



PEOPLE'S PARLIAMENT, ALWAYS IN SESSION

WHY XI MUST
BE HALTED



P7

MOON JAE-IN APOLOGISES
OVER HANDLING OF
KILLING BY NORTH

P9



TRUMP-BIDEN FIRST
2020 PRESIDENTIAL
FACE-OFF ON 29 SEPT

P10

WHY KING OF CLAY
SEEMS A LITTLE
VULNERABLE NOW

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WEATHER

Mainly clear sky. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 36 and 22 degrees Celsius respectively.

RAINFALL: Nil

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 82% Min: 39%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 36.1°C (+2) Min: 22.4°C (-1)

SUN RISES

06:14 hrs

MOON RISES

17:09 hrs

SUN SETS

18:09 hrs

MOON SETS

04:38 hrs

THUMBNAILS



Punjab Youth Congress activists protesting on the birth anniversary of Amar Shaheed Bhagat Singh against the Central government and the farm Bill at India Gate, Rajpath, in the Capital on Monday.

SNS

New West Bengal chief secretary: Alapan Bandopadhyay has been appointed as the new chief secretary of West Bengal. A 1987-batch IAS officer of West Bengal cadre, Mr Bandopadhyay is currently ACS, home department. He will take over the new responsibility on 1 October from incumbent Rajiva Sinha following his retirement on 30 September.

UDF to stop protests in Kerala after Covid spike: The Congress-led opposition United Democratic Front (UDF) in Kerala has decided to stop crowded protests and agitations owing to the critical Covid-19 situation in the state. However, the alliance leadership made it clear that they would continue the protests against the LDF government by observing Covid protocols. BJP, which has also been staging widespread protests seeking KT Jaleel's resignation, has not stopped their protests.

P5

Shocker in MP: DGP-rank officer thrashes wife; relieved of duties after video goes viral

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

BHOPAL, 28 SEPTEMBER



Senior IPS officer of Madhya Pradesh, Special DG Purushottam Sharma was today removed from his post of Director Prosecution with immediate effect after a video went viral showing Sharma thrashing and abusing his wife in his official residence here after she accused him of having an extramarital affair with a married woman.

The video shows Sharma punching and throwing his wife down on the floor at least twice in the presence of two servants. Sharma and his wife, Priya, are also seen arguing and shouting at each other with accusations and abuses.

Sharma is also seen accusing his wife of stabbing him with a knife, to which Priya Sharma says

it was a scissor. She goes on to say that she did it in self-defence and that she should keep pepper spray too.

The state home department issued orders removing Sharma from his post with immediate effect and directing him to report to the home department at the

state secretariat.

Sharma is an MP cadre IPS officer of the 1986 batch. He is a Special Director General of Police and was posted as Director, Public Prosecution.

According to some media reports, Purushottam Sharma's son, who is an Income Tax deputy commissioner, lodged a complaint against his father with Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Narottam Mishra.

Sharma said in the matter that he knew his son had lodged a complaint against him. He also said it was his matter and he was facing it knowing that he would have to suffer what he had to.

"After enjoying so much comfort in life, she has an obligation to her family – to save its reputation. They are going around ruining the family's image..." Sharma said.

Purushottam Sharma's name

had also cropped up in the scandalous 'honeymoon trap', which was exposed during the Kamal Nath-led Congress state government in MP.

(SEE PAGE 2)

Sources said Sharma and his wife have had strained relations for several years but the latest flare-up turned ugly after Priya Sharma claimed to have caught Purushottam Sharma red-handed at a local TV anchor's house in Bhopal.

A separate video and audio clip of that altercation between Priya Sharma, Purushottam Sharma and the woman, whom some media reports identified as Monika Rajput, have been circulating since Sunday night.

Media reports said Monika Rajput is married and works as a newsreader in IND24 news channel at Bhopal.

Purushottam Sharma's name had also cropped up in the scandalous 'honeymoon trap', which was exposed during the Kamal Nath-led Congress state government in MP.

Delhi logs dip in virus cases, tests; records 37 deaths

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPTEMBER

Delhi today reported a sharp dip in the number of Covid-19 positive cases as the city identified only 1,984 coronavirus cases, which took its cumulative total of such cases to 2,73,098, according to the Delhi government's latest health bulletin.

The relatively low count of fresh Covid cases was logged when the city conducted lesser number of tests, 36,302, the previous day.

The Covid-19 cases recorded yesterday in the national capital numbered 3,292, with the total tests conducted being 51,416.

(SEE PAGE 2)

of COVID-19 pandemic and floods.

It had granted the liberty to the petitioner to serve an advance copy of the petition on the Standing Counsel for the UPSC as well as on the Standing Counsel for the Central Agency representing Union of India through email/online.

The petitioners have sought postponement of the Civil Services Exam for two to three months so that the flood/incessant rains recede and the COVID-19 curve flattens.

The plea submitted that the UPSC decision to conduct the exam following the impugned Revised Calendar, violates the rights of the petitioners and those similarly situated, under Article 19 (1)

of the Constitution to practise their chosen profession/occupation of serving the public.

According to the plea this

7-hour offline exam will be

taken by approximately six lakh aspirants at test centres in 72

cities.

Conducting the aforesaid

examination across India at

such perilous time is nothing

else but putting lives of lakhs

of young students (including

Petitioners herein) at utmost

risk and danger of disease

and death. Also, the natural

calamities like flood, incessant

rain, landslides etc., are like-

ly to directly affect the life and

health of the Petitioners and

many similarly situated stu-

dents.

Hence, the impugned

Revised Calendar is utterly

arbitrary, unreasonable,

whimsical and patently violative of

the Right to Health and Right

to Life of the Petitioners herein

and lakhs of similarly situ-

ated students, under Article

21, the petition stated.

The plea said the Civil Ser-

vices Exam, being a recruit-

ment examination, is alto-

gether different from an aca-

emic examination and in

the event of its postpone-

ment, there would not be any

question of delay or loss of any

academic session.

It said that due to non-avail-

ability of exam centres in their

home towns, many aspirants

are facing unimaginable hard-

ship due to non-availability of

Centre approves defence acquisitions worth ₹2,300 cr



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 28 SEPTEMBER

Amid the ongoing military stand-off with China at eastern Ladakh, the government today approved proposals for capital acquisitions of various equipment required by the armed forces at a cost of Rs 2,290 crores and unveiled the Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) – 2020 with a view to providing an impetus to the domestic industry, achieving self-reliance in defence manufacturing and making India a global manufacturing hub.

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), which met under the chairmanship of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, approved the procurements from the domestic industry as well as foreign vendors.

Under the Buy Indian category, the DAC approved procurement of static transmitter and receiver sets and smart anti-airfield weapons (SAAW). The transmitter and receiver sets will enable seamless communication for the field units of the Army and the Air Force and are being procured at an approximate cost of Rs 540 crores. The smart anti-airfield weapon being procured at a cost of

about Rs 970 crores will add to the firepower of the Navy and the Air Force. Further, to equip the frontline troops of the Army, the DAC also accorded approval for procurement of SIG SAUER assault rifles at a cost of about Rs 780 crores. Meanwhile, the Defence Minister also unveiled the Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) – 2020 with a view to providing an impetus to the growing domestic industry, achieving enhanced self-reliance in defence manufacturing and making India a global manufacturing hub.

Specific reforms enunciated in the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan' have been incorporated in the DAP to provide for notifying a list of weapons/platforms for a ban on imports and indigenisation of imported spares.

The Request For Information (RFI) stage will explore willingness of the prospective foreign vendors to progressively undertake manufacture.

Covid-19: 50 lakh recover in India

SNS & PTI
NEW DELHI, 28 SEPTEMBER

Total recoveries from Covid in India crossed the 50 lakh milestone on Monday with recovered cases outpacing active cases by more than five times, the Union Health Ministry said.

In a statement, the ministry said the rise in the number of total recovered cases from 1 lakh in June 2020 has been steep and the last 10 lakh recoveries were added in just 11 days.

"India's total recoveries have crossed the landmark milestone of 50 lakh today (50,16,520). With a very high number of COVID patients recovering every single day, India's steady trend of posting a high level of daily recoveries continues," the ministry said.

"The total recovered cases have outpaced active cases by more than 5 times. With the exponential increase in the recoveries, there is close to 100 per cent increase in recovered cases in one month," it said.

"Noting that 15 States/UTs are showing a recovery rate more than the national average, the ministry said 78 per cent of the total recovered cases are

recorded in 10 States/UTs with Maharashtra leading total recovered cases followed by Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

"Seventy-three per cent of the new recovered cases are being reported from ten states, viz. Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

"This year, the monsoon made an onset over Kerala on June 1, its normal onset date. It covered the entire country on June 26, nearly a fortnight more than its normal schedule. According to the revised date, the new normal date for the monsoon to cover the entire country is 8 July."

Monsoon retreat begins from parts of north India

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPTEMBER

The southwest monsoon retreated from parts of west Rajasthan and Punjab on Monday, 11 days after his normal withdrawal date, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

Conditions are becoming favourable for its further withdrawal from some more parts of Rajasthan and Punjab and some parts of Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh during next two to three days, the IMD said.

"The southwest monsoon has withdrawn from some parts of west Rajasthan and Punjab today, September 28th, 2020," it said.

Dry weather is likely to prevail over parts of north India for the next five days. The official rainfall season in the country starts from 1 June to 30 September.

This year, the monsoon made an onset over Kerala on June 1, its normal onset date. It covered the entire country on June 26, nearly a fortnight more than its normal schedule. According to the revised date, the new normal date for the monsoon to cover the entire country is 8 July.

SC asks UPSC to apprise of arrangements for civil services prelims

SNS&PTI

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPTEMBER

The Supreme Court Monday asked the UPSC to apprise it by tomorrow the "logistical arrangements" made for conducting civil services preliminary exams on October 4 because of an alarming spurt of COVID-19 cases as also floods in various parts of the country.

The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) opposed in the top Court a plea seeking postponement of the prelims amid the pandemic and the floods.

In a hearing conducted through video conferencing, a bench comprising Justices A M Khanwilkar, B R Gavai and



Today is International Day for Universal Access to Information. It is shocking how GOI got exposed during the recent Parliament session. Most answers said 'no data available'. Every citizen has a right to information. The government is answerable and accountable to the people

MAMATA BANERJEE

WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER

Delhi records lesser number of Covid cases and tests

The city sees 1,984 coronavirus cases with tests conducted being 36,302; 37 fresh fatalities logged



A health worker collects swab samples for Covid testing in the Capital on Sunday.

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPTEMBER

Delhi today reported a sharp dip in the number of Covid-19 positive cases as the city identified only 1,984 coronavirus cases, which took its cumulative total of such cases to 2,73,998, according to the Delhi government's latest health bulletin.

The relatively low count of

fresh Covid cases was logged when the city conducted lesser number of tests, 36,302, the previous day.

The Covid-19 cases recorded yesterday in the national capital numbered 3,292, with the total tests conducted being 51,416. The positivity rate was 5.47 per cent today, which was 6.40 per cent yesterday.

Delhi today recorded 37 deaths caused by Covid, which pushed the city's coronavirus

death toll to 5,272 so far, the health bulletin said.

The total number of recoveries recorded so far was 2,40,703, including 4,052 patients discharged during the past 24 hours from different health care facilities. The Covid recovery rate rose to 88.13 per cent in Delhi now.

The health bulletin stated that there were 8,460 patients remaining hospitalised in the nation-

al capital, with the number of active cases of Covid-19 being 27,123. The count of those undergoing treatment on home isolation was 16,679.

The total number of containment zones (red zones) in the city stood at 2,465 as of now, the bulletin added.

Yesterday, what was seen as a disturbing development in Delhi was the point that Covid-caused deaths rose to more than 40 for the second consecutive

day. The Covid fatalities figure in the city was 42 yesterday. It was 46 last Saturday — highest in over 70 days. On 16 July, Delhi had recorded 58 coronavirus deaths on a single day.

Delhi health minister Satyendar Jain had reportedly said yesterday that the Delhi government had come out with a new strategy to contain the Covid spread in the city by increasing the tests per day to nearly 60,000.

The minister, who had himself remained hospitalised for several days as a Covid patient, had said, "The Delhi government has increased testing to 60,000 per day. This is a major change in our strategy to meet the threat posed by Covid-19. The strategy is aimed at ensuring that we are able to track every positive case and contain the spread of the virus infection. The case doubling rate in Delhi is now 50 days."

Jain had said that the Covid fatality rate in the national capital was less than one per cent over the last 10 days, adding that a massive increase in testing for detection of coronavirus infection led to a fresh rise in cases.

On 46 Covid fatalities the city recorded on Saturday, the minister said, "We do not look at the figures for a single day. The average fatality rate of the last 10 days has been 0.94 per cent.

The patients who have succumbed are not those who tested positive in a day. These are people who tested positive 15-20 days back. That is why we take the average of 10 days," he said.

DEEPAK

Capital reports 134 dengue cases this month till 26 Sep

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPTEMBER

As many as 134 fresh cases of dengue were reported in Delhi in this month till 26 September as compared to 47 in the previous month, according to a municipal report released today.

Of the total 212 cases of dengue 4 were reported in February, 2 in March, 7 in April, 6 in May, 1 in June, 11 in July, 47 in August and 134 in September.

The report said that a total of 425 people have been diagnosed with the vector-borne diseases in Delhi which include Dengue, Malaria and Chikungunya so far this year. However, the number is less than last year which was 737 for the same duration.

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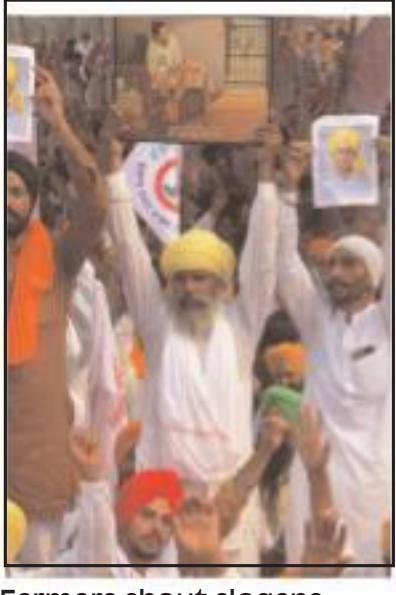
Awareness about COVID-19 should be spread through public address systems and surveillance committees should remain active

YOGI ADITYANATH
UTTAR PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER

The Statesman
NEW DELHI, TUESDAY 29 SEPTEMBER 2020

03

THUMBNAILS



Farmers shout slogans and hold portrait of independence fighter Bhagat Singh on the occasion of his 113rd birth anniversary while blocking railway tracks during a protest against new farm Bills, on the outskirts of Amritsar on Monday. AFP

457 Fresh Covid cases, 6 related deaths in U'khand: The death from the novel coronavirus rose to 58 in Uttarakhand on Monday with six new fatalities, while 457 fresh cases pushed the infection tally to 47,502, according to a health department bulletin. Haridwar district reported a maximum of 129 fresh COVID-19 cases, Dehradun 113, Udhampur 113, Champawat 21, Almora 19, Nainital 16, Pauri 15, Chamoli 7, Rudraprayag 5, Pitgoragh 2 and Bageshwar 2, the state health department bulletin said. Six more COVID-19 patients died at different hospitals in the state, it said. PTI

'PM to address public meetings after inaugurating Atal Tunnel'

HPCM Thakur says Atal Tunnel, to be inaugurated by PM Modi on 3 October, is the world's longest tunnel at over 10K feet, which will give round-the-year connectivity to the snowbound Lahaul people

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 28 SEPTEMBER

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur said Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address two public meetings, one in Sissu in the tribal district of Lahaul Spiti and another in Solang nullah in Kullu district, after inaugurating Atal Tunnel, Rohtang, on 3 October.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will accompany the Prime Minister.

"Everything will, however, be organised as per the Covid guidelines. At both the public meetings, not more than 200 people, including media, would be allowed and proper social distancing would be maintained," the CM said.

Spelling out the 3 October programme, the Chief Minister said the PM will flag off the bus (carrying people of Lahaul to Manali) by crossing over to the South Portal of the Tunnel on the Lahaul side after inauguration.

The Tunnel's inauguration would be done at South



Atal Tunnel, Rohtang

Portal (Manali side) at a brief function organised by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO), which constructed the project.

The PM would fly back to Delhi the same day

Thakur said initially it was

thought that the PM will stay at Keylong

on 3 October night, but it could not be done due to security reasons owing to the ongoing border issues.

"It is a matter of pride for

the state that former Prime

Minister late Atal Bihari Vajpeyi's dream is fulfilled with the completion of this tunnel, which will give round-the-year connectivity to the people of Lahaul who were otherwise stuck in tribal area due to snow on Rohtang pass for

more than five months in a year," the CM said.

He pointed out that the tunnel is of strategic importance for the nation, so the Prime Minister is also keen on actually making this visit to dedicate it to the nation despite the continuing Covid pandemic.

He said Atal Tunnel is the longest tunnel (9.02 kilometres long) at over 10000 feet in the world. He said the tunnel was completed in ten years time with budget of Rs 3300 crore. He said the tunnel has been closed till its inauguration. The Tribal Lahaul valley remains cut off from the rest of the world in winter months due to snow on Rohtang Pass. The tunnel will now by-pass Rohtang Pass.

The CM said the inauguration of Atal Tunnel, Rohtang, will open new vistas of tourism and economy in the Lahaul valley by giving it all-weather connectivity and will enable its younger generation working elsewhere to remain in touch with their kin.

"The Rohtang Pass could be now meant for tourism," he added.

Plea in HC to prevent stubble burning by Punjab, Haryana amid Covid problems in Delhi



Representational Image

PTI
NEW DELHI, 28 SEPTEMBER

The Delhi High Court Monday sought the Centre's response on a plea seeking immediate steps to prevent stubble burning in the neighbouring states of Punjab and Haryana on the grounds it would aggravate Covid-19 related problems.

