

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA
KARIMNAGAR | WEDNESDAY | 11 NOVEMBER 2020



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Kamala ready to reshape US history



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Promote RuPay cards only, FM tells banks



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Tokyo plans test events for Olympics

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WEATHER

Max: 29.6°C
Min: 12.8°C
RH: 34%
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Partly cloudy sky. Mist likely. Max/Min temperature 30/14 °C

COVID-19 CUNT

CASES

(+49,010)

86,34,341

DEATHS

(+587)

1,27,581

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+1,267)

TS: 2,52,455

(+1,886)

AP: 8,46,245

(+4)

1,385

(+12)

6,814

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

5,15,37,959

DEATHS

12,73,806

COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES

216

worldometers.info/coronavirus

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari; Dakshinayana

Tithi: Nija Ashwayuja Bahula Ekadasi till 12.37 am (Thursday)

Star: Purvaphalguni till 6.27 am (Wednesday); Uttaraphalguni till 4.23 am (Thursday)

Varjyam: 1.02 pm to 2.29 pm

Durmuhurtam: 11.37 am to 12.22 pm

Rahukalam: 12 noon to 1.30 pm

HJRI CALENDAR

Rabbi-ul Awwal 24, 1442 AH

PRAYERS

Fajar: 5.16 am

Zohar: 12.10 pm

Asar: 4.06 pm

Maghrib: 5.47 pm

Isha: 6.57 pm

SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.19 AM

SUNSET TODAY 5.41 PM

MOONSET 2.52 PM

MOONRISE 2.07 AM

COUNTER POINT

The vaccine is more effective in polls than in clinical trials!

SHORT TAKE

TEMPERATURE IN CITY 6° C BELOW NORMAL

T.S.S. SIDDHARTH I DC

HYDERABAD, NOV. 10

Cool winds, the Northeast-erlies, flowing over the state are resulting in the sudden dip in temperature. In Hyderabad, the minimum temperature on Tuesday plunged to 12.8° Celsius. This is 6°C below normal for this time of the year. Even colder temperatures were recorded elsewhere in TS — 7.1°C at Kohir in Sangareddy

Modi magic wins Bihar

Nitish's JD(U) slips to third position; RJD single largest party, MIM wins five seats

BJP defeats TRS, wins Dubbak

S.A. ISHAQUI I DC
HYDERABAD, NOV. 10

The BJP's M. Raghunandan Rao stunned the fancied TRS at Dubbaka in a manner much suited for a T20 cricket match, snatching the bypoll by a narrow margin in the last rounds of counting.

The TRS, which was discussing its margin of victory, lost by about 1,470 votes, one of the rare times the party has lost a byelection. To place things in perspective, the TRS had won the seat in 2018 with a 67,000-vote margin.

The BJP's tally goes up to two in the Assembly with this win, the other MLA being T. Raja Singh.

It was a sweet comeback for Raghunandan Rao, once a TRS politburo member, who had stood third in the 2014 and 2018 Assembly elections, and capped one of the most aggressive BJP campaigns in recent times headed by TS unit president Bandi Sanjay. Raghunandan Rao described the victory as a referendum on the rule of Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao.

"The Congress' Cheruku Srinivas Reddy was a distant third. The BJP won 38.47 per cent of the votes, the TRS 37.82 and the Congress INC 13.48 per cent.

The shock for the TRS began in the early rounds when Raghunandan Rao established a slim lead. TRS candidate Solipeta Sujatha recovered some lost ground and even surged to the lead. In the last rounds, however, Raghunandan Rao clawed back and never let go.

According to the Election Commission, the BJP secured 62,772 votes, TRS 61,302 and the Congress 21,819.

■ Page 2: Seizure of cash spurred BJP campaign



Telangana BJP president Bandi Sanjay with party workers celebrate the victory of the party candidate Raghunandan Rao in the Dubbak bypolls on Tuesday. — P. SURENDRA

BJP win to echo in local elections

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, NOV. 10

The electoral victory at Dubbak will rejuvenate the BJP ahead of a slew of urban local body polls, with state unit president Bandi Sanjay taking an aggressive line against the state government and highlighting the Hindu agenda.

The BJP will fancy its chances in the elections to the Hyderabad and Warangal municipal corporations as well as at Siddipet, the bailiwick of T. Harish Rao. The Dubbak win is also being seen as the first step towards the 2023 Assembly polls which the BJP believes it can win: Sanjay said after Tuesday's victory that the BJP will hoist the saffron



Raghunandan Rao

flag on the Golconda fort.

The Dubbak victory will also make the BJP a more attractive option for the disgruntled leaders in the TRS and other parties.

Though the result will have no impact on TRS' dominance in the Assembly, it will give hope of dethroning the party.

■ Page 2: BJP to become prime oppn in GHMC polls

HARISH TAKES BLAME; KTR TO COURSE CORRECT

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, NOV. 10

Finance minister T. Harish Rao said he took complete responsibility for the TRS's loss in the Dubbak byelection. He had led the campaign for the ruling party.

TRS working president K.T. Rama Rao said the Dubbak verdict would serve as an eye-opener for the party. "It has alerted us to be more cautious in the coming days," Rama Rao said.

Stating that the party accepts the verdict, Rama Rao said, "In the coming days, we will analyse the reasons for the party's failure and take corrective measures."

■ Full reports on Page 2

Scindia decimates Congress in MP

DC CORRESPONDENTS
NEW DELHI/BHOPAL, NOV. 10

The BJP on Tuesday won byelections in 11 states, heading for victory in 40 of the 56 Assembly seats that went to the polls, with new BJP entrant Jyotiraditya Scindia ensuring the party remains in power in Madhya Pradesh, where it won 19 of 28 seats. These seats had fallen vacant after Mr Scindia quit the Congress and joined the BJP with his followers, that led to the fall of the Kamal Nath government in the state.

Mr Scindia tweeted his

ASSEMBLY BYPOLLS	
Gujarat	8 BJP
Karnataka	2 BJP
Telangana	1 BJP
MP	19 BJP; 9 Cong
Manipur	4 BJP; 1 Ind
UP	6 BJP; 1 SP
Chhattisgarh	1 Cong
Haryana	1 Cong
Jharkhand	1 Cong; 1 JMM
Nagaland	1 Ind; 1 NDDP
Odisha	2 BJD

congratulations to his party's "winners", with the contest in MP turning

into a prestige fight between Kamal Nath and himself. The Congress had to win 27 of the 28 seats if it had to displace the BJP and return to power in the state, which it could not.

Of the seven Uttar Pradesh Assembly seats for which counting continued Tuesday, the BJP managed to retain six while one went to the Samajwadi Party.

Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh brought some cheer to the Congress and its allies. The two seats in Jharkhand were won by the Congress and its ally JMM, while the lone

Chhattisgarh seat went to the Congress. In Haryana's Baroda seat, the Congress' Indu Raj Narwal defeated the BJP's Yogeshwar Dutt by 12,300 votes. This was a prestige battle for former CM Bhopinder Singh Hooda.

In Karnataka too, both Bengaluru's Rajarajeshwari Nagar and Sira in Tumakuru district were won by the BJP, with the party winning in Sira for the first time. In Gujarat, the BJP made a clean sweep in the bypolls, necessitated after many Congress MLAs resigned during the RS polls.

