiaries and petitioners.

House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler on Wednesday said: "With less than 30 days to go before the elections, the Trump administration announced that it will implement the most sweeping changes to the H-1B visa programme we have seen in decades — and will do so by skirting the normal notice and comment process required by the Administrative Procedure Act".

The powerful Democrat from New York said while the programme can certainly benefit from reforms, the US laws require that the public be provided with adequate notice and

a meaningful opportunity to comment before such reforms are implemented.

"This simply cannot be accomplished to the degree required through an interim final rule and the administration knows this. This is clearly an attempt to score the last-minute political points," Nadler said. The H-1B visa is a non-immigrant visa that allows US companies to employ foreign workers in speciality occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise. The technology companies depend on it to hire tens of thousands of employees each year from countries like India and China. Such a decision by the Trump administration will have an adverse impact on thousands of Indian IT professionals.

Already a large number of Indians on the H-1B visas have lost their jobs and are headed back home during the Coronavirus pandemic that has severely hit the US economy. Immigration and Citizenship Subcommittee Chair Zoe Lofgren said that over the years, she had introduced several bills that would reform the H-1B programme to prohibit substandard wages and ensure that unscrupulous employers don't abuse the system to the detriment of US workers. "While the system needs updating, changes, this must not be rushed through without adequate input from the public. — PTI

India: Don't misuse UNSC to frame innocents

United Nations, Oct. 8: The United Nations Security Council should not be misused by countries with "retaliatory intent to name innocent civilians as terrorist" without credible evidence by invoking non-transparent working methods and procedures, India has said, referring to Pakistan's failed attempt to get four Indian nationals listed under the 1267 Al Qaeda Sanctions Committee. Pakistan had submitted the names of Indian nationals Angara Appaji, Gobinda Patnaik, Ajoy Mistry and Venumadhav Dongara for designation under the 1267 Al Qaeda

Sanctions Committee of the UN Security Council.

However, Pakistan's attempt was thwarted last month after the US, the UK, France, Germany and Belgium blocked the move in the Council to list Appaji and Patnaik. According to sources, no evidence was given by Pakistan in its case to get the individuals listed.

Similarly, an earlier attempt by Pakistan to list Mistry and Dongara was blocked by the Council around June/July.

"We believe that UN Security Council continues to be an effective forum for the maintenance of international peace and

security and combating terrorism."

"However, it should also be ensured that the forum is not misused by countries with retaliatory intent to name innocent civilians as terrorist without credible evidence by invoking non-transparent working methods and procedures," First Secretary and Legal Adviser in India's Permanent Mission to the United Nations Yedla Umasankar said on Tuesday at the 6th Committee of the United Nations General Assembly on 'Measures to eliminate international terrorism'. Without naming

Pakistan, he said, "India has been and continues to be a victim of terrorism sponsored across our borders. We have had firsthand experience of the cruel link between transnational organised crime and terrorism."

"Our fight against terrorism should not only seek to eliminate terrorists and disrupt terror organisations/networks, but should also identify/hold accountable and take strong measures against states that encourage, support and finance terrorism, provide sanctuary to terrorists and terror groups," he said. — PTI

Hostage deaths: UK IS members charged

Washington, Oct. 8: Two Islamic State militants from Britain were brought to the United States to face charges in a gruesome campaign of torture, beheadings and other acts of violence against four Americans and others captured and held hostage in Syria. El Shafee Elsheikh and Alexandra Kotey are two of four men who were dubbed "the Beatles" by the hostages just because of

the captors' British accents.

The two men made their first appearance on Wednesday in federal court in Alexandria, Virginia, where a federal grand jury issued an eight-count indictment that accuses them of being "leading participants in a brutal hostage-taking scheme" that resulted in the deaths of Western hostages. — AP

DECCAN Chronicle

9 OCTOBER 2020

LJP's Bihar poll games bare BJP's secret hand

The twist imparted to the upcoming Bihar Assembly election by the decision of the LJP, an NDA ally, to field candidates against Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's JD(U), also an NDA ally, upends previous calculations about possible outcomes. It also invites us to reflect on the BJP's relationship with allies once the saffron party has gains in strength in a state with the help of those very allies.

Until recently it was thought that Mr Kumar would return as CM for the fourth term without difficulty, although in the face of the twin crises emanating from the return of the migrant workers and the rapid spread of Covid-19, Mr Kumar's government appeared at sea, confirming that the CM was not one for big ideas. But he wasn't one for small ideas either.

The government's grave inadequacies evident in dealing with the infamous shelter home case, which highlighted the cruel exploitation of young girls by the head of the NGO that ran the shelter, badly dented the CM's "sushasan babu" or Mr Good Governance image cultivated through propaganda. The social welfare minister whose husband had a nexus with the accused was forced to resign and was later arrested under the Arms Act, but she has once again been given the JD(U) ticket.

In 2015, Mr Kumar fought the election and became CM in alliance with Lalu Yadav's RJD. But he jumped ship in 2017 to be with BJP, the main Opposition party, and kept his job. The BJP was just grateful to be able to wiggle and get into government. Unlike in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, it didn't have to turn a hair, other than to spread the rumour that Mr Kumar is enabled to give his best as leader of government only when in alliance with it and not the RJD. In fact, the record of the BJP ministers in Bihar is as dismal as of the JD(U) but it can hide behind the CM's lack of imagination, and take succour from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's image.

For all this, the prognosis was that of an easy ride for JD(U)-BJP. Being in jail, their principal foe Lalu Yadav is absent from the campaign. It's widely believed that the poll is being held in spite of the severe Covid crisis in Bihar because the government's opponents can't match its resources in running virtual rallies through thousands of television sets and other gizmos. LJP leader Chirag Paswan's decision has led to the view that he is dancing to BJP's tune in aiming to cut the CM's party to size to enable the saffron party to emerge as number one. With even senior BJP politicians queuing up for the LJP ticket, this suspicion thickens. If BJP-LJP are playing games, it will be interesting to see which way the JD(U) vote splinters, and if the ludicrously-named grand alliance of RJD-Congress-Left is in with a chance, after all.