A bench of Chief Justice D N Patel and Justice Pratik Jain issued notice to the Centre on an application which contended that stubble burning would increase air pollution drastically in the national capital and could further aggravate the health problems in the city in view of the coronavirus pandemic.

The application was moved by Sudhir Mishra, an advocate, who urged the court that the central government be directed to coordinate a meeting between chief secretaries of Delhi, Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh to address the

issue.

During the hearing, Mishra told the court that stubble burning has already started in Punjab and Haryana.

The Centre told the bench that despite directions of the respective state governments not to engage in stubble burning or face penalties for violation, the farmers were doing it.

The court listed the matter for hearing on October 22 and asked the central government to find out if any similar matter was pending before the Supreme Court.

The application was filed by Mishra in his main PIL moved in 2015 seeking directions to the Centre to take immediate steps to control increasing air pollution in the national capital.

He claimed that there is a direct connection between the increase in air pollution and the rise in Covid-19 cases in Delhi.

'HP front-runner in Jal Jeevan Mission'

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 28 SEPTEMBER

The piped drinking water supply through taps would be provided to every household in Himachal Pradesh by 2022 though the Jal Jeevan Mission, which is being implemented in the state.

This was said by Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur while interacting with the beneficiaries of the Jal Jeevan Mission through video conferencing from Shimla on Monday. Chief Minister said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched Jal Jeevan Mission on 15 August, 2019 with the provision of Rs. 3.5 lakh crore which envisages providing functional household tap

PM Modi 'sold' farmers' rights instead of making them self-reliant: HP Cong

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 28 SEPTEMBER

Himachal Pradesh Congress chief Kuldeep Singh Rathore on Monday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of allegedly selling farmers' rights to big businessmen by showing dreams of 'self' reliant India and said the new farm legislations would badly affect their economy.

After staging a protest in Shimla on new farm bills passed in Parliament by the Union government, he said the BJP used its "draconian" majority in Parliament to pass the three bills without prior discussion or consent of the Opposition parties.

"Abolishing the Agriculture Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) system will totally destroy the farmers as they will neither get the Minimum Support Price (MSP) nor suitable price of their crop as per the market rates.

The true example of this is NDIA ruled state of Bihar where APMC Act was done away which led to plight of farmers in the state going from bad to worse.

The traders in Bihar are now



HP Congress chief Kuldeep Singh Rathore along with party leaders and workers holding a protest against new farm laws, in Shimla on Monday.

The implementation of these laws will make farmers-farm labourers biggest losers while a handful of capitalist will make huge profits," he added.

Rathore further stated that the Modi government's claim that now the farmer can sell his produce anywhere in the country, is a white lie.

As per the agriculture census 2015-16, 86 per cent of farmers in the country own less than 5 acres of land while average land holding stood at 2 acres or even less than that.

In such a situation, 86 percent of farmers cannot transport or ferry their farm produce to other places and now they will have to sell it at the nearest markets at rates fixed by big business man.

In the event of APMC system getting abolished, it will give a direct blow to the farmers, he said.

State Congress chief said the scrapping of APMCs will further dry up the source of income of the states as they earn funds worth crore of rupees in term of market fees.

Agriculture experts believe that under the garb of these bills, the Modi government

actually intends to implement the 'Shanta Kumar Committee Report' under which the Centre government is not compelled to procure crops at MSP," he said.

Rathore added the Union government also intends to render the farmer merely a labourer in their own lands by getting him entangled in the contract system.

Does a poor farmer with 2-5 acres of land holding will be able to frame, understand and sign sale-purchase contract with big companies?

Further, the biggest flaw in the contract farming Bill is that purchasing a crop at MSP is not mandatory in contract farming," he added.

He assured the farmers that Congress party was with them against such draconian laws and the party will continue to fight for rights.

Earlier, Rathore along with party leaders staged a silent protest at historic The Ridge ground and later staged a march till Raj Bhawan where they submitted a memorandum to Governor Bandaru Dattatreya seeking repeal of these anti-farmer bills.

Covid-positive Uma Bharti admitted to AIIMS-Rishikesh

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
DEHRADUN, 28 SEPTEMBER

Senior BJP leader and former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Uma Bharti was admitted to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Rishikesh on Monday. She has fever for the past few days and recently tested positive for coronavirus infection (Covid-19).

Uma Bharti came to the AIIMS-Rishikesh for a medical test today and told doctors about her high fever.

According to AIIMS-Rishikesh media release, the Covid-19 sample of the political leader was collected and her vitals like blood pressure, heartbeat, etc., were found normal. Uma Bharti is admitted to a private ward at AIIMS (Rishikesh).

Uma Bharti was on a pilgrimage in Uttarakhand and had visited Kedarnath and Badrinath recently. After suffering from mild fever she conducted her Covid-19 test and it was found positive. The car driver, who accompanied the political leader on her tour, was infected with the virus.

After tested positive for Corona, Uma Bharti was staying in isolation at Vandematram Kunj of the Divya Prem Sewa Mission near Haridwar.



But, her temperature increased on Sunday night, forcing the political leader to rush to Rishikesh for medical treatment care.

Making a tweet, Uma Bharti says, "If I get a positive health report from AIIMS I want to appear in the CBI court of Lucknow on Wednesday."

2G scam: HC order today over CBI, ED pleas for early hearing of case

PTI
NEW DELHI, 28 SEPTEMBER

The Delhi High Court will pronounce on Tuesday its order on the CBI and ED pleas seeking early hearing on their appeals challenging the acquittal of former telecom minister A Raja and others in the 2G spectrum allocation scam case.

Judge Brijesh Sethi had reserved the order on the plea on September 22.

The probe agencies have sought an early hearing of their 'leave to appeal' which are listed for October 12. Leave to appeal is a formal permission granted by a court to a party to challenge a decision in a higher court.

They said substantial judicial time of the high court was consumed in hearing arguments in the case and it should be concluded before retirement of the judge on November 30.

Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Sanjay Jain, representing the CBI and the ED, earlier said that judicial time has already been invested in this matter and it should not go as a bad investment.

He said if the arguments are not completed in the matter before retirement of the judge, they will have to start afresh.

The CBI has also sought advancing the hearing of the appeal challenging the acquit-

ment of Essar Group promoters Ravi Ruia and Anshuman Ruia, Loop Telecom promoters Dayalu Ammal; Vinod Goenka, Asif Balwa; film producer Karim Morani; P Amirtham and Sharad Kumar, Director of Kalaignar TV in the ED case.

It had acquitted 17 others, including DMK supremo M Karunanidhi's wife Dayalu Ammal; Vinod Goenka, Asif Balwa; film producer Karim Morani; P Amirtham and Sharad Kumar, Director of Kalaignar TV in the ED case.

A special court had on December 21, 2017 acquitted Raja, DMK MP Kanamozhi and others in CBI and ED cases related to the scam.

The probe agencies have not shown the urgency so far and during the COVID-19 pandemic, the courts are following a particular sequence in conducting proceedings giving priority to cases where accused/convicts are in jail and that pattern should not be disturbed.

They have submitted that in view of the pandemic, which is becoming more severe by the day and the physical functioning of the high court is restricted, it is not possible for the parties to fully prepare and instruct their counsels and hearings in the restricted environment would cause severe prejudice to them.

The CBI and the ED sought early virtual hearing of their appeals saying that the country's largest trial, which was conducted at the public exche-

quer's cost, be brought to its logical conclusion.

A special court had on December 21, 2017 acquitted Raja, DMK MP Kanamozhi and others in CBI and ED cases related to the scam.



Will be painful if JD(U) gives ticket to ex-Bihar DGP...

MAHARASHTRA CONGRESS SPOKESPERSON SACHIN SAWANT
CLAIMING THAT HE HAD INSULTED MUMBAI POLICE

India

AIADMK to name CM candidate on 7 Oct

Chief minister Edappadi Palaniswami and dy chief minister O Panneerselvam yet not ready to relent on leadership issue

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHENNAI, 28 SEPTEMBER

Amid speculations about BJP central leadership brokering a truce among warring factions of ruling AIADMK well before the release of V.K.Sasikala - closest aide of late Jayalalithaa - from Parappana Agrahara Jail in Bengaluru, which is expected early January 2021, the party executive committee meeting on Monday decided to announce its chief minister candidate on 7 October.

Party deputy coordinator K.P.Munusamy and presidium chairman E.Madhushudhan told the media about the decision after a five-hour-long meeting, which failed to reach a consensus on it. When asked about the 10-day delay in announcing a crucial decision, the leader said: "7 October is an auspicious day."

According to party insiders, heated discussion dominated the executive committee meeting on Monday. Chief minister Edappadi Palaniswami (EPS) and deputy chief minister O.Panneerselvam (OPS) were not ready to relent on lead-

ership issue and both presented arguments as to why they deserved to be the face of the party for the upcoming state Assembly elections.

AIADMK spokesperson V.Pugazhendhi admitted there were lengthy discussions on the chief minister candidate during the executive committee meeting but a decision could not be taken. Revenue minister R.B.Udhayakumar said: "Lengthy discussions took place in a democratic manner and whatever decision is announced will be accepted by the one and half crore cadre of the AIADMK."

Party sources revealed that EPS invoked his leadership during the pandemic and the praise he has received from the Prime Minister as an argument to become the party's candidate. But OPS claimed he was chosen by former CM Jayalalithaa to be the CM.

According to sources, however, OPS never directly pointed out that EPS was appointed to the post by V.K.Sasikala.

According to sources, powerful leaders, including electricity minister Thangamani and Municipal administration minister Velumani remained neutral during



the proceeding and merely helped with negotiations. But the discussion was tilted in favour of CM EPS remaining the face of the party and OPS received only mea-

sure support, according to sources.

Meanwhile, the executive council on Monday passed 15 resolutions that were agreed upon by party leaders. These ranged from Opposition to the current constitution of the 'culture committee' formed

by the Centre to reiterating the government's stand on the two language policy currently adopted by the state.

A resolution urged the Centre to expeditiously disburse Rs 27,763.36 crore towards GST dues, funds pending under 13 heads towards various schemes besides the subsidies.

The executive meeting was held after a decision could not be reached upon on

an ongoing power struggle between CM Palaniswami and Dy CM Panneerselvam in an earlier party meeting this month.

While the latter demanded that the 11-member steering committee be formed as promised in August 2017, the former was unwilling to meet a demand that could create too many power centres within the party.

The resolution, however, came as a show of unity from the executive committee, even as discussion remained heated.

The meeting also gained importance as the state is ripe with speculation that the BJP central leadership wanted to unite original V.K.Sasikala faction (now ITV Dinakaran's Amma Munnetra Kazhagam) and the current ruling faction before the Assembly election by offering party leadership post to Sasikala, who could not become chief minister for another seven years as per the rule since she has been convicted along with Jayalalithaa for amassing assets disproportionate to their income.

Nearly four years after former party supremo Jayalalithaa's death, Avvai Shanmugam Road on which AIADMK headquarters is located, was filled with a large number of AIADMK workers. A section of them wore masks with the picture of OPS, while another section displayed pictures of EPS in farmer attire describing him as the future CM.

In the earlier meeting also a clear division among cadres was evident when they shouted slogans in favour of their leaders separately.

The ruling party could be witnessing turbulent days ahead of deciding the CM candidate.

Kerala's UDF to stop crowded protests in view of spike in Covid-19 cases

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
T'PURAM, 28 SEPTEMBER

Congress-led position United Democratic Front (UDF) in Kerala has decided to stop crowded protests and agitations owing to spike in Covid-19 cases in the state.

The alliance leadership, however, has made it clear that they will continue with the protests against the LDF government by observing health protocols.

Speaking to media persons here, Opposition leader Ramesh Chennithala said the decision was taken after holding telephonic talks with UDF allies.

He said the UDF doesn't have any qualms in taking a decision to stop all their live protests against the state government as the state is witnessing a difficult situation due to the spread of Covid-19.

The BJP, which has also been staging widespread protests seeking the resignation of higher education minister K.T.Jaleel, has not withdrawn its protests.

The Congress and other UDF allies have been protesting across the state against Jaleel demanding his resignation alleging his involvement in the gold smuggling case.

The protests intensified after Jaleel was questioned by the ED and NIA in connection with the case.

It is alleged that Swapna Suresh, the key accused in the case, had close connections with chief minister's former principal secretary M.Sivasankar and other big shots in the government.

Many protesters and police persons had tested positive. Kerala Student Union state president KM Abhijith who took part in the protests had also tested positive for Covid-19.

NIA court awards life term, ₹2.10 lakh fine to IS-returned Kerala man

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
T'PURAM, 28 SEPTEMBER

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) court in Kochi on Monday awarded life imprisonment to Subahani Haja Moideen, who went to Iraq and returned after waging war for the Islamic State (IS).

The court has also imposed

a fine of Rs 2,10,000 on him.

Subahani, a native of Thodupuzha in Kerala's Idukki district, was found guilty by the court on Friday for various charges.

He was awarded life imprisonment and fine of Rs 1 lakh under section 20 of the IPC for waging war against an Asiatic power in alliance or at peace with India.

SPREADING AWARENESS



An officer from the District Magistrate Office dressed as Yamraj (C) helps a man to wear a facemask after fining him for not wearing one in a public place in New Delhi on Monday. AFP

Labour minister defends new labour law

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 28 SEPTEMBER

The Labour and Employment Ministry today said the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Labour had given its consent for Industrial Relations Code provision to retrench, lay-off or close a unit, without government permission, for institutions with 300 employees, in place of earlier limit of 100 workers.

Defending the three new Labour Codes passed by Parliament in its Monsoon Session, the Ministry said "there has been no empirical evidence to suggest that higher threshold promotes hire and fire."

It was only the aspect of prior permission of the appropriate government, which was removed in the Code, while other benefits and workers' rights were kept intact, it said.

The workers' rights such as notice before retrenchment, compensation at the rate of 15 days wages per completed year of service and pay in lieu of notice period were not compromised in the new law, the

Ministry said.

The IR Code envisages an additional monetary benefit equivalent to 15 days of wages from a newly created Reskilling Fund.

The Ministry said the Economic Survey, 2019 had analysed the "pain of dwarfism" prevalent in Indian firms. Dwarfism refers to firms which are surviving for more than 10 years but their growth in terms of employment is stunted.

One of the inhibiting factors in creation of employment was observed to be the threshold of 100 workers under the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947.

Rajasthan in 2014 had increased the threshold from 100 to 300 workers. Rajasthan's example was followed by Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, HP, Jharkhand, Karnataka, MP, Meghalaya and Odisha.

Refuting rumours that Fixed Term Employment (FTE) introduces hire and fire, the Ministry said FTE was already notified by the Centre and 14 other states.

Durga Puja scaled down, Navratri festival called off in Gujarat

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
AHMEDABAD, 28 SEPTEMBER

With daily addition of Covid-19 cases registering more than 1,400, the Gujarat government has decided not to hold the nine-night Navratri festival this year.

Chief minister Vijay Rupani announced that it would not hold the state-level 'Navratri Mahotsav' at Gujarat Mineral Development Corporation (GMDC) ground, a major attraction for the revellers every year.

Durga Puja celebration committees have also decided to scale down their festivities.

Organisers of Durga pujas and Garba dances during Navratri are keeping their fingers crossed about the nature of their celebrations as the government has not yet clarified its stand about the 'quantum' of permission to be finally granted.

Demand for permission to local Garba events are continuing from the entertainment industry, suppliers of musical instruments, lighting, decorators and food stall owners but the government is likely to take a firm stand in view of rising Covid cases in the state.

Name of work	Estimated cost (Rs.)	Earnest money (Rs.)	Time limit	Class	Completion period
1 Improvement & widening on Shapur Sitntha Chowari Chambal via Jot road Km. 76/0 to 87/0 (SH:- Formation cutting, R/wall B/wall , wing walls and Cross Drainage work Km. 76/0 to 78/0)	32,77,208/-	56,700/-	15/00/-	C&B	Nine Months
2 Improvement & widening on Shapur Sitntha Chowari Chambal via Jot road Km. 76/0 to 87/0 (SH:- Formation cutting, R/wall B/wall , wing walls and Cross Drainage work Km. 78/0 to 82/0)	43,08,980/-	72,150/-	20/00/-	C&B	Nine Months
3 Improvement & widening on Shapur Sitntha Chowari Chambal via Jot road Km. 76/0 to 87/0 (SH:- Formation cutting, R/wall B/wall , wing walls and Cross Drainage work Km.82/0 to 87/0)	44,40,956/-	74,150/-	20/00/-	C&B	Nine Months

Terms and conditions:-
The tender documents shall be issued only to those contractors /firms who fulfill the following criteria and submit the following documents with the application:-
1. The tender of only those contractor/ Firms will be processed who will produce the proof of valid registration and submit the copy of renewal/enlistment in appropriate category, EPF No., Pan No. and GST No. with the application.
2. Earnest money in the shape of National saving certificate/Time deposit Account in any of the post office in HP. F.D.R from any Nationalized Bank/(i/o Kangra Central Cooperative Bank) duly pledged in favour of the Executive Engineer Jaisinghpur HP.PWD, Jaisinghpur.
3. The earnest money & cost of tender form for the above works should be submitted with the application for forms. The application received without earnest money & cost of tender form shall summarily be rejected.
4. List of machinery be attached with the tender form.
5. Tax Clearance certificate (T.C.C) issued from the concerned Excise and Taxation Department.
6. Ambiguous/telegraphic/conditional tenders or tender by fax/E-mail shall not be entertained/ considered and will summarily be rejected.
7. Executive Engineer reserves the right to reject or cancel any or all the tenders without assigning any reasons.
8. The offer of the tender shall remain valid upto 120days after the opening of tender.
9. If the date given above happens to be a holiday, the same shall be proccesed on next working days.
10. The contractors/ firms must quote their rates in words as well as in figures failing which XEN reserves the right to accept/ reject any or all tenders.
11. The tender form will not be issued to those contractors/ firms whose previous performance is not found satisfactory and who have not executed/completed the previous awarded works within the stipulated period of completion.
12. One contractor should not have more than two work in hand at a time.
13. Work should be completed by the contractor within the stipulated period.
14. Works completion and work in hand certificate issued by the concerned Executive Engineer must be attached with the application for issue of tender form.

