

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

COIMBATORE | MONDAY 28 | SEPTEMBER 2020

## WEATHER



**Max:** 33°C  
**Min:** 23°C  
**Rainfall:** 1 mm

## ASTROGUIDE

**Sarvari:** Purattasi 12  
**Tithi:** Dwadashi  
**Star:**Avittam  
**Rahukalam:** 7.30 am to 9 am  
**Yamagandam:** 10.30 am to 12 noon

### PRAYERS

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

**SUNSET TODAY 6.14 PM**  
**SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.11 AM**  
**MOONRISE TODAY 4.10 PM**  
**MOONSET TOMORROW 4.54 AM**

## CORONA COUNT

| CASES     | DEATHS |
|-----------|--------|
| (+78,350) | (+947) |
| 60,68,931 | 95,101 |

covid19india.org

### STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

|              |       |
|--------------|-------|
| (+ 5,791)    |       |
| TN: 5,80,808 | 9,313 |

### WORLD CONFIRMED CASES

|             |
|-------------|
| 3,31,99,121 |
|-------------|

### DEATHS

|           |
|-----------|
| 10,00,556 |
|-----------|

### COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES

|     |
|-----|
| 213 |
|-----|

worldometers.info

## Plea in SC to debar persons on trial from polls

**New Delhi:** A petition has been filed before the Supreme Court seeking to debar persons against whom charges have been framed in serious offences, from contesting elections. The PIL, which is likely to come up for hearing in the coming days, sought a direction to the Centre and the Election Commission of India (ECI) to take steps to debar people who are put on trial in cases of serious offences.

## Ex-Bihar top cop takes political plunge, joins JD(U)

**Patna:** Former Bihar police chief Gupteshwar Pandey, who took voluntary retirement from service a few days ago, joined the state's ruling JD(U) on Sunday. Pandey, an outspoken police officer, joined the party in the presence of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, who is also the JD(U) president. The 1987 batch IPS officer had strongly defended Kumar on the issue of institution of a CBI probe into the mysterious death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput.

## 96 pc candidates appear for JEE-Advanced

**New Delhi:** At least 96 per cent of the candidates, who had registered for JEE-Advanced, appeared for the examination on Sunday amid strict precautions in view of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Delhi, which conducted the exam. A total of 1.6 lakh candidates had registered for the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE)-Advanced after qualifying the JEE-Main. "Out of total registered candidates, 96 per cent appeared for the exam.

## COUNTER POINT



**Want to see all your favourite heroines at one place? Go to NCB office**

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**SPB voice of great divinity and soul: Amitabh**



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**Pak's KP govt to buy houses of Raj Kapoor, Dilip Kumar**

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**Bottas wins Russian GP**



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# Rich get richer, poor to be poorer during pandemic

**RAVI RANJAN PRASAD | DC**  
**MUMBAI, SEPT.27**

At a time when the health and wealth of people are at risk due to Covid-19 pandemic across the world, a survey hinted at the widening gap between the rich and the poor because of monetary easing policy adopted by central banks around the world.

According to the Wealth Report 2020 released German multinational financial services company Allianz Global, the accommodative monetary policies are protecting the wealth of the super-rich from the adverse impact of Coronavirus. Never in the last ten years, there was such a big increase in wealth for the rich. "Worldwide, gross financial assets grew by 9.7 per cent in 2019, clocking the strongest growth since 2005," the report said.

"The year 2019 was marred by social unrest, escalating trade conflicts and an industrial recession. But as central banks reversed course and embarked on broad-based

● **Worldwide, gross financial assets grew by 9.7 per cent in 2019. The same story is about to repeat itself in 2020 - but only in extreme.**

monetary easing, stock markets decoupled from fundamentals and soared by 25 per cent, lifting financial assets in the process: The asset class of securities increased by a whopping 13.7 per cent in 2019; never was the economic growth faster in the 21st century," Allianz Global said.

"The growth rates of the other two main asset classes were lower - but still impressive: Insurance and pensions reached a plus of 8.1 per cent, mainly reflecting the rise of underlying assets, and bank deposits increased by 6.4 per cent. In fact, all asset classes clocked growth significantly above their long-term averages since the Great Financial Crisis (GFC)." "The same story is about

to repeat itself in 2020 - but only in extreme," Allianz Global said.

"For the moment, monetary policy has vaccinated financial assets against Covid-19. But we should not fool ourselves. Zero and negative interest rates are a sweet poison. They undermine wealth accumulation and aggravate social inequality, as asset owners can pocket nice windfall profits. It's not sustainable."

"The wealth gap between rich and poor countries also has widened... We need more than ever structural reforms post Covid-19 to lay the foundations for more inclusive growth," the report said, adding that Covid-19 had plunged the world economy to its deepest recession in 100 years.

In 2019, the gross financial assets of households in North America and Oceania (Australia, New Zealand) - which are by far the richest - increased by a record 11.9 per cent each and topped the regional growth league table dominated by Emerging Markets.

# World is close to suffering million deaths

**New York, Sept 27:** The nearly 1 million people around the world who have lost their lives to COVID-19 have left us a gift: Through desperate efforts to save their lives, scientists now better understand how to treat and prevent the disease - and millions of others may survive.

The nearly 1 million deaths attributed to the coronavirus in nine months are far more than the 690,000 from AIDS or the 400,000 from malaria in all of 2019. They're trending just behind the 1.5 million from tuberculosis.

— AFP

# Chennai cases cross 1k again

**Chennai, Sept. 27:** The Covid-19 tally in Tamil Nadu rose to 5.80 lakh with 5,791 fresh cases on Sunday as the capital city saw a further rise in its daily count, a trend witnessed in the last few days.

The state clocked a record 96,102 Covid-19 tests, taking the total number of samples examined so far past the 70 lakh mark, while the death toll mounted to 9,313 with 80 more succumbing to the virus, the health department said.

Chennai, which saw its daily cases crossing the 1,000 mark on September

24 after a gap of a few weeks, added 1,280 fresh infections on Sunday, taking its tally to 1,63,423 out of the state's aggregate of 5,80,808.

After hovering in the 900 plus region for days in a row, the city recorded 1,089 cases on Thursday, 1,193 on Friday and 1,187 on Saturday.

On the positive side, the number of single-day tests hit a fresh high with 96,102 samples. A total of 71,00,660 specimens had been examined so far. The previous record was 94,877 samples on September 25.

— PTI

## Royal 'six' parade



It rained sixes at Sharjah as Rahul Tewatia pulled off an unbelievable chase by smashing a 31-ball 53 in Rajasthan Royals' four-wicket win over Kings XI Punjab on Sunday.

— BCCI

# Former Union Minister Jaswant Singh passes away

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
**NEW DELHI, SEPT. 27**

Former Union Minister Jaswant Singh, who had held the important portfolios of Finance, Defence and External Affairs at various stages in the Vajpayee Government, passed away on Sunday morning in the capital after a cardiac arrest. He was 82. Hailing from Rajasthan, Mr. Singh was a political stalwart and one of the top BJP leaders during the tenure of the Vajpayee Government.

In a statement, the Ministry of Defence (MoD)



Jaswant Singh

said, "The Army Hospital (Research and Referral) based in New Delhi with profound grief announced the sad demise of Major Jaswant Singh (Retd), former Cabinet Minister of

Government of India at 0655 hours on 27 September 2020. He was admitted on 25 Jun 2020 in Army Hospital (R&R) and being treated for Sepsis with Multiorgan Dysfunction Syndrome and effects of Severe Head Injury old (Optd) had a Cardiac arrest this morning. Despite the best efforts of the attending team of specialists to resuscitate him, he could not be revived and passed away at 0655 hours (6.55 am) on 27 Sep 2020." It was also emphasised that Mr. Singh was not suffering from Covid.

and assemblies in place. "Adequate training with provision of special winter clothing will ensure troops' morale remains high and they are ready to function in short notice. Along with this, training and honing of crew skills and drills will remain constant through the winters. The Indian Army in Eastern Ladakh is logistically well prepared," he said.

The Indian army is using three types of fuels in these tanks which don't freeze in sub-zero temperatures and

keeps them running. Earlier this month PLA had brought forward their tanks near the Chushul sector to put pressure on Indian army after it occupied strategic heights on the South banks of Pangong Tso on August 29-30. The Depsang plains, situated at an altitude of over 15,000 feet are flat and suitable for tank action. It is one of the critical points where a thrust by Indian tanks threatens Aksai Chin which was captured by China in 1962.

# 10th accused held in terror plot case

**RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC**  
**KOLKATA, SEPT. 27**

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) made its 10th arrest in the case of the "Pakistan-sponsored" terror module of Al-Qaeda it had busted in West Bengal and Kerala a week ago. Shamim Ansari, the accused, was detained by the NIA with the help of the Border Security Force jawans from his home at Nawdapara village in Jalangi of Murshidabad of West Bengal during a raid on September 25 night, as reported by this newspaper earlier.

His cellphone and some documents were seized also. Shamim was later booked in the case on Saturday and was produced before the chief metropolitan magistrate at the Berhampore Court. The judge has granted the NIA his transit remand following its prayer. Shamim will be taken to Delhi where he will be produced at a special NIA court.

The 25-year-old, who worked as a mason's helper in Kerala but returned home a year ago, is a close associate of Al Mamun Kamal, one of the nine arrested.



Heavy weaponry and T-90 and T-72 tanks are beefing up the troops even as a Himalayan winter is to set in.



## SHORT TAKES

## Gun found in airport cargo parcel

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, SEPT. 27

Tension prevailed at the City airport on Saturday after a gun was found inside a cargo consignment meant to go on a Kolkata-bound flight. Officials said that the explosives detection machine had found that the material inside the parcel was suspect.

Airport sources said an alarm was triggered by a sensor at the final cargo checking area and the gun was found in a cargo parcel labelled 'Toys'. Security staffs contacted the private cargo booking agency to enquire about the parcel. However, they were not aware of the presence of the gun. The gun was handed over the airport police for further investigation.

Making further enquiries, officials contacted one Anish from Dindigul who had booked the parcel. Anish said it was an air gun and that he has the required documents. Unmoved by his answers, the airport police registered a case and asked him to appear for an investigation at Chennai airport. The manager of the private cargo booking office has also been asked to appear before Airport police, sources said.

## Gold seized by Chennai Customs

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, SEPT. 27

The Chennai Air customs seized 1.62 kg gold worth ₹88.7 lakh and arrested three persons in connection with the smuggling. Based on intelligence that gold was likely to be smuggled from Dubai, two passengers Mohd Mustafa Meerasa Maraikkayar, 43, and Sahubar Ali Aynjai, 39, of Ramanathapuram who arrived by Indigo Airlines were intercepted. Sheik Abdullah Habeeb Abdullah, 21, of Pudukkottai who had arrived by Air India Express was also intercepted at the exit point of the Customs arrival hall by AIU officers.

The passengers confessed to carrying bundles of gold paste concealed in their body. In all seven bundles — two from Meerasa and Aynjai each and three from Abdullah — were recovered along with 5 gold cut bits (weighing 100 grams) which were concealed in their pant pockets. As much as 1.52 kg gold of 24 k purity was extracted from gold paste and in all 1.62 kg gold valued at Rs. 83.7 lakhs was recovered and seized. All three have been arrested.

## Agri bills betrayal of farmers: Kamal

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, SEPT. 27

Kamal Haasan, on Sunday, attacked the AIADMK government in Tamil Nadu over the controversial farm bills, which were cleared in the parliament last week.

"Isn't this support to these bills a betrayal of farmers by Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami who calls himself a farmer?" Mr Haasan asked in a statement, warning that farmers who sow have the power to bury the government too as Tamil Nadu goes to polls next year.

Kamal dissected each bill underlining that farming has always been a state subject and that each of



these proposed laws threaten farmers. "The bills allow movement of goods to any part of the country; it threatens food security and would create a dangerous situation as a state would be able to do nothing amid scarcity or price rise," Kamal said. He

reminded everyone that AIADMK captured power promising more autonomy to farmers in the state.

"It is a ploy to make corporates new landlords and farmers modern day slaves. The bills would pave the way for corporate hoarding and create scarcity for profit. Why is the government covering up the dangers of corporates fixing prices of farm produce? Continuation of minimum support price (MSP) has come under question," Kamal said while referring to the removal of food grains and oils from the list of essential items.

Farmers across the country have been protesting for weeks demanding that the farm bills be repealed.

## Stalin attacks CM over farm bills

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, SEPT. 27

DMK President M K Stalin launched a broadside against the Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami for openly supporting the controversial agricultural bills passed in Parliament recently and listed a series of corruption charges against the AIADMK government.

Stalin was addressing, through video conference, a 'Muperum Vizha' (triple celebrations) event of the party organized for the first time using a video



conferencing facility by the Karur district unit of the DMK, in which 50,000 persons listened to his speech.

Praising the Karur DMK district secretary Senthil

**Praising the Karur DMK district secretary Senthil Balaji for pioneering the effort that other districts could follow, Stalin said 'we must use technology to the fullest'**

Balaji for pioneering the effort that other districts could follow, Stalin said 'we must use technology to the fullest.'

Party founder like C N

Annadurai and M Karunanidhi had used newspapers, books, drama and cinema to disseminate their ideologies, ideas and principles to the masses, he said, adding that in this era of technology we had harnessed the television, websites and social media to spread our messages.

Stating that the party was using the video conferencing facility, as it was doing for the Muperum Vizha meeting, Stalin said 'what we say mattered more than through which channel we are saying it.'



Boys celebrate humid Chennai weather with a dip into the cool waves at Marina Beach.  
— E.K. Sanjay

## Man arrested under Pocco Act

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, SEPT. 27

A 28-year-old man was arrested here for allegedly sexually abusing a minor girl, police said. A case was registered against him under Pocco Act following a complaint from the 15-year-old girl's family that he had sexually abused the teenager on Friday.