Spare the commuter

The Supreme Court judgment on Wednesday making it unequivocally clear that public ways and spaces cannot be occupied indefinitely by protesters and that democracy and dissent must go hand in hand can be seen as an attempt to strike a fine balance between the right to freedom of speech and expression and the demands on governance in a democracy. The judgement came on a petition filed against a Delhi High Court order which refused to instruct the Delhi administration to clear the Kalindi Kunj-Shaheen Bagh stretch which was occupied by protesters against the Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019.

The court was categorical in rejecting the argument that citizens have an absolute right of peaceful protest but was careful in not giving the government a carte blanche. It called Article 19, which confers on citizens two 'treasured rights' of freedom of speech and expression, one of the cornerstones of the Constitution, and that was a strong message indeed. "In a democracy, the opposition is not only tolerated as constitutional, but must be maintained because it is indispensable," it quoted Walter Lippmann, Pulitzer winning journalist. The court, however, reminded the protesters that the mode and manner of dissent against colonial rule cannot be equated with dissent in a self-ruled democracy. In the end, the demonstrations expressing dissent have to be in "designated places alone," the court ruled.

No democrat should find fault with such a balanced prescription. But the sad fact is that the courts do not come to adjudicate such issues in time all the time. The habeas corpus petitions the citizens of India from the fully-integrated Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir have filed with the apex court are still pending in the court, unheard. Or the unaddressed plight of the guest workers during the lockdown. The courts must protect the constitutional rights of all citizens all the times; occasional interventions would hardly do.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

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Subhani



Can 'Quad' grow into a force that China fears?

K.C. Singh

The foreign ministers of Australia, India, Japan and the United States met in Tokyo on October 6-7, a second time at the ministerial level, in a group that was christened the "Quad", or Quadrilateral, at the first meeting in 2007 at the additional secretary level.

Then Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was the driving force behind that meeting, held on the Asean Regional Forum sidelines in mid-2007. He fell months later and his successor Yasuo Fukuda, wishing to engage China, lost interest in the Quad. In December 2007, the Liberal Party lost power in Australia, ushering in Labour PM Kevin Rudd, an acknowledged Chinese-speaking Sinophile. US President George W. Bush, embroiled in stabilising Iraq and with one year of his presidency remaining, saw China as critical to handling the nuclear and missile proliferation of North Korea. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had in any case been a reluctant participant, as Sino-Indian relations were still in the phase of growing economic engagement, while maintaining peace and stability at the Line of Actual Control. Thus, the Quad went into hibernation.

Its revival over a decade later reflects the changed geopolitical context. Mr Abe was again Prime Minister and moving Japan away from its pacifist postwar constitution. India under Narendra Modi and the United States under Donald Trump now had populist-nationalist leaders. Australia was again under Liberal Party rule. Moreover, China under President Xi Jinping was brazenly asserting real and imaginary claims on the seas and land, impinging on the sovereignty of neighbours. Despite the 2016 ruling against its claims by the Permanent Court of Arbitration, in a case

brought by the Philippines under the UN Convention on the Laws of the Seas, China proceeded to occupy, militarise and declare its artificially created islands as its territory with vast economic zones. China was now a revisionist power, scoffing at the rules-based global order and willing to use the threat of force to unilaterally enforce its claims.

Concomitantly, China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), announced in 2013 as a benign infrastructure and connectivity project, began to be seen darkly as an instrument for debt traps and neo-colonisation. Meanwhile, chants grew in the developed world, starting with the US, that globalisation had become a Chinese weapon to de-industrialise Western manufacturing powerhouses. Of course, the European criticism was more calibrated as countries like Germany had a huge market in China. But President Trump made China the main whipping boy in his populist harangue on America's economic woes.

The Covid-19 pandemic, that spread from Wuhan in China, exacerbated the perception that China was not just a competitor but a strategic rival upending the rules-based post-World War II order. Thus, the Quad was no longer a projection of Mr Abe's vanity. It was a timely means to rally democratic, liberal nations in the Indo-Pacific to create a network to balance, or even contain, China's disorderly rise.

This week's Quad meeting was timely also because Japan had a change of leadership, with the ailing Mr Abe passing the baton to his confidant Yoshihide Suga, who spoke to the leaders of Australia, India and the US before engaging Chinese President Xi Jinping, signalling continuity in the Japanese commitment to the Quad. Chinese foreign minister and state council

lor Wang Yi, a former ambassador to Japan, will visit Tokyo later this month. Mr Xi's postponed visit to Japan is still up in the air. China may be belatedly realising the dangers of the revived Quad and thus may be trying to neutralise Japan. China should worry over Japan's \$2.27 billion outlay to enable Japanese businesses in China to shift to the homeland or elsewhere. Japan is also critical to the finalisation of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), consisting of the 10 Asean nations and China, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand. India has resisted joining that without adequate protection for its domestic industry. With the Sino-Indian confrontation in Ladakh and Chinese intrusions into contested or India-controlled areas, economic and trade issues are now intertwined with the strategic and military ones. The Quad reflects this reality.

There may have been no joint statement but tweets by participants revealed what was discussed. Other than the US, no one else named China, even though China was at the heart of the meeting. US secretary of state Mike Pompeo felt "the Quad shares a vision for peace, security and prosperity in a free and open Indo-Pacific". External affairs minister S. Jaishankar sought "respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty and peaceful resolution of disputes". All the four ministers supported what is coined as "FOIP", or Free and Open Indo-Pacific.

More than a group statement, their views were reflected in the bilateral meetings and earlier understandings. For instance, the Resilient Supply Chain Initiative (RSCI), driven by the post-Covid conflation of need to de-couple from China and diversify and secure sup-

A Joe Biden administration may rebalance relations with China, relaxing trade sanctions in exchange for climate change cooperation

ply chains for pharmaceuticals, semiconductors, telecommunications and automobiles etc. Chinese aggressiveness with neighbours, military confrontation with India, forcible occupation of Hong Kong and the threat to invade Taiwan have perforce added a security dimension to trade and economic issues. Mr Pompeo correctly berated the Chinese Communist Party's "exploitation, coercion and corruption in the South and East China Seas, the Mekong, the Himalayas and the Taiwan Straits".