Modi's appeal to rural poor helped Nitish

YOJNA GUSAI I DC
NEW DELHI, NOV. 10

Plagued by "anti-incumbency" sentiment against incumbent chief minister Nitish Kumar, the BJP strategised its election campaign heavily around its star campaigner Prime Minister Narendra Modi's popularity. The "Modi vote-bank" helped the BJP to tide over the "anti-incumbency" mood against the Bihar government and also overshadowed 'big brother' JD(U) by bagging more seats.

Mr Modi, according to BJP poll strategists, helped in changing the narrative of the Bihar polls in NDA's favour. BJP poll strategists relied heavily on the 'Modi vote-bank', which includes beneficiaries of the Modi government's flagship schemes — cash transfer in Jan Dhan accounts, free LPG under Ujjwala, DBT schemes — and most importantly free ration during and post-Covid-19 lockdown. Women and youth constitute a sizable chunk of this vote-bank.

BJP poll managers give credit to the Modi vote bank for the party's stunning performance in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls. The Prime Minister himself addressed a dozen rallies, including those where Nitish Kumar shared dais with him, and wrote an open letter to the people of Bihar seeking votes for the incumbent CM.

Initial feedback reaching the BJP had indicated that there was a simmering anger against the *sushashan babu*, over various issues including the Covid-19 lockdown and recent flood, prompting the BJP to focus its campaign around the PM and Central schemes.

"In the caste-riddled Bihar, Narendra Modi created another caste of the poor and marginalised which transcended the limits of caste and community. It is a silent vote-bank but is the most vocal supporter of Modi," said MP Rakesh Sinha.

In the state where the JD(U) is considered as the 'big brother', the BJP outperformed it both in terms of strike rate and number of seats won. While the JD(U) contested on 115, the BJP contested on 110 seats.

CHIRAG MADE NITISH BIGGEST LOSER IN BIHAR

SANJAY BASAK I DC
NEW DELHI, NOV. 10

If there's a major loser in the keenly fought Bihar elections, it is Nitish Kumar. Bihar's wily old fox, who always came out on top, was ambushed by the Bharatiya Janata Party, which used Lok Janshakti Party chief Chirag Paswan as its "Shikhandi" to cut Nitish Kumar to size.

■ Full report on Page 4

RJD'S TEJASHWI FORCED CONTEST ON BJP, JD(U)

NAYEAR AZAD I DC
PATNA, NOV. 10

The NDA on Tuesday emerged as a likely winner after the closely contested Bihar Assembly elections — the first amid the coronavirus pandemic. Political analysts said that it was Tejashwi Yadav's "ten lakh job promise" and aggressive campaign against the NDA which made the contest for Bihar Assembly tough.

■ Full report on Page 4

BJD EMERGES INVINCIBLE IN ODISHA POLLS

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO I DC
BHUBANESWAR, NOV. 10

Odisha's Biju Janata Dal (BJD) proved that it was invincible as it won the two Assembly seats that went to elections following the death of two incumbent lawmakers.

The party headed by CM Naveen Patnaik wrested the Balasore Sadar seat which was represented by the BJP and retained the Tirtol seat.

■ Full report on Page 4

6 killed, 3 injured in accident on ORR

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, NOV. 10

Six people were killed and three others were injured in a hit and run accident on the Outer Ring Road at Muthangi near Patancheru on early Tuesday. An unidentified vehicle hit their MPV from the left and drove away.

The nine men were heading to Nagpur from Bengaluru, on their way home in Jharkhand. Police investigation is on to identify the vehicle that hit their multi-purpose vehicle (MPV) bearing

number DL5 CE 5176. "We are suspecting that it could be a van which hit their vehicle, going by some parts found at the accident site. The victims were all carpenters by profession. The three survivors were rushed to hospital. Their condition is said to be out of danger by the duty doctors," he said.

The deceased were identified as Kamalesh Lohare, Hari Lohare, Pramod Buher, Vinor Buher, Pawan Kumar and another person from Bangladesh had not been identified, said the police.

Five star show



Players of the Mumbai Indians team pose with the IPL trophy at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium after winning the title for the fifth time on Tuesday. Mumbai beat Delhi by five wickets in a one-sided final. — BCCI ■ Full report on Page 8

Modi gives an earful to Xi on other's sovereignty

SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI I DC
NEW DELHI, NOV. 10

In a veiled message directed at China and Pakistan, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said connectivity can be strengthened only if nations respect each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

"India believes that to deepen connectivity, it is important to move forward by respecting each other's sovereignty and

territorial integrity," PM Modi said.

The Prime Minister delivered the message in Hindi in the presence of Chinese President Xi Jinping and Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan during a meeting of the eight-nation Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Council of Heads of State. The meeting was held in the virtual format.

Modi shared screen space with the Chinese President and the Pakistani Prime Minister

during the summit that was chaired by Russia President Vladimir Putin. It was the first time Modi came face to face with the Chinese President, albeit in virtual mode, since Sino-Indian military tensions began this summer.

In another oblique message aimed at Pakistan, Modi said it was unfortunately dragged into the SCO agenda which violated the grouping's charter.

SHORT TAKES

BJP TO BECOME PRIME OPPN IN GHMC POLLS

From Page 1

The BJP leaders felt that the win in Dubbak, which had more votes in the rural areas, has erased the tag that it is an urban voter-based party.

The TRS losing Dubbak ahead of the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) elections will encourage BJP cadres to believe that they can emerge as the main opponent to the ruling party, and replace the Congress as the principal Opposition party.

The saffron party lost its deposit in 100 of the 117 seats in the Assembly polls held in December 2018, and won only one, pulled off a surprise in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections by winning four seats — Adilabad, Karimnagar, Nizamabad and Secunderabad.

The general election helped push up the BJP vote share from seven per cent in the Assembly polls to over 19 in 2019. Since then, the party has been projecting itself as an alternative to the TRS.

After Sanjay, a staunch worker of the RSS taking over, the state unit began targeting the TRS and its ally MIM.

Besides, Sanjay has roping in leaders from the dominant Reddy and Munnuru Kapu communities to consolidate the party base.

In recent times, party leaders have indicated that several leaders in the Congress, particularly from the Reddy community, are looking at the BJP for their political future.

The state BJP president further stated that the party's central leadership had strongly backed the strategies of the state unit to dethrone the TRS in 2023.

SEIZURE OF CASH BY COPS SPURRED BJP CAMPAIGN

From Page 1

The byelection was a triangular contest till the police seized cash from a close relative of BJP nominee Raghunandan Rao. The BJP sharply ramped up its campaign, taking on the TRS and ultimately winning.

The arrest of Sanjay by the Siddipet police and his subsequent protest at Karimnagar further intensified the war between both parties and is believed to have put the challenger ahead.

The TRS accused the BJP of creating law and order issues and using unaccounted money. The BJP had targeted the TRS over development and jobs and strongly highlighted that it was the BJP-led NDA government at the Centre that was funding some of the state's vaunted welfare schemes.

The issue of the Centre's contribution hotted up so much that Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao joined battle and threatened to resign if the BJP could prove its charges. This was countered by Sanjay's own challenge of a debate.

Sanjay and Raghunandan Rao also countered the challenge of finance minister T. Harish Rao who was the lead campaigner for the TRS. The Chief Minister held two official meetings in districts adjacent to Siddipet, where Dubbak is located, to send a message to voters, observers said.

The byelection held on November 3 was necessitated by the death of TRS MLA Solipeta Ramalinga Reddy, the husband of Sujatha, in August. Around 82 per cent voter turnout was recorded. There were 23 candidates in the fray.



Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy addresses the media in Hyderabad on Tuesday after BJP won the Dubbak Assembly by-election. — DC

Kishan: Win is fight against TRS misrule

Says people were disgruntled, wanted change

IREDDY SRINIVAS REDDY
DC
HYDERABAD, NOV. 10

The BJP's victory in Dubbak is the beginning of the establishment of dharma and good governance in Telangana state, minister of state for home G. Kishan Reddy said here on Monday while hailing the victory of party candidate M. Raghunandan Rao.

Kishan Reddy said the Dubbak victory would leave have its impact on the entire state. The victory would help the BJP in the GHMC and MLC elections, he told the media

● **KISHAN REDDY** said the Dubbak victory would leave have its impact on the entire state.

here after the party's surprise victory.

The minister said that in any election, the candidate would be given priority. "However, the victory of the candidate and the victory of the party cannot be separated," he said.

BJP candidate M. Raghunandan Rao and party activists had fought against injustice and exposed the ruling party's mistakes which is why they had triumphed.

Kishan Reddy thanked the people of Dubbak for supporting to the BJP, and congratulated the cadre who worked hard for the victory.

Party vice president D.K. Aruna said that the Dubbak elections were proof that the people want change in the political situation. She said only the BJP is the alternative to the TRS in Telangana state, which can fight with the government to defend the people. She alleged that the TRS had lost the faith of the people, who were looking to the BJP to form the next government.

Leaders pay tributes to Patel

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, NOV. 10

Telangana state Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president Bandi Sanjay Kumar along with party vice president D.K. Aruna, for-

mer MP G. Vivek and other leaders paid tribute at the statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and the Martyrs Memorial at Gunpark, after the party's victory at Dubbak. Police told Sanjay that

he did not have permission to hold a rally. The senior BJP leaders replied that they were going to pay tribute to the martyrs of the separate state. They were then allowed through.

Raghu: Byelection was a referendum on KCR rule

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, NOV. 10

M. Raghunandan Rao, winner of the Dubbak bypoll, mockingly dedicated his victory of Siddipet police commissioner Joel Davis on Tuesday. The official had led the raid on the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate's relatives' houses midway through the campaign, and reportedly unearthed hidden cash.

Speaking to the media at the counting centre at Siddipet after his victory, Raghunandan Rao sarcastically thanked the Hyderabad and Cyberabad commissioners for their help in his victory.

The Hyderabad and Cyberabad police had seized money allegedly belonging to the BJP candidate's aides and relatives.

Striking a more serious note, Raghunandan Rao said the victory was not his alone. Union minister of state G. Kishan Reddy, BJP vice-president D.K.



M. Raghunandan Rao.

Aruna, TS party president Bandi Sanjay, MPs D. Arvind and Soyam Babu Rao, former MLA Babu Mohan and other leaders who campaigned for him had all contributed to the victory.

He said that he would develop Dubbak and serve the people in good faith.

Raghunandan Rao described the victory as a referendum on the rule of Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao.

● **RAGHUNANDAN RAO** sarcastically thanked the Hyderabad and Cyberabad commissioners for their help in his victory.

The Dubbak result was a lesson to the Chief Minister, he said.

He recounted how the TRS had harassed him and his family and said the election outcome was the best reply he could give them.

Responding to the taunting question — "where is the BJP" — often posed by TRS leaders during the campaign, Raghunandan Rao said: "The BJP a kilometre from Gajwel (The CM's constituency), 2 km from Siricilla (represented by K.T. Rama Rao) and 1 km from Siddipet (T. Harish Rao's Assembly seat).

"With the boost received in Dubbak, the BJP will work hard to win power in the 2023 Assembly elections," Raghunandan Rao said.

BJP winner was in TRS politburo, got Asad bail

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, NOV. 10

Madhavaneni Raghunandan Rao, 52, who dealt a rare defeat to the Telangana Rashtra Samiti (TRS) in the Dubbak byelection on Tuesday, has a more interesting background than many politicians.

He started his career as a news contributor to a vernacular daily but also rose to be in the politburo of the Telangana Rashtra Sabha and also represented MIM president Asaduddin Owaisi in court. In 2001, Raghunandan Rao ventured into politics by joining the Telangana Rashtra Samiti (TRS) which had just been formed. He took active part in the Telangana statehood movement under the leadership of TRS presi-

● **RAGHUNANDAN RAO** was suspended from the TRS on allegations of meeting TD chief in May 2013.

dent K. Chandrashekar Rao and was selected to the TRS politburo.

Raghunandan Rao was suspended from the TRS on allegations of meeting Telugu Desam chief N. Chandrababu Naidu in May 2013.

He joined the BJP and contested the Assembly elections from Dubbak in 2014 and 2018 as well as the 2019 Lok Sabha election from Medak.

Raghunandan Rao born in March 1968 in the erstwhile Medak district and did his BSc from Siddipet Degree College. He later completed his

LLB from Osmania University and began practicing law. Interestingly, Raghunandan Rao in 2013, when he was TRS Medak district president, moved the district Principal and Sessions Court seeking bail for Owaisi.

This move of Rao at that time was significant as the TRS has been strongly opposing the MIM for its stand against Telangana statehood.

The bail was in a case pending against Asaduddin Owaisi, his brother Asaduddin and 20 others for their alleged involvement in obstructing the collector and other officers who were allegedly demolishing a mosque at Muttangi. Raghunandan Rao succeeded in getting bail for the MIM chief. The case later ended in acquittal.

‘TRS knew it will lose, started a false propaganda against BJP’

IREDDY SRINIVAS REDDY
DC
HYDERABAD, NOV. 10

We have repeatedly said that we are the alternative to the TRS. Results like the one at Dubbak will be repeated in all the elections, said Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) state president Bandi Sanjay, who aggressively campaigned for the Dubbak byelection and earned a surprise victory for the party. The icing on the cake for Sanjay, appointed TS unit president earlier this year, must have been Union home minister Amit Shah call to congratulate him. Speaking to Sanjay over the phone, Shah, the former BJP president, congratulated party leaders and cadre who worked for the victory of party candidate M. Raghunandan Rao.

Since his surprise victory as MP from Karimnagar last year and especially after his elevation as TS BJP president, Sanjay has led a no-holds barred campaign against the TRS which has galvanised the cadre. His protests following the cash seizure at the party candidate's house are seen as one of the turning points of this election.

Sanjay spoke exclusively with *Deccan Chronicle* just minutes after it became clear that the BJP had prevailed in the neck-and-neck battle. Excerpts:

How is the BJP taking Dubbaka's victory? How was this success possible?

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel won independence for Hyderabad by ending the Nizam's rule. In the same manner, KCR is ruling Telangana now and the BJP will keep a check. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the country is moving ahead and people have confidence in the BJP. The



Bandi Sanjay Kumar.

BJP is the alternative in Telangana, which the people have proved by giving us a victory in Dubbak. Despite facing a lot of troubles, our hard work paid off well.

Top TRS leaders including Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao, K.T. Rama Rao and T. Harish Rao said that the BJP was lying on the matter of Central funds. Why didn't the people believe them?

They did not disclose the funds given by the Centre and diverted the money but they levelled allegations against the BJP. We proved that the Centre has funded the state government's pensions, subsidised rice and other welfare schemes. When KCR made demeaning comments, the people under-

DC Exclusive

stood that the funds were diverted. Knowing that the BJP will win, the TRS tried to mislead the people.