The accused has been identified as Santhakumar, 28 of Perumal Kovil street in Vattampakkam in Kanchipuram district. He is a daily wage worker employed at a private company in the city. Due to the lockdown, the victim, a class -9 student, had been working on farmland with Santhakumar.

On Friday, Sathakumar had allegedly harassed the minor girl and a complaint was lodged by the girl's parents at the Oragadam police station after the girl had complained to them. The accused was arrested on Sunday, remanded to judicial custody and lodged in jail.

## Imposters don't even spare the policemen



Apsara Reddy

And the point is..

In the past week four IPS officers were the target of virtual miscreants. Creating false social media IDs, they went about having conversations with unsuspecting people in the names of some very senior Police officials.

Many who knew the officers were added by the mischief mongers and better still they requested money for charitable projects. After being intimidated by their well-wishers, the officers were quick to put out an advisory to their friends to report these IDs to those social media platforms.

Online crimes are acted upon in a "systematic manner" and "due process is followed" is the standard response of any law enforcement agency officer across India. But the speed at which online crimes occur and the information transfer to millions within seconds cannot be merely dealt with by just the application of intelligence and strategy. It needs speed!

Cyber crimes are the new form of terrorism. Forcing men and women into submission, suicide even! Using blackmail, stalking and impostor techniques to defame prominent folk and even unsuspecting gullible youth, online villains are extracting their pound of flesh and soul with little or no checks.

TN's well known and much respected IPS offi-



Balakrishna Velaiah



Shankar Krishnan

cers, Joint Commissioner Balakrishna Velaiah and CBCID IG Shankar, were among a few who got to experience firsthand the malicious mechanisations of cyber thugs.

While the law enforcement agencies deal with serious tangible crimes of murder and rape, the virtual space too has become a cause of concern for

general public. Content being unleashed in the name of freedom of speech or deviant ways to hide behind fake and anonymous identities has led to tarnished careers, loss of incomes, fragmented families and mental health issues for the victim.

What gives these individuals the motivation and power is anonymity and the fact that they don't even consider this a crime. For far too long we've sensationalised kidnap, rape and murder to be crimes worthy of cinema, news and headlines. It's time cyber crime departments work with as much conviction, finesse and speed as every other arm of law enforcement. And for that the onus is on the government to provide latest technologies, up to speed gadgets and training. Budgetary allocation for cyber policing must be prioritised as we move into an even darker space of tech-savvy and devious criminals.

And unlike imposters who struck when email first came into being, like the Nigerian Prince who wanted to donate to charity and needed your bank details or a hapless battered woman in India's tiny village needing your credit card details to feed her family, the imposters today are picking people with influence and social cachet, identifying their network of family and friends and then working their magic to win their trust and earn a quick buck.

The point is cyber crime is the new form to terror and that we must be clear on. The distance and anonymity aside, everlasting damage and death can occur through reckless rogues using the virtual space.

## Governor, CM condole Jaswant Singh's death

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, SEPT. 27

Leaders in Tamil Nadu, led by the Governor Banwarilal Purohit, condoled the demise of Jaswant Singh, former Union Cabinet Minister, in New Delhi on Sunday.

He had handled Finance, External Affairs and Defence Ministry portfolios with full dedication and left his strong mark, Purohit said in a statement.

He was a retired officer of the Indian Army and an experienced political leader



known for his simplicity, humbleness, governance skills and cordial relations, Purohit said.



Deputy Chief Minister O Panneerselvam said he was a Parliamentarian for over 30 years and that he was sad-

dened to hear about his passing away. In a tweet, Panneerselvam expressed his condolences to the family.

DMK President M K Stalin, in his Facebook post, said: 'Deeply saddened to hear about the passing of former Union Minister and veteran politician Thiru Jaswant Singh. On behalf of DMK, I express my sincere condolences. My thoughts are with his family and friends at this difficult time.'

PMK founder Dr S Ramadoss, in a tweet, described Singh as an honest and transparent

politician, condoling his death.

MDMK founder Vaiko described him as a good friend, who would place arguments in Parliament with proper evidence. He was not keeping well after a fall and had been taking treatment from home, Vaiko said in a statement.

Makkal Neethi Maiyam founder Kamal Haasan tweeted: 'He will always be remembered as a gentleman politician and for his immense contribution to Indian polity.'

## How police red tape sank Chennai's modern traffic management system

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, SEPT. 28

The city of Chennai lost a modern Integrated Traffic Management System thanks to Police politics. And now the government of Tamil Nadu has to pay the damages — as much as Rs 37.4 crores and interest of Rs 13 crore and ticking. A sum of Rs 50 crore plus has been awarded to Purple Infotech as a committee of arbitrators ruled in its favour after the State terminated the contract in arbitrary manner after much work had gone into the shaping of a state-of-the-art control and command centre in the Greater Chennai Commissioner of Police's office in Vepery.

The ITMS, modelled on systems operating in the UK, would have benefitted Chennai. It would have provided HD images from 100 locations at city intersections and the live data could have helped drive traffic management. The system also envisaged the creation of green corridors for VIP traffic to move unhindered while disrupting other traffic movement minimally. It would also have enabled ambulances to travel in



(top) The state-of-the-art control and command centre at CoP office of the terminated ITMS stands silent sentinel to Chennai losing a valuable project. (Right) File photo of late CM J. Jayalalithaa inaugurating the project to issue e-challans on the spot, which was a forerunner to the ITMS.

specified corridors and controlled signalling to deal with emergencies.

The project got stalled for mysterious reasons despite the fact that the then chief minister J. Jayalalithaa had evinced great interest in it and got the ball rolling and even inaugurated the associated project of generating e-challans on the spot for traffic violations. The integrated system would have been a pioneering IT effort in managing traffic in cities

and would have set an example for bigger metros in avoiding traffic snarls and keeping a close eye on intersections which invariably clog vehicle movement.

Experts and former top cops were of the opinion that the system covering the core of the city would have been just the start as the entire city could have been covered in phases. The first phase was to cost Rs 117 crore and a part of its design was for the CM's con-

voy from off Cathedral Road to travel smoothly to the Secretariat and Assembly in Fort St George. The HD eyes in the sky would have also been very handy tools in crime detection and even crime prevention. It was with a very weak argument of "delay in project execution" that the axe was brought down by very senior cops.

The project cost may have been recovered from just fines levied on traffic viola-



tors as courts tend to go by modern video evidence presented in clear, foolproof manner as violators can hardly contest the footage of offences committed as they are caught by number plate recognition technology. It was strange then that the then Commissioner of Police should cause the serving of a termination notice on the project even after considerable efforts had been taken and money spent on customisation of

equipment and software in putting together the control and command centre and installing cameras at traffic intersections.

Sources close to the enablers of the project who are from the IT industry who were looking forward to breakthrough tech in modern traffic management and control were made to wonder if the officers who terminated the project should not be held accountable. The bureau-

cracy led the arbitrators on a merry dance even to pay the sitting fees after having denied electricity and placed other hindrances in completing what would have been a trend setting project for the city, which would have been a first in India.

The committee of arbitrators which awarded compensation was headed by Justice Doraisamy Raju, retired SC judge, as the presiding arbitrator and com-

mitted (retired) Justice K. Mohanram representing Purple Infotech and (retired) Justice S. Rajeswaran representing the Police department. The project was awarded in 2012 and the first phase was completed and made over to the Police in February 2013. The then Commissioner of Police S. George cited a delay in execution for ordering an inquiry by Additional Commissioner (Traffic) Karuna Sagar following which the order was terminated in March 2013.

The award clearly relies on evidence presented to the committee of arbitrators on the "illegal and unilateral termination" of the contract.

The arbitrator also noted that the time was not of the essence in carrying out work of this nature and that the basic premise on which the termination was done was not legal. As sources close to those who were bringing the project to fruition said, "It's not just the money. The city lost a great system. Just imagine what integrated traffic management would also have done for India's habit of wantonly ignoring traffic rules."



## SHORT TAKES

## CM thanked for use of Indian medicine

DC CORRESPONDENT  
TIRUCHY, SEPT. 27

Dr K.S. Subbaiah, state president of the All-India Siddha Doctors Association and the Tamil Nadu Acupuncture Research Council, has thanked Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami for giving importance to Indian medicine, especially Siddha medicine, to tackle the medical emergency of Covid-19.

He made these remarks while inaugurating a free Siddha medical camp here on Saturday. He claimed that the Indian system of medicine also played a key role in treating Covid-19 patients.

## Paddy transplanting undertaken

DC CORRESPONDENT  
PUDUKKOTTAI, SEPT. 27

Paddy transplanting was undertaken in the rice intensification method at Meboothakudi village in Pudukkottai district as part of the Tamil Nadu Irrigated Agriculture Modernisation project under the guidance of Pudukkottai district joint director of agriculture R.M. Shrivakumar.

The crop sequence demonstration with green manure crop, paddy and pulses crops under intensive production technology is implemented under the TN-IAMP scheme in Meboothakudi village Virallimala block.

T. Ramu, assistant director of agriculture, Virallimala, said in this crop sequence demonstration, green manure crop called Dhaincha was sown in the fields of beneficiaries, ploughed at the time of flowering to increase soil fertility and planted paddy under the rice intensification method.

## Annual car festival conducted

DC CORRESPONDENT  
TIRUCHY, SEPT. 27

The annual car festival of Sri Prasanna Venkatachalapathy Temple at Gunaseelam near Tiruchy was conducted on Sunday.

Hereditary trustee of the temple Pitchumani Iyengar said the car festival was celebrated as part of the annual Brahmorchavam which commenced on September 18. With the help of tractors, the temple car was pulled out and placed at its base.

Then devotees were allowed darshan following social distancing norms, he added.

## PM lauded TN's Covid management: Health minister

R. VALAYAPATHY | DC  
PUDUKKOTTAI, SEPT. 27

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has lauded the Tamil Nadu Government's efforts in containing Covid-19 and asked other states to emulate Tamil Nadu, said Health Minister Dr. C. Vijayabaskar.

Dr. Vijayabaskar, talking to mediapersons at Ammanpettai village near Pudukkottai on Sunday on the sidelines of opening a Rs 45 lakh community centre, also informed that Tamil Nadu is the only state which conducts at least 90,000 RT-PCR tests every day, which was the reason behind the Prime Minister's praise.

He said the Tamil Nadu Government is going to establish 2,000 mini clinics shortly across the state and the recruitment drive of medical and para medical staff is going on. He said all the rural hospitals are fully equipped to handle Covid-19 cases.

The Minister added that Tamil Nadu produces excess oxygen and supplies it to neighbouring states. Earlier, the Minister, accompanied by Pudukkottai Collector B. Umamaheswari, launched the Anna mobile ration shop at Panangkudi village.

T. SUDHEESH | DC  
CHENNAI, SEPT. 27

While the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) has started setting up temporary structures to prevent people from using public spaces for urination, a social activist and health experts have demanded more concrete steps to control this long-standing menace in light of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The GCC, under the Swachh Bharat Mission, recently set up temporary

## AIADMK Executive meet today may be stormy

G. BABU JAYAKUMAR & D. SEKAR | DC  
CHENNAI, SEPT. 27

The AIADMK Executive Committee meeting, primarily called to put an end to the simmering factionalism in the party, could turn out to be a stormy one on Monday as the mandarins of the party are keen on sorting out a lot of issues that threaten to knock down the façade of unity before the next elections.

Over 300 party functionaries like MPs, MLAs, headquarters administrators and special invitees, besides the party's Executive members are expected to attend the meeting, scheduled for 10.30 am at the party headquarters in Chennai.

The decision to call for the Executive itself was taken at a high-level meeting suddenly called by the party's coordinator and Deputy Chief Minister O. Panneerselvam, who is the person now complaining about the way things are being conducted in the AIADMK and the government.

Though at one end, Minister Sellur Raju had said that a plethora of important decisions would be taken at the Executive meeting and that the party cadre should abide by them, another Minister D. Jayakumar had said the meeting was just a formality to meet the Election Commission norms that makes the convening of the meeting every year mandatory.

However, party insiders agree that there is a bitter

**Over 300 party functionaries like MPs, MLAs, headquarters administrators and special invitees, besides the party's Executive members are expected to attend the meeting, scheduled for 10.30 am at the party headquarters in Chennai**

power struggle going on in the party and that there is no likelihood of it abating without both sides making compromises. Panneerselvam's main complaint is that the 11-member steering committee, whose formation was agreed upon when the faction led by him merged with the ruling AIADMK faction under Edappadi K. Palaniswami in August 2017, has not yet been formed.

When Panneerselvam raised the issue at the recent high-level meeting, Palaniswami and his supporters had asked if there was any need for the steering committee at this point of time when the party's tenure in the Assembly was coming to an end in another eight months and that they had to face elections after that.

Panneerselvam, it is said, insisted on the formation of the committee, which, as it was decided in 2017, would take all key decisions related to the party that would have Panneerselvam as coordinator and Palaniswami as joint coordinator. The latest offer that had been made to Panneerselvam is

that he could become the general secretary of the party, the most powerful post that was occupied by founder M. G. Ramchandran (MGR) and his successor J. Jayalalithaa, while Palaniswami should be allowed to continue as the Chief Minister in the next term, too, if the party comes back to power.

The grouse of Panneerselvam is that he had not been given the due respect and importance of a Deputy Chief Minister since 2017. The Chief Minister had not involved him in many of the talks with the Centre and had not taken him along for the district tours, treating him as just another Minister in Cabinet. So, he would like to stake his claim for the Chief Ministership and not settle for anything less.

After all it was Panneerselvam who was identified to be the Chief Minister by Jayalalithaa twice, his supporters say. Insiders claim that even among the participants of Monday's Executive meeting, Panneerselvam's supporters would form the majority. When the high-level meeting was held at the party headquarters, Panneerselvam's supporters had thronged the premises to raise slogans in support of his demand to be made the Chief Minister.