Is the Quad the rough framework of a military alliance, being dubbed as an "Asian Nato"? Can it grow into Quad Plus with the addition of democracies across the region? Finally, what impact will the US presidential election have on the Quad's role. While the other three are already allies, India, even under the incumbent government which belittles nonalignment, would not like to be ensnared in a US-led alliance to counter China. A strategic convergence with specific areas for common action provides more room for manoeuvre. That will also make it easier to lure new entrants. For instance, South Korea avoids openly confronting China as does the Philippines and other Asean members. A non-formal framework of engagement, including military interoperability, may draw Vietnam and the Philippines. A Joe Biden administration may rebalance relations with China, relaxing trade sanctions in exchange for climate change cooperation. But the overall US distrust of China will persist. Under enlightened American leadership, the Quad can counter China across multiple domains ranging from technology to trade to defence.

The Quad remains a great concept. China fears, above all, the soft power of liberal democracies. But the Quad members must note that majoritarianism at home and liberalism abroad would significantly undercut its success.

The writer is a former secretary in the external affairs ministry. He tweets at @ambicsingh.

LETTERS

DUBEY'S FLIP-FLOPS

Gupteshwar Dubey's shenanigans with the administration reflected twice in his opting VRS — once in 2009 to fight LS election in which he was defeated and reinstated and the other now to fight Bihar Assembly election. He could pull strings on both occasions (*Ex-DGP Pandey and the power of 'good offices', DC, Oct. 8*). A befitting reply by the electorate should be his defeat once again by losing the deposit too.

K. Nehru Patnaik
Visakhapatnam

DHONI'S CALIBRE

It seems like Dhoni has lost his charisma in cricket lately as he was never expected to be out after adding a meagre 17 runs as his contribution yesterday. It may be due to his imminent retirement or disinclination towards cricket.

N.S. Sharma
Visakhapatnam

RAPE CASES

Gangrapes are becoming frequent. It is a big blot on civil society. Government should start mahila rakshan project in a big way (bigger than Swachh Bharat) throughout India.

K.L. Rao
Visakhapatnam

50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

Prince of Berar dead

HYDERABAD, Oct. 8 Mr. Himayat Ali Khan (the Prince of Berar) father of Mr. Barkat Ali Khan, formerly Nizam of Hyderabad, died here at 12.05 am, after a brief illness. He was 63. The funeral will take place at Mecca Masjid in the Old City after the Friday prayers around 2 pm.

Mr. Himayat Ali Khan was the eldest son of the late Nizam of Hyderabad, Mr. Osman Ali Khan, who died in February 1967. The late Nizam, had, however, nominated the Prince of Berar's son Mr. Barkat Ali Khan to succeed him as Nizam.

Mr. Barkat Ali Khan and his brother are now abroad.

The cortege will leave the residence of the Prince of Berar "Bell Vue" at 11 am. Beyond the Afzal Gunj bridge it will be taken on foot to the Mecca Masjid. He will be buried near the graves of his ancestors, the Azamjahi rulers.— PTI.



Mahir Ali

How Lennon lives on, still giving peace a chance...

Back in the summer of 1980, a muckraking small-town newspaper in Michigan was in trouble with the forces of law and order. *The Flint Voice* irritated the authorities by exposing local instances of racism, corruption and the like. Its newsroom was under threat of being raided. Briefly, it became a cause célèbre in the United States.

One day, the newspaper's 20-something editor, Michael Moore — then a young journalist who had launched his first publication at the age of nine, today better known as an indefatigable filmmaker and activist — answered a phone call. "This is John Lennon," said the voice at the other end in a curious accent.

"Oh, Gary, really funny," responded Moore, and then hung up, convinced that he had been pranked. Moore was suitably apologetic when Lennon called again a little while later, having worked out by then that he had slammed the phone down on a Beatle.

According to Moore's delightful

early-life memoir, *Here Comes Trouble*, Lennon was graciously understanding, saying: "I know a little bit about police surveillance making your life a bloody hell." He went on to say he was wondering "if there was any way I could help. Maybe I could do a benefit or something for your legal fund or your paper".

He said he was working on a new album and probably wouldn't have time until the following year, then added: "Well, I've been sorta quiet for a while, being a dad and all. But I'm ready to get at it again, and now that I'm legally a resident of your fine country, I plan to be more involved and exercise my constitutional rights." In Moore's telling, the conversation concluded with Lennon saying: "Keep your spirits up, mate. I'll be around."

Tragically, he wasn't. Lennon was assassinated on Dec 8 outside his Dakota apartment block next to New York's Central Park.

It was rumoured at the time that the assassin might have been programmed by the CIA or some other

segment of the deep state to commit the evil deed in view of Lennon's radical proclivities and the risk that he might resume his subversive activism.

It seemed to be an absurd assumption, given that by then Lennon had seemingly relegated to the past the rabble-rousing instincts that guided him towards the end of the Beatles phase in the late 1960s and beyond, initially in Britain and then in the United States where he teamed up with the likes of Jerry Rubin and Stokely Carmichael, prompting the Nixon administration's concerted (but ultimately unsuccessful) effort to deport him.

There is still no reason to assume Lennon's assassination was part of a plot, but Moore's anecdote certainly puts paid to the idea that the ex-Beatle ever succumbed to the temptation of aligning himself with an establishment he frequently needed, and often irritated, ever since he announced the song 'Twist and Shout' at a royal command performance by The Beatles in 1963 by cheekily

requesting: "The people in the cheap seats, clap your hands. And the rest of you, if you'd just rattle your jewellery."

In his recent memoir, *Reporter*, the legendary American investigative journalist Seymour Hersh recalls, in a footnote, encountering "a pleasant Brit and his Japanese girlfriend" at a dinner party in the early 1970s. They sought his help, as a *New York Times* staffer, to press the case for a green card. "It turned out the Brit was John Lennon and his friend was Yoko Ono," Hersh deadpans. "How was I to know? Neither had anything to do with Watergate."

He notes that years later he visited the Lennons' New York apartment, which was "filled with dozens of framed drawings by the Beatle, all suggesting the world had yet to see the best of him".

The best of him is, in fact, never far off the radar. Until the Democratic Party establishment predictably scuttled Bernie Sanders' candidacy earlier this year, the "democratic socialist" candidate invariably

arrived on the stage at campaign rallies to the tune of *Power to the People*, an anthem Lennon composed in 1971 after an extended encounter with a pair of left-wing journalists (one of whom happened to be my brother, Tariq Ali).