There were allegations that BJP candidate M. Raghunandan Rao had bribed voters, and the police even recovered money during searches. What do you have to say to this?

Was the money found in the candidate's home? No! The TRS gave the money to the police who planted it there. If they have the guts, they should prove that the money belonged to Raghunandan Rao. The BJP does not need to disburse money. We won because we have the public support.

Can we assume that the BJP has become stronger by winning the byelection?

A. We are already stronger. We won four Lok Sabha seats and now we have won another Assembly seat. By winning the byelection, we have got the key from the public. You will see the BJP winning the GHMC elections. None can stop the BJP wave, including KCR. We dedicate this victory to Telangana martyrs. The sacrifice of thousands of martyrs in secur-

ing Telangana statehood were put at stake by the eighth Nizam KCR. By winning the elections, the BJP will keep a check on corrupt persons and put them behind bars.

Did your arrest at Siddipet and your subsequent deeksha help you in winning public sympathy?

It is my responsibility to fight if my party candidate is harassed by the ruling party by using the police. When I wanted to visit Siddipet, I was arrested despite being a state party president. I will not fear anyone. I will fight back with the party and cadre's support. I protested against the illegal arrest. Instead saying that I gained sympathy, it can be viewed as the people understanding the harassment of the ruling party.

How much money would you think the TRS has spent in Dubbak?

It is a habit for the TRS to bribe voters. The Dubbak people realised this and gave a thumping victory to the BJP. Harish Rao tried to save his minister's post. They spent ₹5,000 for each vote and had a target of spending ₹100 crore. However much the TRS is willing to spend, the people are not ready to trust them.



Party workers celebrate BJP's victory in the Dubbak bypoll. — P. SURENDRA

Dubbak bypoll defeat an eye-opener: KTR

S.A. ISHAQUI | DC
HYDERABAD, NOV. 10

TRS working president K.T. Rama Rao on Tuesday said the Dubbak verdict would serve as an eye-opener for the party. "It has alerted us to be more cautious in the coming days."

Stating that the party accepts the verdict in favour of the BJP in Dubbak, Rama Rao said minutes after it became clear that the TRS had lost: "In the coming days, we will analyse the reasons for the party's failure at the hustings and take corrective measures."

Addressing a press conference at Telangana Bhavan, Rama Rao said: "We have emerged victorious in several elections and byelections since the formation of Telangana state. When we win, we don't get overwhelmed, and when we lose we will not be disillusioned."

He declared that the TRS government will continue with its welfare and developmental programmes with renewed vigour.

Maintaining that the aim of any party contesting the election is to win, Rama Rao said, "We did



IT minister K.T. Rama Rao speaks to the media at Telangana Bhavan on Tuesday. — S. SURENDER REDDY

● **HE DECLARED** that the TRS government will continue with its welfare and developmental programmes

HARISH RAO, WHO LED CAMPAIGN FOR BYELECON, OWNS UP LOSS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, NOV. 10

Finance minister T. Harish Rao said that he took complete responsibility for the TRS's loss in the Dubbak byelection. He had led the campaign for the ruling party.

He told the media, that despite losing the byelection,

the TRS government and he himself would continue to serve the people of the Dubbak constituency and play a key role in its development.

The minister thanked the people who voted for the TRS as well as party activists who strove for victory during the campaign.

RJD, Left seek recount in many seats

From Page 1

Late in the evening, the RJD shared a purported list of winning candidates from as many as 119 seats, claiming the returning officers had already congratulated its candidates on their win, but the Election Commission was now refusing to issue certificates claiming they've lost.

A delegation including RJD and Congress leaders visited the Election Commission office in Patna and demanded a recount in many constituencies.

The CPI(M-L) too sought a recount in three seats. The Left parties, which were leading in 19 seats for most part of the day, were down to 11 in the evening.

In a letter to the Election Commission, the CPI(M-L) demanded a recount of

votes in Bhorey, Arrah and Daraundha Assembly constituencies citing "dubious counting practices".

The letter said that the CPI(M-L) candidates "have been shown to be defeated in very narrow margins, following some worrying violations of counting norms".

The letter alleged that in Bhorey, JD(U) candidate Sunil Kumar, a former additional director general of police, "commands a lot of clout in the administration" and that a local JD(U) leader "was seen entering the counting hall — which is illegal and prohibited".

The Election Commission, which held three press briefings on Tuesday and was likely to hold another one late at night to declare the final results, responded to the RJD's allegations saying

● **THE ELECTION COMMISSION**, which held three press briefings on Tuesday and was likely to hold another one late at night to declare the final results, responded to the RJD's allegations saying that according to an order dated May 2019, "in places where the margin of victory is less than the total number of postal ballots rejected as invalid, it is mandatory to reverify rejected ballots.

that according to an order dated May 2019, "in places where the margin of victory is less than the total number of postal ballots rejected as invalid, it is mandatory to reverify rejected ballots.

The reverification should be mandatorily videographed."

A majority of the exit polls had on Saturday projected that the Tejashwi Y a d a v l e d Mahagathbandhan will have an edge over the NDA. It seemed that the

pollsters got the Bihar results wrong once again.

The results threw up many interesting turns in state politics with a weakened Nitish Kumar and a strengthened BJP.

It remains to be seen whether Mr Kumar, who is seeking a fourth term as chief minister, heads the next government in Bihar. The massive drop in the JD(U)'s seats and vote-share could largely be attributed to the Chirag Paswan-led LJP which was, late in the

evening, leading in one seat.

The party, which had walked out of the NDA in Bihar just ahead of the polls, has denied the JD(U)'s chances by putting up candidates against it and not the BJP.

If the NDA manages to maintain its majority, then there is no question of any post-poll formation. However, in case it fails to reach the magic mark, then the field is open and the Mahagathbandhan is likely to approach Mr Owaisi's AIMIM for support.

In such a scenario, it would be difficult for AIMIM as it cannot be openly seen to be aligning with the NDA and would have to either support the Grand Alliance or abstain in case of a show of strength on the floor of the Assembly.

OTHER STORIES

AIMIM celebrates Bihar victory

Adilabad: AIMIM party leaders and activist celebrated the party's victory in the Bihar assembly elections as well as winning five MLA seats in the Adilabad town on Tuesday. Party activists and leaders under the leadership of former municipal chairman Farooq Ahmed gathered in the town and busted crackers and distributed sweets.

COPS PRESENT CLOTHES TO SLAIN MAOIST'S KIN

DC CORRESPONDENT
KOMARAM BHEEM ASIFABAD, NOV. 10

The Tiryani police presented new clothes to the family members of slain Maoist Atram Shoban alias Charles on the eve of Diwali on Tuesday.

Komaram Bheem Asifabad district additional SP Y.V. Sudheendra presented the new clothes to Kova Laxmi, sister of the slain Maoist. She resides in Rompelli village in Tiryani mandal.

Atram Shoban was acting as the commander of the Mangi dalam, was killed in an encounter in Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra in 2016.

Asifabad DSP Acheshwar Rao, CI Satish, Tiryani SI Ramarao, Rompelli and Mesramguda Sarpanches and Rompelli village headman Atram Jalapathi and others were present.

MAN SWINDLED BY CYBERCRIMINALS OF ₹24.36 LAKH

DC CORRESPONDENT
KHAMMAM, NOV. 10

A man lost ₹24.36 lakh in cyber fraud in Kusumanchi.

As per details, Maddali Rama Rao runs a tyre shop in Kusumanchi. He applied for a gas agency on August 15.