But then, Palaniswami's supporters too had landed there to hail him as the 'permanent' Chief Minister. The situation in the Executive would be different, say the insiders, adding that Palaniswami

would have no option other than to agree to the many demands of Panneerselvam.

Of course, Palaniswami, too, has his own band of supporters. It was Ministers like Thangamani and Velumani who bailed out the Chief Minister at the high-level meeting. But on Monday, Panneerselvam might dig in his heels with the demand for the Chief Minister's post. Though he had said that no one in the party should talk about who would be the next Chief Minister, he wants the issue to be resolved at the Executive or at least in the General Council that is expected to be held by December.

Panneerselvam is said to have told his supporters that he has been keeping silent on many issues all these years only because he wanted to help the party continue to rule the State for another 100 years, as per the dreams of Jayalalithaa. However, now he wanted to assert his right to claim the Chief Minister's job since Palaniswami had had a free run for over four years.

Keen on settling the issue before going to the polls, Panneerselvam at least wants Palaniswami to agree to share the post — one of them holding it for two and a half years and the other for the rest of the term. He already had the backing of leaders like Vaithilingam, Manoj Pandian and JCD Prabakaran in the previous meeting and expects more of them to be with him at the Executive.

## Two boys die in mishaps

DC CORRESPONDENT  
MANNARGUDI, SEPT. 27

Two boys, aged 15 and 3, were killed in two separate mishaps in Mannargudi on Sunday.

Kritheesh, 3, of Vaduvur West was fatally ran over by a tractor when he fell down accidentally from a motorcycle, driven by his relative Gokul, on Sunday. Vaduvur police are investigating.

In another mishap, Abdul Kader, 15, was washed away by a flash-flood in the Pamani river in Mannargudi. Police said the deceased Kader, a 10th standard student, along with his friends, went to the river for bathing and drowned.

The fire and rescue department personnel recovered the body after two hours of search.

DC CORRESPONDENT  
THOOTHUKUDI, SEPT. 27

The Thoothukudi district police have arrested four men with iridium tubes, which went suspiciously missing from DRDO, Mumbai in 2010.

Acting on a tip-off that four men, Mariyadas (49), son of Anthony Pitchai of Thoothukudi, Murugan (47), son of Mariappan, Vaithiyalingam (60), son of Singamuthu of Karai-kudi, and Muthuramalingam (45), son of Karuppannan of Muthugulathoor, Ramanathapuram



Students appear for JEE Advanced exam at a centre in Kovilambakkam.

— DC

## Tension after disrespect shown to Periyar statue

## OPS assures action on desecration incident

DC CORRESPONDENT  
TIRUCHY, SEPT. 27

Tension prevailed at Inamkulathur near here on Sunday for some time after members of all political parties blocked the busy Tiruchy-Dindigul national highway, demanding the arrest of miscreants who painted the Periyar EVR statue in saffron colour and garlanded it with a chappal at Samathuvapuram there.

A police team led by Inspector General of Police (central zone) Jayaraman rushed to the spot. The police team, with the help of local people, cleaned the Periyar EVR statue and assured the agitators that police will take action against the miscreants, and restored normalcy.

DMK principal secretary K. N. Nehru accused the police of hesitating to take action against the miscreants.

Police team, with the help of local people, cleaned the Periyar EVR statue and assured the agitators that police will take action against the miscreants

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, SEPT. 27

Deputy Chief Minister O. Panneerselvam said that the AIADMK government would take action against the 'anti-social elements' who indulged in the 'criminal act' of desecrating the statue of Periyar E. V. Ramasamy at Tiruchi. In a twitter message, Panneerselvam described Periyar as a rationalist leader who struggled for social justice.

Condemning the desecration of the statue at the Inamkulathur Samathuvapuram in Tiruchy, Stalin said 'Periyar is not a leader of a movement. He is the leader of the Tamil race. Whoever thought they were dishonouring him only dishonoured themselves.'

In his Facebook message, Stalin wondered

when those people would realise that by repeating the same mistake they would be isolated by the people more and more.

BJP State President L. Murugan condemned the desecration and said the police should arrest those who committed the 'uncivilised act' and take appropriate action against them. Referring to the smearing of saffron paint on the statue, Murugan said in a statement that saffron was divine and was inclusive so it was not fair to use it with bad intentions.

PMK founder Dr S. Ramadoss also demanded serious police action against those who adorned the statue with a garland of footwear and smeared saffron paint on it. Only such an action would be a deterrent to those trying to disrupt peace and amity in the State.

## After 8 years, man murders brother's killer

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, SEPT. 27

A 45-year-old man was hacked to death in a broad daylight by an armed gang in Chengalpet district on Sunday. Police identified the deceased as Sekar, a history-sheeter with three murder cases against him in suburban police stations.

The incident happened around noon on Sunday when Sekar was heading to his friend's place in Selvi Nagar in Chengalpet. While he was riding

his two-wheeler, he was intercepted by six men on three motorbikes. On seeing them, he abandoned his bike and began to run, but was caught and brutally hacked to death. Eye witnesses said that when people from the locality started to gather, the murderers fled the scene.

Chengalpet taluk police came to the spot and sent the body to the Chengalpet GH for post-mortem. Even as police began enquiries, around 5 pm, Suresh and his friends

Manikandan, Mahesh, Babu and Mohideen surrendered at the Chengalpet SP's office.

During preliminary investigation, Suresh confessed that along with his friends he killed Sekar to seek revenge for his brother's murder eight years ago. Police said that Sekar had murdered Suresh's brother Vijayakumar owing to previous enmity. Vijayakumar was the Panjayat leader of P. V. Kalathur, when he was murdered



The luxury boat, ML Thimirabarani bought by Poombuhar Shipping Corporation docked at the boat jetty in Kanyakumari.

— DC

## Two more boats added to Kanyakumari fleet

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KANYAKUMARI, SEPT. 27

Tourists coming to Kanyakumari after the Covid-19-triggered travel restrictions are lifted will be able to visit the rock memorials of Thiruvalluvar and Vivekananda without much waiting, thanks to the addition of two swanky boats to the fleet of Poombuhar Shipping Corporation (PSC).

The state-owned PSC's new luxury boat, ML Thimirabarani, has a seating capacity of 150. The boat built in Goa has a separate airconditioned cabin for passengers with

TV facility. ML Thimirabarani has reached Kanyakumari and will be put into service once the tourism industry is reopened. One more boat of the same kind, christened ML Thiruvalluvar, is under construction.

The PSC has utilised the lockdown period for the renovation of its three boats, ML Guhan, ML Pothigai and ML Vivekananda. The entire roof of ML Pothigai will be replaced with M. S. Angle superstructure and the boat is at the Chinnamuttom harbour for repair work.

The extension of the boat jetty at the

Vivekananda rock memorial, planned to berth two more boats at a cost of Rs 20 crore under the Sagarmala project with the state sharing a part of the project cost, however has been rejected by the Tamil Nadu Coastal Zone Management Authority as the project site falls under CRZ-1B (intertidal zone) and CRZ-IV area.

The Tamil Nadu Coastal Zone Management Authority is said to have reported the Tamil Nadu Maritime Board (TNMB), the project proponent, to study the feasibility of expanding the boat jetty without formation of groynes.

tures in the open spaces to sort out open urination. What the city requires is permanent toilets and their proper maintenance. Once the temporary structures collapse, people will start urinating again in open. So we suggest that authorities must come up with a permanent solution', he added.

Sanjai Murali, founder, JOGO Health, is also concerned about public urination. It's fine in creating a solution in Gill Nagar but many areas in the city badly need a permanent solution

for this menace. We want to see it expanded to all areas', he added.

Tennyson Stephen, a resident of Gill Nagar, said they were living with this menace for the last two decades. We were happy to see at least a temporary solution for this issue now', he said. He also pointed out that the authorities took up the matter after they complained through the Namma Chennai app.

V.S. Jayaraman, secretary, T. Nagar Residents Welfare Association, pointed out

that the corporation should use this pandemic situation to stop this menace. In our area, they have done nothing to prevent this menace though people continue to indulge in public urination. Proper toilets with clear signboards should be constructed. 'Often people urinate on the road because they are unable to find a toilet. A few years ago, GCC set up toilets in our area. But it became an additional burden for the public as it was ill-maintained by the authorities. I think creating

temporary structures would help to create awareness among people. However, the civic body should ensure that it should be well-maintained.

They could tie up with the city police to monitor via CCTV camera network', he said.

Meanwhile, officials said they were taking steps to prevent public urination based on the complaints received through the Namma Chennai application. We will check the places where residents and

commuters are suffering from open urination and put up fences to prevent people from using public places for urination and defecation', the officials said.

It may be recalled the recent Swachh Survekshan survey, an initiative under Swachh Bharat to monitor cleanliness in different cities and towns in India, adjudged Chennai as the third dirtiest city in the category of those with a population of more than one million.

## ‘To tackle menace of open nuisance build good toilets’

**The GCC, under the Swachh Bharat Mission, recently set up temporary fences to curb open urination on the central school roadside near Gill Nagar ward 109. This comes at a time when the GCC is imposing fines on those caught spitting in public that could help in the spread of Covid-19**

fences to curb open urination on the central school roadside near Gill Nagar ward 109.

This comes at a time when the GCC is imposing fines on those caught spitting in

public that could help in the spread of Covid-19.

Social activist and NGO Arappor Iyakkam convener Jayaram Venkatesan said there was no point in setting up temporary struc-



## SHORT TAKES

2.25 LAKH PEOPLE  
AFFECTED BY  
FLOODS IN ASSAM

**Guwahati, Sept. 27:** A total of 2.25 lakh people in nine districts were affected and over 10,000 hectares of crops submerged on Sunday as fresh floods hit Assam, the state disaster management authority said. Dhemaji, Lakhimpur, Morigaon, Nagaon, Majuli, West Karbi Anglong, Sivasaagar, Dibrugarh and Tinsukia districts have been affected, the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) said in its report.

Incessant rain in the last few days has triggered this year's third wave of floods in the state, claiming one life in Nagaon district on Saturday, it said. The fresh fatality has pushed the number of deaths in flood-related incidents in Assam this year to 118, the report said.

The number of affected people was 1.8 lakh on the previous day. Nagaon is the worst-hit district with 1.51 lakh affected people, followed by Morigaon (32,711), Dhemaji (16,792) and Dibrugarh (10,622), the report said. Human habitations and farmland in 219 villages in nine districts are submerged, it said. The mighty Brahmaputra is flowing above the danger mark at Neamatighat in Jorhat district and Tezpur in Sonitpur. A total of 43 relief camps have been set up in three districts so far, the report said. Road connectivity has been affected in Morigaon, Nagaon and West Karbi Anglong districts, it added.

21-YEAR OLD  
HELD FOR KILLING  
ROOMMATE

**New Delhi, Sept. 27:** The Delhi Police has arrested a 21-year-old man from southeast Delhi's Govindpuri area for allegedly killing his roommate whom he suspected of having a relationship with his niece, officials said on Sunday.

The accused has been identified as Suman, a resident of Tuglakabad village, they said. On September 17, after receiving information that a man was injured at Kangar Mohalla in Tuglakabad village, the police rushed to the spot and found him unconscious. Blood was oozing out from the man's nose and mouth and he was rushed to AIIMS hospital where he was declared brought dead, a senior police officer said. The deceased was later identified as Kamlesh (20).

In the autopsy report, the lacerated wounds were revealed as the cause of death. Thereafter, a murder case was registered at Govindpuri police station, police said. During investigation, the CCTV footage of the nearby area was analysed. "CCTV footage revealed that there was contradiction in the version Suman had given as he was seen entering and leaving the house at the time when the deceased was reportedly killed. "Later, the accused admitted to killing Kamlesh with a pair of scissors while he was sleeping in his room," Deputy Commissioner of Police (southeast) R. P. Meena said.

3 KILLED, 7 HURT  
AS VAN COLLIDES  
WITH BUS IN UP

**Kannauj, Sept. 27:** Three persons, including a seven-year-old boy, were killed while seven others seriously injured on Sunday evening when their van collided head-on with a bus in Uttar Pradesh's Kannauj district, police said.

After colliding with the van, the bus fell in a roadside ditch. Eighteen passengers of the bus received minor injuries, the police said. According to Kotwali police station SHO, Vikas Rai, the accident took place on the GT Road at Jalalpur village of the district. The seven people, who were seriously injured, were in the van, police said.

Among the deceased, one was Ayush, the son of a man named Sonu, who was returning with his family members to Kanpur from Farrukhabad after attending the last rites of his brother-in-law. The van's driver Ajit Kumar (30) and Shakuntala (35) also died in the incident, police said. Three of the seriously injured, whose condition was critical, were referred to the Medical College and Hospital in Tirwa. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath expressed grief over the loss of lives, and directed that the injured persons should get adequate treatment, a statement issued by the UP government said on Sunday.

Army deploys  
tanks at forward  
areas in Ladakh

**DC CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 27**

The Indian Army has deployed tanks at forward areas like the Chumar, Depsang and Chushul sectors to take on any threat from China's People's Liberation Army amid the ongoing standoff at the Line of Actual Control.

The Indian Army has deployed T-90 and T-72 tanks along with the BMP-2 infantry combat vehicles at the Chumar-Demchok sector, that is crucial for the defence of the Ladakh sector. The Army has brought T-90 tanks to the Depsang plains in Sub Sector North (SSN), where Chinese troops are preventing Indian patrols from going to patrolling points 10 to 13.

With the Indian Army preparing to stay put at the forward posts in the coming winter, these tanks have the ability to operate even at minus 40 degrees Celsius.

"The Fire and Fury Corps is the only formation of the Indian Army and also in the world to have actually deployed mechanised forces in such harsh terrain. The maintenance of the tanks, infantry combat vehicles and heavy guns is a challenge in this terrain. To ensure crew and equipment readiness, adequate arrangements are in place for both man and machine," the Leh-based Fire and Fury Corps chief of staff, Maj. Gen. Arvind Kapoor, told a news agency.