Five years ago, I tracked down the original, graffiti-strewn Lennon Wall in Prague. Since then, 'Lennon walls' have appeared all across Hong Kong as part of the territory's quest for democracy. The latest recycled, remixed, remastered Lennon compilation is titled *Gimme Some Truth*, after one of the songs on his *Imagine* album, a timely reminder, in the age of fake news, of the artist's relentless quest in what would have been the year he became an octogenarian.

Had he survived, John Lennon would have turned 80 on Friday, October 9 — twice the age he was when his life was brutally cut short. But it's gratifying that his spirit and his ideals live on, and *Give Peace a Chance* is still sung.

By arrangement with Dawn

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	40,182.67	0.76
Nifty 50	11,834.60	0.82
S&P 500*	3,441.56	0.65
Dollar (₹)	73.23	0.13
Pound Sterling (₹)	94.95	-0.24
Euro (₹)	86.14	0.09
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	51,153.82	0.16
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	43.19	1.20
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.015	0.001
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.772	-0.013

* As of 8:30 PM IST

Double-digit growth in power use in October

Power consumption in the country recorded double-digit growth in the first week of October at 25.95 billion units (BU) amid buoyancy in industrial and commercial activities. Power ministry data shows power consumption grew by 13.65 per cent during October 1 to 7 to 25.95 BU, up from 22.83 BU in the same period last year. Power consumption in October last year stood at 97.84 BU.

Uday Shankar quits as Star, Walt Disney Apac chief



Global media and entertainment conglomerate The Walt Disney Company said Uday Shankar will step down as president of its Asia Pacific (Apac) business and chairman of Star and Disney India with effect from Dec. 31. Shankar has quit the posts he has held since Feb. 2019 to pursue entrepreneurial interests. The company said over the next three months, Shankar will work closely with Rebecca Campbell to identify his successor.

Sanjay Aggarwal takes over as PHDCCI president

Paramount Cables Group chairman and CEO Sanjay Aggarwal has taken over as the president of PHDCCI for 2020-21, the industry chamber said. Multani Pharmaceuticals chairman Pradeep Multani and PG Industry MD Saket Dalmia have taken over as senior vice-president and vice-president, respectively, of the PHDCCI.

Titan, Montblanc joint venture to end in December

Tata Group firm Titan said it will end its five-year joint venture with luxury firm Montblanc in December this year, to focus on its primary business and proprietary brands. Titan holds a 49 per cent equity stake in Montblanc India Retail Private Limited. During the five-year partnership which began in 2015, Montblanc opened 12 boutiques in major cities across the country and established an e-com business via TataCliq.



Rally in IT stocks takes Nifty near 12K Sensex spikes above 40K pts

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, OCT. 8

Led by a big rally in heavy-weight IT stocks, the Sensex settled above the 40,000 level, marking a fresh seven month high, while the Nifty-50 inched closer to the 12,000 level, as the market rally continued for the sixth session in a row.

Strong second quarter results of Tata Consultancy Services and its Rs 16,000-crore share buyback announcement at 10 per cent higher price was the main trigger for rally in IT stocks. Another buyback announcement by Wipro further cemented investors' positive outlook on the IT sector.

The Sensex closed at 40,182.67, up 303.2 points, after hitting a high of 40,468.88 while Nifty-50 closed at 11,834.60, up 95.75 points after touching 11,905.70 in intra-day trade.

"The BSE' market capitalisation has bounced back to pre-covid levels at more than Rs 160 lakh crore.

TCS gained 3.19 per cent, closing at Rs 2824.80 after touching a high of Rs 2885 on the BSE. Other major IT gainers included Wipro (7.22 per cent), Infosys (2.57 per cent), HCL Technologies (2.63 per cent) and Tech Mahindra (1.62 per cent).

Mid-tier IT stocks L&T Infotech (7 per cent), Mindtree (5.77 per cent) and Mphasis (5.77 per cent) also made big gains and the BSE IT Index gained 2.99 per cent and Nifty IT



EQUITY MF REDEMPTIONS DOWN

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, OCT. 8

Redemptions from pure equity mutual funds are easing now even though outflows continued for the third consecutive month, data released by Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi) for September showed.

Overall, the MF industry's net asset under management (AUM) in September fell to Rs 26.85 lakh crore against Rs 27.49 lakh crore in August.

Growth or equity oriented schemes saw combined outflow of Rs 734.40 crore

compared with Rs 4,000 crore in August while hybrid schemes saw combined outflow of Rs 4,219.01 crore against Rs 4,819.45 crore in August.

The debt schemes saw a quarter-end outflow by Rs 51,962 crore, which led to overall MF AUM shrink by more than 2.3 per cent to Rs 26.85 lakh crore.

Index funds (Rs 552.41 crore) and other equity exchange traded funds (Rs 3543.96 crore) saw healthy inflows while gold ETF inflows stood at Rs 90.90 and fund of funds investing overseas at Rs 177.39 crore.

Index, 3.23 per cent.

The market is now poised to go higher with bullish patterns visible, said analysts. Shrikant Chouhan, executive VP-research, Kotak Securities, said, "The Nifty 50 Index has ended positive for the nine consecutive sessions, closing nearly one per cent higher at 11834.60.

Technically, with the index above the 11,794 levels indicates a bullish signal for the market and exhibits strength for the index to rally beyond 12000 levels."

Buying by foreign portfolio investors to the tune of Rs 978 crore held the market higher while domestic institutions' buying was muted at Rs 19.85 crore.

Automotive retail sales show signs of recovery

MICHAEL GONSALVES PUNE, OCT. 8

Passenger vehicles retail sales jumped 10 per cent year-on-year in September but two- & three-wheelers and commercial vehicles declined in double-digits.

Maruti Suzuki, Hyundai, Tata Motors, Kia Motor and Mahindra, among others, had shipped 35 per cent more passenger vehicles to 2,75,137 units from factory gates to dealerships ahead of the festive season. Also, vehicle retail sales last month rose 11.45 per cent month-on-month but fell by -10.24 per cent year-on-year, the Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations, or Fada, said on Thursday.