Cybercriminals targeted him and took his details from his application by hacking the system.

Later, Rao received a call from persons claiming to be officials of the gas company, where he had applied. They referred to his details in the application. In the course of the conversation, the cyber-criminals gave a bank account number and asked him to deposit ₹24.36 in a phased manner.

Rama Rao believed this to be a call from the company and transferred ₹24.36 lakh at different times. Later, Rama Rao called them, but when the callers did not respond, he suspected something was wrong and approached the police. Kusumanchi sub-inspector Indrasena Reddy is investigating the case.

FARMERS WORRIED AS GOVT MUM ON COMPENSATION

DC CORRESPONDENT
KHAMMAM, NOV. 10

Farmers of all the mandala in Khammam have no clarity if they will receive compensation for the loss of their crops due to the massive rains in August and October.

N. Nageswara Rao, a farmer from Konigerla said, "My four acre cotton crop was destroyed due to the heavy rains and the plants rotted in rainwater. I spent ₹50,000 so far on it".

Though officials submitted an initial report on the crop loss in the district, the state government has yet to give orders to farm officials to conduct a final survey, to assess crop loss and payment of compensation. It is over a month since the initial report was given.

In the initial report, 1.02 lakh acres including 38,111 acres of paddy, 37,227 acres of cotton and 27,000 acres of chili were affected due to the heavy rains in October in the district. In the August rains, 20,511 acres of green gram, 2,877 acres of paddy and 1,546 acres of cotton got damaged.

As per norms, the government has to pay ₹13,500 per acre, as compensation under irrigation and ₹6,800 for the irrigated dry crops. For crop loss estimation, the mandal agriculture extension officers should visit every village and get precise crop loss.

District agriculture officer Vijaya Nirmala said that they are ready to conduct a survey if the government gives the orders.

■ AS PER norms, the government has to pay ₹13,500 per acre, as compensation under irrigation and ₹6,800 for the irrigated dry crops.

A feather in the cap for Bandi

Dubbak, first major victory for the saffron party; also first defeat for TRS in 6-and-a-half years in assembly

PULI SHARATH KUMAR | DC
KARIMNAGAR, NOV. 10

With news that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate Raghunandan Rao won the Dubbak bypolls, celebrations broke out, and leaders and party workers burst crackers, distributed sweets and danced to the tunes of beating drums on Tuesday in erstwhile Karimnagar district.

Raghunandan Rao defeated Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) candidate S. Sujatha. It is the first major victory for the BJP, after Karimnagar MP, Bandi Sanjay Kumar took charge as the state chief of the BJP. It is also the first defeat for the ruling TRS in the past six-and-a-half years in assembly.

The BJP defeated the TRS in the 2019 Parliament elections and grabbed four seats of Karimnagar, Nizamabad, Adilabad and Secunderabad.

The Dubbak byelections attracted the attention of the state from the beginning. A war of words between the BJP and the TRS ensued. Mr Sanjay who shouldered the responsibility of the byelections campaigned widely in the constituency. At one point, when the police did not allow him to enter the constituency behaving harshly with him, Mr Sanjay locked himself in his party office, grabbing the attention of the people in the state.

Then political experts opined, it would be tough, for the TRS in the days to come with Mr Sanjay proving to be successful every time.

Mr Sanjay highlighted points which proved costly for the TRS. Also, the BJP being in power at the Centre helped Mr Sanjay counter the TRS whenever it brought up an against



Above: BJP district unit president G. Krishna Reddy along with others celebrate play drums to celebrate the party's victory in Dubbak by-elections in Karimnagar on Tuesday. **Right:** BJP workers led by party district president G. Satyanarayana wave the party flag in Khammam on Tuesday.

the Central government.

Meanwhile, in Mr Sanjay's home town, Karimnagar party activists celebrated the Dubbak win by distributing sweets, bursting crackers and taking out a bike rally, after paying tributes to the statue of the Telangana martyrs.

District unit president, Gangidi Krishna Reddy said that the TRS tried to win the elections, by misusing its powers and harassing the BJP workers by lodging illegal cases against them.

They even attacked BJP president Bandi Sanjay Kumar.

Despite this undemocratic behaviour by the ruling party, the people stood by the BJP candidate Raghunandan Rao who emerged the winner.

"This proves, the BJP is the alternative party to the TRS in the state," he said.

This verdict of the Dubbak people is the turning point in state politics and an eye-opener to those who asked where the BJP party is. It is also the beginning of the downfall

■ THE BJP HAD defeated the TRS in the 2019 Parliament elections and grabbed four seats of Karimnagar, Nizamabad, Adilabad and Secunderabad.

of the TRS. The people are ready to put an end to the family rule and corruption in the state. With the same spirit, the BJP will grab most of the seats in the coming up Greater Hyderabad Municipal Elections, he added.

Former MLA Bodiga Shoba, leaders Shiva Rama Krishna, K. Vasudeva Reddy, T. Srinivas Goud, former mayor D. Shankar, S. Mallesh, S. Srinivas Reddy, R. Prasad, B. Praveen Rao, A. Raji Reddy, M. Satish, S. Venu, K. Lokesh, M. Praveen Kumar, D. Srinivas, Shivaraj, Anusha, BJP corporators Anand, Ravi, Srinivas, Jithendar, Rama Reddy, Chandra Sekhar, Chaithanya and Gayatri were present along with others.

Victory comes at right time: BJP

PILLALAMARRI SRINIVAS | DC
ADILABAD, NOV. 10

It Dubbak victory has boosted the morale of the BJP cadre and it's second-rung leaders. They believe that the Dubbak victory has come at a time when the party needed a boost.

Celebrating the party's victory, BJP leaders and activists burst crackers and distributed sweets at various places in erstwhile Adilabad district.

BJP leaders say that this victory will go a long way and the BJP will try to replicate it in the next elections in the state.

BJP senior leaders Jogu Ravi, Lala Munna, district secretary Venugopal, Payal Sharath, Akula Pravin, Soma Ravi, and others participated in the victory celebrations in Adilabad town.

BJP leaders and activists also celebrated the victory in Utnoor, Neredigonda, Jainad, Bela and



BJP leaders celebrate the party's victory in Dubbak by distributing sweets in Adilabad town on Tuesday.

— DC

■ BJP LEADERS say this victory will go a long way, will try to replicate it in the next elections in the state.

and many other areas in the erstwhile Adilabad district.

Voter's dissatisfaction paved the win

NARENDER PULLOOR | DC
NIZAMABAD, NOV. 10

The surprising victory of the BJP in the Dubbak byelection has boosted the morale of party cadres across Telangana state, especially in undivided Nizamabad district. Party leaders are in a jubilant mood and are hoping for victory in the coming Assembly elections in 2023. Nizamabad district is always an experimental lab for the BJP as its candidates won the MP, MLA and the municipal chairperson's posts from here.

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*, BJP state executive committee member Dhanpal Suryanarayana Gupta said that people saw the true colours of the ruling TRS in Telangana state. People believed in the TRS leadership when Telangana state was formed. But it was misused by family rule.

"We observed dissatisfaction among the voters for the TRS in the Dubbak byelection campaign", he said.

There is no doubt, BJP will



BJP leaders take out a rally to celebrate the party's victory in the Dubbak byelection on Tuesday in Nizamabad.

— DC

rule Telangana state from 2023 onwards, he opined.