He said the Army was logistically prepared in terms of tackling the harsh weather, with special winter clothing and other facilities such as

fuel, spares and assemblies in place. "Adequate training with provision of special winter clothing will ensure troops' morale remains high and they are ready to function at short notice. Along with this, training and honing of crew skills and drills will remain constant through the winters. The Indian Army in eastern Ladakh is logistically well prepared," he said.

For the winter, the Indian Army is using three types of fuels in these tanks which don't freeze in sub-zero temperatures and keeps these tanks running.

Earlier this month, the PLA had brought forward their tanks near the Chushul sector to put pressure on the Indian Army after it occupied the strategic heights on the south bank of Pangong Tso on August 29-30.

The Depsang plains, situated at an altitude of over 15,000 feet, are flat and suitable for tank action. It is one of the critical points where a thrust by Indian tanks threatens Aksai Chin, which was captured by the Chinese Army in 1962.

Last week, during the sixth round of corps commanders' talks, India and China had agreed to stop sending more troops to the frontline, to refrain from unilaterally changing the situation on the ground, and avoid taking any action that may complicate the situation.

However, no breakthrough could be achieved by India and China on the disengagement of troops, which means that both sides will keep their forces at forward posts in the Ladakh sector during the winter.

Congress eggs BJP  
allies to quit NDA

**DC CORRESPONDENT  
WITH AGENCY INPUTS  
NEW DELHI/CHANDIGARH,  
SEPT. 27**

A day after the Shiromani Akali Dal walked out of the NDA, new political equations seem to be emerging with the Trinamul Congress, the Congress, Nationalist Congress Party and other rivals of the BJP hailing the move and expressing support for the ongoing farmers' agitation.

The Congress on Sunday dared BJP allies Janata Dal (United), LJP and JJP to oppose the Centre and not to support the agriculture bills, which it alleged were like "cancer and slow poison that will kill farmers".

At a joint virtual press conference, Congress Haryana chief Kumari Selja and Punjab PCC chief Sunil Jakhar urged all parties to join hands and oppose the farm bills, while asking the government to take back the laws, saying these would make farmers the slaves of big businessmen.

Ms Selja and Mr Jakhar said the NDA allies should back the Opposition the way they had extended support against the Land Acquisition Bill, which the Centre had been forced to withdraw. On the Akali Dal's exit from the NDA, Mr Jakhar said the party did not quit the ruling coalition on its own, but was forced to do so by farmers, who made it difficult for the Akalis to enter Punjab otherwise.

"The resignation by the

DAGGERS OUT  
IN WB BJP OVER  
PROMOTIONS

**RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC  
KOLKATA, SEPT. 27**

Anger is brewing in the BJP in West Bengal after the promotion of two Trinamul Congress defectors, Mukul Roy and Anupam Hazra, in the saf-ron party's rank and file at the cost of old-timers ahead of the Assembly election in the state.

On Saturday evening, Rahul Sinha, a party veteran, found his name dropped from the new list of national secretaries.

What infuriated him was the appointment of Hazra, known to be a follower of Roy who has been made vice-president, in his place from the state. Sinha revolted publicly. Tagging Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's party and the Prime Minister he tweeted, "Served @BJP4India for 40 Years as the Warrior and today just to include @AITCOfficial Leaders, I have been asked to Left the Post of the Party. @nar-ndramodi @BJP4Bengal (sic)."

Akali minister was not given but taken by the BJP and the Akali Dal did not quit the NDA on its own but were thrown out," he claimed. "The anger of farmers and the BJP's arrogance forced the Akalis to buy a permit to enter Punjab by this drama."

## RESCUE | MISSION

Ship was carrying 905 tn rice and sugar to the African nation  
Coast Guard save 12 from sinking ship

**Ahmedabad, Sept. 27:** Twelve crew members of a cargo vessel sinking in the Arabian Sea off the Gujarat coast have been rescued by the Coast Guard, officials said on Sunday.

Around 9 pm on Saturday, the Coast Guard received information that there was flooding onboard the vessel 'MSV

Krishna Sudama' around 10 nautical miles off the Okha coast.

The vessel had on Saturday started sailing from Mundra in Gujarat for Djibouti, carrying 905 tonne rice and sugar to the African nation, the Coast Guard said in a statement.

"Search and rescue was immediately commenced

## On the protest track



Farmers block railway tracks during Rail Roko Andolan against the Central government's newly introduced farm bills, at Devi Dass Pura village, 20 km from Amritsar, on Sunday. — PTI

India's Covid-19 cases  
surpass 60-lakh mark

## Country records single-day spike of 88,600 infections

**DC CORRESPONDENT  
WITH AGENCY INPUTS  
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 27**

The total Covid-19 case-load in India crossed the 60 lakh mark with 88,600 more persons contracting the virus on Sunday, 12 days after it crossed the 50-lakh mark. The total number of recoveries surged to 50,02,959.

India is the second-worst hit nation in terms of Covid-19 cases after the US, while it is in the third spot in terms of fatalities globally after the US and Brazil, according to the data to the Johns Hopkins University (JHU), which has been compiling Covid-19 data from all over the world. India is in pole position in terms of the number of recoveries, followed by Brazil and the US.

**Marginal dip in TS cases:** There has been a marginal drop in fresh Covid-19 cases with the state health department saying that 1,967 samples tested positive on Saturday, while nine persons died of the disease. With this, the total has risen to 1,85,833 and the toll to 1,100, the department said in its bulletin on Sunday.

The Greater Hyderabad area too reported fewer

**New Delhi, Sept. 27:** Travellers from Dubai and the UK were primary sources of Covid-19 importations into India, according to an analytical study done by Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Mandi.

According to the research, which has been published in the Journal of Travel Medicine, Covid-19 got induced into Indian states mainly due to interstate transfer too.

cases than on Friday, at 297. This is the second time in the week since September 20, when authorities reported 266 cases, that the GHMC area has reported less than 300 cases in a day.

**6,923 new cases in AP:** The decrease of Corona positive cases continued on Sunday in Andhra Pradesh with the dropping of positive cases to 6,923 from an earlier average of 10,000 cases per day. As many as 6,923 Covid-19 positive cases registered and 7,796 patients dis-

The study has also found that infected cases from Tamil Nadu, Delhi and Andhra Pradesh played less role in spreading the disease outside their communities. Whereas infected people in Gujarat, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Kerala, Jammu and Kashmir, and Karnataka played a significant role in the local transmission, and some of them caused interstate transfer too.

charged after cure increasing the recovery rate in the past 24 hours on Sunday giving a ray of hope to contain Corona spread.

**Karnataka reports 9,543 new cases:** Karnataka on Sunday reported 9,543 new cases of Covid-19 and 79 related deaths, taking the total infection count to 5.75 lakh and the toll to 8,582.

So far, cumulatively 5,75,566 Covid-19 positive cases have been confirmed in the state and it included 8,582 deaths and 4,62,241

"We tracked the spread of Covid-19 and its diffusion from the global to national level and identified a few super spreaders who played a central role in the transmission of the disease in India. The Covid-19 spread in phase one was traced using the travelling history of the patients, and it was found that most of the transmissions were local," Sarita Azad, Assistant Professor, IIT Mandi, said.

discharges, the department said in a bulletin. Bengaluru Urban district continued to account for a lion's share of new cases, clocking 4,217 on Sunday.

**Kerala number keeps surging:** Kerala registered its biggest single-day spike in Covid-19 cases on Sunday with 7,445 additions, taking the total number of those infected in the state to 1.74 lakh. Kozhikode district reported 956 fresh cases, the highest in the state on Sunday followed by Malappuram with 915.

Ex- DGP Gupteshwar  
Pandey joins JD(U)  
ahead of Bihar polls

**NAYEAR AZAD | DC  
PATNA, SEPT. 27**

Former Bihar DGP Gupteshwar Pandey joined the JD(U) in the presence of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar at his residence in Patna on Sunday. After he took voluntary retirement last week, it was being speculated that he would join the JD(U). On Sunday, while talking to reporters, he said that his next political move depends on the party.

"I have joined JD(U) and as a good soldier of the party I would like to wait for the instructions and advice of the top leadership", Pandey said.

Reports suggest that Pandey is likely to get a ticket to contest either the Assembly election from Buxar or the Valmikinagar Lok Sabha seat where a bypoll has been necessitated due to the death of JD(U) MP Baidyanath Mahto.

This is the second time he is trying his luck in electoral politics. In 2009 he had opted for voluntary retirement to contest the Lok Sabha polls from Buxar but returned to the service after he failed to get the ticket from the BJP.

"I have spent my life working for the people and will continue to serve them in future also. As far

NCB WANTED ME  
TO IMPLICATE  
KARAN JOHAR:  
KHSITIJ PRASAD

**SHAHAB ANSARI | DC  
MUMBAI, SEPT. 27**

Executive producer Kshitij Ravi Prasad, who has been arrested by Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) in a drugs case linked with the death of Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput, has been remanded to police custody till October 3. According to his lawyer, when Kshitij was produced before the court, he alleged before the magistrate that he was tortured and pressurised and asked to name Karan Johar or some other top official linked with Dharma Productions.

Initially when Prasad's name cropped up it was said that he was an employee of Dharma Production, but Karan Johar denied it and said that he was not linked with his firm.

According to advocate Satish Maneshinde, Prasad was produced before magistrate through videoconferencing. At that time the lawyer informed the magistrate that Kshitij was harassed and blackmailed to make a statement as told by the probe officer. On his request the magistrate recorded the statement made by Prasad.

Prasad told the court that when NCB searched his house they found nothing objectionable. However, the officials still mentioned in the panchanama that his house was a "ganja joint" and at his wife's insistence they added the word "believed" to be a ganja joint.

He alleged that at the time of recording his statement, an NCB officer, despite his protests, inserted various patently false claims in his statement. The statement was not recorded as per Prasad's narration and language, he claimed.

According to the lawyer, Prasad alleged before the court that NCB officer had told him that since he was associated with Dharma Production, they would let him off if he implicated either Karan Johar, Somel Mishra, Rakhi and others alleging that they consumed drugs. However, he did not agree despite pressure being mounted on him as he did not know any of these people personally and didn't wish to implicate anyone, the lawyer said.

● "I HAVE joined JD(U) and as a good soldier of the party I would like to wait for the instructions and advice of the top leadership", Pandey said.

as my contesting elections is concerned it's the party which has to take a decision", Pandey said after joining the JD(U).

Political analysts are of the view that the JD(U) which draws its support from the OBCs and a large section of minority voters hopes to reach out to the Brahmin voters with the induction of Pandey. "He has been a competent officer and we saw how efficiently he handled communal and other sensitive issues. The party will benefit from his entry," JD(U) MP Lalan Singh said.

The Assembly election in Bihar for 243 seats is to be held in three phases beginning October 28 and the results will be declared on November 10. Pandey had hit headlines by taking a strong stand on the death of Sushant Singh Rajput. He had criticised the Mumbai police in matters pertaining to the investigation. He had also stoked a controversy by saying that "Rhea Chakraborty doesn't have the stature (aukat) to comment on Bihar CM".

— PTI



## IN BRIEF

**Lebanon shooting: 2 soldiers killed**

**Beirut:** Gunmen in a car opened fire on an army post in in the Minyeh region of northern Lebanon Sunday, triggering a shootout in which two soldiers and one gunman were killed, the Lebanese military said. Another gunman fled to an unknown destination. An army operation is underway to arrest the fugitive and uncover the circumstances of the attack, the military said. The shootout occurred as the army was engaged in a heavy exchange of fire with a group of militants linked to Sunni extremists in northeast Lebanon, close to the border with Syria.

**16 killed in China mine accident**

**Beijing:** Sixteen people trapped in a coal mine in south-west China's Chongqing Municipality on Sunday were killed due to the presence of excessive levels of carbon monoxide, official media reported. The incident happened when the burning belts in the mine caused the carbon monoxide to exceed safety limit, trapping 17 people inside, state-run *Xinhua* news agency reported. A 75-member rescue team has entered the mine and 30 medical workers have rushed to the scene, it said. One person who survived the accident was rushed to the hospital, *CGTN TV* reported.

**15 perish in Pak van inferno**

**Karachi:** At least 15 people were killed when a passenger van travelling in southern Pakistan crashed and caught fire. The van was carrying passengers from Karachi to Hyderabad city when it struck an object and careered off the road late Saturday. "The death toll has reached 15," Owais Shah, the transport minister of Sindh province, said. Five other people were injured, three of them critically. Most of the bodies were burned beyond recognition, said Faisal Edhi, head of the non-profit Edhi Foundation which runs the morgue the bodies were taken to. Investigators were looking to see if a natural gas cylinder aboard the bus had contributed to the inferno.

**Chinese soldiers' remains returned**

**Beijing:** The remains of 117 Chinese soldiers who died in the 1950-53 Korean War were returned to China on Sunday in an annual repatriation delayed this year by the Coronavirus outbreak. South Korea handed over the remains at a ceremony at Incheon airport outside Seoul, and a Chinese military transport plane flew them to Shenyang, a northeastern Chinese city near the North Korean border. Chinese soldiers fought on the North Korean side against US-led forces in the South during the war on the Korean Peninsula. Most of the 117 remains were found in the Demilitarized Zone that separates North and South Korea.

**NORTH KOREA ACCUSES SEOUL OF INTRUSION**

**Seoul, Sept. 27:** North Korea accused South Korea of sending ships across the disputed sea boundary to find the body of a South Korean official recently killed by North Korean troops, warning Sunday the intrusion could escalate tensions. South Korea denied the accusation. "We urge the South side to immediately halt the intrusion across the military demarcation line in the West Sea that may lead to escalation of tensions," the official *Korean Central News Agency* said. "It arouses our due vigilance as it may lead to another awful incident." Along with its denial, South Korea proposed a joint investigation to resolve discrepancies in each country's account of the South Korean official's death last week. Officials in Seoul have said the 47-year-old was likely attempting to defect before North Korean troops aboard a boat fatally shot him and burned his body. According to Seoul, North Korea on Friday sent a message, including a rare apology by leader Kim Jong-un for the shooting death of the official, who was found floating on an object in its waters. It said its troops shot the official because he attempted to flee after refusing to answer to questions. It said North Korea maintained troops were unable to find the official's body and burned the object he was floating on in line with anti-Coronavirus rules.