Automakers are now pinning hopes on the festive season for a pick-up in momentum.

On yearly comparison, 2-wheeler sales d-grew by -12.62 per cent, 3-wheeler by -58.86 per cent and commercial vehicles by -33.65 per cent. However, passenger vehicles for the first time grew by 9.81 per cent since unlocking began. Tractor registrations continued its upward journey with a magnificent 80.39 per cent growth, Fada said.

Entry level passenger vehicles saw good demand, Fada said. Dealer inventory for both 2-wheelers and cars are at the highest levels ahead of key festivals.

Millions facing poverty in South Asia: World Bank

INDIA'S GDP MAY CONTRACT BY 9.6% THIS FISCAL

MADHUSUDAN SAHOO NEW DELHI, OCT. 8



Millions in the South Asian region are being pushed into extreme poverty by the Covid-19 pandemic, the World Bank said on Thursday. The Washington-based multilateral lender also said India's GDP is expected to contract by 9.6 per cent this fiscal year.

The bank, which forecast an economic contraction of 7.7 per cent in South Asia this year, said workers in the informal sector are being hit the hardest and private consumption is unlikely to recover quickly.

"The impact on livelihoods will even be larger than the GDP forecast suggests," the bank said in its bi-annual South Asia Economic Focus report, adding that the region would experience a sharp increase in the poverty rate.

"India's GDP is expected to contract by 9.6 per cent in the fiscal year that started in March. However, the regional growth is projected to rebound to 4.5 per cent in 2021," the bank said.

"The situation is much worse in India than we have ever seen before. It is an exceptional situation in India...We have seen from the rapid survey that many people have lost their jobs and this is happening against a background when India's economy was already slowing down

before the pandemic. Besides, we had also seen a rise in non-performing loans. Those are all vulnerabilities that India has to deal with," Hans Timmer, World Bank chief economist for South Asia told reporters in a conference call.

While the central government has signalled its preparedness to support the economy, there has been no clarity yet about the timing or the extent of the next round of stimulus to pop up the economy. India has already seen around a 24 per cent contraction in its economy in the first quarter of the current fiscal year.

The World Bank said the spread of the coronavirus and containment measures have severely disrupted supply and demand conditions in India. "There's a big problem that the informal sector has no coverage in social insurance...What we see now is that especially the informal workers in the middle of the income distribution have lost their

jobs. There are no systems in place to support those people," Timmer said.

To a query he said what the Indian government has done with limited resources and limited fiscal space is very impressive. "We have seen a loosening of monetary policy. You have seen attempts to increase credit to the private sector to help a company survive," he said, adding that there have been big efforts in the health sector and expansion of a social safety net. But with every big crisis, I think, we have to realise that this will not go over anytime soon. And it will actually change the longer-term future also."

The report warned that South Asian economies could end up worse than the forecast as the pandemic continues to surge, making foreign investors more wary, limiting governments' ability to increase spending and putting more strain on banking systems already heavily burdened with bad loans.

Combined fiscal deficit may go up to 14%

Hyderabad, Oct. 8: The combined fiscal deficit of states and the Centre in the current year may go up to 14 per cent against the mandated level of six per cent, former Reserve Bank governor C. Rangarajan said on Thursday.

Speaking at an ICAI Business School event here, the former chairman of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister said banks should neither be timid nor adventurous while lending as the loans of today should not become NPAs of tomorrow.

"So, therefore, we are essentially talking about

13.8 per cent or 14 per cent of the GDP (gross domestic product) as the overall fiscal deficit of the states and the Centre. It is obvious this is twice the mandated level. The mandated level for both the Centre and state is 6 per cent of the GDP. It is twice or even more than twice of the estimated figure," he said.

According to him, the fiscal deficit may further go if the government decides to go in for additional borrowings to meet the GST compensation part.

Rangarajan said RBI's monetary policy is "consistent" under the present circumstances and as a result banks have adequate liquidity for more lending.



C. Rangarajan

He said governments need to spend more when the economy is in a slump and it is essential to spend on healthcare, relief and rehabilitation and on stimulus to spur economic

activities. "There are three types of expenditure required. One, expenditure on healthcare, second is the expenditure on relief and rehabilitation. Third is expenditure on stimulus. And it appears that the government both at the Centre and states are somewhat slow in increasing expenditures," he said.

He said the economic growth of the country and other nations has come to a grinding halt due to lockdown to contain the spread of coronavirus.

However, he said capital flows into India was encouraging in the last three months. —PTI

FORBE'S TOP TEN RICHEST INDIANS

 Mukesh Ambani Reliance Industries 88.7	 Gautam Adani Adani Ports & SEZ 25.2	 Shiv Nadar HCL Technologies 20.4	 Radhakishan Damani Avenue Supermarts 15.4	 Hinduja brothers Ashok Leyland 12.8
 Cyrus Poonawalla Serum Institute of India 11.5	 Pallonji Mistry Shapoorji Pallonji Group 11.4	 Uday Kotak Kotak Mahindra Bank 11.3	 Godrej Family Godrej Group 11.0	 Lakshmi Mittal Arcelor Mittal 10.3
Figures in \$ billion Source: KBK Infographics				

Paytm targets a million apps on mini app store

SANKALP PHARTIYAL & ADITYA KALRA NEW DELHI, OCT. 8

Alibaba-backed Indian fintech firm Paytm is aiming for a million apps on its 'mini app store' by the first quarter of 2021, it said on Thursday, seeking to challenge the dominance of Alphabet's Google in India's mobile web economy.

Paytm founder Vijay Shekhar Sharma called

Google "judge, jury and executioner" after his app was temporarily removed from the Android app store last month for a policy violation. On Thursday, he kicked off his company's "Mini App Developer Conference" by calling Google a "toll collector".

Google, whose Android operating system powers nearly 99 per cent of India's roughly 500 million smartphones, has



Vijay Shekhar Sharma

faced criticism from several startups in the country over a move to enforce its global policy more

strictly and charge a 30 per cent commission for in-app purchases.

That criticism led the US tech giant this week to defer by six months its deadline for companies to comply with the new billing system.

Paytm's Sharma is trying to use the discontent to attract business to his newly launched mini app store, which is hosted within the Paytm app. He has vowed not charge

domestic app developers any fees.