The TRS experienced a shocking defeat from the BJP in the Nizamabad Parliamentary constituency in 2019 and the Dubbaka byelection. Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao's

daughter, then MP K. Kavitha, was defeated by BJP candidate, D. Arvind in the last Lok Sabha elections. The defeat of Kavitha by a BJP candidate came as a surprise and sent shock waves among the ruling TRS.

The then ruling Congress

heavyweight and Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee president, D. Srinivas, was defeated in the 2009 general elections, and in the 2010 byelection, by BJP candidate Endala Laxminarayana from the Nizamabad Assembly constituency.

Congress leadership, particularly D. Srinivas camp had believed that there was no opposition to beat them in the elections, but BJP emerged and won the MLA seat twice.

Long back, BJP candidates Mukka Devender Gupta and Dr P. Bharathi Rani were elected municipal chairperson of Nizamabad, in 1995 and in 2000 respectively.

BJP has turned into a great alternative, as anti-incumbency and lack of leadership prevails in the ruling party. The BJP is also strengthening its base in urban and rural areas. A section of the youth, in the last three decades, has always supported the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's image has doubled the base.

Asifabad collector transferred, corrupt TRS MLAs role alleged

DC CORRESPONDENT
KOMARAM BHEEM ASIFABAD, NOV. 10

Komaram Bheem and Asifabad district collector, Sandeep Kumar Jha who held office for nine months, is transferred. PS Rahul Raj is posted as the new collector of Asifabad.

Among political circles, the news is that the TRS MLA's and other TRS district leaders were behind his transfer. It is a message, to officials who refuse to endorse their unlawful and illegal activities, of the power they hold.

On numerous occasions, differences between the collector and the TRS leaders on various issues came to the fore. The TRS leaders had gone to the extent of pressurising the collector to get their

■ AMONG POLITICAL circles, the news is that the TRS MLA's and other TRS district leaders were behind his transfer. It is a message, to officials who refuse to endorse their unlawful and illegal activities, of the power they hold.


■ ON NUMEROUS occasions, differences between the collector and the TRS leaders on various issues came to the fore. The TRS leaders had gone to the extent of pressurising the collector to get their things done but, Sandeep Kumar Jha did not bow to the pressure.

Even government officials from some departments had differences with the collector. Some employees staged a protest, alleging that the collector behaved rudely with them, increased their work burden and did not give them leaves. Adivasis said that Sandeep Kumar Jha

was sympathetic towards the Adivasis, and tried to resolve their problems during his short tenure, despite facing political pressure from the political leaders including Adivasi elected public representatives.

Minister for forest Allola Indrakaran Reddy had tried to patch up the differences between the TRS MLAs, ZP chairperson, employees and the collector, but they continue to remain at loggerheads.


Forest officials were also unhappy with Sandeep Kumar Jha for favouring the Kolam families that the forest officials had removed from the Kolam Gondi village, in Kagaznagar mandal citing the place is a reserved forest area. The collector had on sympathetic grounds accommodated a few Kolam families back in the same village from where they were evacuated. This did not go down well with the forest officials. A team of forest officials had met Allola Indrakaran Reddy a few months ago and had complained against the collector, that he was behaving rudely with them.



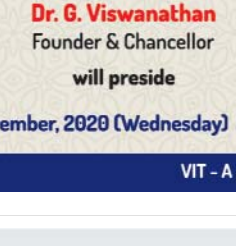
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IN BRIEF

LEFT STRIKE RATE BETTER THAN CONGRESS'

DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs
NEW DELHI, NOV. 10

If any single block has gained phenomenally in the battle for Bihar it is undoubtedly the three Left parties — the CPI(Marxist), CPI and CPI-ML (Liberation).

The three parties fought as part of the RJD-led Mahagathbandhan, but their strike-rate was far better than the other alliance partner, Congress, which fought 70 and is on its way to winning only 20.

According to the Election Commission, the Left parties were leading in 18 of the 29 seats they contested in the Bihar Assembly election.

Out of this, the major gainer was the CPI-ML (Liberation) which was leading in or had won 13 seats out of the 19 it fought. The CPI(M) was ahead in two out of the four it contested and the CPI in three out of six.

The RJD had stuck its neck out and gave the Left 29 seats despite objections from other alliance partners. Some of the seats contested by the Left had been won by the RJD in the last Assembly polls.

In 2015, the CPI-ML (Liberation) had grabbed three seats while the other two Left parties drew a blank. Only the CPI-ML (Liberation) had an understanding with the RJD in 2015, and not the other two Left parties.

According to Dipankar Bhattacharya, general-secretary of the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) Liberation, "The leads so far are on expected lines and we hope to catch up in three more seats. This was a different kind of election. This was more a people's movement. We banked on young candidates, student leaders, candidates who were part of farmer struggles, working class people. That seems to have worked".

The Left parties fielded candidates from Agiaon, Arrah, Arwal, Balrampur, Bibhutipur, Darauli, Daraundha, Dumraon, Ghosi, Karakat, Manjhi, Matihani, Paliganj, Tarari, Ziradei, Bachhwara, Bakhti, among other places.

According to CPI, general-secretary D. Raja, while the alliance with the two parties has helped in vote conversion, what has also led to the good performance is the cadre base of the three parties that helped spread the reach of the Mahagathbandhan.

NITISH WILL GET POST BECAUSE OF US: SHIV SENA

BHAGWAN PARAB | DC
MUMBAI, NOV. 10

Maharashtra's ruling party Shiv Sena has said that Nitish Kumar should thank the Uddhav Thackeray-led party should he become the Bihar chief minister again.

Commenting on the results of Bihar assembly polls senior Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut said, "If Nitish Kumar becomes the CM again with the BJP's support despite securing less number of seats, he should give credit to Shiv Sena, which has shown in Maharashtra what happens when you break your promise."

In Bihar, Mr Kumar's Janata Dal United (JDU) party has been relegated to a third position. Though the BJP leadership has made it clear that Nitish will be the CM again, the local leaders have demanded that the saffron party should stake its claim on the top post.

Mr Raut said, "The BJP has to give the chief minister's post to Nitish Kumar, as the tricks of breaking the word will not happen in Bihar. Because of the counter blow given by the Shiv Sena in Maharashtra, the BJP cannot afford to repeat its game in Bihar."

Last year, the Shiv Sena broke its alliance with the BJP after the Vidhan Sabha polls over a dispute on the Chief Minister's post and joined hands with the NCP and Congress to form the MVA government headed by Mr Thackeray. According to Sena, the BJP had promised to share the CM post before the polls, but later backtracked.

Mr Raut also said actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death had no impact on polls. "I don't think, the case in Maharashtra would have helped any party in Bihar. The election was fought on issues like development, unemployment, health, education etc and the credit for it goes to Tejashwi Yadav," he said.

Nitish, NDA apple cart upset by Chirag

Chirag Paswan's negative campaign against Nitish Kumar reduced the NDA's tally in Bihar elections

NAYEAR AZAD | DC
PATNA, NOV. 10

LJP Chief Chirag Paswan's aggressive campaign against Chief Minister Nitish Kumar affected the JD(U)'s tally during the assembly elections. The results show that the JD(U) has slipped to number three position in the state after BJP and RJD. The situation also raises questions about Nitish Kumar's role in the NDA after the results.

The BJP, however, met Nitish Kumar in the evening to discuss future strategies. When asked whether the BJP was comfortable in accepting Nitish Kumar as its Chief Ministerial face despite its falling tally MoS Home Nityanand Rai said, "the party extends its thanks to the people who voted for the NDA during the assembly elections. NDA is intact and there is no problem with our leadership issue in Bihar".