In this image taken from a footage released by Armenian Defence Ministry on Sunday, Armenian forces destroy Azerbaijani military vehicle at the contact line of the self-proclaimed Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh, Azerbaijan. Fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan has broken out around the separatist region of Nagorno-Karabakh and the Armenian Defence Ministry says two Azerbaijani helicopters have been shot down. Ministry spokeswoman Shushan Stepanyan also said Armenian forces hit three Azerbaijani tanks. — AP

# Martial law in Azerbaijan as fighting erupts with Armenia

**RETURN TO NEGOTIATIONS OVER KARABAKH, SAYS EU**

**Brussels, Sept. 27:** The European Union called Sunday for a halt to fighting between Armenian and Azerbaijani separatists over the Nagorny Karabakh region and an "immediate return to negotiations".

The worst clashes since 2016 broke out on Sunday between arch-foes Azerbaijan and Armenia, which have been locked for decades in a territorial dispute over the Armenia-backed breakaway region.

Ministry spokeswoman Shushan Stepanyan also said Armenian forces hit three Azerbaijani tanks. There was no immediate word on casualties. Nagorno-Karabakh is an ethnic Armenian enclave within Azerbaijan that has been

out of Azerbaijan's control since the end of a war in 1994. Both sides have heavy military presence along a demilitarised zone separating the region from the rest of Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan's defence ministry denied the claim that its helicopters and tanks

had been hit. But President Ilham Aliyev said in a televised address to the nation that "there are losses among the Azerbaijani forces and the civilian population as a result of the Armenian bombardment". Stepanyan said the fighting on Sunday began

with an Azerbaijani attack, but Azerbaijan said the Armenian side attacked and that Azerbaijan launched a counteroffensive. The news was harshly received in Turkey, a close ally of Azerbaijan. Turkey's ruling party spokesman Omer Celik tweeted: "We vehemently condemn Armenia's attack on Azerbaijan. Armenia has once again committed a provocation, ignoring law."

He promised Turkey would stand by Azerbaijan and said, "Armenia is playing with fire and endangering regional peace."

Turkish presidential spokesman Ibrahim Kalin also took to Twitter: "Armenia has violated the ceasefire by attacking civilian settlements ... the international community must immediately say stop to this dangerous provocation." — AP

# Despite lockdown, thousands of Israelis stage protest in Jerusalem

**Jerusalem, Sept. 27:** Thousands of Israelis gathered outside the official residence of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Saturday night to demand his resignation, pressing ahead with weeks of protests against the embattled Israeli leader despite a strict new lockdown order. With Israel facing one of the world's worst Coronavirus outbreaks, the tough lockdown rules went into effect Friday, closing many businesses, banning large gatherings and ordering people to stay close to home.

But Israel's Knesset, or parliament, was unable to agree on proposed legislation that would ban the right to protest. Netanyahu has pushed hard for a ban on the demonstrations, claiming they pose a threat to public safety, and he has threatened to declare a state of emergency to halt the unrest. But his opponents accuse him of using the health crisis as a pretext to put a halt to weeks of demonstrations against him.

For over three months,

## Prince Charles: 1mn youth require help

**London, Sept. 27:** Britain's Prince Charles on Sunday issued an urgent plea in favour of the youth, who he fears are being severely impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic. In an article for *The Sunday Telegraph*, the 71-year-old heir to the British throne, warned that at least 1 million young people could be in "urgent need of help" as he reflected upon the work of his Prince's Trust charity in this area over nearly 45 years.

"Over all these years since the Trust was launched,

there has never been an easy time. However, there has never been a time as uniquely challenging as the present, when the pandemic has left perhaps another million young people needing urgent help to protect their futures," writes the royal.

"The task ahead is unquestionably vast, but it is not insurmountable," he said. He cited unemployment in the 1970s that prompted him to set up the Prince's Trust to help people aged between 11 and 30 seek job opportunities and life skills.

Thousands of people have thronged the streets of central Jerusalem near Netanyahu's residence, calling on him to step down. Protesters say Netanyahu shouldn't remain in office when he is on trial for corruption charges and accuse him of bungling the response to the Coronavirus crisis. Many of the protesters are young, educated Israelis who have lost their jobs because of an economic downturn.

## WISCONSIN SEES RECORD SPIKE IN COVID-19 CASES

**Madison (US), Sept. 27:** Wisconsin on Saturday hit a record for Coronavirus cases reported in a single day as health officials reported 2,817 people have tested positive for the virus. The state has seen some of the nation's fastest Coronavirus spread over the last two weeks.

The rolling average number of daily new cases has increased by 950, an increase of nearly 97 per cent, according to Johns Hopkins researchers. In that time, the state has reported the nation's third-highest number of new cases per capita, with about 423 new cases per 100,000 people. In another troubling trend, the positivity rate for Coronavirus testing has also been among the country's highest. That's an indicator that many more have infections than tests are revealing.

## Trump campaign sues to block mail-in ballot rule changes

**Raleigh (US), Sept. 27:** President Donald Trump's campaign committee and the Republican National Committee sued Saturday to block North Carolina election officials from enforcing rule changes that could boost the number of ballots counted in the presidential battleground state.

The Republicans' lawsuit claims a new system adopted by the State Board of Elections will allow for absentee ballots to be cast late and without proper witness verification, which invites fraud, coercion, theft, and otherwise illegitimate voting.

The elections board on Tuesday issued new guidance allowing mail-in absentee ballots with deficiencies

# Police: One shot and killed, seven injured in Iowa

**SHOOTING AT POLICE STATION: SUSPECT HELD**

**Waterloo (US), Sept. 27:** Gunfire erupted early Saturday at a gathering of motorcycle clubs in Iowa, killing one person and wounding seven others, authorities said.

About 100 people were at the gathering inside a building in Waterloo when there was "some kind of confrontation shortly after 3 a.m.," Joel Fitzgerald, the police chief of the city about 145 kilometres northeast of Des Moines, said at a news conference. Officers were nearby at a traffic stop when the shooting started, said Capt. Joe Leibold with the Waterloo Police Department. They arrived to find a chaotic scene, with people hurt and others fleeing the area, and they began administering aid as paramedics and firefighters pulled up. "It was a pretty dynamic scene," said Battalion Chief Ben Petersen with Waterloo Fire Rescue. "Coming into something like that, you are trying to size up the patients

and triage the scene." Eight people had gunshot wounds and one of them later died.

— AP

# After Barrett nod, GOP invests \$10m in boosting Trump

**Washington, Sept. 27:** The Republican National Committee is putting Amy Coney Barrett's Supreme Court confirmation fight front and center with voters just weeks before Election Day.

The confirmation battle will be featured in a new \$10 million RNC digital ad campaign to encourage battleground state voters to return vote-by-mail ballots or go to the polls. The national party, in concert with President Donald Trump's campaign, is planning local events and protests across the country to support Barrett's confirmation as well.

The party is also incorporating Barrett's nomination into its scripts that staffers and volunteers use when calling or knocking on voters' doors, with a focus on social conservative Catholic and evangelical voters — particularly in swing states

like Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and Florida.

Filling the vacancy created by the death of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg has been an unexpected political opportunity for Trump, who won the White House in 2016 in large part because conservatives were animated around filling the seat opened by the death of Justice Antonin Scalia. The RNC on Saturday unveiled a website, ConfirmBarrett.com, to allow supporters to contact lawmakers to urge them to put Barrett on the court. "With a full-throttled effort from now until President Trump's nominee is confirmed, our teams will expose Democrats' partisanship, aggressively promote the qualifications of Judge Barrett, and use this issue to galvanize voters to the polls in November," said RNC Chair Ronna McDaniel. — AP

**NATIONAL | TREASURE****Dept of archaeology to fund repairs to heritage buildings of the Indian celluloid stars**

# Pak's KP govt to buy houses of Raj Kapoor, Dilip Kumar

**Peshawar, Sept. 27:** The provincial government in Pakistan's Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa has decided to purchase the ancestral houses of legendary Bollywood actors Raj Kapoor and Dilip Kumar to conserve the historic buildings which are in dilapidated condition and facing demolition threat.

The Department of Archaeology in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province has decided to allocate sufficient funds for purchasing the two buildings, which have been declared as the national heritage and lie in the heart of Peshawar city, an

official said. An official letter has been sent to the Deputy Commissioner of Peshawar to determine the cost of both the historic buildings, where the two greats of Indian cinema were born and raised in their early days before the partition, said Dr Abdus Samad Khan, the head of department of archaeology. Raj Kapoor's ancestral home, known as Kapoor Haveli, is situated in the fabled Qissa Khwani Bazar. It was built between 1918 and 1922 by the legendary actor's grandfather Dewan Basheswarnath Kapoor. Raj Kapoor and

his uncle Trilok Kapoor were born in the building. It has been declared national heritage by the provincial government.

Veteran actor Dilip Kumar's over 100-year-old ancestral house is also located in the same locality. The house is in shambles and was declared as national heritage in 2014 by the then Nawaz Sharif government.

Khan said the owners of the two buildings made many attempts in the past to demolish them for constructing commercial plazas in view of their prime location but all such mo-

vements were stopped as the archaeology department wanted to preserve them keeping in view their historic importance.

However, the owner of Kapoor Haveli, Ali Qadar, said that he did not want to demolish the building and made many contacts with the archaeology department officials to protect and preserve this historic structure which is a national pride. The owner has demanded Rs 200 crore from the KP government to sell it out to the government. In 2018, the Pakistan government decided to convert the Kapoor Haveli



The houses of Dilip Kumar and (R) Raj Kapoor.

into a museum, heeding to a request by Rishi Kapoor who died this year in Mumbai. However, the announcement to this effect could not be materialised.



— PTI



# DECCAN Chronicle

28 SEPTEMBER 2020

## Duplicitous government exposed on GST funds

The report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India (CAG) that the Union government wrongly retained ₹47,272 crores of GST compensation cess that was collected specifically to compensate states for the loss of revenue in the financial years 2017-18 and 2018-19 is a stinging rebuke of its financial management.

The GST (Compensation to States) Act, 2017, guarantees all states an annual growth rate of 14 per cent in their GST revenue in the first five years of implementation of GST beginning July 2017. Should there be a shortfall, the Union government will compensate it from the GST Compensation Cess Fund, created by levying a cess on certain luxury and “sin” goods. The Act and the accounting procedure mandate that the entire cess collected during a year is credited to the Fund, a non-lapsable one which can be used only for the purpose for which it is created. For the financial year 2017-18, the government collected ₹62,612 crores as cess and transferred ₹56,146 crores to the Fund and for 2018-19, it collected ₹95,081 crores and transferred ₹54,275 crores. In effect, it retained ₹6,466 crores in 2017-18 and ₹40,806 crores in 2018-19. This is a violation of the law, the CAG said. Worse, the Centre transferred the money to the Consolidated Fund of India, thereby making it available for use for purposes other than what was provided in the Act. This has “led to an overstatement of revenue receipts and understatement of fiscal deficit for the year”, the report said.

The government has not officially responded to the CAG report but it has let it be known that the cess mess was not a diversion but a retention of funds. This is ridiculous. The Union government has no right over the funds; its job is to collect and distribute it as per the approved formula. By not following its own mandate, the government has defiled the law, the national consensus on GST and the legislative intention behind the constitutional amendment. That it got an opinion of the attorney-general in its favour is no matter of pride.

The GST was implemented with a number of noble and notable aims including making tax administration a smooth affair and plug leakage by creating a proper trail of goods and services from the first the point to the last. However, this tax reform took a heavy toll on the state governments’ finances as it took away their right to levy taxes and deposited them all with the Union government. The CAG report says the latter has failed to keep its part of the bargain.

It may be remembered that the states, fatigued by the long-drawn fight against pandemic Covid-19, have been knocking on the Union government’s doors for financial aid, including GST compensation. The government, which consumed the excess cess in the previous fiscal, took shelter behind “act of god” and shrugged its shoulders. This is gross, and strikes at the very root of the idea of constitutional democracy that India is. The earlier the government corrects itself, the better.

## Golden voice of SPB

A mellifluous voice that sang in innumerable Indian tongues has fallen silent but the songs of the polyglot playback singer will live on. The passing of SP Balasubrahmanyam, or just “SPB” in affectionate abbreviation, is just another tragedy caused by the shadow of the coronavirus Covid-19 falling on the lives of millions. The virus seems to have acted willfully in the case of so many celebrated talents in the fields of music, performing arts and fine arts who have passed on in the last six months in which the pandemic has been raging globally. It is small consolation that their works will live on in music tracks, celluloid or video.

The outpouring of grief and the underlying affection for the charismatic singer illustrates the depth of his engaging personality who, as a public performer, was peerless in dealing with people in the film music industry. His greatness lay in his humane qualities and the manner in which he made everyone around him feel important and touched by playing a constructive part in the expression of his art. His fans, enraptured by the melodies he sang or the devotional songs he rendered in emotional asseveration of faith in a higher being, will immortalise his songs by playing them again and again.

Remarkably, in a career that began in 1966 and ended only on the day he was admitted to hospital in August 2020, the 74-year-old singer’s voice retained its richness, depth, range and timbre. His felicity in rendering his songs in concerts was phenomenal, making his shows a celebration of the artiste and his works while establishing a direct link with lovers of popular music. He never trained formally in classical music and still made his name reverberate nationally with his songs in *Sankarabharanam*, a movie that brought the vibrations of Carnatic music to the common man. Music has always had the quality of uniting Indians across the divides of a unique national diversity. SPB, who sang in 16 languages while capturing every nuance, was a true pan-Indian performer who lent his golden voice to matinee stars across the country.