Executive Engineer
Jaisinghpur Division
HPPWD, Jaisinghpur

336/2020-2021 HIM SUCHNA AVAM JAN SAMPAK



*Our farmers voice is crushed in Parliament and outside.
Here is proof that democracy in India is dead...*

CONGRESS LEADER RAHUL GANDHI
ALLEGING AGRICULTURE-RELATED LAWS ARE A 'DEATH SENTENCE' FOR FARMERS

The Statesman
NEW DELHI, TUESDAY 29 SEPTEMBER 2020

05

THUMBNAILS



A couple crosses a street in New Delhi on Monday. AP

Indian soldier injured in Pak firing: A soldier of the Indian Army was injured on Monday when Pakistani troops resorted to unprovoked shelling in the Machhal Sector of Kupwara in north Kashmir. Defence spokesman, Colonel Rajesh Kalia said that the soldier was evacuated and his condition was stable.

SNS

Plasma donors felicitated: Assam chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal on Monday felicitated a group of hundred convalescent plasma-donors recently in the city. Assam reported 875 new Covid-19 cases in the last 24 hours

SNS

India: Pakistan delisted 4,000 terrorists during coronavirus

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 28 SEPTEMBER

India today accused Pakistan of allowing delisting of 4000 proscribed terrorists to sustain its terror ecosystem even as the world was busy combating the Covid-19 pandemic.

"It's not without reason Pakistan remains a safe harbour for terrorists," Pawan Badhe, First Secretary at the Permanent Mission of India at the UN in Geneva said at the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) meet in India's 'Right of Reply' to Pakistan's malicious propaganda against New Delhi.

The Indian diplomat alleged that Islamabad has escalated full-scale training camps and launch-pads for terrorists in Pakistan occupied parts of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. "Nothing can change the fact that the entire territory of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh is an integral part of India. I advise Pakistan to see

Mamata attacks Centre over data; Oppn retorts

Charity should begin at home, says Congress leader Adhir Chowdhury

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

KOLKATA, 28 SEPTEMBER

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Monday criticised the Centre for not providing any data on the death of migrant labourers during the lockdown drawing sharp retort from the Congress and BJP which said that the state government should be transparent "before lecturing others".

Banerjee said every citizen is entitled to Right to Information, as the government is answerable and accountable to the people.

She was supported in this by Leader of Congress party in Lok Sabha Adhir Chowdhury who, however, went on to add that instead of pointing fingers at others "the state government should follow the path of transparency".

The BJP state leadership criticised the TMC government for, what it called, its "double standards".

Referring to the Centre's response during the mon-



soon session of Parliament that it does not have any data on the death of migrants, Banerjee said it is 'shocking' how the union government got exposed.

"Today is International Day for Universal Access to Information. It is shocking how

GOI got exposed during the recent Parliament session. Most answers said 'no data available'. Every citizen has a right to information. The government is answerable and accountable to the people," Banerjee said in a tweet.

Her comments followed



Union Labour Minister Santosh Gangwar's statements during the monsoon session of Lok Sabha that the government does not have data on the number of migrants who died or were injured while returning to their native places during the lockdown.

dent, said suppression of facts by the government is a direct affront to a vibrant democracy.

Both the state and central governments have been negating the RTI Act to hide the truth, he said.

"The International Day for Universal access to information is being celebrated today. I think that the epoch-making legislation of RIGHT TO INFORMATION act conceived and passed during UPA regime in India could be recognized as a befitting tribute to the essence of this day," he said in a series of tweet.

"Suppression of facts by the govt of any denomination is a direct affront to a vibrant democracy. Union govt has been negating the RTI Act to hide the truth. Even state govt of West Bengal is also fervently emulating the path of Union govt by denying the right to the common men," he said.

The Congress leader urged Banerjee to lead by example instead of pointing fingers at others and demanded that the state government issue a white paper on the pandemic. "Charity should begin

at home. At least my demand to the state govt to issue a white paper on the COVID pandemic situation that could be a precursor of transparency, please do the same in regard to this historic day," he said.

Criticising the Trinamool Congress government, West Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh said it had mastered the art of "hiding facts and figures".

"The TMC government should stop lecturing the Centre. Its double standards have been exposed. The state government during the COVID pandemic has mastered the art of hiding facts and figures. They were caught red-handed by the visiting inter-ministerial central team," he said.

A nationwide lockdown was imposed on March 25 to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus.

A large number of migrant workers returned to their far flung native places from different parts of the country, many of them even on foot, during the unprecedented lockdown which was imposed to break the chain of coronavirus infection.

Kargil distancing itself from Leh's demand for 6th Schedule for Ladakh

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, 28 SEPTEMBER

the reality and stop coveting territories of other countries," he added.

The Indian official deplored the fact that Pakistan has institutionalised enforced disappearance as a tool of subjugation against dissent and criticism not just against individuals but the entire society.

Children as young as 12-year old were normally abducted and trained to be suicide bombers in Baluchistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh.

In a chilling reminder of what Pakistan was capable of, ministers in the country proudly call for another full-scale genocide against Baluchis to resolve the political crisis in Baluchistan, he claimed.

The political leaders of Kargil said that they did not participate in the agitation for the 6th Schedule for Ladakh and it was launched only by political, social and religious groups of Leh district.

"We have not supported abrogation of Article 370 by the Modi government", said a leader of Kargil.

The Shia Muslim dominated district was facing discrimination at the level of the

government and BJP he added. They are, however, satisfied with the Home minister announcing that representatives of Kargil will also be taken on board during the dialogue on the issue. But we will highlight in the meeting how Kargil was being discriminated, a leader said.

Former chairman of the J&K Legislative Council, Anayat Ali, who had left the PDP and joined the BJP, was critical about the "discriminatory" attitude of the central government and the Ladakh UT administration towards Kargil.

Sixth Schedule is a very big issue, let them first resolve our small grievances of discrimination vis-a-vis Leh", Anayat Ali told The Statesman when contacted on phone at Kargil. Another prominent leader of Kargil, Asgar Ali Karbalai pointed out that the people demanding protection under the 6th Schedule should realize that the Article 35A that was abrogated by the Modi government was providing protection of land, employ-

ment, culture, identity etc to Ladakh. "We are against the imposition of the new system of UT on us, UT status for Ladakh is the demand of only people of Leh belonging to a particular community and Kargil never demanded this", he said.

If the centre wants to empower the people of Ladakh which is a strategic area touching China on one side and Pakistan on the other then instead of 6th Schedule the centre should grant statehood to Ladakh so that we are in a position to make our own laws by exercising the executive powers.

Karbalai was upset over the "media and bureaucracy" projecting as if Leh represents the entire Ladakh.

Anayat Ali said that our foremost demand is removal of discrimination with Kargil.

Neither the Lt. Governor nor any central minister or top bureaucrat has visited Kargil ever-since Ladakh became a UT last year. The central ministers confine their visits to Leh.

Dhankhar alleges WB govt ignoring his office, warns of governor's rule

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KOLKATA, 28 SEPTEMBER

party is not prepared to concede.

"We have given the Congress a proposal to contest 58 assembly seats and the Valmiki Nagar Lok Sabha constituency which will have bypoll soon," said RJD spokesman Mrityunjay Tiwari.

Another RJD spokesman Shakti Singh Yadav also confirmed the numbers and said "one or two seats can be adjusted here and there."

Bihar Congress spokesman Rajesh Rathor refused to go public about the number of seats the party wants to contest, but maintained it has definitely sought a larger share than what was being offered.

"In the 2015 election under the grand alliance, the JD(U) and the RJD had contested 101 seats each and the Congress 41. Now that JD(U) has ditched the Mahagathbandhan and joined hands with the BJP, the seat distribution arithmetic is needed only for the 101 seats Nitish Kumar's party had fought then.

"Out of that we expect proportionate distribution

of seats to us," Rathor told PTI.

RJD's Tiwari, however, is unconvinced. He said the Congress being a national party has the scope to contest elections in many states but Bihar is the only strong turf for the state's main opposition party.

RLSP chief Upendra Prasad Kushwaha is already camping in New Delhi where he is believed to have met top BJP leaders to finalise the modalities for his return to the NDA.

Kushwaha, according to sources in the NDA circles, wants to contest the Valmiki Nagar Lok Sabha byelection, which has been necessitated following the death of sitting JD(U) MP Baidyanath Mahto.

Sources in the Vikash Sheel

Insan Party (VIP) of Bollywood

set designer Mukesh Sahni

said with the number of

alliance partners shrinking,

the party wants to contest a

respectable number of seats.

As a Mahagathbandhan ally,

it fielded candidates in three

places in the Lok Sabha polls

but had drawn a blank.

to be blocked then the ceiling

has to be kept open and pan-

dals must have adequate space

for ensuring physical distanc-

ing.

There has to be separate

entry and exit gates with floor

markings and other signages to

ensure compliance of physical

distancing norms.

Adequate number of vol-

unteers must be deputed and

they should wear face masks and

shields for safety.

Anjali, Prasad Bitaran and

Sindoor Khela should be orga-

nised in a planned and stag-

gered manner with smaller

groups. Priests should use

microphones so that the sound

reaches worshippers standing

even far away and thus avoid

overcrowding. Again, devotees

may be encouraged to offer

**Anjali with flowers brought

from homes so that collection

points in the pandals do not

become congested.

Judges for puja award pro-

grammes should not be allowed

to enter the puja premises in huge

convoy and not more than

two cars of judges at a time should be allowed to visit a pandal. "Ideally all visits for 'judging' the

pujas should be virtual and

physical visits should be con-

fined from 10 am to 3 pm.

not be allowed.

Some of the guidelines were

announced by chief minister

Mamata Banerjee after a meet-

ing with the puja committees on

24 September.

The guidelines issued by

state chief secretary Rajiv Sinha

stated that in case the sides have

WB issues guidelines for Puja amid pandemic

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 28 SEPTEMBER

The West Bengal government today issued a set of guidelines to the Durga Puja committees for the upcoming festival amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to the guidelines, the pandals have to be spacious and kept open from all sides for proper ventilation, hand sanitizers will have to be mandatorily placed at the vicinity of the pandals and wearing of face masks will be binding. Puja Carnival and cultural programmes at or near the pandals

to be blocked then the ceiling

has to be kept open and pan-

dals must have adequate space

for ensuring physical distanc-

ing.

There has to be separate

entry and exit gates with floor

markings and other signages to

ensure compliance of physical

distancing norms.

Adequate number of vol-

unteers must be deputed and

they should wear face masks and

Cooling off

Some years ago, a parliamentary panel had recommended that the cooling off period for an Army officer joining the private sector be raised from one to two years, and that for officers of the rank of Brigadier and above be pegged at five years. These recommendations had come in the wake of a recently retired Lieutenant General reportedly offering a bribe to then Army chief and current Minister, VK Singh, for purchase of sub-standard equipment. While efforts to curb unethical practices by one uniformed service are commendable, India's political class appears to encourage such practices and worse in another uniformed service, nowhere better exemplified than by the bizarre case of the man who was until the other day Bihar's Director-General of Police and was seen on multiple media outlets garrulously explaining his force's "principled" position on registering a complaint filed by the family of a film star with roots in the state. It is open to question if Mr Gupteshwar Pandey was even qualified for elevation to the post he held, in light of his decision in 2009 to seek premature retirement to seek a ticket from the Bhartiya Janata Party and his return to the uniform when he failed to secure one. While the BJP did the creditable thing by thwarting his political ambitions, the Bihar Chief Minister, Mr Nitish Kumar, had no such qualms. Not only was Mr. Pandey's request for retirement five months before he reached the age of superannuation accepted, Mr Kumar welcomed him into his party's fold on Sunday at a well-publicised event. It remains to be seen if the former policeman's ambition to enter the legislature attains fruition, but this turn of events has turned the spotlight on the police-politician nexus as seldom before.

Certainly, the development fuels suspicions that Mr. Pandey's decisions as head of Bihar's police were tainted by his political ambition and that the registration of a First Information Report in Patna with respect to a death that occurred in Mumbai was aimed not so much at ensuring justice for a son of the soil as it was at helping the ruling party at the hustings. If so, this is reprehensible and calls for a larger debate on the cooling-off period for members of the police, administrative services and even the judiciary.

While some subject-specific quangos may require, for instance, appointment of a retired judge to a quasi-judicial role, it is important to have institutional mechanisms in place to ensure that actions taken in service are not rewarded immediately after superannuation, whether premature or in the fullness of time. It may therefore be advisable to have a uniform cooling-off period for those retiring from supervisory positions – not just from the Army or police but every service that entails payment of a salary from the exchequer – to ensure that actions taken in the saddle are not influenced by post-retirement ambitions.

Tourist in the dock

Reviews on Tripadvisor, a travel and tourism website which had more than 450 million unique visitors a month in 2019, are often a way for travellers to draw on experiences of those who have visited a place, dined at an eatery or stayed at a hotel. For this reason, they are immensely popular with frequent travellers who turn to reviews to find out if a hotel or a restaurant, or indeed other tourism related activity, will meet their expectations. For the same reason, favourable reviews are much sought after by hoteliers and restaurateurs and there have been innumerable cases of critical comments leading to improvements in the facility under scrutiny. All that may change at least as far as the tourism industry in Thailand is concerned, with the owner of a resort in Koh Chang island choosing to prosecute an American tourist who wrote an unflattering Tripadvisor review. According to the review posted in July for his stay at a time when the tourism industry was gasping for survival, the tourist described the staff of the Sea View resort as "unfriendly" and said they "act like they don't want anyone here." The resort complained to police that he had posted an unfair review which had caused damage to its reputation. The complaint filed under Thailand's harsh anti-defamation laws, which have often been termed as a weapon to curb free expression, led to the tourist, an expatriate settled in Thailand, to be arrested by immigration police before his eventual release on bail.

Before the Covid epidemic shattered tourism around the world, Thailand depended hugely on its earnings from this sector. Including indirect receipts, tourism was said to contribute almost a fifth to the country's Gross Domestic Product last year and was estimated to grow to 30 per cent by 2030. The country last year attracted nearly 40 million tourists and in the World Economic Forum's Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report a few years ago, it was ranked 35th out of 141 countries while another survey ranked Bangkok as the world's second most visited city after London. In a world where most tourists make their bookings online, and where they often base their choices on the opinions of other travellers, reviews on travel sites are a useful aid to decision-making. It is axiomatic for a review to be sometimes harsh, and to perhaps even be prejudiced by factors that the reviewer does not admit to.

But that is a part of the unwritten contract a service provider must accept. If Thailand, a country which is already working hard to reopen itself to tourism, gains a reputation for coercing favourable reviews from travellers on threat of prosecution, it will ultimately pay a price. The country's tourism authority would do well to discourage complaints of the sort preferred by the resort in Koh Chang.

Long Overdue

The agriculture sector has been crying for reforms for decades. These Bills resurrect a 1991-moment to finally liberate Indian agriculture and promise a win-win situation for farmers, consumers, start-ups as well as corporates. If in the process, APMC and *mandis* become history, only the middlemen and rent-seekers will shed tears



In the midst of raging protests, Parliament has passed three Bills aimed at long-overdue reforms of the agriculture sector, especially for the marketing of agricultural produce. The Bills which replaced ordinances promulgated earlier are: (1) Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill; (2) Farmers' (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill and (3) Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill. Their impact on the agriculture and income of the farmers is likely to be far-reaching, if backed by proper regulatory and institutional mechanisms to ensure fairness and transparency. These Bills will at long last dismantle the License-Permit Raj which has kept agriculture captive to the caprices of the *mandis* run by the Agricultural Produce and Marketing Committees (APMC) in various states and the middlemen mafia that control them.

The APMC system was introduced to protect farmers from exploitation of intermediaries and to ensure better prices for their produce through auctions, but has been hijacked to serve exactly the opposite purpose by restricting the farmer from selling directly to food-processors, exporters or retailers as all products are required to be routed only through *mandis* or markets notified under the various state APMC Acts, which over time have become restrictive, extortionate and monopolistic. A highly controlled structure like this positively discourages the much-needed private investments in cold storage, food processing and marketing infrastructure to modernise agriculture and for the development of a unified pan-Indian agricultural market. The whole system is extremely opaque, and is plagued with multiple licenses, fees and levies, besides agents who act as intermediaries between the farmers and buyers and collect commissions from both. The levies and commissions increase cost with a cascading effect and distort markets while erecting strong entry barriers. To remove barriers, the Centre has been prodding the states to follow the model bills drafted by it during 2016-18, but save a few states, others have shown no eagerness, when the Centre promulgated the ordinances now replaced by the Bills.

Understandably the *arhatiyas* – who are commission agents, middlemen and money lenders all rolled into one – are outraged. The Bills will finally end their stranglehold over farmers and

mandis. They have gone on strike, throwing the grain procurement process into chaos. A study in Punjab has found that *arhatiyas* provide two-thirds of all loans to farmers in unbanked villages and 55 per cent of farm loans in villages even with banks, indicating their absolute control over farmers' lives. Because of them, the Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) which can procure directly from farmers at remunerative prices could never strike deep roots in rural India. Their tremendous lobbying power has forced resignation of a Union Minister and led to fierce protests in those states where the middlemen rule the roost, mainly Punjab and Haryana. In Punjab alone, there are 40,000 of them controlling 1800 *mandis*. In Haryana, there are 32,000 *arhatiyas*. They form a vicious cartel among themselves to hoard and dictate price and enjoy formidable political clout. Only now they are facing an existential crisis.

The protests, scattered and unorganised though they are, are primarily directed against the provisions of the first Bill pertaining to 'trade area', 'trader', 'dispute resolution' and 'market fee'. This Bill will create an ecosystem to enable the farmers to sell their produce outside the '*mandis*' without any barriers in both intra- and inter-state trades, while reducing marketing and transportation costs to get better prices including through the electronic trading platforms. The e-NAM portal launched by the Centre in April 2016 to facilitate establishment of a unified national agriculture market has remained dysfunctional so far with only 3 per cent of farmers registering with it, and suffers from multiple problems including non-functionality of platform and lack of enabling amendments in the state APMC Acts.