"Neither a company from the East, nor a company from the West, if someone will rule India it will be an Indian company," Sharma said in the virtual conference.

Paytm's mini app store will allow "app developers to, for good, forget about going through somebody else's kingdom or roads," Sharma said.

—Reuters

DESIGNED | TO LEAD

Focus on convergence of digital and physical technologies

‘India to lead 4th industrial revolution with Jio’

New Delhi, Oct. 8: Having missed most of the first three industrial revolutions, India has its chance to lead the fourth industrial revolution through a convergence of its IT prowess, ultra-high-speed internet connectivity and affordable smart devices, Reliance Industries chairman Mukesh Ambani said on Thursday.

He said his group's telecom and digital unit Jio was conceived to provide the key ingredients needed to lead the fourth industrial revolution.

India missed the first two industrial revolutions



Mukesh Ambani

and the changes brought about by them. During the third industrial revolution, where information technology came to prominence, India joined the race but still remained behind, trying to catch up

with the leaders.

"As we step into the fourth industrial revolution, India has the opportunity, not just to catch up with the leaders but to emerge as a global leader itself," he said at TM Forum's Digital Transformation World Series.

The fourth industrial revolution, he said, is driven by the convergence of digital and physical technologies such as digital connectivity, cloud and edge-computing, IoT and smart devices, artificial intelligence, robotics, blockchain, AR/VR (augmented reality/ virtual reality) and genomics.

IBM TO SPIN OFF \$19-BN BUSINESS TO FOCUS ON CLOUD COMPUTING

Armonk (US), Oct 8: IBM says it is breaking off a \$19 billion chunk of its business to focus on cloud computing.

The 109-year-old tech company said on Thursday it is spinning off its managed infrastructure services unit into a new public company, temporarily named NewCo. The separation is expected to take effect by late 2021.

IBM CEO Arvind Krishna said the split will help IBM focus on its cloud platform and artificial intelligence, while the newly formed company will provide services to manage the infrastructure of businesses and other organisations.

IBM's annual revenue was \$77.1 billion last year. Krishna said in April at his first quarterly earnings call as CEO. —AP

HOUSING PRICES FALL 2-7% IN TOP 6 CITIES IN JULY-SEP.

New Delhi, Oct. 8: The average housing prices declined by 2-7 per cent year-on-year during July-September in Delhi-NCR, Mumbai, Chennai, Pune, Kolkata, and Ahmedabad on lower demand, according to Knight Frank India.

But prices increased in Bengaluru and Hyderabad by 3 per cent and 4 per cent, respectively, during the period compared with the year-ago period.

Chennai saw the maximum fall of 7 per cent, followed by Delhi-NCR and Pune at 5 per cent.

Rates dipped 3 per cent each in Kolkata and Ahmedabad, while Mumbai witnessed 2 per cent price correction.

The weighted average prices in Q3 2020 registered a year on year decline in six of the eight markets.

"Hyderabad and Bengaluru were the only markets that witnessed a price increment of 4 per cent and 3 per cent YoY respectively, as developers in these predominantly end-user markets sustained pricing power in a favourable demand-supply scenario," Knight Frank India said in its report released on Thursday.

According to the report, housing sales stood at 33,403 units during July-September 2020. —PTI

SHORT TAKES

SA cricketer's brother shot dead

Cape Town: A brother of South African cricketer Vernon Philander was fatally shot in a street in Cape Town on Wednesday, his family said. "Tyrone Philander, a younger brother of Vernon, was killed metres from the family home in the neighborhood of Ravensmead. He was shot while delivering water to a neighbor," South African media reported. Vernon Philander said in a statement issued by the family that they were "coming to terms with the brutal murder." "There are no details around the incident at the moment and speculation will make it very difficult for us as a family to mourn in peace," Vernon Philander said. Police said the shooting happened around lunchtime on Wednesday and are investigating the case as a murder. No arrests have been made. — *AP*

Coe weighs in on racial justice

Tokyo: Dressed in a blue suit and speaking in a light drizzle, Sebastian Coe stood at the edge of the track at Tokyo's new National Stadium on Thursday and repeated his support for the right of athletes to advocate for social or racial justice at next year's postponed Olympics. Coe spoke out in direct opposition to Rule 50 of the Olympic Charter, which says "no kind of demonstration or political, religious or racial propaganda is permitted in any Olympic sites, venues or other areas." "I've been very clear that if an athlete chooses to take the knee on a podium then I'm supportive of that," Coe said, giving a boost to Black Lives Matter protests and other social-and-racial-justice movements that are determined to use Tokyo as a stage. — *AP*

Track king Joshua scripts record

Valencia, Spain: Joshua Cheptegei smashed the 10,000m track world record and Ethiopia's Letesenbet Gidey set a new mark for the women's 5,000m on a heady night of athletics in Valencia on Wednesday. All the talk in the run-up to the meet was of Cheptegei's assault on Kenenisa Bekele's time of 26min 17.53sec established in 2005 in Brussels. The 24-year-old 10,000m world champion surpassed expectations, running the distance in 26 mins 11.00 seconds to cement his standing as the new middle distance maestro. This was his third world record this year. Ethiopia's Gidey ran the earlier 5,000m in 14 minutes 6.62 seconds. She was lowering the previous mark of 14min 11.15 held by her compatriot Tirunesh Dibaba since 2008 by over four seconds. — *AFP*

Hero riders power through Stage 2

Villamartin, Spain: Hero MotoSports Team continued their run at the Andalucia Rally in Spain on Thursday with mixed results in the second stage. Sebastian Buhler impressed with his consistent performance and finished the day at the 13th place. Joaquim Rodrigues, who had a stellar run on Wednesday, hit a technical snag right at the start of the stage and the team decided to bring him back to the bivouac, avoiding any unnecessary risks. C. S. Santosh found his rhythm and was looking to bring home a good stage, when he stopped to help Rodrigues in getting out of the stage and consequently lost some time. Despite this stop and a navigation error in the second part of the stage, he achieved a commendable 23rd place finish.