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Sanju Verma



## Farm laws to end Arhatiya control, bring down prices

The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 2020, which removes cereal, pulses, oilseed, edible oil, onion and potatoes from the list of essential commodities, was passed by the Rajya Sabha on September 22, 2020, to curb hoarding, artificial scarcity and trade cartelisation. Earlier last week, the Narendra Modi government also passed two historic farm bills, to defang APMCs and allow farmers to engage in contract farming, in the Rajya Sabha. The three bills had already cleared the Lok Sabha.

A beleaguered Opposition electorally vanquished by the Modi juggernaut, cried foul, alleging the bills were passed by only a voice vote in the Upper House. A voice vote is perfectly democratic and the deputy chair of the Rajya Sabha was within his rights to pass these bills with a voice vote.

Keeping the politics aside, the moot question is, will these farm bills help farmers? The answer is a resounding, “yes”. Do the farm bills remove MSP or public procurement? No, they do not.

The procurement process will continue as before. The minimum support price (MSP) payment to farmers for paddy rose by 2.4 times at ₹4.95 lakh between 2014 and 2019 under the Modi government, as against only ₹2.06 lakh crores under the previous Congress-led one between 2009 and 2014. The MSP to farmers for wheat increased by 1.77 times during 2014-2019, as compared to 2009-2014. For pulses, MSP payment of ₹49,000 crores to farmers was up by a massive 75 times. Payment to farmers for oilseeds and copra surged 10 times to ₹25,000 crores.

Do the farm bills dismantle the existing “APMC-Anaj Mandi” structure? No, they do not. The rights or livelihood of those associated with Agriculture Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) Mandis will not be encroached upon. However, it is a known fact that APMC structure has been inefficient, with farmers relying on APMC agents to help them sell their produce. In this system, while APMC agents walk away with hefty commissions, while the hapless

farmers make precious little. It is precisely to unshackle them from predatory agents and middlemen that the Modi government passed the farm bills.

APMCs will not be dismantled but they will certainly face stiff competition now from “Trade Areas”, which will be created and will exist alongside APMC Mandis. Farmers will be free to sell their produce to whomsoever they wish to, at a price they deem fit, in these “Trade Areas”. So let it be clear that it is not farmers who are protesting but middlemen and APMC Mandi owners who are upset because their monopoly has been broken. There will be no taxes by either the state or central governments on trade conducted in these “Trade Areas”, thereby reducing the cost of transaction in the entire food chain from farm to fork.

The farm bills also allow for contract farming, whereby farmers can enter into contracts, at a predetermined price, even before the crop has been harvested, with private companies, aggregators, food processors and exporters. This is

an unprecedented reform, as it allows farmers to lock in a good price for their harvest and insulates them from any post-harvest price volatility.

Is partial privatisation of agriculture good? Of course, it is. Who will pay for the insurance, cold storage, machinery and farm equipment when farmers enter into contracts with private players? The farm bills clearly state that these will be paid for by the counter-party and not the farmer. This will be a big relief for especially small and marginal farmers who can access superior farm technology and become agripreneurs without having to go out of pocket.

How will farmers negotiate with private entities that are supposedly equipped with more business acumen? Well, in Budget 2020, the Modi government announced the formation of 10,000 Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs). These FPOs are largely big groups of farmers who are brought together, as they will have better bargaining skills, rather than farmers operating as individuals. There are already

about 5,000 FPOs in India.

Why are protests largely from Punjab? Well, in Punjab, there are over 40,000 powerful arhatiyas or middlemen, with one lakh clerks working under them. Arhatiyas also double up as moneylenders to farmers. Under the existing system, in states like Punjab, APMC/Mandi fees come to around 8.5 per cent — a market fee of three per cent, rural development charge of three per cent and the Arhatiya’s commission of 2.5 per cent. The “Arhatiya” system is more influential in Punjab than elsewhere in India, and hence most protests are from this region. In FY20, 40,000 Arhatiyas in Punjab reportedly pocketed commissions worth over Rs 1,600 crores. Prime Minister Modi’s farm bills, however, seek to put money into the hands of farmers, something no political leader ever attempted before.

*The writer is an economist, chief spokesperson for BJP Mumbai and bestselling author of Truth & Dare — The Modi Dynamic.*

Subhani



## Govt didn’t bring Opp. on board on China question



Manish Tewari

State of the Union

It is unfortunate that Parliament ducked discussing the most serious National Security challenge that India faces since 1962 i.e. the stand-off in Eastern Ladakh and North Sikkim qua China. It is obvious that government would try and avoid answering the hard questions but the combined Opposition in both Houses should have pushed hard for a full-fledged discussion and not contented itself with a bland statement from the defence minister with some pro-forma clarifications in the Rajya Sabha and not even that in the Lok Sabha.

In fact, this writer wrote to the defence minister on September 16, 2020, urging that the government should suo-moto propose a discussion on the border situation for not only would it demonstrate the strength of our democracy but also convey our unequivocal national resolve expressed through the collective will of Parliament to the Chinese.

I reminded him that during the 1962 Sino-Indian conflict 165 Members of the Lok Sabha had participated in a discussion on the ongoing Sino-Indian war in the Lok Sabha and an equal number including former Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee in a concurrent discussion in Rajya Sabha. In fact, the day the Chinese invaded India on October 20, 1962, on the urging of Mr Vajpayee who was one of the MPs of a four-member Bharatiya Jan Sangh grouping in Rajya Sabha Nehru unhesitatingly summoned Parliament to meet on November 8, 1962.

A day later Mr Vajpayee took the floor. He commenced by fiercely critiquing the Nehru administration just as the Chinese were seizing the two crucial knolls — Green Pimple and Yellow

Pimple — thereby giving them a bird’s eye view of the 4 Dogra battalion HQ established at Walong on that very day.

Unconstrained by the consideration that the Indian Army was locked in a brutal battle with the Chinese trespassers he began up by highlighting the need for introspection especially with regard to the events leading up to the Chinese offensive all through the 1950s and early 1960s.

He demanded answers to some very uncomfortable questions — namely — why our army was not “in full force” in NEFA and why were they not battle-ready. He enquired why between September 8 when China’s bellicose intent started manifesting itself and October 20, when they struck, the Army had not mobilised itself in full force to preempt the belligerents. He insisted on clarity on the identity of those “eminentes” in both the civil and military establishment who had kept the dispensation in the dark and what action had been taken against them.

Mr Vajpayee intuitively understood that in a democracy we must state the truth howsoever uncomfortable it might be rather than brushing sensitive issues under the carpet. That is why 37 years later when the Kargil intrusion took place in April-May 1999, just one year after the highpoint of the Lahore bus ride, he had no qualms about telling the nation that he had been betrayed by the Pakistanis and they had captured key heights in Drass, Kargil and other areas overlooking National Highway 1-A that connects Srinagar to Leh. Similarly, during the December 1971 war for Liberation of Bangladesh, Late Mrs Indira Gandhi did not dodge Parliament.

Unfortunately, Mr Vajpayee’s successors lack the moral courage to be forthcoming on the latest Chinese transgressions. They hide behind the specious fig leaf of national security to avoid the hard questions labelling everyone who tries to hold their policies and personnel to account as anti national. Such is the paranoia of this government that all my questions — and there were only unstarred questions permitted in this session of Parliament addressed to the Prime Minister, defence, home and external affairs ministers on the Sino-Indian face-off — were disallowed on grounds of “sensitivity” despite having been balloted in the list of 230 questions that are supposed to be answered on any given day. This level of opacity only raises further misgivings that the government is attempting to hide the truth from the nation.

During both World Wars I and II, parliaments of democratic nations across the world regularly met to discuss the conduct and direction of war. Winston Churchill’s most famous speeches were made on the floor of the House of Commons during the duration of the Second World War.

The present mess that India finds itself in one is of its own making. India failed to read the Chinese intent. When India was busy playing the friendly neighbour the Chinese were preparing themselves for the confrontation. China deceived India by making it complacent. The present confrontation shows that the 2018 Wuhan and the 2019 Mamallapuram summits were but a smokescreen. The lack of early detection of the Chinese activities on the LAC has intelligence, strategic and tacti-

cal failure written all over it. The Chinese know that the ruling party is heavily invested in maintaining its hyper-nationalist image. Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s official statements of denying the transgressions have played to China’s advantage. It now accuses India of violating the LAC.

The ongoing stand-off does not seem to end anytime soon. Talks have been ongoing since May with a goal to disengage and to restore the status quo ante. However, the talks have failed because there is a differing understanding of what status quo ante means to the two parties. India wants a status quo ante as of the pre-April 2020 situation. However, the Chinese seem to prefer the pre-2019 situation before the revocation of the autonomous status of the region. Both the parties have dug into their positions, to deny the other any strategic advantage. Both the parties do not want the confrontation to turn into a full-fledged war; therefore, this would turn into a war of attrition that would further sap our already-weakened economy. The Chinese are taking advantage of the stand-off situation to rapidly augment their offensive capabilities along the entire LAC. The Chinese, by occupying and building infrastructure in the previously viewed “grey areas” by both the parties, have forced India to accept the Chinese claim line as the new normal through the force of arms.

Should any self-respecting nation tolerate this national humiliation, notwithstanding the obfuscation that the government is blatantly encouraging by running a Bollywood soap opera on what were till yesterday supposed to be news and current affairs dissemination outlets?

*The author is a lawyer, Member of Parliament and former Union information and broadcasting minister. The views expressed are personal. Twitter handle @manishtewari.*

**Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s official statements of denying the transgressions have played to China’s advantage. It now accuses India of violating the LAC.**

## LETTERS

### NO ROOM AT TOP TABLE

The PM’s angst about India being denied a lead role in the UNSC may not be assuaged any time soon. It would need an amendment to the UN Charter requiring a two-thirds vote of general members and the support of the P5 who could just keep paying lip service while tabling the issue. A tall task for the world body, when it has not been able to even raise the number of non-permanent members on the Security Council, and then, what about a legitimate bids of Germany and Brazil who would support each others’ cases, being part of G4 nations? In 75 years, too many nations have grown in clout but the UNSC could add no room for a large table.

**R. Narayanan, Chennai**

### GENDER INEQUALITY

“To call women weaker sex is a libel and it is man’s injustice to them,” said Gandhi and it is justly endorsed in the article, No country for young women. It is pathetic to note that despite stepping into the 21st century, the patriarchal and malechauvinistic attitude still prevails in society resulting in the fair sex becoming victims right from domestic violence to being subjected to man’s unjustifiable carnal desires, leave alone the recent invention of #MeToo coming to the rescue of women. If all are equal and some are more equal, then the equation is paradoxical. True morality consists of not following the beaten track but to rejig a new path, where women would walk keeping their heads held high in the air on a par with men. Calling out that “True gender equality in India is still a long way away” bears a stamp of class in exposing the injustice meted to women till date.

**E.S. Chandrasekaran, Chennai**



quick  
BITES

| INDICATORS             |             | %      |
|------------------------|-------------|--------|
| Sensex                 | 37,388.66   | 2.28   |
| Nifty 50               | 11,050.30   | 2.27   |
| S&P 500*               | 3,298.46    | 1.60   |
| Dollar (₹)             | 73.61       | 0.39   |
| Pound Sterling (₹)     | 94.01       | 0.03   |
| Euro (₹)               | 86.01       | 0.19   |
| Gold (10gm)* (₹)       | 49,551▼0.71 | 353    |
| Brent crude (\$/bbl)*  | 41.78       | -0.16  |
| IN 10-Yr bond yield    | 6.038       | 0.046  |
| US 10-Yr T-bill yield* | 0.659       | -0.005 |

\* As of Friday/Saturday

Centre offers  
moong, urad at  
subsidised rates

The Centre has offered to provide processed moong and urad pulses from its buffer stock to state governments for retail sale at a subsidised rate in the current lean period in a bid to check any possible price rise, according to consumer affairs secretary Leena Nandan. Moong will be offered at Rs 92 per kg and urad at Rs 84-96 per kg, much lower than prevailing retail market prices, she said.

■ Accommodative stance, tweaks expected  
RBI may opt for  
rate status quoFALAK NAAZ SYED  
MUMBAI, SEPT. 27

Elevated retail and rising core inflation seem to rule out a rate cut on October 1 from the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India. However, the RBI would continue to emphasise its accommodative stance and keep doing tweaks to liquidity and regulatory operations to keep financial market conditions benign, said economists who now expect the central bank to cut rates only in December or in February policy.

The six-member MPC headed by RBI governor is scheduled to meet for three days, starting September 29. The resolution of the MPC would be announced on October 1. The RBI has cut the repo rate by 115 basis points since February.

While price stability is the prerogative of the MPC, the central bank is also juggling other policy priorities, with some of them running counter, such as managing the dollar deluge while ensuring currency stability; keeping bond yields low just as inflation plays spoilsport.

"The current elevated level of inflation, which is well above the RBI's upper bound of 6 per cent, suggests the MPC will pause again in October. However, given more durable damage to growth versus a more transitory shift in inflation, we expect 50 basis points in cumulative rate cuts in



total, with the next 25 basis points to be delivered at the December policy meeting," said Sonal Varma, chief India economist at Nomura.

The August CPI inflation stayed steady at 6.7 per cent year-on-year heading in a favourable direction, but still above the RBI's 2-6 per cent target range while growth has slipped quite sharply. Core inflation (ex-food and fuel) ticked up to 5.8 percent YoY compared to 5.7 per cent in July, with the core-core (core excluding transport and gold) witnessing a pullback. Rural and urban inflation also remained high, moving in lockstep in recent months, as supply hit impacted across geographies.

At 9.1 per cent in August, food inflation was the lowest since November 19. Inflation of pulses, cereals, meat, spices and milk showed softened inflation. While the liquidity situa-

tion is comfortable, bank credit growth has been negative.