The 'trade area' defined in Section 2 of the Bill excludes the existing APMC *mandis* to give farmers the freedom to trade their produce within or outside them. In the *mandis*, they will continue to get the government administered Minimum Support Price (MSP), while outside the *mandis*, the prices will be determined by the market. Definition of a 'trader' is so wide that practically anyone with a PAN can operate in both the *mandis* and trade areas, though for trading in the *mandis*, a licence/registration

under the concerned APMC Act would be necessary, just like the *arhatiyas*.

Drawing upon the Centre's residual power under the Concurrent List that includes 'trade', as distinct from 'marketing' of agricultural produce which falls under the State List, Section 6 of the new Bill specifically prohibits any market fee, cess or levy to be imposed by the states in a trade area, for reducing the cost of transaction. Currently these charges add significantly to the cost and hence increase prices of traded goods in the *mandis*; e.g., Punjab collects total fees of 8.5 per cent on wheat, comprising market fee of 3 per cent, rural development charge of 3 per cent and *arhatiya*'s commission of 2.5 per cent, while Haryana levies 6.5 per cent. On rice procurement, Punjab charges 14.5 per cent, Andhra Pradesh 13.13 per cent and Haryana 11.5 per cent. Thus trade outside *mandis* will be hugely attractive to corporates and farmers both, since corporates can use this difference to pay better prices to farmers to wean them away from the *mandis*. Agricultural states also stand to lose some

services. The protesters are arguing that uneducated farmers will be disadvantaged in negotiating prices with the big firms, but competition is likely to ensure fair price, provided cartelisation is prevented.

The dispute resolution mechanism under Section 8 allows the disputes to be settled mutually through a Conciliation Board to be constituted by a subdivisional magistrate, with the district collector being the final appellate authority. Opponents fear this is not robust enough to safeguard the farmers' interests, since it denies the farmers the liberty to approach civil courts. But given our clogged civil justice system famed for its tardiness, such a provision would only serve the vested interests by delaying justice.

The second Bill ushers in the system of contract farming in India. Farmers can now enter into long-term contracts (upto five years) with agri-business firms for selling their future products at a pre-agreed price, assuring them future income for planning ahead. The burden of risk and unpredictability of seasons will thus shift to the sponsor agri-business firms, and the small and marginal farmers owning less than 5 hectares of land who constitute more than 86 per cent of the total farmers in India, will stand to gain from aggregation and direct contract with firms without intervention of middlemen. Through the firms, farmers will be able to access modern technology and agricultural practices to reduce cost and boost incomes.

The argument that a sponsor may not like to enter into a contract with multitudes of small farmers is baseless, because the multitudes are not blind to their own benefits. This will rather push them to form big co-operatives to increase their bargaining power. The FPOs also can help. The third Bill seeks to remove items like cereals, pulses, oilseeds, onions and potatoes from the list of essential commodities, to eliminate stockpiling of these items except in extraordinary circumstances like war. This liberates the farm sector and allows the market to determine the price levels of all commodities to the benefit of both the farmers and the consumers.

The agriculture sector has

been crying for reforms for decades. These Bills resurrect a 1991-moment to finally liberate Indian agriculture and promise a win-win situation for farmers, consumers, start-ups as well as corporates. If in the process, APMC and *mandis* become history, only the middlemen and rent-seekers will shed tears

which is difficult to obtain at the individual level, was used is of grave significance. The Russian government has refused to clarify the facts. Isn't it unavoidable that it is suspected of involvement in the case? Under Putin, anti-government politicians and journalists have been attacked with poison and other materials. In most cases, the perpetrators were not arrested and the truth has been buried in the dark. In 2018, a former Russian intelligence agent who was in exile in Britain became seriously ill from the effects of Novichok. The British government concluded that the case was attempted poisoning by Russian agents, but Russia did not cooperate in the investigation. It cannot be overlooked that every time such an incident is repeated, a sense of fear is instilled in dissidents in Russia, and as a result, the anti-government movement is intimidated. The latest incident has also affected German-Russian relations. The German government has asked Russia to explain the circumstances behind the incident and thoroughly investigate the case, mentioning a possibility that Germany could review a project constructing pipelines for natural gas from Russia to Germany.

A MEMBER OF THE **ANN**
ASIAN VOICES

Putin must clarify suspected poisoning of opposition leader

Another incident has occurred in which an opponent of the administration of Russian President Vladimir Putin was taken down for an inexplicable reason. It is important for the international community to increase pressure on Russia to disclose the truth. Alexei Navalny, leader of the anti-Putin administration movement, became unconscious and fell into a critical condition on a plane while taking a domestic flight. At the request of his family, who felt that he was threatened, Navalny was transferred from a hospital in West Siberia to Berlin and has been receiving treatment. The German government concluded, based on an examination by a military research institute, that it was an attempt to kill Navalny by poisoning him using a chemical nerve agent from the Novichok group developed by the former Soviet Union. Novichok is said to be more lethal than sarin, and is subject to the Chemical Weapons Convention. The use of the chemical agent is unacceptable under any circumstances.

It is natural that foreign ministers of the Group of Seven advanced nations strongly condemned the use of the poison in a joint statement. Navalny has been detained and imprisoned many times for looking into the ruling party's irregularities on a video posting site. He called for a campaign to reduce the number of ruling camp seats ahead of the unified local elections on September 13. The Russian government has insisted there was no evidence that the poison had been used, but it has not conducted a full-fledged investigation nor presented any materials for counter-evidence. The suspicion that a nerve agent,

The Phnom Penh Post

which is difficult to obtain at the individual level, was used is of grave significance. The Russian government has refused to clarify the facts. Isn't it unavoidable that it is suspected of involvement in the case? Under Putin, anti-government politicians and journalists have been attacked with poison and other materials. In most cases, the perpetrators were not arrested and the truth has been buried in the dark. In 2018, a former Russian intelligence agent who was in exile in Britain became seriously ill from the effects of Novichok. The British government concluded that the case was attempted poisoning by Russian agents, but Russia did not cooperate in the investigation. It cannot be overlooked that every time such an incident is repeated, a sense of fear is instilled in dissidents in Russia, and as a result, the anti-government movement is intimidated. The latest incident has also affected German-Russian relations. The German government has asked Russia to explain the circumstances behind the incident and thoroughly investigate the case, mentioning a possibility that Germany could review a project constructing pipelines for natural gas from Russia to Germany.

IN MEMORIAM

GUPTA PROVA — In revered memory of a Karma Yogi, whose life was a perpetual quest for attaining the highest level of spiritual bliss, asceticism, self-mortification, renunciation and purificatory approach to life were the hallmarks of this pilgrimage of eternity. We lost her this day in Jaipur (Rajasthan) in 1994. Remembered always with abiding and deep veneration. Bless us wherever you are.

— Rupa, Gautam (Delhi), Tanya (Washington DC).



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

editor@thestatesman.com

Importance of clean fuel

SIR, This is with reference to Rafia Zakaria's article,

'Plans based on faulty assumptions' (*The Statesman*, 25 September). Deforestation, indoor pollution and climate change are all linked through a complex system. Chulhas and traditional stoves are major contributors of indoor air pollution in rural India. About one-third of rural households and up to 95 per cent people in poor countries burn wood, dung, peat and other biomass fuels, as well as coal for energy.

Chulhas produce CO₂, Methane and particulate matter that contribute to global warming. The traditional Chulha consumes tonnes of woods, which is an unsustainable way of life, in a region already rav-

aged by deforestation and drought. Household air pollution caused by solid fuels burning is responsible for 1.04 million premature deaths and 31.4 million lost life years annually. Fine particles or PM2.5 are particularly harmful for the disease burden.

There is now substantial data in India (and globally) on the insidious link between solid fuel use in

households and serious

health consequences for

women and children.

Increased incidence of

chronic bronchitis in

women and acute respiratory infections in children are two clear effects.

However, the only way to save lives from toxic fumes is to change the fuel and make clean fuel available to all poor households. This will also empower the

poor women, who spend an inordinate time on collecting firewood and cooking meals. LPG is a clean fuel, but poor families have limited access to it. Keeping this reality in view, the Government of India has launched 'Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana' (PMUY) for providing LPG connections to 5 crore women belonging to BPL families over a period of 3 years from FY 2016-2017.

Yours, etc., Jaydev Jana

Kolkata, 26 September.



NEW ORDER

SIR, This refers to the news item "Modi makes strong push for UN reforms" (*The Statesman*, September 27). The United Nations (UN) has always struggled when its most powerful members disintegrated. The 75th anniversary of UN's foundation comes at a time when multilateralism is facing its sternest test. The widening chasm between the world's two biggest powers is pulling the international community apart. This in turn undermines the work of various international bodies, as exemplified by Trump pulling the US out of WHO.

Meanwhile, Chinese President Xi Jinping rhetorically bats for a multilateral order every now and then but his aggressive actions in the South China sea, termination of Hong Kong's autonomy and hostilities at the India-China border belie international rules and cooperation. It's clear that UN-driven multilateralism envisioned 75 years ago needs reforms to reflect the realities of today. In this regard, not only does the world need more multilateralism to meet challenges like recession, pandemics and global warming, this should also be based on shared values such as democracy, human rights and respect for international rules. It's precisely because of the failure to universalise such values that the UN has been reduced to a talk shop as the powerful nations use the global body for their own agenda. Old multilateralism must make way for a new one.

Yours, etc., N Sadhasiva Reddy, Bengaluru, 27 September.

Why Xi must be halted

HARSHA KAKAR

Xi Jinping, in his televised address to the UN, spoke of mutual respect and cooperation between nations, following a policy of non-expansionism and promised to avoid hot and cold wars.

Chinese actions and words even on the global stage are vastly contradictory. Any despot who has amassed complete power in his hands is assured of loyalty, has no challengers to his throne, appoints only yes-men and becomes over ambitious. This was so with Adolf Hitler in the 1930s and is currently so with Xi Jinping. Hitler sought to regain Germany's past glory by undoing the insult of the treaty of Versailles while Xi seeks to regain China's past glory by undoing its history of unjust treaties. In pursuit of this, China has begun claiming territory which it unilaterally assumes belongs to it.

Xi, like Hitler, dreams of being considered the greatest ruler of his country in history for having re-integrated its territories and undone injustices imposed on the nation over centuries. As the world suffered through a pandemic created according to some in a Chinese laboratory, Xi Jinping set into motion his offensive plans.

Deng Xiaoping had stated, 'hide your capabilities, bide your time' and hence Xi's predecessors adopted economic and soft power to enhance Chinese image and amalgamate China into the global mainstream, ensuring steady growth that enabled development of military power. On the 70th anniversary of the Republic of China in October 2019, Xi defined China's twin goals, to be achieved by 2049, as 'rejuvenation of the Chinese nation' both economically and territorially by reunifying Taiwan.

However, it is evident that timelines for reunification of Taiwan and regaining claimed territories has been brought forward by Xi himself. Reasons for his change in approach are possibly economic and may have something to do with pandemic management failures as also threats to his throne. Xi, in contrast to Deng, chose two offensive tools for fulfilling his ambitions, 'wolf warrior diplomacy' and military power. Wolf warrior

diplomacy was launched last year, when Wang Yi, the Chinese foreign minister, briefed his diplomats, directing them to display greater assertiveness in representing Beijing's interests overseas and being vocal in defending the Chinese communist government from criticism.

This offensive diplomacy became prominent after the global spread of the pandemic as China began claiming parts of nations around it. Chinese state-owned press claimed Mongolia, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan as part of greater China. To the surprise of its only major ally, Russia, China said Vladivostok was part of it before being annexed by Russia.

Military power to regain territory were visible in the South China Sea (SCS), despite protests by Asean nations, against Taiwan and offensive actions in Ladakh. China also encroached on Nepalese territory and demanded tracts of land in Bhutan.

As the world united to stop Hitler from pursuing his policy of Lebensraum, similarly the world is uniting to stop Xi's policy of expansionism. While India and Taiwan are preparing for possible military action, the US, Australia, UK, Germany and France, apart from nations within the Asean, are joining hands to hold China back.

Xi had expected his PLA to achieve its aims in Ladakh by early June, post which he could engage India in unending talks, enabling him to concentrate on regaining Taiwan. He had based his strategy on speedy movement to grab claim lines and exploit Indian philosophy of resolution through dialogue. Historically, in all cases of Chinese intrusion in recent years - Doklam, Sumborong Chu, Depsang and others - this was the standard Indian approach.

It is also possible that after consolidating his gains in the Pangong Tso and Depsang regions, China could have contemplated an offensive through the Chushul bowl and in Depsang, in case it got the opportunity, to deny India any future opportunity of interfering with Chinese strategic roads linking Tibet and highways connecting the CPEC. Galwan and the Indian offensive action of securing dominating heights on the Kailash Ridge upset its plans.

Throughout the Ladakh crisis,



pressure was building on Taiwan. For China, the longer Taiwan remains independent, broadcasts anti-China statements and offers sanctuary to pro-democracy protesters, the greater would be its influence in Hong Kong and the mainland. The presence of a successful democratic state so close to Chinese shores is an anathema for communist Chinese leaders, as it could lead to similar demands within. With nations dumping the One China policy and sending senior government representatives formally to Taiwan, there were internal accusations of diplomatic failure of the Xi regime.

Amalgamation of Taiwan would ensure Xi is revered for life and worshipped for being the foremost leader in Chinese history. Violation of Taiwanese airspace, conducting exercises near the Taiwan straits, direct

threats to its President, Tsai Ing-wen and warnings to the global community on breaking the One China policy became part of Xi's offensive approach. Last week it discarded the median line of the strait. Taiwan has activated its command and control centres and placed its armed forces on a high state of alert.

What gave the global community time to get its act together and deploy forces in the SCS was India staring down the dragon in Ladakh, putting spokes in Xi's plans for Chinese expansionism. China knew that if it escalates in Ladakh, its plans for Taiwan would have to be shelved. China, despite its economic and military power, would be unable to handle two fronts.

Historically, the world was silent when Hitler remilitarised Rhineland and occupied Czechoslovakia. Had it

acted offensively then it could have prevented the second world war. Similarly, remaining silent when Xi invades Taiwan could set in motion events which the world would never be able to control, without indulging in a nuclear war. It cannot let another Hitler rise, especially in Asia.

To support Taiwan and maintain pressure against Chinese expansionism, the US has pushed its carrier group into the South China Sea as a precaution. As global reality begins to dawn, Australia, and European powers have announced their intention to join forces to block Chinese expansionism. Simultaneously, economic pressure is pushing China back. Xi must be checked before another Hitler rises.

The writer is a retired Major-General of the Indian Army.

100 YEARS AGO

OCCASIONAL NOTE

The Government appear to have taken a firm position in regard to the latest demand of the British miners, which has been met by "unqualified rejection." An ordinary claim for increased wages based on the cost of living and inadequacy of present earnings would not be met in this manner. It might or might not be possible to grant the increase, but at least the demand would be carefully considered and if the full claim were impracticable efforts would be made if possible to find a compromise. In this case, however, it appears that the Miners' Federation, despite the fact that wages already are at an unprecedentedly high level, have advanced their claim simply with the object of absorbing surplus revenue from the coal industry estimated at sixty-six millions sterling. The Federation are not content even with an excessive day's wage, but want to appropriate the shares of others interested in the coal mines. They couple with their own claim a demand for a reduction in the price of household coal, and this willingness to divide the surplus with household consumers might be accounted a sign of grace but for the inevitable suspicion that the object is rather to court support than to consult public interests - otherwise why should the reduction be limited to household supplies while industrial works are handicapped? It now remains to be seen whether the general body of the miners will follow the dictates of the leaders who are misguiding them.

NEWS ITEMS

NON-BRAHMIN CONFERENCE

The Karnataka Non-Brahmin Social Conference came to a close this evening. The Conference passed half a dozen resolutions, among them being a record of sincere appreciation of the valuable services of His Excellency Sir George Lloyd rendered to the labouring classes at a time when strikes and passive resistance had rendered the situation very serious and would surely have resulted in lamentable consequences had it not been for his tactful handling and timely interference. A resolution therefore prayed that His Excellency would not be allowed by His Majesty to lay down the reins of office before this critical period in the history of the masses, especially of the labouring classes, had passed away. The resolution passed. Other resolutions urged non-Brahmins to develop female education, to use their influence against early marriage.

INDIANS IN KENIA

The following is a continuation of the communiqué detailing the reception by His Excellency the Viceroy of members of the deputation with regard to the position of Indians in East Africa. His Excellency said the claims on account of German Government Currency notes were being dealt with by the Reparations Commission. He had no information with regard to the claims on account of notes issued by the German East African Bank. Claims on this account were probably enforceable either on the assets of the Bank held by the Liquidator in Tanganyika territory, or against the Bank itself in Germany through the clearing office. In any case the Government of India could not intervene in order to give relief to individuals in a matter of this sort.

INDIAN AUXILIARY FORCE

The draft of the Indian Auxiliary Force Bill, which is now published for general information, represents the modifications of the Indian Volunteers Act, which long experience has proved to be desirable. The Volunteer Force was converted during the war into the Indian Defence Force of which the dominant principle was that of universal training for all Europeans. It is, however, recognised that the needs of India in the matter of an adequate Auxiliary Force trained to a reasonable standard of efficiency constitute the chief consideration, and the Secretary of State has now decided that if this consideration demands the adoption of a system of universal training the matter is one for determination by the Indian legislature. In framing the new measure voluntary enrolment has been substituted for obligatory registration.

AMERICA'S CUP

The early promise of a brisk racing breeze for today's race was belied, as the wind diminished to three miles an hour shortly before the start, necessitating its temporary postponement. The course was fifteen miles out and back. The Shamrock had a slight lead at the start, but Resolute headed her after a time, and later increased her advantage to half a mile. The race was now developing into a drifting match but Resolute's lead was increased. When only nine miles had been covered in four-and-a-half hours, the race was called off, as it was clearly impossible to finish in the stipulated time. Resolute was then leading by probably a couple of miles.