The BJP emerged as a single largest party in the state with 74 seats while its partner JD(U) managed to win 43 seats. Two NDA partners Hindustani Awam Morcha (HAM) and Vikasheel Insan Party (VIP) also managed to win 4 seats each during the polls. Jitan Ram Manjhi's HAM had fielded candidates on 7 seats and Mukesh Sahani's VIP was given 11 seats from the BJP quota.

However, Chirag Paswan who campaigned aggressively against Nitish Kumar's party JD(U) failed to open an account in the state. "In the current scenario, the BJP would be needing JD(U)'s support to form a government in the state comfortably. It is also clear now that the NDA's tally would have been better if Chirag Paswan had not fielded candidates against the JD(U)", political observers said.

Reports suggest that the JD(U) has urged the BJP central leadership to act against the LJP "for creating confusion by launching a negative campaign against Nitish Kumar and his party".

A day after quitting the NDA citing ideological differences with Nitish Kumar, Chirag Paswan had written an open letter urging people "not to waste a single vote" for the JD(U) nominee. Ahead of the polls, Chirag had also distributed symbols and tickets to sitting BJP MLAs who seats had gone to the JD(U).

The BJP in face-saving tactics had later issued a letter condemning the act and expelled its leaders for abandoning the party for joining hands with LJP ahead of polls.

Despite initiating action against its leaders, the move was seen as BJP's tactics to create an alternative against Nitish Kumar who has been facing massive anti-incumbency.

Political experts said that "the BJP tried to create an alternative in the state as it was aware of the anti-incumbency against Nitish Kumar. The saffron party feared that the voters may towards the grand alliance".

'Nitish butchered like Abhimanyu'

SANJAY BASAK | DC
NEW DELHI, NOV. 10

If there's a major loser in the keenly fought Bihar elections, it is Nitish Kumar. Bihar's wily old fox, who always came out on top, was ambushed by the BJP, which used Lok Janshakti Party chief Chirag Paswan as its "Shikhandi" to cut Nitish Kumar to size.

While top BJP leaders, from Prime Minister Narendra Modi to home minister Amit Shah, maintained a stoic silence over Chirag's decision to go it alone and take on Nitish Kumar, the lone voice which stood by the chief minister was his "old friend", deputy chief minister Sushil Modi. He was the only one who



RJD chief Lalu Yadav, who is serving a jail term in a fodder scam case and undergoing treatment at RIMS, speaks on the phone during counting day of Bihar Assembly polls in Ranchi on Tuesday. - PTI



Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) supporters flash victory sign during counting of votes for the Bihar Assembly polls, in Patna on Tuesday. - PTI

Tejashwi Yadav emerges as a formidable player in Bihar politics

NAYEAR AZAD | DC
PATNA, NOV. 10

The NDA on Tuesday emerged as a winner after the closely contested Bihar Assembly elections — the first amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Political analysts said that it was Tejashwi Yadav's "ten lakh job promise" and aggressive campaign against the NDA which made the contest tough during the Bihar assembly elections.

This was also probably the first time in four decades when RJD chief Lalu Yadav did not campaign for Bihar elections.

While talking about the assembly election results, RJD leaders in Patna said that, "it was Tejashwi Yadav's leadership and his effort that made the contest tough for the NDA. A leader like Nitish Kumar who has been ruling in Bihar for 15 years has slipped to the third position only due to him and despite grand alliance los-



ing the polls, we are sure that Tejashwi Yadav will prove his worth in the state assembly as well".

Experts assessing the political scenario after the results on Tuesday were of the opinion that Tejashwi Yadav has come out of the shadow of a mass leader like Lalu Yadav and has proved that he is ready to lead the party in his absence.

Lalu Yadav is currently serving a jail term in fod-

● **EXPERTS ASSESSING** the political scenario after the results on Tuesday were of the opinion that Tejashwi Yadav has come out of the shadow of a mass leader like Lalu Yadav and has proved that he is ready to lead the party in his absence.

● **DURING THE polls**, he had also managed to mobilize youths and did not pull back while being attacked by the NDA during polls campaigns.

der scam cases and his bail petition is to be heard on November 27.

"Despite NDA's '15 years of good governance of Nitish Kumar versus 15 years of jungle raj' narrative against the RJD he managed to turn the tally in his party's favour. However, our assessment is that few political parties like RLSP and AIMIM cut his party's votes during the third phase of polls which led to the loss of the

grand alliance", political analysts said. During the polls, he had also managed to mobilize youths and did not pull back while being attacked by the NDA during polls campaigns.

They said that "when he was called the Yuvraj of the jungle he handled the situation well and urged the NDA to talk about employment, industrialization and special status for the state."

Kumar's popularity began to wane when he jumped ship from the NDA to the Mahagathbandhan in the 2015 election and then back to the NDA in 2017. The BJP apparently used the alliance to build its votebank. As the election progressed, BJP workers began to be given clear signals that "if the NDA loses it would be because of Nitish and if it wins it'll be because of Modi".

Already, BJP leaders have begun to credit Modi for the results. Before the elections, Mr Kumar declared this would be his last election. After the results it is clear that whatever may be the final outcome, Mr Kumar has lost, or as someone said, he is "finished" - thanks to BJP".

Nitish has always been the senior partner in the coalition, but the results have ensured that from now the BJP would take over as the "big brother". Even if the BJP keeps its pre-poll promise to keep Nitish as chief minister, "at best he would be a puppet king", a senior JD(U) leader said. Some feel Mr

With Bihar show, Cong's relevance to allies dwindles

ASHHAR KHAN | DC
NEW DELHI, NOV. 10

The political capital of the Congress suffered a major dent after it managed to win just about 25 per cent of the seats allotted to it in the alliance with the RJD. This will have serious repercussions for the former party chief, Rahul Gandhi, who is also battling strong resistance from within his party for his leadership bid. Mr Gandhi is seen as the architect of the alliance. Many in the party and the RJD feel that had the Congress improved its strike-rate, the outcome of the Bihar elections would have been completely different.

A senior leader from Bihar Congress who did not wish to be identified told this newspaper, "There were leaders from outside the state running the show who had no idea about Bihar. Several candidates were dropped from the top who had little resonance on the ground." He said that the Congress had more Central observers than the number of seats the party has won.

In the Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections in 2017, the Congress was in alliance with the Samajwadi Party. It contested 105 seats and won only seven, thus ensuring that the alliance lost miserably.

Now questions are being raised about the Congress being a burden on its alliance partners in states. Many feel that after the Bihar result it will be difficult for the Congress to get a good deal from the DMK in the upcoming Assembly elections of Tamil Nadu

where the two parties are slated to contest in alliance.

Even in West Bengal, where the Congress is looking at Left parties for potential alliance, the Congress will be on the back-foot in seat-sharing negotiations.

The dismal performance of the party in Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat by-polls also suggests that the leadership was not geared up to take the challenge to the BJP.

Though there is no dearth of issues, including farm laws, rising prices, unemployment, the party is unable to connect with the people.

In Madhya Pradesh, the Congress could just manage to win eight seats out of the 28 it fought, while in Gujarat it lost all the eight seats. In Uttar Pradesh, where the Congress staged two massive protests over migrant labourer crisis and the Hathras rape incident, the party lost all seven seats.