The policy comes at the time when the term of three external members of the MPC ends in September, but a short extension of their term may be considered, according to media reports.

"High-frequency indicators (and staple food prices) along with rising number of infection cases necessitating regional movement restrictions suggests that September inflation is also likely stay firmly in the 6 per cent-plus terrain for a fifth consecutive month. Our evolving forecast trajectory points to shallow pullback toward the 4 per cent CPI target only in 1Q21. This lowers the odds of a rate cut in December, prompting us to revise our forecast to a pause in December and 25 basis points cut in 1Q," said DBS.

All 4 labour  
codes to  
take effect  
by Dec.

Sept. 27: The government is aiming to implement all the four labour codes in one go by December this year and complete the final stretch of labour sector reforms, labour minister Santosh Gangwar has said.



Santosh Gangwar

Parliament in its just concluded session passed three labour code bills: the Industrial Relations Code, the Social Security Code, and the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code.

The Wage Code Bill, 2019 was passed by Parliament last year.

The labour ministry had circulated the draft rules on the Wage Code Bill last year but held back its finalisation and implementation. The ministry wanted to implement all the four codes and rules under those in one go as all of them are inter-linked.

Talking to PTI, Gangwar said, "Government is doing all efforts to complete the labour reforms by implementing the all four labour codes by December this year..."

He further said "the rules under these legislations would be enforced at once".

—PTI

Dhanlaxmi needs course  
correction: Aibea tells RBIFALAKNAAZ SYED  
MUMBAI, SEPT. 27 SEPT

The banking sector's largest union, the All-India Bank Employees' Association (Aibea), has asked the central bank to effectively intervene in Dhanlaxmi Bank to prevent it from running into problems once again. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has appointed its nominee G. Jagan Mohan as additional director on the board of the private lender and through him the RBI should actively intervene to oppose management decisions that can adversely impact the bank, C.H. Venkatachalam, general secretary, Aibea told *Financial Chronicle*.

In a strongly worded letter to RBI governor Shaktikanta Das, the union opposed management decisions to change



the business profile of the bank, opening of branches in northern India, and appointment of a large number of sales executives and senior executives on contractual and cost to company bases at much higher remuneration, which could adversely impact the bank.

"We strongly believe that RBI's role in the board of directors of the bank should be reviewed as otherwise RBI would become answerable if things go bad," wrote

Venkatachalam.

The 93-year-old Dhanlaxmi Bank (originally Dhanalakshmi Bank) is a small-sized private bank headquartered in Thrissur, Kerala. A few years ago, particularly during 2008 to 2012, the bank was facing multiple problems regarding its performance and made losses to the tune of Rs 850 crore during this period.

The letter said that after making losses for continuously for five years the bank is making profit for the last eight quarters. The profit for 2019-20 at Rs 65 crore was the highest since the bank's inception. However, in the beginning of this year, the top management has changed and "in the recent months we are concerned to observe that perhaps the bank is once gain heading in the wrong direction."

## TCS offers its hiring test to other firms

New Delhi, Sept. 27: Tata Consultancy Services has opened its National Qualifier Test (NQT) to corporates to help them in their fresher recruitment programmes. Till last year, the NQT was restricted to hiring for TCS.

NQT—conducted by TCS' strategic unit TCS iON—is a multi-level assessment to assess competence on core cognitive abilities required for entry-level jobs, industry-specific knowledge and insights, and specialisation on skills required for performing the job role. Introduced in 2018, NQT

last year saw more than 3.6 lakh students participating from over 2,600 colleges.

"NQT will now be a common gateway test for several participating corporates for their fresher recruitment programmes. This standardised test will provide candidates with access to open positions at multiple corporates giving millions of young jobseekers an opportunity to work for India's top corporates," TCS iON global head Venguswamy Ramaswamy told PTI.

It will provide subscribing corporates with a well-

rounded evaluation of candidates' abilities, and access to quality talent across the nation at speed and scale, he added.

Apart from large groups, the company is also in touch with small businesses across 600 cities so that students from these locations can get the NQT score and smaller enterprises can hire local talent.

Young professionals with up to two years experience, and students from any stream, can apply for the test, conducted every quarter and the score will be valid for two years. —PTI

## COFFEE-BREAK

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



**Aries:** You'll be torn between what you want and what you need. Attend to friends and colleagues; they bring happiness, but use common sense.



**Taurus:** Don't let obligations daunt you; they aren't as overwhelming as they seem. You seek adventure now but won't know how to get it. Beware of hidden motives.



**Gemini:** Despite the optimism, don't overdo anything. Your current success depends on how you sustain your energy. Be patient and work towards fulfilment.



**Cancer:** Be wary of fanciful promises and assess situations carefully. Financial health looks brighter. You'll revive old contacts. Find a balance between work and home.



**Leo:** Avoid money transactions to avoid loss. Expenses are uncontrollable. You'll not be in harmony at work or home, especially with your spouse/partner. Expect a stomach upset.



**Virgo:** Avoid tension with family. Someone will push you to spend on the wrong things. Be polite to avoid controversies today. Pending work and other thoughts keep you busy. Don't blindly follow even close friends.

## You share your b'day with

Ranbir Kapoor, Bollywood actor. He is best known for his roles in Sanju, Barfi, Ae Dil Hai Mushkil, Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani, Rockstar, Raageneeti, Wake Up Sid, Tamasha and Ajab Prem Ki Ghazab Kahani.



**Libra:** It's a slow day, with your mood distracted. Important work gets postponed. Laziness stops you short of achieving your goals. Unwanted expenses drain your energy. Domestic atmosphere could be tense.



**Scorpio:** Don't be talkative; be deliberative. Money matters and expenses bother you. Your romance and love life are not favourable. Avoid tensions and depression.



**Sagittarius:** You'll regain a lost friendship. An old friend turns into a lover. Friends are easy-going and accept your plans. Complacency at work may harm you.



**Capricorn:** Overindulgence causes loss of interest in you. You'll offer professional insights to decision-makers. A renewed affair brings excitement.

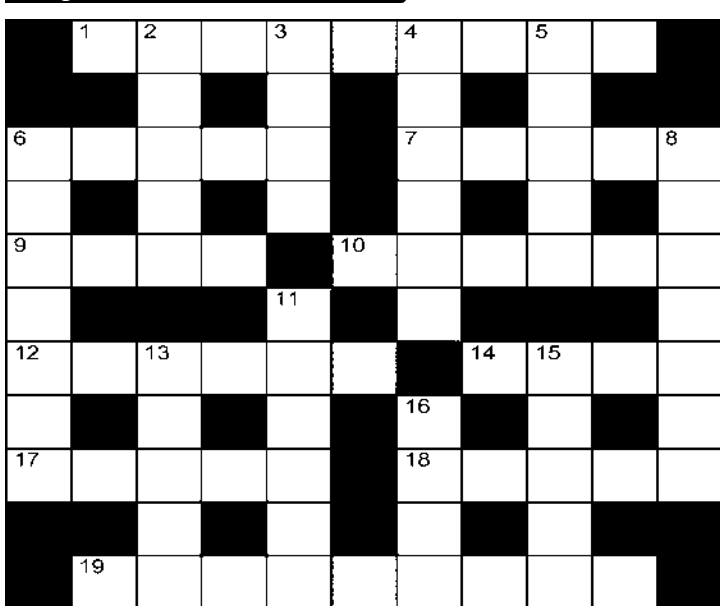


**Aquarius:** Ardent faith and love help you recover from illness. Unrealistic expectations may bring financial disappointments. You may obtain decision-making powers.



**Pisces:** Careless expenses could halt ongoing projects. Love affair takes precedence; you'll benefit from the situation. Sports persons will find rewards. Spouse's health is problematic but won't get diagnosed easily.

## QUICK CROSSWORD



## Across

1. Unnamed (9)
6. Charred (5)
7. Grassed areas (5)
9. Throb painfully (4)
10. Black magic (6)
12. Aft (6)
14. Assistance (4)
17. Subject (5)
18. Planet's path (5)
19. Red scone (anag) (9)

## Down

2. Compass direction (5)
3. Brief letter (4)
4. English poet (6)
5. Single (5)
6. Flagrant (7)
8. Athletic event (4,3)
11. Summary (6)
13. Thin candle (5)
15. Receded (5)
16. Be optimistic (4)

## YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

Across: 1. Classify, 7. Adder, 8. Delve, 9. Cereal, 10. Seal, 12. Nose, 14. Butt in, 17. Terse, 18. Leads, 19. Cerebral.

Down: 1. Cider, 2. Abroad, 3. Suds, 4. False, 5. Fascinate, 6. Replenish, 11. Butler, 13. Scree, 15. Trail, 16. Cede.

## Word Mine

P  
AEO  
TDGRN

TODAY'S RATINGS: 55 AVERAGE: 65  
GOOD: 70 OUTSTANDING

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

Words: 1. A, 2. E, 3. O, 4. P, 5. T, 6. D, 7. G, 8. R, 9. N, 10. A, 11. E, 12. O, 13. P, 14. T, 15. D, 16. G, 17. R, 18. N, 19. A, 20. E, 21. O, 22. P, 23. T, 24. D, 25. G, 26. R, 27. N, 28. A, 29. E, 30. O, 31. P, 32. T, 33. D, 34. G, 35. R, 36. N, 37. A, 38. E, 39. O, 40. P, 41. T, 42. D, 43. G, 44. R, 45. N, 46. A, 47. E, 48. O, 49. P, 50. T, 51. D, 52. G, 53. R, 54. N, 55. A, 56. E, 57. O, 58. P, 59. T, 60. D, 61. G, 62. R, 63. N, 64. A, 65. E, 66. O, 67. P, 68. T, 69. D, 70. G, 71. R, 72. N, 73. A, 74. E, 75. O, 76. P, 77. T, 78. D, 79. G, 80. R, 81. N, 82. A, 83. E, 84. O, 85. P, 86. T, 87. D, 88. G, 89. R, 90. N, 91. A, 92. E, 93. O, 94. P, 95. T, 96. D, 97. G, 98. R, 99. N, 100. A, 101. E, 102. O, 103. P, 104. T, 105. D, 106. G, 107. R, 108. N, 109. A, 110. E, 111. O, 112. P, 113. T, 114. D, 115. G, 116. R, 117. N, 118. A, 119. E, 120. O, 121. P, 122. T, 123. D, 124. G, 125. R, 126. N, 127. A, 128. E, 129. O, 130. P, 131. T, 132. D, 133. G, 134. R, 135. N, 136. A, 137. E, 138. 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## SHORT TAKES

## Chelsea stage superb fightback

**West Bromwich:** Chelsea staged a superb second-half fightback from three goals down as Tammy Abraham's last-gasp strike rescued a thrilling 3-3 draw against West Bromwich Albion on Saturday. Frank Lampard's side were torn apart in the first half as Callum Robinson's brace and Kyle Bartley's goal punished woeful defending. But Mason Mount reduced the deficit soon after the break and Callum Hudson-Odoi got Chelsea's second before Abraham equalised deep into stoppage-time. On Sunday, Tottenham were denied by another controversial penalty given for handball deep into stoppage time as Callum Wilson's spot-kick snatched a 1-1 draw for Newcastle. — *AFP*

## Ramos snatches win for Madrid

**Madrid:** Sergio Ramos scored a late penalty as Real Madrid came from behind to scrape a 3-2 win against 10-man Real Betis, their first La Liga victory of the season. Betis were ahead at half-time after two goals in two minutes from Aissa Mandi and William Carvalho overturned Fede Valverde's opener for the reigning champions. But Betis defender Emerson endured a nightmare start to the second half by scoring an own-goal. VAR again intervened in Madrid's favour in the 82nd minute as Marc Bartra was adjudged to have cleared with his arm, leaving Ramos to chip in the winning penalty. — *AFP*

## James powers Lakers into Finals

**Miami:** The Los Angeles Lakers, fueled by a triple-double from superstar LeBron James, beat the Denver Nuggets 117-107 on Saturday to reach the NBA Finals. With the win in the league's quarantine bubble in Orlando, the Lakers completed a 4-1 victory over the Nuggets in the best-of-seven Western Conference finals. James scored 16 of his 38 points in the fourth quarter as the Lakers remained perfect in elimination games this post-season. Denver, already the first team to twice come back from 1-3 series deficits in the same playoffs, couldn't work the magic again. James added 16 rebounds and 10 assists. — *AFP*

## Live on TV

## CRICKET

**IPL:** Royal Challengers Bangalore vs Mumbai Indians from 7:30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

**England Women vs West Indies Women:** Fourth T20 from 10:30 pm on Sony Six, HD

## TENNIS

**French Open:** Matches from 2:30 pm on Star Sports, Select 2

## FOOTBALL

**English Premier League:** Fulham vs Aston Villa from 10:30 pm on Star Sports 3; Liverpool vs Arsenal from 12:30 am (Tuesday) on Star Sports Select 2, HD

**Italian League:** Bologna vs Parma from 12:15 am (Tuesday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

## BASKETBALL

**NBA Eastern Conference Finals (Game 6 of best-of-7):** Miami Heat vs Boston Celtics from 6 am on Sony Six, HD

## WWE RAW

Bouts from 5:30 am (Tuesday) on Sony Ten 1, HD

## ROYAL TWIST

## RR record highest IPL rurchase, beat KXIP by 4 wickets

**Sharjah, Sept. 27:** Rajasthan Royals recorded the highest rurchase in IPL history to beat Kings XI Punjab by four wickets in a high-scoring encounter here on Sunday. Put into bat, Mayank Agarwal smashed a 50-ball 106, while skipper K.L. Rahul cracked a 54-ball 69 as the duo stitched a 183-run opening stand off 99 balls to power Punjab to an imposing 223 for 2.

Sanju Samson then put on a lion-hearted effort with a 42-ball 85 studded with seven sixes and four boundaries, while Steve Smith scored a 27-ball 50 to keep RR in the hunt.