The sound of our music



ZARRAR KHUHRO

Music can do a heck of a lot more than soothe the savage breast, and if you don't believe me just ask the Neanderthals. Of course, you can't do that because we — or at least our forebears — effectively out-competed and wiped them out ages ago. And now it emerges that music, or specifically drumming, may have played a part in that great replacement. This debate was sparked by a theory that giant basalt mortars, embedded in the bedrock in ancient human settlements in the Galilee, may not have been used to store

or crush grain but were in fact used as drums for ritual purposes and/or for summoning the tribe.

What does that have to do with out-competing the Neanderthals? It's simple: science has proven that group drumming leads to synchronisation and greater and more effective bonding between members. Think about it: when you're listening to music the guitar chords may elevate you, the lyrics may trigger emotion but it is the drum that literally gets the heart pumping. Now if you start drumming in a group, provided the beats have a steady tempo, in a short amount of time you find that

could be when it comes to achieving military objectives.

Or take religious ceremonies that employ music, singing or chanting: research in Sweden showed that as choir singers sang in unison, their pulses began to speed up and slow down at the same time, in sync with the musical structure of the composition they were singing. Slow chants, which are a near-universal staple of religious intonations, produced the most synchronicity. Again, one can see how this promotes the sense of unity and belonging that we see in religious congregations, from Gregorian chants to Hindu priests chanting 'om', all the way to Sufi zikr and so on.

Rhythm is key: a group of adults were made to listen to rhythmic music, non-rhythmic music and 'white noise' and then were made to perform tasks that required cooperation and coordination. Unsurprisingly, the group that had previously listened to rhythmic music performed best, and it is perhaps in recognition of this that lately corporate trainers have taken to group drumming and singing as a team-building exercise.

All this works because humanity is literally wired for music: just like we have a dedicated part of the brain that recognises and responds to speech, we also have a dedicated neural circuit that is exclusively meant to process music and governs our reactions to it. Going further, studies also show that listening to music and singing together directly impacts neuro-chemicals in the brain that play a role in creating feelings of closeness and connection. And that, believe it or not, can act like an actual painkiller. That's right, the very act of listening to or performing music, whether it be dancing,

singing or drumming etc, leads to the participants having higher pain thresholds due to increased endorphin release in the brain which, when coupled with dopamine, also results in the aforementioned feelings of closeness and connection. No wonder then, that so many people find their workouts to be more effective when they are listening to music.

What's really intriguing is that the size of the group also matters: larger groups produce larger results, when it comes to feelings of closeness and connection, as anyone who has sung along with the band at a concert can likely testify to.

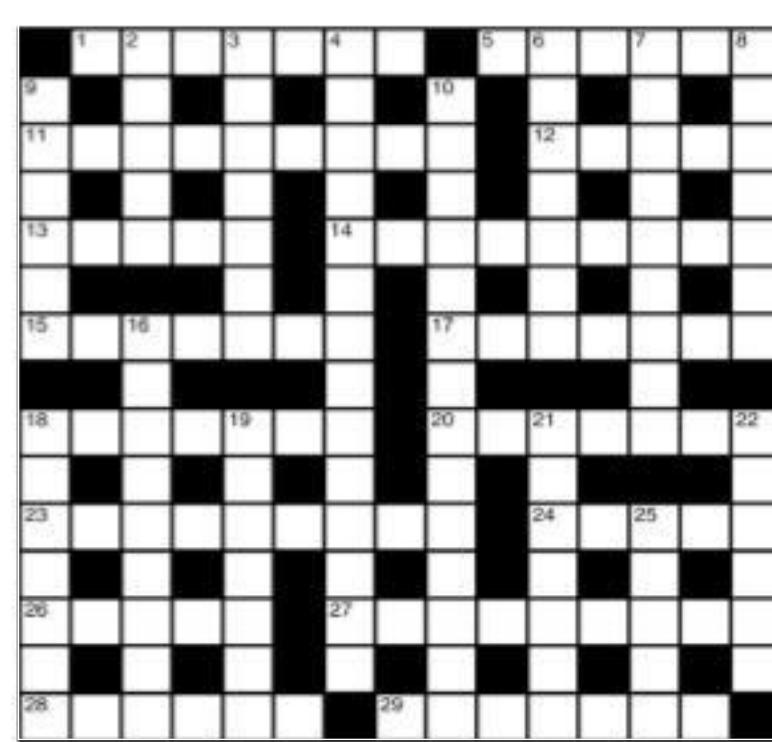
Of course, this isn't to say that smaller and more intimate scenarios are ineffective; quite the contrary. Research published in the journal *Frontiers in Psychology* shows that in music therapy sessions, the brains of the patient and the therapist become synchronised, thus enabling greater understanding and interaction between the two and leading to far more productive therapy sessions.

Of course, leave it to humans to find violent and sometimes downright evil applications for music as well: the CIA notably used musical torture to break the will of detainees at places like Guantanamo Bay and other black sites. This involved the repeated playing of 'culturally unfamiliar' music like heavy metal and country music to detainees at loud volumes, even using specific tracks as 'triggers' to let detainees know that a torture session was about to begin. A discordant note to end on perhaps but then again, this is my composition.

Dawn/ANN.

NO 28088

CROSSWORD

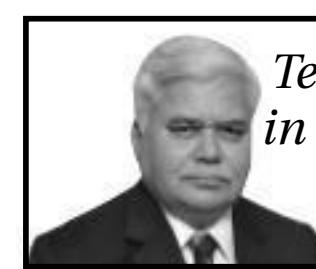


YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

QUARTERS	STREAM
UDA	A E E R I
ARDENTLY	STANDS
I	K O B E S T
LLOCKS	ALABASTER
S	D N T E
LIGHTS	DRESSES
W O A	T P S
HUNTING	PIECES
I R E I C S	
TALISMANS	COUNT
E A P R T O L O	
LINERS	FOUNTAIN
I D A L G T E	
ESSAYS	ESCAPEES

NOTE: Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required. (By arrangement with The Independent, London)

- ACROSS**
- 1 Interior of foreign inn updated all round using playful ambiguity? (7)
 - 5 Crit regularly swallowed by cardinal bird (6)
 - 11 There are many sides to this German and, ultimately, he can go berserk! (9)
 - 12 Mars mission within months (5)
 - 13 Big league auctioneer's covering empty garage (5)
 - 14 Shakier judge takes me over lawyer (9)
 - 15 Spontaneous Aunt travelled by rail wanting independence (7)
 - 17 Weight in questions about extremely logical Victorian physicist (7)
 - 18 Downgrade pound after each broadcast (7)
 - 20 In 50/50, is tie break oddly strict? (7)
 - 23 Chap on air excited about old ruler (9)
 - 24 Perhaps house or garage? (5)
 - 26 Addresses part of macho message (5)
 - 27 Reading, with fringes of Southcote first choice (9)
 - 28 Housing row show (6)
 - 29 Bit of rubble in tradesman's waste (7)
 - DOWN
 - 2/16 It describes a lot – somehow her mum heard ten (5,3,6)
 - 3 Can rule out sort of energy (7)
 - 4 And eighty able minds knew LSD use without limits leads to vision impairment (5,9)
 - 6 Charity is gathered here, releasing lambs and bull (4,3)
 - 7 Hearing without advanced sort of headphones – this sort of filtering improves clarity (9)
 - 8 Bond's tribly covers hole in head (7)
 - 9 Hideous new build generates capital ... (6)
 - 10 ... between very small bits about nice rural motel (14)
 - 16 See 2
 - 18 Carbon monoxide starts to poison some households by old power station (3,4)
 - 19 Admired quiet road containing excellent semi – ignoring motorway (7)
 - 21 Submissive American thanks flesh eating maniac at last (4,3)
 - 22 Brilliant Lucy's cut short – essential part of presenting team initially (6)
 - 25 Series sounds delightful (5)



Telecom has bright future, have full faith
in professionalism of telecom operators

R S SHARMA
OUTGOING TRAI CHAIRMAN

THUMBNAILS

Sugar export: The government has given additional three months' time till December to millers to undertake mandatory export of their sugar quota allocated for this year, a senior food ministry official said on Monday. For the 2019-20 marketing year ending September, the government has allowed export of 6 million tons of sugar under the quota.

PTI

Healthium Medtech collaboration: Healthium Group, a global leader in medical devices, collaborated with over 150 hospitals and nursing homes to support safety for patients and healthcare practitioners through a 'safe OPDs and safe surgeries' campaign by educating on best practices, distributing educational material for patients and tools, checklists and training material for staff and surgeons. "Vocal for local is a great initiative in India and with the government support, we will grow our business to double and will provide employment from the present 2700 employees to 10,000 employees in the next few years in India," said Healthium group CEO Anish Bafna. SNS

RBI defers MPC meet, new dates likely soon

The meeting was scheduled to take place during 29, 30 Sept and 1 Oct

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 28 SEPTEMBER

The Reserve Bank of India today postponed the meeting of the monetary policy committee (MPC), the all-important interest rate-setting panel, over a possible lack of quorum as the appointment of independent members is delayed.

The Reserve Bank in a Press release said that the MPC meeting, which was to begin for three days beginning Tuesday for a bi-monthly monetary policy review, has been rescheduled and new dates will be announced shortly.

"The meeting of the monetary policy committee (MPC) during 29, 30 September and 1 October 2020 is being rescheduled. The dates of the MPC's meeting will be announced shortly," the RBI said.

The government moved the interest rate-setting role from the RBI Governor to a six-member MPC in 2016. Half of

LACK OF QUORUM

► The RBI on Monday postponed the meeting of the monetary policy committee (MPC), the all-important interest rate-setting panel, over a possible lack of quorum as the appointment of independent members is delayed.

► The four-year terms of three external members of MPC ended last month and they are yet to be replaced by the government.

► Rules require at least

the panel, headed by the RBI Governor, is made up of external independent members.

The four-year terms of three external members of MPC ended last month and they are yet to be replaced by the government.

Rules require at least four members to be present at the meeting, with at least one being the Governor or his deputy, who is a member of the committee.



four members to be present at the meeting, with at least one being the Governor or his deputy, who is a member of the committee.

It was expected that the MPC would hold interest rates at the upcoming meeting as inflation was still above the comfort zone.

The government in 2016 appointed Chetan Ghate, a professor at Indian Statistical Institute; Pami Dua, director at Delhi School of Economics (DSE); and Ravindra Dholakia, professor at Indian

Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, as independent members of the MPC for four years.

The external members can hold office for a period of four years and are not eligible for re-appointment.

The other ex-officio members of the MPC are Reserve Bank Governor, deputy governor (in-charge of monetary policy) and one RBI officer to be appointed by the central board. The MPC, which must have a quorum of four, cannot meet unless the Central government appoints new independent members.

The government earlier this year constituted a search panel headed by the Cabinet secretary with RBI Governor and economic affairs secretary as members for selecting members of MPC.

The six-member panel, which had its first meeting in October 2016, was given the mandate to maintain annual inflation at 4 per cent until 31 March 2021, with an upper tolerance of 6 per cent and a lower tolerance of 2 per cent.

Financial stocks push equity indices up

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 28 SEPTEMBER

Benchmark equity indices the Sensex and the Nifty surged as much as 1.6 per cent today, lifted by intense buying in financial stocks on hopes of capital support to public sector banks and stimulus measures for the economy.

The BSE Sensex settled 592.97 points or 1.59 per cent higher at 37,981.63 points, while the NSE Nifty surged 177.30 points or 1.60 per cent to 11,227.55 points - the second straight session of rise for the indices.

In the Sensex pack, IndusInd Bank was the top gainer, rising around 8 per cent, followed by Bajaj Finance, Axis Bank, PowerGrid, ONGC, Sun Pharma, ICICI Bank and M&M. On the other hand, Hindustan Unilever, Infosys and Nestle ended in the red.

All sectoral indices ended

with gains, with BSE power, bankex, auto, realty, utilities, finance and metal rallying up to 3.40 per cent. Broader mid-cap and small-cap indices outperformed the benchmark, rising up to 2.68 per cent.

"Key indices ended high as bulls led the charge backed by financials and well supported by auto and pharma. Expectations of a stimulus coupled with capital support to state-run banks fuelled the rally in late afternoon trade," S Ranaganathan, head of research at LKP Securities, said.

Vinod Nair, head of research at Geojit Financial Services, said global cues were also positive following positive industrial profits data from China, setting aside concerns about the increasing virus infections and related impact. Indian markets were also banking on further stimulus and other measures by the government to boost the economy, he said.

Tata, Shapoorji Pallonji break-up that has no winners

RAJA MURTHY
MUMBAI, 28 SEPTEMBER

The Tata and Shapoorji Pallonji groups deciding last week to "part ways" has again confirmed how it takes momentary mistakes to undo decades of work.

As one of the leading construction firms in the country, Shapoorji Pallonji knows better how hard it is to build and so easy to destroy what has been built.

Two iconic corporate names from Mumbai - one globally known and the other little known outside the construction industry - are in the process of breaking up one of the great associations in India's corporate history.

Tata Sons by itself is unique - the only holding company of a corporate behemoth that has charitable trusts as the major stockholder.

The Tata Sons and Shapoorji Pallonji partnership (the latter holding about 18 per cent stake in the former) is also a

shining jewel of the Parsi community's immense contribution to India that is far disproportionate to its minuscule population.

The break-up seems to have happened with Tata Group blocking Shapoorji Pallonji attempts to raise desperately needed funds using as collateral its stake in Tata Sons. Tatas fear that shares can fall into wrong hands.

But friction leading to the break-up between the two benign corporate giants, amid a global economy devastating pandemic, has roots in a fatal decision seven years ago.

Within a year after becoming the sixth chairman of the Tata Group, Cyrus Mistry had asked Tata Group companies in October 2013 to end all business relations with his father's Shapoorji Pallonji (SP) group.

This was ostensibly to avoid perceptions of conflict of interest.

The move resulted in thousands of crores of rupees loss for the SP Group and the ser-

vices of one of the most reputed construction firms in the country for the Tata Group - for no reason except due to the overzealous misreading of corporate ethics when this business equation had started and existed decades before Mistry was born.

More than 50 SP Group companies were said to be impacted by Mistry's decision, even as Shapoorji Pallonji continued owning 18.5 per cent stake in Tata Sons.

Cyrus Mistry's decision has to be ranked as one of the more foolish decisions by a

chieftain of any leading corporate group.

If Mistry had genuine concerns over conflict of interest, he should not have accepted the chairmanship of the Tata Group - instead of making a critical decision that damaged his family company and thousands of others depending on its welfare.

"SP Group has received business worth of Rs 20,000 crore from the Tata's since 1980," a business daily reported four years ago. "Most of the TCS campuses and Tata Motors

factories have been built by the SP Group." Tata Group orders to Shapoorji Pallonji went from Rs 1,125 crore in 2013 to zero in 2016.

Mistry was propelled into Tata Group chairmanship by Ratan Tata before the two had a falling out as mentor and prodigy. Tata was accused of back-seat driving the group after his retirement and undermining and interfering with Mistry's decisions as the new chairman.

Both Ratan Tata and Cyrus Mistry had contributed to damage both the Tata and the Shapoorji Pallonji groups.

Instead of healthy organic growth, Ratan Tata had during his chairmanship gone rampant with an unwise global trophy acquisition. His buying many leading global brands, including Corus and Jaguar Land Rover, has now left group flagship companies Tata Steel and Tata Motors nursing big headaches.

The good Ratan Tata's debatable decisions, includ-

ing making the "world's cheapest car" Tata Nano that predictably flopped - led to pushing a young and relatively inexperienced Mistry to lead India's oldest and one of Asia's leading corporate groups.

Mistakes from false ego can be undone. Between the Tata and Shapoorji Pallonji groups, both more than 150 years old, serve some of the best managerial talents in India. These are two special corporate groups that rank philanthropic work and service to the country higher than mere business profits.

Corporate common sense needs wiser heads to come together, and correct the mistakes made during the past few years and months.

Instead of currently breaking heads on how to buy out the Shapoorji Pallonji stakes in Tata Sons, these wiser heads should work to heal wounds and reunite a beneficial partnership that helps both corporate groups and the country's economy.

PUBLIC SECTOR ROUNDUP

Minister passes projects to improve DJB network

Delhi water minister and chairman Delhi Jal Board (DJB) Satyendar Jain chaired the 153rd board meeting on 24 September and passed several projects aiming to improve the water and sewer network of the DJB.

The board accorded approval to the policy for Operation and Management of water and sewerage networks in entire Delhi (except 3PPP) areas for implementation of 'One Zone - One

Operator' schemes in DJB. DJB aims to provide 24x7 clean drinking water to all residents of Delhi and proper maintenance of sewerage network. Delhi being a large

metropolitan city is divided in 7-8 zones (except areas under PPP projects) as per the feasibility of division of the networks, UGRs command areas and sewerage outfall boundaries and accordingly 7-8 operator contracts may be awarded except for 3 PPP areas. The operators will be appointed for a period of 10 years under 'One Zone - One Operator' schemes.

The board also accorded approval for a simplified pro-

cedure for new connection of water/sewer like only online application will be accepted for new connection in order to make system more simplified and paperless for people who can not apply online can take help of the facility of Mobile Sahayak under door step delivery of public services by calling 1076.

DJB also approved the proposal to install 200 tube-wells in the flood plains of Palla area in a phased manner.

SCOPE enunciates the need for technological disruption in PSEs

Disruption in technology is the future of all industries, accelerating the need for automation of processes in organisations and to reckon the impact of the same, the Standing Conference of Public Enterprises (SCOPE) organised a webinar titled 'Webinar on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Robotic Process Automation (RPA) for Business

Automation' with Deloitte. Priti Ray, partner, Deloitte India; Prasad Godbole, director, Deloitte India; Atul Sobti, DG, SCOPE and Ashutosh Vasant, director, RailTel addressed the participants.