Live on TV

CRICKET

IPL: Rajasthan Royals vs Delhi Capitals from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

FORMULA ONE

German Grand Prix: Practice 1 from 2.25 pm on Star Sports Select 1, HD; Practice 2 from 6.25 pm on Star Sports Select 2, HD

TENNIS

French Open: Matches from 6.30 pm on Star Sports 2

WWE SMACKDOWN

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

BASKETBALL

NBA Finals (Game 5 of best-of-7): Los Angeles Lakers vs Miami Heat from 6.30 am (Saturday) on Sony Six, HD

Bairstow blitzkrieg

Jonny's brilliant knock floors Kings XI Punjab by 69 runs

Dubai, Oct. 8: Sunrisers Hyderabad rode on a whirlwind 97 from opener Jonny Bairstow and his 160-run partnership for the first wicket with captain David Warner to beat Kings XI Punjab by 69 runs in their IPL match here on Tuesday.

Batting first, the Sunrisers put up an imposing 201 for 6 and then bowled out the Punjab Kings for 132 in 16.5 overs for an emphatic victory that took them to third on the points table. Bairstow smashed 97 off just 55 balls — during which he hit seven fours and six sixes — while Warner made 52 off 40 balls as KXIP bowlers did not have a clue how to get a breakthrough till the 15th over.

At that stage, SRH were 160 for no loss.

Leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi (3/29) then removed both Bairstow and Warner in the space of three balls in the 16th over before Arshdeep Singh (2/33) dismissed Manish Pandey for 1 in the next over to trigger a brilliant turnaround.

It was a welcome change for KXIP to concede just 41 runs in the last five overs and take six wickets in the process. But the flying start provided by Bairstow and Warner ensured SRH cross the 200-run mark.

— *PTI*



Jonny Bairstow of Sunrisers Hyderabad plays a shot against Kings XI Punjab during their Indian Premier League match at Dubai International Cricket Stadium in the United Arab Emirates on Thursday. — *BCCI*

SCORECARD

Sunrisers Hyderabad: David Warner c Glenn Maxwell b Ravi Bishnoi 52, Jonny Bairstow lbw b Ravi Bishnoi 97, Abdul Samad c Arshdeep Singh b Ravi Bishnoi 8, Manish Pandey c & b Arshdeep Singh 1, Kane Williamson not out 20, Priyam Garg c Pooran b Arshdeep Singh 0, Abhishek Sharma c Maxwell b Mohammed Shami 12, Rashid Khan not out 0. **Extras:** (LB-1, NB-1W-9) 11. **Total (for 6 wickets in 20 overs) 201.** **FoW:** 1-160, 2-160, 3-161, 4-173, 5-175, 6-199. **Bowling:** Sheldon Cottrell 3-0-33-0, Mujeeb Ur Rahman 4-0-39-0, Mohammed Shami 4-0-40-1, Glenn Maxwell 2-0-26-0, Ravi Bishnoi 3-0-29-3, Arshdeep Singh 4-0-33-2.

Kings XI Punjab: K. L. Rahul c Williamson b A. Sharma 11, M. Agarwal run out 9, Simran Singh c Garg b Ahmed 11, N. Pooran c Natarajan b Rashid Khan 77, G. Maxwell run out 7, Mandeep Singh b Rashid Khan 6, Mujeeb Ur Rahman c Bairstow b Ahmed 1, Ravi Bishnoi not out 6, M. Shami lbw Rashid Khan 0, S. Cottrell b Natarajan 0, A. Singh c Warner b Natarajan 0. **Extras:** (LB-2, W-2) 4. **Total (all out in 20 overs) 132.** **FoW:** 1-11, 2-31, 3-58, 4-105, 5-115, 6-126, 7-126, 8-126, 9-132, 10-132. **Bowling:** S. Sharma 4-0-27-0, KK Ahmed 3-0-24-2, T. Natarajan 3.5-0-24-2, A. Sharma 1-0-15-1, Rashid Khan 4-1-12-3, A. Samad 1-0-28-0.

IPL POINTS TABLE

Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
Mumbai Indians	6	4	2	0	8	+1.488
Delhi Capitals	5	4	1	0	8	+1.060
Sunrisers Hyderabad	6	3	3	0	6	+0.232
Kolkata Knight Riders	5	3	2	0	6	+0.002
Royal Challengers Bangalore	5	3	2	0	6	-1.355
Chennai Super Kings	6	2	4	0	4	-0.371
Rajasthan Royals	5	2	3	0	4	-0.826
Kings XI Punjab	6	1	5	0	2	-0.431

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

Batsmen let team down: MS

Abu Dhabi, Oct. 8: Chennai Super Kings skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni said the batsmen let the team down after a spirited comeback by the bowlers in their Indian Premier League game against Kolkata Knight Riders here on Wednesday.

Chasing 168, Shane Watson struck his second successive fifty to give CSK a perfect start, but the team choked at the back end of the innings and was restricted to 157 for five to suffer its fourth defeat in this IPL.

"In the middle overs, there was a phase when they bowled two-three good overs. Then we lost two-three wickets in a row. If our batting was different during that period, the result would have been different," Dhoni said.

"Initially we gave away a few too many with the new ball. Karn (Sharma) did really well. The bowlers did well to bring them down to 160-odd. As a team we should have achieved the target but the batsmen let the bowlers down," Dhoni further added. — *PTI*



Chennai Super Kings captain M. S. Dhoni (left) poses with Varun Chakravarthy of the Kolkata Knight Riders.

GETTING DHONI WICKET SURREAL, SAYS VARUN

Abu Dhabi, Oct. 8: If playing against him was not enough, Varun Chakravarthy ended up bowling Mahendra Singh Dhoni out and described the moment as "surreal", three years after watching him from the stands at Chepauk with big dreams in his eyes.

Chakravarthy capped off what was a memorable day for him in the IPL by getting photographed with the World Cup-winning skipper.

Representing KKR, Chakravarthy dismissed Dhoni at a crucial stage in their IPL match against CSK here on Wednesday.

"I used to come just to see Dhoni batting. Now I bowled against him. It was a surreal moment for me," Chakravarthy said. — *PTI*

Fleming explains Kedar strategy

Abu Dhabi, Oct. 8: Chennai Super Kings head coach Stephen Fleming said Kedar Jadhav was sent ahead of Ravindra Jadeja and Dwayne Bravo in a tense run chase against Kolkata Knight Riders because of his ability to play spin well.