However, it was Rahul Tewatia, who turned hero when he smashed five sixes in the 18th over off Sheldon Cottrell to turn the match on its head. He scored a 31-ball 53 after struggling initially to take them to the brink of win.

Earlier, Agarwal outshone his captain Rahul with a maiden IPL hundred.

The duo just missed the record of highest opening wicket partnership in IPL history by a mere two runs when Agarwal was out in the 17th over after hitting 10 fours and seven sixes during his magnificent 50-ball knock.

Nicholas Pooran then hit 25 not out from just eight balls while Glenn Maxwell also remained unbeaten on 13.

Rahul was content to playing second fiddle to Agarwal though the KXIP captain also made some brilliant shots during his 54-ball knock studded with seven fours and a six, continuing his rich vein of form after his 132 not out against Royal Challengers Bangalore.

Agarwal surged ahead of his captain by reaching his fifty (from 26 balls) in style with a six off Shreyas Gopal and followed it up with another maximum to bring up KXIP's 100 in the ninth over. — *PTI*



Sanju Samson of Rajasthan Royals plays a shot against Kings XI Punjab in their Indian Premier League match held at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium in the United Arab Emirates on Sunday. — *BCCI*

## IPL POINTS TABLE

| Teams                       | P | W | L | N/R | Pts | NRR    |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|-----|-----|--------|
| Delhi Capitals              | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0   | 4   | +1.100 |
| Rajasthan Royals            | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0   | 4   | +0.615 |
| Kings XI Punjab             | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0   | 2   | +1.498 |
| Mumbai Indians              | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0   | 2   | +0.993 |
| Kolkata Knight Riders       | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0   | 2   | -0.767 |
| Chennai Super Kings         | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0   | 2   | -0.840 |
| Royal Challengers Bangalore | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0   | 2   | -2.175 |
| Sunrisers Hyderabad         | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0   | 0   | -0.730 |

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

## SCORECARD

**Kings XI Punjab:** K. L. Rahul c Shreyas Gopal b Rajpoot 69, Mayank Agarwal c Samson b Tom Curran 106, Glenn Maxwell (not out) 13, Nicholas Pooran (not out) 25. **Extras: (b-1, w-8, nb-1) 10. Total: (for 2 wkts, in 20 overs) 223.**

**For:** 183-1, 194-2  
**Bowling:** Jaydev Nadkhat 3-0-30-0, Ankit Rajpoot 4-0-39-1, Jofra Archer 4-0-46-0, Shreyas Gopal 4-0-44-0, Rahul Tewatia 1-0-19-0, Tom Curran 4-0-44-1.

**Rajasthan Royals:** J. Buttler c Khan b Cottrell 4, S. Smith c Mohammed Shami b Neesham 50, S. Samson c Rahul b Mohammed Shami 85, R. Tewatia c Agarwal b Mohammed Shami 53, R. Uthappa c Pooran b Mohammed Shami 9, J. Archer (not out) 13, R. Parag b Ashwin 0, T. Curran (not out) 4. **Extras: (b-1, lb-1, w-6) 8. Total: (for 6 wkts, in 19.3 over) 226.**

**For:** 1-19, 2-100, 3-161, 4-203, 5-222, 6-222.

**Bowling:** S. Cottrell 3-0-52-1, Mohammed Shami 4-0-53-3, Ravi Bishnoi 4-0-34-0, J. Neesham 4-0-40-1, M. Ashwin 1.3-0-16-1, G. Maxwell 3-0-29-0.

## Warner hits out at SRH batters

**Abu Dhabi, Sept. 27:** Sunrisers Hyderabad skipper David Warner has criticised the below-par effort of his batsmen after they slumped to their second successive defeat in the ongoing IPL, saying poor application in the middle overs let the team down yet again.

Manish Pandey (51 off 38) and Wriddhiman Saha (30 off 31) failed to take on Kolkata Knight Riders' disciplined bowling in the middle overs to set a modest 143-run target after Warner chose to bat. Coming in place of an injured Vijay Shankar, Bengal wicketkeeper batsman Saha was particularly slow to start with and wasted a lot of balls before being run out.

"We could have applied a bit more pressure on the bowlers and tried to hit more boundaries in that middle period," Warner said after the seven-wick-

**We could have applied a bit more pressure on the bowlers and tried to hit more boundaries in that middle period. I'm disappointed more about the dot balls we played — there were about 35-36 dot balls in the middle, which in T20 cricket is not acceptable. I think we need to change our mindset.**

— **DAVID WARNER**

Sunrisers Hyderabad skipper David Warner after losing the match against Kolkata Knight Riders

et loss to KKR on Saturday.

"I'm disappointed more about the dot balls we played — there were about 35-36 dot balls in the middle, which in T20 cricket is not acceptable. I think we need to change our mindset."

The dashing Australian opener said SRH were 20-30 runs short of what could have been a good score. "We were probably 20-30 runs short and then it would have been a good game. If you don't put the right total on board, it's going to be hard to defend."

Saha came in at No. 4 ahead of Afghan hard-hitting all-rounder Mohammad Nabi, who was fresh from his exploits in the Caribbean Premier League.

But Warner defended the move, saying he wanted a "genuine batsman" to build a partnership

after his dismissal.

"You got to put a genuine batsman in, when I got out, we were trying to build partnerships. It's easy to say, send pinch-hitter in or what not, but you got to generate some momentum," he said.

"It's just unfortunate that they bowled well. They pulled their length back. We're unable to hit the boundaries. They executed well."

Warner looked in his elements in a 30-ball 36 before becoming spinner Varun Chakravarthy's maiden IPL victim.

"Obviously, it was a very poor and soft dismissal for myself. We just got excited, pressed the button and started going on," he said.

"I don't blame anyone. I take full responsibility for myself for not batting through the overs and getting a soft dismissal."

— *PTI*

## AFRIDI LAMENTS ABSENCE OF PAK PLAYERS IN IPL

**Karachi, Sept. 27:** Pakistan's former captain Shahid Afridi has rued the absence of top players from his country in a "big platform" like the Indian Premier League.

In a report published in the Pakistani media, Afridi said that the IPL is a big platform for any player to get exposure, gain experience and improve.

"The IPL is a big brand and I know that if our players like Babar Azam and others get a chance to play in it they would learn to play under pressure situations.

Unfortunately, due to the existing policies, our players are not getting that big platform," he said.

Pakistan's players have not been part of the IPL since the first edition in 2008. — *PTI*

## MI test awaits Kohli's boys

**Dubai, Sept. 27:** Royal Challengers Bangalore would be looking to address their pace-bowling concerns when they face defending champions Mumbai Indians in the Indian Premier League here on Monday.

RCB started on a winning note but then they collapsed against Kings XI Punjab, resulting in a humbling 97-run defeat.

After scores of 14 and 1, Kohli is due for a big one and would be itching to spend more time in the middle. Opener Devdutt Padikkal, who started his IPL career with a classy half-century, did not do much against KXIP and will be aiming for consistency.

Australian limited overs captain Aaron Finch would be hoping to convert starts into match-winning performances while AB de Villiers will be expected to provide the late fireworks again with the lower-order not inspiring a lot of hope.

It is still not clear whether RCB will have the services of South African all-rounder Chris Morris, who sat out of the first two games due to a side strain.

In the bowling department, Yuzvendra Chahal, as always, will be the key man with pacers, barring Navdeep Saini, leaking runs.

Dale Steyn and Umesh Yadav have proved expensive so far. The South African great is likely to retain his place in the playing eleven but the same can't be said about Yadav, who could make way for Mohammad Siraj.

England all-rounder Moeen Ali will be a welcome addition to the middle-order but with Josh Philippe keeping wickets regularly, he can only replace Steyn.

Mumbai Indians, who ticked all the boxes in their comfortable win against Kolkata Knight Riders, are unlikely to tinker with

## NUMBERS GAME

## HEAD TO HEAD

## OVERALL:

- Matches: 25
- Rajasthan won: 16
- Punjab won: 9

## MEETING IN 2019

- Mumbai Indians beat Royal Challengers Bangalore by 6 runs in Bangalore.
- Mumbai Indians beat Royal Challengers Bangalore by 5 wickets in Mumbai.

## FOR THE RECORD

- Virat Kohli, who scored 8,915 runs at an average of 40.89 in 268 innings of 283 innings, needs 85 runs to become first Indians and seventh batsman overall to complete 9,000 runs in Twenty-20 cricket.

- Rohit Sharma, who scored 689 runs at an average of 29.95 in 25 innings of 26 matches, is the second highest run-getter behind Mahendra Singh Dhoni (794 runs in 27 matches) against Royal Challengers Bangalore in the IPL.

— *S. PERVEZ QAISER*

their team composition. The biggest positive is that skipper Rohit Sharma is back among the runs and looked in ominous touch against KKR, and so did Suryakumar Yadav.

The only change that the team can make is bring in Ishan Kishan in place of the bulky Saurabh Tiwary.

Apart from their batting prowess, Hardik Pandya and Kieron Pollard can jointly perform the role of an additional bowler, but MI coach Mahela Jayawardane has made it clear that they don't want to take any risks with Hardik, who is playing after a long break following a back injury. — *PTI*

## GILL HAILS CUMMINS' SUPERB COMEBACK

**Abu Dhabi, Sept. 27:** Young Kolkata Knight Riders opener Shubman Gill, who played an unbeaten match-winning knock against Sunrisers Hyderabad, hailed Pat Cummins for his strong comeback after the Australian pacer had a forgettable outing against Mumbai Indians in their opening IPL fixture.

The world number one Test bowler, who leaked in excess of 16 runs an over without any success against MI, smartly altered his length on Saturday to return with tidy figures of 1 for 19 as KKR restricted SRH to a below-par 142 for 4 here.

And then Gill made an unbeaten 70 off 62 balls to anchor KKR's chase.

"One odd day doesn't mean much to us and he (Cummins) bowled really well in this game," Gill said after helping KKR beat SRH by seven wickets to register their first win in IPL 2020.

Cummins, who was



Shubman Gill

bought by KKR for a record ₹15.5 crore, shared the new-ball with spinner Sunil Narine and castled an in-form Jonny Bairstow (5) with a delivery that sharply nipped back in.

"Pat is one of the best bowlers in the world right now. We had to start with Pat and Sunil," Gill said.

Gill said as an opener it's his duty to bat through the innings.

"I think as an opener, it's very important to stay there and it's your duty to see the team through," he said. — *PTI*

## Halep reaches second round, Venus bows out

**Paris, Sept. 27:** Top-seeded Simona Halep won 10 straight games in beating Sara Sorribes Tormo 6-4, 6-0 to reach the second round of the French Open on Sunday and extend her winning streak to 15 matches.

Halep won on her 29th birthday, but with minimal celebrations planned for the evening since the coronavirus pandemic means players stay locked inside the security bubble of their hotels.

Wearing thick black leggings and a long-sleeved pink jersey to combat the chilly conditions, the 2018 champion made a series of unforced errors and trailed 4-2. But then she found her range, clinching the first set with a hold to love and

## FRENCH | OPEN

sealing victory on her first match point when her Spanish opponent clipped a forehand wide.

Over on Court Suzanne Lenglen, U.S. Open runner-up Victoria Azarenka experienced a vastly different temperature to Flushing Meadows only two weeks ago.

The 10th-seeded Azarenka, who beat Danka Kovinic 6-1, 6-2, fumed when match officials didn't immediately send them back to the locker room during a rain interruption. "I am going to get frozen," she complained.

"No. I'm not waiting here a couple of minutes because I'm cold. It's eight

degrees, eight degrees, I live in Florida, I am used to hot weather."

After the match, she said the conditions were risky. She next faces Anna Karolina Schmiedlova, who won 6-4, 6-4 against American veteran Venus Williams. "Even on my really good shots she had a lot of amazing replies that just kind of came out of nowhere," Williams said.

Williams exited in the first round at Roland Garros for the third straight year and is 0-3 in Grand Slams this year following the Australian Open and the U.S. Open. Since the start of 2018, the seven-time Grand Slam champion has lost in the first round in seven of the past 11 major tournaments. — *AP*

## Bottas exploits Hami's troubles in Russia



Mercedes' Valtteri Bottas celebrates on the podium after winning the Russian Formula One Grand Prix at the Sochi Autodrom circuit on Sunday. — *AP*

**Sochi (Russia), Sept. 27:** Valtteri Bottas took full advantage of a troubled day for his Mercedes team-mate Lewis Hamilton to claim the ninth win of his career with a measured drive to victory in Sunday's incident-packed Russian Grand Prix.

The Finn swooped to take second place at the start and inherited the lead when the runaway series leader and six-time champion took an extended pit-stop to serve two five-second penalties for irregular pre-race practice starts.

A disgruntled Hamilton, aiming to win and equal Michael Schumacher's record of 91 Grand Prix triumphs, re-joined in 11th place, but fought back to finish third behind Bottas and Red Bull's Max Verstappen.

His second win in Russia and second this season reinvigorated Bottas' chal-

lenge for the drivers' title and reduced Hamilton's lead to 44 points.

Sergio Perez came home fourth for Racing Point ahead of Renault's Daniel Ricciardo, who had to take a five-second penalty for an infringement, and Charles Leclerc, who was sixth for Ferrari. Esteban Ocon was seventh for Renault ahead of local hero Daniil Kvyat and his Alpha Tauri team-mate Pierre Gasly and Alex Albon in the second Red Bull. Hamilton did not want to talk about his penalty.

"It doesn't matter. It's done now. I'll take the points and move on, but congratulations to Valtteri," said Hamilton.

Hamilton accused the stewards "trying to stop me" after he was handed two five-second penalties that wrecked his hopes of a record-equaling 91st victory. The runaway series

leader said the stewards' penalties, given to him for a minor infringement when he performed two pre-race practice starts, were excessive.

"They're trying to stop me, aren't they? But, that's ok. I just need to keep my head down and stay focussed and we'll see what happens."

— *AFP*

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