Over 800 participants including senior officials from Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs) attended the webinar through SCOPE's various platforms.

Surender Babbar takes over as PTCUL finance director

Surender Babbar, General Manager (Finance) of Delhi Transco Ltd has joined Power Transmission Corporation of Uttrakhand Ltd (PTCUL), Govt of Uttrakhand as director (Finance).

Babbar is a Chartered Accountant having enrolled as the member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India in 1990. Babbar graduated in Law (LLB) from University of

Delhi in 1994 and Masters in Law (LLM) in 2006 from University of Kurukshetra. He has an experience of 30 years in the fields of contract law, tax laws, electricity laws, tendering processes and contract management, besides being a finance professional. Babbar joined Delhi Transco in 2007 and handled the functions related to electricity tariffs, taxation and contract issues.

Dehradun Airport to get makeover soon

To meet the expected future growth of passenger footfall, AAI's Dehradun Airport is getting upgraded in phases at the project cost of Rs 353 crore. First phase of development work includes construction of domestic terminal building along with utility block, carpark, sewage treatment plant, rainwater harvesting structures and other ancillary structures.

The building has been designed to provide passengers and visitors a sense of place highlighting the culture and heritage of Uttarakhand. The new building will also have eco-friendly sustainable features like

SBI inaugurates new office

SBI chairman Rajnish Kumar inaugurated new office of 'Financial Inclusion & Micro Market (FIM&MM)' on 25 September in New Delhi. The new office is located in the heart of the city, near the Connaught Place. The inauguration ceremony was attended by SBI managing director (FIM&MM) and other senior officials.

GAIL wins Leaders Award

GAIL (India) Limited won the Leaders Award in the Mega Large Business, Process Sector category in the 11th edition of Frost & Sullivan - MEASA and TERI - The Energy and Resources Institute's Sustainability 4.0 Awards 2020.

The award recognises corporates in sustainable development practices that provide a measurable and ver-

ifiable framework for sustainability.

Manoj Jain, C&MD, GAIL said, "We are extremely happy and honoured to have been recognised as Leader in Mega Business Process Sector Category this year by Frost & Sullivan & TERI Award Jury. The award is essentially a result of eco-conscious development GAIL has been pursuing for the past 36 years."

Book launched

One of the well known authors Manbir Kaur unveiled her new book titled 'Get Your Next Promotion' recently. This book will help professionals understand the problems & challenges being faced and helps to overcome them.

"The book discusses inspirational journeys of successful corporate leaders and shares details of the strategies they used to overcome such challenges while progressing through different stages in their professional lives," stated the author.

NBT inaugurates 2nd batch of 3-month online course

The National Book Trust (NBT), India inaugurated the second batch of its three-month long online book publishing course.

The premier batch of the first-ever online 3-month book publishing course by NBT concluded from 26 June to 20 September, with over 60 students. The second batch with

PNB commences 'Jai Jawan Jai Kisan' campaign

India's second-largest public sector bank, Punjab National Bank (PNB) commenced the Phase-3 of its nationwide CSR campaign to create awareness against the menace of Covid-19 pandemic and provide its prevention materials on 25 September. The third phase of the campaign titled 'Jai Jawan Jai Kisan' is to honour the servicemen and farmers

through its rural and semi-urban branches in 662 districts across India. In the third phase, PNB senior officials distributed facemasks and sanitizer kits through its rural and semi-urban branches.



United States will use its diplomatic and military influence in the region to try to ease a volatile dispute between NATO allies Greece and Turkey

US SECRETARY OF STATE MIKE POMPEO
PLEDGING US SUPPORT TO EASE GREECE-TURKEY DISPUTE

The Statesman

NEW DELHI TUESDAY 29 SEPTEMBER 2020

09

South China Sea: China holds drills amid new tensions

Beijing said those were intended as a warning to the self-governing island that China claims as its own territory

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BEIJING, 28 SEPTEMBER

A look at developments in the South China Sea, where China is pitted against smaller neighbours in multiple territorial disputes over islands, coral reefs and lagoons.

The waters are a major commercial shipping route and are rich in fish and possible oil and gas reserves.

China is holding new military exercises in the South China Sea amid an uptick in tensions between the Asian giant and its Southeast Asian neighbours and the U.S.

The Maritime Safety

Administration issued a pair of announcements blocking offseas around the area of the exercises running Sunday through Monday but gave no additional details.

China holds regular drills in the area and there was no immediate indication they had been prompted by recent events. However, they follow a series of sorties earlier this month by Chinese warplanes into Taiwan's airspace at the northern end of the South China Sea.

Beijing said those were intended as a warning to the self-governing island that China claims as its own territory to be brought under its

control by force if deemed necessary.

Earlier this month, an Indonesian patrol ship confronted a Chinese coast guard vessel that spent almost three days in waters where Indonesia claims economic rights and are near the southernmost part of China's disputed South China Sea claims.

The Philippines, Malaysia and Vietnam have also engaged in push-back against Chinese claims and actions in the area, while progress in talks between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and China over the South China Sea appear at a standstill.

The U.S. State Department

is accusing China of going back on its word to not militarise the Spratly Islands, calling Beijing's outposts in the area platforms of coercion.

Spokesperson Morgan Ortagus recalled Chinese leader Xi Jinping's statement during a White House visit in 2015 that China does not intend to pursue militarisation of the Spratly Islands, and that China's outposts would not target or impact any country.

China has instead pursued a reckless and provocative militarisation of those disputed outposts, Ortagus said in a statement issued Sunday.

Ortagus cited China's

deployment of anti-ship cruise missiles, expanded surveillance capabilities, and the construction of runways and hangars for fighter jets.

The Spratlys are occupied by multiple countries, making them the most hotly contested of the South China Sea's island groups.

China uses these militarised outposts as platforms of coercion to assert control over waters to which Beijing has no lawful maritime claim, Ortagus said.

They serve as staging grounds for the hundreds of maritime militia vessels and China Coast Guard ships that regularly harass civilian craft

and impede legitimate law enforcement activities, offshore fishing, and hydrocarbon development by neighbouring states.

China denies militarising the region, saying the island developments are intended to increase maritime safety as well as assert Chinese territorial claims.

It accuses the U.S. of militarising the area by sailing its ships nearby Chinese outposts in freedom of navigation operations and through other actions.

Meanwhile, the Philippine President received rare praise from critics Wednesday for invoking before the United

Nations a 2016 arbitration ruling that invalidated China's vast territorial claims in the South China Sea.

President Rodrigo Duterte made one of his strongest defenses of the Philippine victory in the arbitration case in his first address before the annual U.N. General Assembly. China dismissed the conclusions of the Hague Tribunal and has long refused to bring the issue to any international arena.

Duterte, who has nurtured close ties with China since taking office in mid-2016, has long been criticised for refusing to immediately and forcefully demand Chinese compliance with the ruling. It found China's claims on virtually the entire South China Sea on historical grounds inconsistent with international maritime law.

The award is now part of international law, beyond compromise and beyond the reach of passing governments to dilute, diminish or abandon, Duterte said, without naming China. We firmly reject attempts to undermine it. Chinese officials did not immediately issue a reaction.

Albert del Rosario, a former Philippine foreign secretary who brought the disputes with China to international arbitration, said he was heartened by Duterte's move.

South Korea's Moon apologises over handling of killing by North

ASSOCIATED PRESS
SEOUL, 28 SEPTEMBER

South Korean President Moon Jae-in apologised for the first time on Monday for the death of a man who was shot by North Korean troops last week, saying his government failed in its responsibility to safeguard a citizen.

The shooting triggered outrage and criticism that Seoul apparently wasted hours to rescue the South Korean official who was found adrift in North Korean waters before his death last Tuesday.

While the shooting drew a rare apology from North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, the North has largely passed the blame to the man who was killed, saying that he refused to answer questions and attempted to flee before North Korean troops fired at him.

North Korea has suspended virtually all inter-Korean cooperation and diplomacy amid a stalemate in larger nuclear negotiations.

sels across their disputed western maritime border in search of the man's remains, warning that the alleged intrusion could escalate tensions. South Korea's military and coast guard insist they have been searching only in waters south of the boundary.

In a meeting with senior aides, Moon offered his deep condolences to grieving family members and also apologised to the public over their shock and fury, saying that the government without any excuses is responsible for protecting the safety of its citizens. Moon also

said Kim's apology showed he was eager to prevent a breakdown in bilateral relations over the incident and called for the North to resume dialogue and reconnect military communication channels that it cut off in June.

South Korea's Defense Ministry said it was difficult to establish communication with North Korea because of the severed channels and that officials needed more time to analyze intelligence to determine what the North would do to the man.

On Sunday, North Korea accused the South of sending ves-

tions with the Trump administration, which have faltered over disagreements in exchanging sanctions relief and disarmament.

South Korea has proposed a joint investigation with the North to investigate the shooting. Our hope is that this tragic incident doesn't just end as a (tragic) incident and instead creates room for dialogue and cooperation, becoming an opportunity to develop South-North relations, Moon said.

Critics, including conservative lawmakers, have accused Moon's government of inaction after military officials revealed the man was spotted in North Korean waters about six hours before he was killed.

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GUARD OF HONOUR



French President Emmanuel Macron (C) and Lithuania's President Gitanas Nausėda (L) inspect an honor guard during a welcoming ceremony at the Presidential Palace in Vilnius, Lithuania on Monday.

Pompeo pledges for US support to ease Greece-Turkey dispute

ASSOCIATED PRESS
THESSALONIKI (GREECE),
28 SEPTEMBER

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said Monday the United States will use its diplomatic and military influence in the region to try to ease a volatile dispute between NATO allies Greece and Turkey over energy rights in the eastern Mediterranean.

Pompeo began a five-day regional tour Monday in the northern Greek city of Thessaloniki, days after Greece and Turkey committed to restarting a diplomatic dialogue on the dispute that triggered a dangerous military conflict in the disputed maritime area over the summer.

The United States and Greece shared views on the eastern Mediterranean and reaffirmed their belief that maritime delimitation issues should be resolved peacefully, the two countries said in a joint statement after Pompeo met with Greek Foreign Minister Nikos Dendias.

The two countries, it said, reiterated their dedication to enhancing their close cooperation as NATO allies, using all appropriate means at their disposal, in order to safeguard stability and security in the wider region.

Relations between Greece and neighboring Turkey deteriorated sharply this year over disputed maritime boundaries and exploration rights in the eastern Mediterranean.

Turkey sent a research vessel, accompanied by warships, to prospect for energy resources in an area Greece claims is on its own continental shelf and where it claims

exclusive economic rights. Athens sent warships of its own to the area. European Union members later this week are to discuss imposing sanctions on Turkey for its actions.

Pompeo had discussed the situation in the eastern Mediterranean late Sunday with NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg as he headed to Greece.

Pompeo's regional tour will also include Italy, the Vatican, and Croatia.

Later Monday, he will depart to the Greek island of Crete where he is scheduled to meet with Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis and visit a U.S. naval base at Souda Bay.

Last October, Pompeo visited Athens and signed a revised defense cooperation agreement with Greece that provided for increasing joint U.S.-Greece and NATO activity at three locations in Greece as well as infrastructure and other improvements at Souda Bay. Amid the tension with Turkey, Greece has announced major arms purchases, including fighter jets from France, as well as warships, helicopters, and weapons systems.

Pompeo is the first U.S. Secretary of State to visit Greece's second-largest city of Thessaloniki. Security was tight in the port city, with the venue of Pompeo's meeting with Dendias changing from the originally planned location, a local ministry, to a hotel for security reasons, authorities said. A protest against his visit was planned for Monday evening.

During his visit to Thessaloniki, Pompeo is to sign a bilateral science and technology agreement in Greece.

Germany launches new search for nuclear waste storage site

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BERLIN, 28 SEPTEMBER

Germany has launched a new search for a site to store its most radioactive nuclear waste, eliminating a disputed site at a former salt mine that was earmarked decades ago and has long been a focus of protests.

A report issued Monday by Germany's waste management organisation, or BGE, identified 90 areas covering 54 per cent of the country's surface area as potentially geologically suited for a nuclear storage site. It kicked off what is bound to be a politically

fraught process, with a final decision slated for 2031.

The aim is to start using the selected site in 2050.

Following the Fukushima nuclear disaster in Japan nine years ago, Germany decided to phase out its own nuclear power generation by the end of 2022. But the question of where to put the waste already generated has remained unresolved.

Three years ago, parliament cleared the way for a science-based search for a site. Officials are seeking a safe home for a million years for some 1,900 containers of waste, which make up only

(File photo) A container with nuclear waste is loaded from a train onto a truck in Dannenberge, near Gorleben, northern Germany.

per cent of Germany's total nuclear waste but 99 per cent of its radioactivity, BGE chair-

man Stefan Stuett said. Germany's geology is so favourable, from north to south and east to west, that we can say with conviction that it will be possible to find the one site with the best possible security for the final storage of highly radioactive waste, Stuett added.

One site that won't be considered is the one that was earmarked by West German authorities in the 1970s a former salt mine at Gorleben, in a sparsely populated area then located in an isolated corner of the country, close to the border with communist East Germany.

Locals never accepted that decision and Gorleben became a focus for Germany's strong

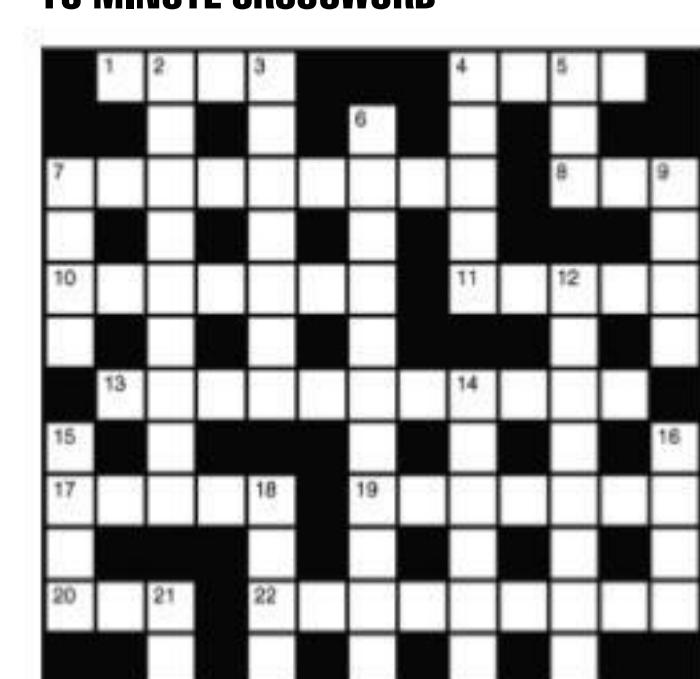
anti-nuclear movement. Occasional shipments of reprocessed waste to a warehouse near the salt mine turned into huge security operations with days-long cat-and-mouse games between police and protesters, who sought to block rail tracks and roads.

BGE official Steffen Kanitz said Gorleben was found to have a favorable overall geological situation, in part because of a potential risk of erosion.

It appears unlikely that local politicians will welcome any newly selected site with open arms.

LEISURE

10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Cast off (4)
- 4 Christmas period (4)
- 7 Disappointment (4,5)
- 8 Joke (Informal) (3)
- 10 Deliberately contrived (7)
- 11 Propose (5)
- 13 Hassle (11)
- 17 Military body (5)
- 19 Genuine (7)
- 20 Society girl (3)
- 22 Life story (9)
- 23 Make eyes at (4)
- 24 Tardy (4)

DOWN

- 2 Fast food item (9)
- 3 Collection of papers (7)
- 4 Aggressive youth (Slang) (5)
- 5 Limb (3)
- 6 Section (11)
- 7 Money (Slang) (4)
- 9 Microorganism (4)
- 12 Plant container (9)
- 14 Threadlike leaf (7)
- 15 Soothing (4)
- 16 Box (4)
- 18 Fur (5)
- 21 Hidden microphone (Informal) (3)

By arrangement with The Independent
Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required

BEETLE BAILEY/Mort Walker



GREG + MORT WALKER

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RED EYE/Bill Yates & Mel Casson

CORNMEAL STEW FOR DINNER AGAIN?

NO...TONIGHT WE'RE HAVING BEAR STEAKS!

GR-R-R-R

CORNMEAL STEW

DADDY DAZE/John Kovaleski

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• ISBT (General Inquiry): 23868836, 23865181

• Deen Dayal Upadhyay 29958747

• Deepak Ray 25496320, 25494403

• Guru Tegh Bahadur 2317473, 23325520

FLIGHT INQUIRY

• AIR INDIA Flight Inquiry and Reservation 18001801407

• INDIGO AIRLINES New Delhi City Office 0910353838, 18001803838, Reservation 41528181

• Air Canada Flight Inquiry and Reservation 23462262 (City)

• Air France Flight Inquiry and Reservation 43513186, Indigo Airlines Air-

port 011-25671580; Terminal I 25671576, Palam Road 25671579, 18001803838

• JET AIRWAYS Flight Inquiry and Reservation 39841111

• EMIRATES Flight Inquiry and Reservation 3373377

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Triple Word Score

Triple Word Score

Triple Letter Triple Word Score



Biden's son Hunter made money from Russia, China.

US PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP

WEATHER

CITY	MAX(°C)	MIN(°C)
SINGAPORE	30	26 R
HONG KONG	31	25 H
TOKYO	24	16 R
LONDON	18	9 H
DUBAI	38	28 S
SAN FRANCISCO	24	13 H
NEW YORK	24	21 R
MOSCOW	17	8 H

S=sunny, CL=clear, H=hazy, R=rainy...