However, Jadhav laboured to seven off 12 balls as KKR won the game by 10 runs here on Wednesday.

"At the time, we thought that Kedar could play the spinner well and dominate, while Jadeja was there to come and finish. But in the end there was too much work to do and we fell short," Fleming said.

Jadhav was trolled heavily on social media following the defeat.

The New Zealander rued that their batsmen let it "slip" despite having so much resources. The team added just 14 runs from 11-14 overs, a period when they lost both Shane Watson and an in-form Ambati Rayudu.

"If we could have got one

At the time, we thought that Kedar could play the spinner well and dominate, while Jadeja was there to come and finish. But in the end there was too much work to do and we fell short.

— **STEPHEN FLEMING**
CSK head coach

of those players to 75-plus and continued that partnership for another maybe four or five overs, the game might have been a lot different. Kolkata hung in there long enough to put pressure on us and we just couldn't accelerate. We feel disappointed that we let it slip.

"But the performances like today, with the experience we have got, we should have put it away. We have got a lot of batsmen anyway so the balance is very good with the six bowlers. I don't think an extra batsman is going to help," he added. — *PTI*

RR look to steady boat against DC

Sharjah, Oct. 8: Struggling to figure out their best eleven, Rajasthan Royals will need to come up with some quick-fix measures to snap their three-match losing streak when they take on a formidable Delhi Capitals unit in an IPL match here on Friday.

The Royals were off to a flying start, winning both their games at Sharjah but they have struggled to adjust to the bigger grounds of Dubai and Abu Dhabi, slipping to three successive defeats.

Led by Shreyas Iyer, Delhi have looked solid in all three departments, winning four out of their five matches.

For Rajasthan, time is running out as they still have not been able to find their best playing XI. While the return of Ben Stokes will give them hope but the England allrounder is currently in quarantine and will be available only after October 11.

The sudden loss of form of skipper Steve Smith and Sanju Samson — who did bulk of the scoring in the first two matches, is as much a reason for their failure.

However, the good news for RR is the return to form of opener Jos Buttler, who scored a fine 44-ball 70 in their last game.

In bowling, Jofra Archer and Tom Curran have been left to do the heavy lifting. Delhi, on the other hand,

NUMBERS GAME

HEAD TO HEAD

OVERALL:

- Matches: 20
- Rajasthan: 11
- Delhi: 9

MEETING IN 2019

- Delhi Capitals beat Rajasthan Royals by 6 wickets at Jaipur.
- Delhi Capitals beat Rajasthan Royals by 5 wickets at Delhi.

FOR THE RECORD

- Shikhar Dhawan who smashed 99 sixes in 163 innings of 164 matches, needs just one six to become the 20th batsman to complete a century of sixes in IPL.

- Steven Smith who hit 97 sixes in 173 innings of 197 matches, needs three sixes to complete a century of sixes in Twenty-20 cricket.

— *S. PERVEZ QAISER*

have been a well-oiled machine, boosting of a solid bowling unit which is well supported by the batsmen.

While skipper Iyer has been in good form, opener Prithvi Shaw and Rishabh Pant have done their job well. Marcus Stonis too have produced two smashing fifties so far.

On the bowling front, Kagiso Rabada has looked ominous with 12 wickets to emerge as the best bowler in the IPL so far.

A fit-again Ravichandran Ashwin, who replaced injured Amit Mishra, also returned with one wicket for 26 in his comeback game. — *PTI*

Table toppers MI aim for perfection

Abu Dhabi, Oct. 8: Perched at the top of the points table they might be but Mumbai Indians head coach Mahela Jayawardene says there are several aspects of the game that his team needs to improve as it guns for a second consecutive IPL title.

Mumbai recorded their third consecutive win, beating Rajasthan Royals by 57 runs on Tuesday. They have so far accumulated four wins and two losses from six matches overall.

"...right now we have played some consistent cricket, and executing a lot of the skills really well with the ball and bat. So, things are going well but we can still improve, there are certain areas but make sure that everyone is

focused on each and every day," Jayawardene said in a video posted by the team's official *Twitter* handle.

He, however, did not specify the areas which require improvement.

On Tuesday, handing the new ball to pace spearheaded Jasprit Bumrah worked wonders as Mumbai bundled out RR for 136 after putting 193/4 on the board. "We had a tough week where we had three back to back games, so we get a bit of a break now, so it is good to go into the break with three consecutive wins," former Sri Lankan captain signed off.

Mumbai now play on Sunday next when they take on in-form Delhi Capitals in an evening game.

— *PTI*

GAVASKAR WANTS TWO BOUNCERS A OVER IN T20

New Delhi, Oct. 8: The legendary Sunil Gavaskar believes that T20 cricket doesn't need much tinkering as it is in "pink of health" but custodians of the game can consider allowing two bouncers per over, moving ahead.

Does he foresee see a rule change to ease the pressure off bowlers?

"The T20 game is doing very well and there's no need to tinker with it," Gavaskar said during an exclusive interview from the UAE where he is working as a broadcaster for the Indian Premier League.

But the iconic figure did put forth a few suggestions. "It is loaded heavily in favour of the batsmen for sure. So, give a fast bowler two bouncers per over and yes the boundaries can be easily longer, if the ground authorities want it. Also look at giving an extra over to the bowler who takes a wicket in his first three overs. But seriously there's no need to bring any changes at all," he further added. — *PTI*

Sunny, Richards Sachin's heroes

Mumbai, Oct. 8: Batting icon Sachin Tendulkar on Thursday said legendary Sunil Gavaskar and West Indies great Viv Richards were his batting heroes when he was young, while his dad Ramesh Tendulkar was his real life hero.

"My heroes, okay, I would say that when I was playing cricket or when I was of your age (young), I wanted to become a cricketer and going ahead wanted to play for my country. I had two

heroes — one is our own Sunil Gavaskar. Along with him, it was Viv Richards of the West Indies. These were my batting heroes when I played cricket.

"But generally in life, then I would say that my hero was my father (Ramesh Tendulkar). So much time I spent with him and he was mild, calm and composed, he was a man with good nature," Tendulkar said. — *PTI*

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