THUMBNAILS



A man walks past messages pasted inside the windows of the Oxford Court student accommodation at Manchester Metropolitan University, in Manchester, north-west England on Monday. AFP

Russia reports over 8,000 new cases: Russian health officials have reported over 8,000 new Covid cases for the first time since mid-June. The 8,135 new confirmed cases brought the country's total to nearly 1.16 million, the fourth largest caseload in the world. Almost 27 per cent of Monday's new cases 2,217 were registered in Moscow. AP

TENDER

e-Tenders are hereby invited from the bona fide contractors by the Block Development Officer, Rajganj Development Block, Rajganj, Jalpaiguri, under MGNREGA Fund for e-NITWBPS / MGNREGA / 03 / EO / RAJ / 2020-2021, Memo No.: 2388 / 1(1) / Raj Date: 28-09-2020 Last date of submission bids: 06-10-2020. Other details can be seen from the office Notice Board of the office of the undersigned in any working day and working hours also as well as in www.wbtenders.gov.in

Norbhu Chewang Sherpa
W.B.C.S. (Exe.)
Block Development Officer & Programme Officer (MGNREGA)
Rajganj Block, Rajganj, Jalpaiguri

NOTICE
Inhabitants of all family within Krishnanagar Municipality have healthy individual household latrine. No. family members and incoming outsiders defecate in the open area. Krishnanagar Municipality is open defecation free Municipality. Keep Krishnanagar Municipality neat and clean.

Sd/- Chairman
Board of Administrators Krishnanagar Municipality

EAST DELHI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER CENTRAL STORE B-2 Block, Near 212 Bus Terminal, Nand Nagari, Delhi -110093
NOTICE INVITING TENDER

NIT No. EE(Central Store)/TC/2020-21/18 Dated : 25.09.2020 Executive Engineer (Central Store) EDMC on behalf of Commissioner, EDMC invites only Online open tenders from reputed agencies/firms/ Agencies (Registered and Un-Registered firms or agencies both are eligible) for the following work:

S.N. : 1: Name of Work : Selection of Consultant to work as "PROJECT CONSULTANT" under the scope of Consultancy and Monitoring of PPP project for door-to-door collection & transportation of MSW in East Delhi Municipal Corporation area; Head of A/c : XL-III-D-IV; Tender Amt. : Item Rate: Bid Document Fee : Rs. 25,000/-; Time of Completion : 9 Years; Tender No. : 319246.

Detailed NIT can be seen from the following Website or from the office of the undersigned:

<http://mcdtenders.com>, <https://mcdonline.nic.in/>
R.O. No. 52/DPI/East/2020-21 Executive Engineer (Central Store/EDMC)
EDMC's Citizens Helpline No. : 155303

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Email- con@ner.railnet.gov.in Website www.ner.indianrailways.gov.in Fax No. 0551-2200721

TENDER NOTICE No. 24 Date 28.09.2020

Invitation of Tenders through e-Procurement system

Principal Chief Material Manager, North Eastern Railway, Gorakhpur, and on behalf of The President of India, invites tenders through e-procurement system for the supply of the following items. Complete description of the item and other condition are available on website www.ireps.gov.in

Item No.	Tender Number	Due On	Brief Description of Stores	Reserved to be procured from	Qty. Required	Earnest Money (Rs.)
1	26200240	21.10.2020	Vinyl coated upholstery/Fabric etc.	ICF	48060 Mr.	124880/-
2	22200215	22.10.2020	Axle Box Housing etc.	ICF	2728 Nos.	573800/-
3	302010690	22.10.2020	110 V DC Mobile phone charge etc	ICF	18120 Nos.	99160/-
4	22200745	23.11.2020	Hanger for Bogie etc.	ICF	17813 Nos.	446890/-
5	29201028	26.10.2020	Wiring set complete etc.	—	8335 Set.	96480/-
6	29201022	26.10.2020	Set of Key Box Assembly etc.	—	7153 Set.	76630/-
7	29201023	26.10.2020	Set of Fasteners etc.	—	7835 Set.	56990/-
8	22201090	27.10.2020	Outer Primary Spring etc.	RDSO	798 Nos.	129760/-
9	22191103	27.10.2020	Primary Spring (Outer) etc.	RDSO	270 Nos.	53420/-
10	22201653	27.10.2020	Feeder Junction Box etc.	ICF, RCF	50 Nos.	156940/-
11	22201083	28.10.2020	Primary Spring Inner etc.	RDSO	949 Nos.	73500/-
12	22200682	28.10.2020	Knuckle for Transition etc.	RDSO	589 Nos.	76790/-

CPO/R/S-28 Principal Chief Materials Manager, Gorakhpur
About any passenger amenity complaint SMS on Mob. No.: 09794845955
Never travel on roof and foot boards

Trump-Biden to face off in first 2020 presidential debate on 29 Sep

Trump & Biden will respond to questions on their track record, economy, etc in the face-off

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

WASHINGTON, 28 SEPTEMBER

Republican incumbent President Donald Trump and his Democratic challenger Joe Biden are all set to share the stage for the first time on Tuesday night when they will be going head-to-head in the first of the three presidential debates.

Dubbed as the "Super Bowl of American Democracy", Trump, 74, and Biden, 77, would respond to questions on their track record, the Supreme Court, economy, race and violence in cities and integrity of the elections at the Case Western Reserve University and Cleveland Clinic in Cleveland, Ohio—a key battleground state.

Popular Fox news anchor Chris Wallace would moderate the first debate, which would start at 9 pm EST (6:30 a.m. IST). Steve Scully from C-SPAN Networks and Kristen Welker from NBC News would moderate the other two presidential debates on 15 October in Miami (Florida) and 22 October in Nashville (Tennessee), respectively.

Vice President Mike Pence, 61, and Democratic vice-presidential candidate Kamala Harris, 55, will participate in the only vice-presidential debate, to be hosted by USA Today journalist Susan Page, in Salt Lake City in Utah on 7 October.

All the four debates are being organised by the Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD). The debates would be of 90 minutes duration.

In August, the CPD had turned down a request of the Trump campaign for a presidential debate in early September.

Trump told reporters on Sunday that former New Jersey governor Chris Christie and former New York mayor Rudy Giuliani were helping him prepare for the debates. The two were seated in the press briefing room along with the White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany during the news conference by the president.

Earlier in the day, Trump in a tweet demanded that Biden undergo a drug test before the debate.

I will be strongly demand-

ing a Drug Test of Sleepy Joe Biden prior to, or after, the Debate on Tuesday night. Naturally, I will agree to take one also. His Debate performances have been record setting UNEVEN, to put it mildly. Only drugs could have caused this discrepancy?" he tweeted.

Responding to a question at the news conference, Trump reiterated his demand that Biden should go for a drug test before the debate. He said he will also do the same.

"I'm willing to take a drug test. I think he should too because he's had a very uneven... You know, what I'm saying. If you look at some of those debates, I said there's no way he could continue. He can't continue," Trump said.

Biden is yet to respond to the president's tweet.

Meanwhile, ahead of the debates, over 70 members of the US Congress wrote to the CPD to include climate change as one of the topics.

The first ever general elections presidential debates were held on September 26, 1960 at the CBS studios in Chicago between the then-senator John F Kennedy and

then-vice president Richard Nixon. The debate that was televised changed the nature of American politics and presidential elections for all times to come. Kennedy and Nixon debated four times that year. Kennedy went on to win the 1960 elections.

In 1987, the non-partisan and non-profit CPD was established to "ensure for the benefit of the American electorate the general election debates between or among the leading candidates for the officers of president and vice president of the United States or a permanent part of the electoral process"

The CPD does not receive any funding from the government or any political party or political action committee or candidate. It has sponsored and produced all general election presidential debates since 1988.

Frank Fahrenkopf, Co-Chair of the CPD, told reporters at the National Press Club on Sunday that all precautions have been taken in view of the coronavirus pandemic.

"There's no clapping, there's no whistling and so forth, he said. Between 50

and 150 million people are expected to watch the televised debates.

According to Kenneth Wollack, co-chair of CPD, as important as the presidential debate has been in the US, debates have even a greater impact overseas -- in new and emerging democracies, in particular, in countries in post-conflict political environments. Debates have played a very important role in the transition process in these countries for three reasons, Wollack said.

Number one, it has levelled the playing field in countries where there has been a dominant political party. Secondly, it helps focus the candidates on a policy, public policy issues rather than personalities. And three, it has lowered the campaign rhetoric often at political rallies because citizens see the two or more major candidates vying for office shaking hands, Wollack said.

The Commission, in cooperation with the National Democratic Institute, have helped organise more than 400 debates in 45 countries around the world.

"totally fake news".

US presidents are not required by law to release details of their personal finances, but every one since Richard Nixon has done so. Trump, who has fiercely guarded his tax filings, is the only president in modern times not to make them public.

He has, in fact, fielded court challenges against those seeking access to his returns, including the US House, which is suing for access to Trump's tax returns as part of congressional oversight.

According to the NYU investigative report, Trump has long fought to keep private a story fundamentally different from the one he has sold to the American public.

"His reports to the IRS (Internal Revenue Service) portray a businessman who takes in hundreds of millions of dollars a year yet racks up chronic losses that he aggressively employs to avoid paying taxes. Now, with his financial challenges mounting, the records show that he depends more and more on making money from businesses that put him in potential and often direct conflict of interest with his job as president," it said.

Trump paid just \$750 in US income taxes in 2016, 2017: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

WASHINGTON, 28 SEPTEMBER

Donald Trump paid just USD 750 in federal income taxes in the year he was elected US president and also in his first year in the White House, according to a media report, which also said that he or his companies paid USD 1,45,400 taxes in India in 2017.

Trump entered the 2016 presidential race as a Republican and was elected in a surprise victory over Democrat nominee Hillary Clinton.

Donald Trump paid USD 750 in federal income taxes the year he won the presidency. In his first year in the White House, he paid another USD 750," the New York Times reported on Sunday, citing tax return data extending over 20 years. The report came just days before Trump's first presidential debate with Democratic rival Joe Biden on Tuesday and weeks before the 3 November election.

Trump paid no income taxes at all in 10 of the previous 15 years largely because he reported losing much more money than he made, the report said.

The US president immediately dismissed the report as

are perceived as the aggressors; they are not. Biden is committed to change these systems, so we can provide survivors of bullying with the support that they need," Singh said.

In a joint statement, Josh Dickson, the National Faith Engagement Director for the Biden campaign, and Seema Sadanand, a Policy Advisor for the campaign, said Biden

"A lot of the systems in place prevent victims of bullying from being heard and validated. Often these victims

Biden campaign launches initiative to woo Sikhs in US

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

WASHINGTON, 28 SEPTEMBER

Sikh-Americans experience bullying at rates twice the national average and have reported a spike in these encounters since 2017, the campaign said in a press release on Sunday. "The Biden campaign plans to highlight the specific plans and policies that Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden has outlined in his platform to address the unique challenges that the Sikh American community faces with regards to racism, xenophobia and discrimination," it said.

Kiran Kaur Gill, a prominent

civil rights activist and member of the Sikh American National Leadership Council, alleged that President Donald Trump has not only turned a blind eye to bullying and discrimination, but has also encouraged it. The Sikh American National Leadership Council is an advisory council to the Sikh Americans for Biden.

With Biden as the US president, Sikh-Americans can feel safer in schools and on the streets, Gill said in a statement. "(Former) vice presi-

dent Biden has a track record of taking stances against hate, discrimination and bullying, and his leadership on these issues matter to our community," she said.

The Biden campaign has said that if voted to power, the Biden administration would allocate additional federal funding for anti-bullying initiatives. According to civil rights activist Valarie Kaur, "This election is unlike any other. Everything our Sikh ancestors fought for a world of dignity, equality,

and justice is at stake."

"A Biden presidency would give us a chance to save our democracy, heal the earth, and begin to birth a world where we see no stranger". That's why I am proud to join Sikhs for Biden and do everything in power to get out the vote. Our lives depend on it," she said in a statement issued by the South Asians for Biden on Sunday.

Japjee Singh, an anti-bullying advocate, detailed the horrific bullying that took place at his high school in Georgia. In

2013, when he was 17-year-old, Singh was repeatedly targeted with verbal and physical harassment because of his Sikh faith. He was called a "terrorist" and fellow students used to target him for wearing turban. Singh's bullying case led to the first US Department of Justice school bullying settlement on behalf of a Sikh student.

"A lot of the systems in place prevent victims of bullying from being heard and validated. Often these victims

President Donald Trump is fighting to fill a Supreme Court vacancy, howling with unsubstant

Redefining education



Management institutions are emphasising on revisiting and redesigning content to transform them into self-learning modules

JITENDRA KUMAR MISHRA

The outbreak of Covid-19 brought almost everything to a halt and management institutes were no exception to it. While the government imposed complete lockdown and along with everything else academic institutions were also shut, students had to go home. The immediate challenge before management institutions at that time was how to complete the academic session and to address this challenge they were quick enough to shift to online classes. Despite the teething

trouble faced during the initial phase of the transition, these institutes could quickly come to terms with the new way of education.

As online classes continued, students started reporting disturbance and distraction in their learning process due to poor network, inadequate internet speed, connectivity, and compatibility of their systems among other challenges. Further, management education being a practice of helping students to learn skills, attitudes and values in ongoing online education remain a challenge.

Management institutions are

exploring various options to enhance the quality of learning and students' development. The primary requirement at this front is developing technological capabilities both in terms of improving technological infrastructure and facilities, and necessary skills and proficiency. On one hand, institutions are increasingly acquiring the necessary hardware and software and facilitating for intense technological training to members of faculty and staff on the other. At the next level emphasis is on revisiting and redesigning the content to make it more a kind of self-learning material. Considering the constraint of in-person interaction, the quality of the content has become critical in determining the effectiveness of learning.

To ensure the development of necessary skills and attitude in students, developing online simulations and digital games for the various learning modules may be the closest alter-

native for the present mode of learning. The bigger institutions may invest in designing and developing such simulations and share it with other smaller institutions at a reasonable price. These institutes may also choose to collaborate with different technology companies, EduTech companies, or universities in India and abroad for access to the content, simulations, and games for addressing the learning needs of their students. The technological solutions are required to facilitate collaboration among students for joint projects, and discussions as well. The alternatives to the existing challenge of lack of internet access, poor connectivity, and low speed also need to be explored to ensure effectiveness and equity in learning of students across the economic strata and geography.

Finally, the psychological and mental well-being of the learners is the most important concern in the entire

online learning process. The isolation, social distancing, and high screen time can have several adverse consequences to mental health and psychological well-being. The technological transformation that has swept the functioning of most organisations during the pandemic is going to stay for a much longer time. The accelerated innovation in technology and its increasing adoption in different spheres of life and organisation are likely to redefine the ways of life and work. The issues of psychological and mental well-being thus need to be addressed in a larger context of the quality of work and life. It is vital that in the new setting wherein technology has become a driving force in the functioning of organisations including academics, the screen time for teaching-learning and protocol for the work is defined.

The writer is director, Jaipuria School of Business, Ghaziabad

WEARING MANY HATS

Besides imparting knowledge, teachers need to take on several roles to address the current needs of learners

RISHABH KHANNA

In his book *Future Shock* (1970), Alvin Toffler wrote, "By instructing students how to learn, unlearn and relearn, a powerful new dimension can be added to education. Tomorrow's illiterate will not be the man who can't read; he will be the man who has not learned how to learn."

The tomorrow he referred to in 1970 is now. The question that arises today is what is it that we need to unlearn and what is it that we need to relearn? Well, the answer is pretty simple. We need to learn the skills that can help us meet the current needs of our learners.

Covid-19 has brought forth these needs, quite clearly. Learners today cannot be taught the way they were taught in the past. Earlier, students grew up in an information-scarce society. The most pressing need for them was access to information and that is what defined the role of a teacher then. A teacher was somebody who collected and shared the collected information. This is something that teachers can unlearn, given the demands today.

The 21st century learners live in an information-abundant society. In fact, it is not only abundant, it is overflowing. More so, this has seen new heights after the pandemic. And not all information is correct. The most pressing need for today's learners is to be able to access the right information. So, teachers should be able to curate this correct information for them. Covid-19 has brought us to the crossroads, where we need to decide the roles we want to take on.

Teachers, to be successful in class now, must adorn many hats; take on many roles that address the current

needs of the learners.

The most significant role of all is that of an adapter. A teacher needs to adapt to the changing needs of content, pedagogy as well as technology.

They must equip learners with enough resources to enable learning beyond the classroom. That's why education mustn't be restricted, it should be all pervasive. Now, this is true for teachers as well. In order to teach new skills, they must learn them first. So, another role that a teacher plays today is that of a lifelong learner. This will enable them to quickly grasp the new technology-based tools to teach during the Covid-19 situation.

Because of the pandemic, face to face interaction of teachers with students has come to a complete halt. Hence, more than an instructor, a teacher now needs to become a facilitator. He/she should be able to lead students to the intended topic to deduce learning. Technology can make this extremely easy for educators. They must guide students rather than directing them to learn.

Technology has become an inseparable part of the education system due to Covid-19. It positively influences the performance of educators by offering endless opportunities. One of these includes collaboration with various stakeholders involved in the education sector. Hence a teacher today must also take on the role of a collaborator. We can use technology to remain connected not only with students, their parents, colleagues, policy makers, but also with teachers and educators across the world. This allows not only to foster exchange of information but also to learn about the latest and best pedagogical practices.

Another challenge that teachers faced pre-pandemic was with maintaining student learning data and records. Again, thanks to forced implementation of technology - a situation facilitated by Covid-19 - most of the data can be stored on the cloud and a teacher can now analyse it, with just a few clicks. Teachers must learn how to gather, track and analyse all this data and then use it to enhance learning. So, the role of a data expert cannot be ignored as well.



It is needless to say that post Covid-19 we'll be witnessing a different world altogether; one with a new set of roles and rules. For teachers, it would mean acquiring new skill-sets

that would define the new education systems. Let's get ready to embrace the new world.

The writer is founder, Suraasa

PLUS POINTS

Ingenious innovation



Karan Soin – a 17-year-old enterprising student of Shri Ram School, Gurugram won the second prize (the top prize this year) at the prestigious CSIR Innovation Award for School Children-2020, for his mobile app *Sudhaar*. The app will provide farmers easy access to small loans and is aimed at improving (*sudhaar*) rural lives through loans (*udhaar*) or.

This app helps people in rural area to seek small loans (microfinance from 20,000 to 50,000 INR) access to multiple reputable Microfinance Institutions (MFIs) in their vicinity so they can choose the most suitable lender. It will make the microfinance ecosystem become more equitable, since anyone with a smart phone in any village can access MFIs, irrespective of their socio-economic status.

Soin was among 14 students who won prizes for their innovations from states across India. No first prize was awarded at the event.

Golden opportunity



Vidyamandir Classes (VMC) – an institute for IITJEE and NEET preparation announced the launch of Vidyamandir Intellect Quest (VIQ) recently. The exam will be conducted on 24 October and 1 November through proctored online medium for admissions in classes starting from April 2021. Students have the option of selecting any of the two dates as convenient. In lieu of the pandemic, they will get to study at last year's fee. Upon qualifying, students can register for the course at Rs 9,999. With VIQ, Vidyamandir has also launched Prodigy programme, which caters to pre-foundation stage students at sixth to eighth standard. These students will get to build their acumen for reaching their fullest potential.

Speaking on this occasion, Brij Mohan, co-founder said, "We are delighted to announce the launch of VIQ – biggest admission and scholarship test by VMC, which is going to provide a huge opportunity to the IITJEE and NEET aspirants. It is a great opportunity for students to prepare under the guidance of industry icons and superb teachers from IITs, IIITs and premier colleges." For details visit: www.vidyamandir.com

Unique initiative



Jagran Lakecity University (JLU) Bhopal would be launching its annual academic event "International Igniting Minds Lecture Series 2020" recently. This year, the university has taken the event to a global level by inviting more than 30 international faculties from 12 countries like the USA, UK, Greece, Italy, Germany, Australia, Russia, to name a few. The event has organised especially for the new batch that has joined for the present academic year.

With a vision to aid international collaboration and exposure for its students, the month-long initiative will be driven by renowned faculties with expertise across law, media, management, hospitality, and public policy in line with the programmes offered at the university.

In-depth learning



IIIT Naya Raipur is inviting applications for BTech programmes for 2020. The institute is currently offering three undergraduate programmes in electronics and communication engineering (ECE), computer science and engineering (CSE) and data science and artificial intelligence (DSA). These credit-based programmes are designed to foster core skills with innovation and entrepreneurship skills among students. The last date of application is 15 October. For details visit: <https://www.iiitnr.ac.in/>



COACHING FROM HOME

West Ham United boss David Moyes (*photo, left*) is still calling the shots at the London Premier League club despite having to self-isolate after testing positive for Covid-19. The Hammers thumped Wolverhampton Wanderers 4-0 on Sunday, with the manager pulling the strings from home.

For more updates

www.thestatesman.com

THUMBNAILS

Restart date: The Sports Authority of India on Sunday announced it would restart the training of Tokyo Olympics-bound para-athletes and athletes at the National Centres of Excellence on 5 October in the "next phase" of resumption of sporting activities.

Colours matter: Kings XI Punjab skipper KL Rahul has got the Orange Cap while his team-mate, Mohammad Shami, took the Purple one from Delhi Capitals' Kagiso Rabada after Sunday's Indian Premier League match against Rajasthan Royals had been played.

Oz plan: Players preparing for the Australian Open could be allowed to compete while in quarantine after arriving in the country, Tennis Australia boss Craig Tiley said. Visitors to Australia have to isolate for 14 days as part of strict Covid-19 protocols.

Bayern upset: Quadruple-winners Bayern Munich slumped to a shock 4-1 loss at Hoffenheim in the Bundesliga on Sunday to end their 32-match unbeaten run in all competitions stretching back to last year. Bayern had not lost since 7 December, 2019.

Barca win: Lionel Messi was back in scoring business for Barcelona on Sunday, leading them to a resounding 4-0 win at home against Villarreal in a near-perfect La Liga opener for the Catalans under new coach Ronald Koeman. Ansu Fati was in inspirational form.

Juve held: Cristiano Ronaldo's second goal of the night salvaged a 2-2 draw for 10-man Juventus away to AS Roma on Sunday, after Jordan Veretout had twice put the capital club in front. Veretout and Ronaldo netted penalties as the teams were penalised for handball.

City shocked: A Jamie Vardy hat-trick coupled with goals from James Maddison and Youri Tielemans steered Leicester City to a stunning 5-2 win at Manchester City on Sunday and kept them top of the Premier League with a maximum nine points from three games.

Proposal rejected: The Italian government has rejected a proposal to allow more spectators to watch sport, including the Serie A league. Italy's regions had suggested that the current limit of 1,000 spectators be increased to 25 per cent of stadium capacity.

Clubs' choice: Brazil's first division clubs have reportedly voted unanimously against allowing fans to return to soccer stadiums, rejecting an earlier health ministry decision to permit grounds across the country to admit up to 30 per cent of their capacity.

Morbidelli on pole: Petronas Yamaha SRT's Franco Morbidelli slammed in stunning 1:38.798 in MotoGP Q2 at the Gran Premi Monster Energy de Catalunya to claim his maiden MotoGP™ pole position – and his first pole since 2017 Malaysian GP.

Delhi confident ahead of Hyderabad encounter

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ABU DHABI, 28 SEPTEMBER

Off to the best possible start with two wins on the trot, confident Delhi Capitals will hope to keep the juggernaut rolling when they take on a winless Sunrisers Hyderabad in an Indian Premier League match here tomorrow.

Both sides have had contrasting campaigns so far. Delhi head into the game after two morale-boosting victories. The Shreyas Iyer-led side edged past Kings XI Punjab in a thrilling super over before thrashing Chennai Super Kings to jump to the top of the points table. The Sunrisers are the only side yet to register a win in the tournament, having lost both their games, and David Warner and his men will be desperate to turn things around. In their opening encounter, despite opener Jonny Bairstow (61) and Manish Pandey (34) putting the

DC vs SRH: Match begins at 7.30 pm IST.

Sunrisers in a winning position in a chase of 164, the team failed to cross the line. Against Kolkata Knight Riders, their middle order failed to fire and the team settled for a below-par total which the bowling unit couldn't defend. Wriddhiman Saha was particularly slow and would be expected pace to his innings in accordance with the for-

mat. For Delhi, the South African pace duo of Kagiso Rabada and Anrich Nortje has looked sharp with the new ball while spinners Axar Patel and Amit Mishra have performed splendidly in the absence of Ravichandran Ashwin. Ashwin suffered an injury in the team's first outing and was likely to miss the match against the Sunrisers.

"Ashwin, I feel, is doing pretty well, but we wanted to give him a two-or-three-game rest so that he feels better," Iyer had said ahead of the match against CSK. In batting, the onus will be on such seniors as Shikhar Dhawan to lay the foundation, and he will have the talented Prithvi Shaw at the top of the company. Rishabh Pant and Iyer have also looked in good nick. After rescuing the team from a spot of bother in the first game, the two pitched in with valuable runs against CSK.

Australian all-rounder Marcus Stoinis has proved he is handy with the willow while Shikhar Dhawan, Prithvi Shaw, Shrimon Hetmyer, Kagiso Rabada, Ajinkya Rahane, Amit Mishra, Rishabh Pant (wk), Ishant Sharma, Axar Patel, Sandeep Lamichhane, Keemo Paul, Daniel Sams, Mohit Sharma, Anrich Nortje, Alex Carey (wicketkeeper), Avesh Khan, Tushar Deshpande, Harshal Patel, Marcus Stoinis, Lalit Yadav.

unit letting them down in both outings, the Sunrisers might consider bringing in Kane Williamson, who has recovered from an injury, to provide stability to the line-up. He would be coming in place of Nabi. Sunrisers' spinners, led by Rashid Khan, continue to impress but the side are short of a pace bowler who can hit the deck and push batsmen back. Australian fast bowler Billy Stanlake is an option but with only four overseas slots available, his inclusion looks unlikely.

The Squads (from):
Sunrisers Hyderabad: David Warner (captain), Jonny Bairstow, Kane Williamson, Manish Pandey, Shreevats Goswami, Virat Singh, Priyam Garg, Wriddhiman Saha, Abdul

Samad, Vijay Shankar, Mohammad Nabi, Rashid Khan, Jason Holder, Abhishek Sharma, Bavanka Sandeep, Sanjay Yadav, Fabian Allen, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Khaleel Ahmed, Sandeep Sharma, Shahbaz Nadeem, Siddharth Kaul, Billy Stanlake, TNatarajan, Basil Thampi.
Delhi Capitals: Shreyas Iyer (captain), Ravichandran Ashwin, Shikhar Dhawan, Prithvi Shaw, Shrimon Hetmyer, Kagiso Rabada, Ajinkya Rahane, Amit Mishra, Rishabh Pant (wk), Ishant Sharma, Axar Patel, Sandeep Lamichhane, Keemo Paul, Daniel Sams, Mohit Sharma, Anrich Nortje, Alex Carey (wicketkeeper), Avesh Khan, Tushar Deshpande, Harshal Patel, Marcus Stoinis, Lalit Yadav.

unit letting them down in both outings, the Sunrisers might consider bringing in Kane Williamson, who has recovered from an injury, to provide stability to the line-up. He would be coming in place of Nabi. Sunrisers' spinners, led by Rashid Khan, continue to impress but the side are short of a pace bowler who can hit the deck and push batsmen back. Australian fast bowler Billy Stanlake is an option but with only four overseas slots available, his inclusion looks unlikely.

The Squads (from):
Sunrisers Hyderabad: David Warner (captain), Jonny Bairstow, Kane Williamson, Manish Pandey, Shreevats Goswami, Virat Singh, Priyam Garg, Wriddhiman Saha, Abdul

Nadal, particularly hard for Rafael Nadal.

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"He's not in his regular rhythm. He needs match practice. Normally, he was coming to Roland Garros having often played four big clay tournaments, which he had generally won."

Thiem knows very well what it takes to beat Nadal.

"You go into the match knowing that even your best tennis, even if you play it over three, four hours, might not be enough," said Thiem.

"I mean, if you do it, you may have a little chance, but you have to go to your limit on every single rally, every single point. That makes it not easy to go into the match. And that's the mental part, I guess."

Nadal will head into the French Open without a clay title under his belt for the first time, having lost in straight sets to Diego Schwartzman in the quarterfinals at Rome – his

"This year is going to be

first tournament in six months. "It's not a moment for excuses. I've spent a long time without competing, I played two good matches," Nadal, who skipped the US Open citing Covid-19 concerns, said following the defeat.

"It's a completely special and unpredictable year," he added. "I did my job here. I did a couple things well and other things bad. At least I played three matches."

Despite the sense this is the most understrength version of Nadal at the French Open in recent times, Djokovic remains adamant the 34-year-old is again the favourite to lift the Coupe des Mousquetaires.

"The record that he has there, the history of his results, you just can't put anybody in front of him," said Djokovic, himself vying to add to his lone 2016 triumph at Roland Garros.

"But, you know, definitely Diego showed that Nadal is beatable on clay," added the Serb.

"The conditions that they

played on, obviously heavy clay, not much bounce, humid, night sessions, we are going to have that as well in Paris. I'm pretty sure that he does not prefer that to a high bounce. I know he likes the high bounce."

"He likes the hot and humid and fast conditions, where he can use his spin a lot. Even though he's the favorite, I think there are players that can win against him there."

Another championship run for Nadal, not accounting for potential walkovers, would take him to a century of wins at the French Open. Only Federer, Serena Williams, Martina Navratilova and Chris Evert have hit triple digits in wins at a single major in the Open era.

Schwartzman agreed that Nadal was still the favourite.

"Rafa is the king. It's his house. He went to Roland Garros many years playing good, sometimes not playing his best and he won."

"I think Rafa is always there, the guy who is going to win."

Nadal is unbeaten in 21 matches at the French Open; his last defeat there was back in 2016 when he was forced to withdraw with a wrist injury after reaching the fourth round.

So what makes him so dominant there?

"He's an unbelievably great tennis player. Probably on clay, a little bit better than on the other surfaces," Thiem said. "He's left-handed, which makes it very uncomfortable. And then his forehand, the top spin on the clay, it's cruel to play."

Thiem takes notes and hopes to emulate aspects of Nadal's game. So do others.

First seen in nets is what we saw in that Cottrell's over," said Smith in the post-match presentation ceremony. "I told someone as along as he gets one, floodgates will open. He showed heart. He told me during the timeout we still believe."

Tewatia was hardly able to get ball on bat before he went after Cottrell and RR were banking on Sanju Samson yet again. Samson scored his second consecutive half-century and was dismissed on 85 off 42 balls. "Sanju is striking

the ball cleanly all over the ground. Taking pressure off everyone. We will have to

adapt to the bigger grounds, but these shots would clear everywhere," said Smith. Smith had chosen to bowl first despite winning the first match played at the same ground after batting first. His decision seemed to have backfired when Kings XI Punjab totalled 223/2 but Rajasthan's fireworks allowed them to get to 226/6 with three balls to spare.

"That was something else, wasn't it? Generally it gets wetter so I thought we were in with

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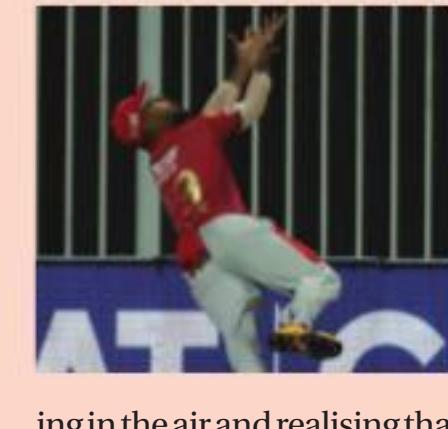
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Best save ever seen in my life: Sachin on Pooran's fielding effort

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
SHARJAH, 28 SEPTEMBER

Master Blaster Sachin Tendulkar was full of praise for Nicholas Pooran (*in photo*) after the West Indian came out with a stunning fielding effort during Kings XI Punjab's crushing defeat by Rajasthan Royals in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2020 clash at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium.

In the eighth over of Rajasthan Royals' chase of 224, Sanju Samson played a pull shot off Murugan Ashwin and it was then that Pooran, standing at deep mid-wicket, dived full length over the rope to catch the ball. The West Indian caught the ball while hanging



ing in the air and realising that he wouldn't be able to come inside the boundary line, he threw the ball -- all while being in air -- back inside the boundary line to save his team vital six runs.

"This is the best save I have seen in my life. Simply incredible!!" Tendulkar tweeted during the match on Sunday.

Responding to the praise from the batting legend, Kings XI fielding coach and one of the greatest fielders the game has ever seen, Jonty Rhodes said: "When the God of Cricket Sachin Tendulkar says it is, then there really is no question about it being the best save, ever."

"Fantastic work by Nicholas Pooran who inspired the rest of the Kings XI Punjab fielders to put on 1 of the best defensive fielding displays I have ever seen proudcoach," he added. Cricketer-turned-commentator Ian Bishop also praised Pooran and said: "Nicholas Pooran has just pulled off one of the great saves in the game of cricket. Unbelievable awareness."

King of Clay treading uncertain ground at Roland Garros

AGENCIES
PARIS, 28 SEPTEMBER:



The undisputed King of Clay, Rafael Nadal (*in photo*) is one title away from matching Roger Federer's all-time Grand Slam record, but 15 years on from the Spaniard's first French Open triumph he appears more vulnerable than ever at his beloved Roland Garros.

Nadal owns an astounding 93-2 record in Paris dating back to his debut in 2005, when, still a teenager, he became the first player to win the French Open in his first attempt since Mats Wilander in 1982.

Fast-forward to the present day, and his 19 Grand Slam crowns – a record 12 of which have come at Roland Garros – coupled with Federer's absence after knee surgery, leave him on the brink of history at a venue where he has won each of the past three years.

Yet a multitude of factors, mostly beyond his control, have conspired against Nadal and offered hope to his chief rivals Novak Djokovic and recently crowned US Open champion Dominic Thiem.

Boris Becker, a former coach of world No 1 Djokovic, suggested the rescheduled tournament pushed back from its traditional spring billing due to the coronavirus pandemic will be tougher than usual for Nadal.

The heavier conditions could suit hard-court players more and negate some of Nadal's lethal top spin, possibly aiding Thiem who has finished runner-up in Paris twice in succession.

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particularly hard for Rafael Nadal. He's my number-one favorite but the difference between him and the other players is less big this year than usual," said Becker, a six-time Grand Slam champion.

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De Villiers' final flourish takes RCB to 201

PTI
DUBAI, 28 SEPTEMBER

AB de Villiers (*in photo*) turned the clock back with his magnificent hitting after Aaron Finch and Devdutt Padikkal's stroke-filled half-centuries took Royal Challengers Bangalore to an imposing 201 for 3 against Mumbai Indians in an IPL game despite another failure from skipper Virat Kohli. It was AB de Villiers, who used all his might during the death overs to smash his way to an unbeaten 55 off 24 balls, taking the score past 200-run mark. His innings had four sixes and as many boundaries as the swift yet brutal assault of Jasprit Bumrah (0/42 in 4 overs) will be remembered for a long time. Even James Pattinson (0/51 in 4 overs) received a lot of stick as two speed merchants accounted for 8 off the 10 sixes in the RCB innings. The remaining couple were hit off MI's most successful bowler Trent Boult (2/34).

The last five overs produced 78 runs with Shivam Dube scoring 27 not out off 10

balls. While Australia's white-ball skipper Aaron Finch scored 52 off 35 balls to get his team off to a flying start, the extremely elegant Padikkal upped the ante in the later half with some delightful big hits, scoring 54 off 40 balls. The duo added 81 runs for the opening stand.

Padikkal's sittings was studied with five boundaries and two sixes and a good stand of 62 runs for the third wicket with De Villiers, who then provided the final flourish as he has been doing for years now.

The tall upright Padikkal's second IPL half-ton will be remembered specially for two sixes off fast bowler James Patt