Just two months back, 23 leaders of the Congress — young and old included — had written to the Congress president, Mrs Sonia Gandhi, demanding several changes, including elections to the working committee and the post of Congress president. Many saw this as a challenge to Mr Gandhi who is in line to take over from his mother in due course. With the disastrous results in Bihar and bypolls, the chasm within the party is only going to grow and create more troubles for Mr Gandhi.

Insiders feel that many more leaders may speak up in the coming days about the functioning of the party.

Bihar win to help BJP in Bengal elections

SANJAY BASAK | DC
NEW DELHI, NOV. 10

The outcome of the Bihar elections sounds an alarming bell for the Trinamul Congress chief Mamata Banerjee. The Bihar results will be a tailwind for the BJP which has already moved into a campaign mode in West Bengal.

"Bihar victory again proves Modi magic still works and will also work in Bengal. Bihar victory will influence the Bengal voters and will certainly have a major impact on Hindi speaking community in the state," said the vice president of Bengal BJP's minority morcha, Mr Charles Nandi.

Moreover, similar to Bihar, anti-incumbency is riding high in Bengal. The BJP leaders are working overtime to talk about distributions of ration and relief material post-cyclone Amphan and the home ministry. Amit Shah who recently promised a "Sonar Bangla" also targeted the TMC regime for "shoddy handling of the Covid crisis and distribution of relief materials."

Polarizing the vote bank will remain BJP's main weapon against the TMC ruled Bengal. To counter Mamata Banerjee's hold over the minority community, the strategists intends to divide the Muslim vote bank.

In 2016 of the 294 assembly seats, TMC had won 211. According to statistics in nearly 100 of these Muslim votes played the decisive factor.

The BJP is already working to select candidates, who could make a dent in the TMC's armour in these seats.

Speculations are rife that Asaduddin Owaisi's AIMM along with an

influential Muslim cleric could field candidates in Muslim dominated constituencies and this could divide the Muslim votes and benefit the BJP. And the BJP is waiting for such an alliance to happen. Party's vice president, Jay Prakash Majumder had gone on record saying that "the trouble for Mamata Banerjee will start when a influential Muslim group in alliance with Owaisi will contest Muslim dominated seats...Mamata's Muslim vote share will be under serious stress."

In 2019, BJP managed to bag nearly 30 percent of vote share in north Bengal.

Incidentally from 2016 assembly polls, BJP's vote share which was only 10.2 per cent went up by 30.1 per cent during the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

It clearly showed that the besides Hindi speaking community, Hindu Bengalis were moving towards the BJP.

The BJP is also consolidating its support among the Matua community, the Namasudras which constitute nearly 17.4 per cent of the total SC population in the state. During the Lok Sabha elections, the Prime Minister, Mr Narendra Modi kicked off his election campaign by seeking blessings from Boro Ma Binapani Devi, the matriarch of the Matua community.

The BJP fielded her grandson and won Bongaon by-poll seat for the first time.

The BJP is also going to play the CAA card aggressively and try win over the Bengali Muslims in the rural Bengal.

The minority morcha of the BJP intends to induct nearly 20 lakh Muslims by the end of this year.

IN BRIEF PALESTINIAN SPOKESMAN EREKAT DEAD

Jerusalem, Nov. 10: Saeb Erekat, a veteran peace negotiator and prominent international spokesman for the Palestinians for more than three decades, died Tuesday, weeks after being infected by the Coronavirus. He was 65.

The American-educated Erekat was involved in nearly every round of peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians going back to the landmark Madrid conference in 1991, when he famously showed up draped in a black-and-white checkered keffiyeh, a symbol of Palestinian nationalism. Over the next few decades Erekat was a constant presence in Western media, where he tirelessly advocated for a negotiated two-state solution to the decades-old conflict, defended the Palestinian leadership and blamed Israel for the failure to reach an agreement. His Fatah party announced his death in a statement.

A relative and a Palestinian official confirmed he passed away.

Erekat is survived by his wife, two sons, twin daughters and eight grandchildren.

ANTI-GOVT PROTESTS: IRAN PARDONS 157

Tehran, Nov. 10: Iran pardoned 157 people held on charges stemming from their alleged participation in antigovernment protests, the country's judiciary announced on Tuesday, the biggest such release of those swept up in the harsh crackdowns.

Judiciary spokesman Gholamhossein Esmaili told reporters that the people freed had been imprisoned for "spreading propaganda against the system" and taking part in several waves of protests that challenged the government over the last three years. The amnesty was part of a customary clemency order by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei to mark the birth of the Prophet Muhammad, Khamenei, who has the final say on all state matters, issued a decree pardoning 3,780 prisoners last week.

As the Coronavirus pandemic ravaged Iran, propelling its death toll to highest in the Middle East, the government released over 100,000 prisoners to keep the virus from spreading behind bars. Economic grievances in Iran have repeatedly triggered nationwide political unrest in recent years.

In November 2019, security forces smothered protests that were prompted by a sharp increase in gasoline prices, arresting over 1,000 and killing hundreds, according to rights watchdog Amnesty International. The cases of those caught in crackdowns have drawn international outrage.

In September, Iran executed a 27-year-old wrestler accused of stabbing a water supply company employee.

CHASTISED CARDINAL HOSPITALISED

Warsaw (Poland), Nov. 10: A prominent Polish cardinal who was recently sanctioned by the Vatican over sex scandal cases has been hospitalised since last week and remains unconscious, Polish media said Tuesday.

Retired Archbishop Henryk Gulbinowicz was sanctioned by the Vatican last week after the 97-year-old was accused of sexually abusing a seminarian and of covering up abuse in another case.

The Vatican's embassy in Poland said Friday that Gulbinowicz, the former archbishop of Wrocław, has been forbidden from using his bishop's insignia and participating in any religious celebrations or public events.

The once well-respected cardinal, who supported Poland's pro-democracy Solidarity movement in the 1980s, has also been denied the right to have a cathedral burial service or to be buried in a cathedral. Professor Wojciech Wtewicz, head of the hospital in Wrocław, told Radio Wrocław Tuesday that Gulbinowicz is in a very serious condition and unconscious.

Local daily Gazeta Wroclawska said Gulbinowicz was hospitalized Wednesday. A few days earlier, Vatican envoys had informed him about the sanctions. Recently, allegations were also made that Gulbinowicz was an informer for the communist-era secret security.

Gulbinowicz is the latest Polish prelate to be sanctioned after a Vatican-mandated investigation into allegations of sexual misconduct.

Ready to write next chapter: Harris

Will build an economy that works for working families, the V-P elect says in a tweet

SC weighs future of Obamacare

Washington, Nov. 10: When the Supreme Court weighs the fate of "Obamacare," arguments will revolve around arcane points of law like severability — whether the justices can surgically snip out part of the law and leave the rest.

But what's at stake has real-world consequences for just about every American, as well as the health care industry, a

major source of jobs and tax revenues. Whether the Affordable Care Act stays, goes, or is significantly changed, will affect the way life is lived in the US.

The argument against the law from the Trump administration and conservative states is that the 10-year-old statute was rendered unconstitutional in its entirety when Congress dialled down to zero a penalty on those

remaining uninsured.

The court has shifted solidly to the political right under President Donald Trump. Here's a look at some of what's at stake if the opponents of the law prevail: COVID-19 A NEW PRE-EXISTING CONDITION Before the ACA, insurers could turn a person down for an individual policy, or charge them more, based on their medical history. — AP



Harsh Vardhan Shringla

FS DISCUSSES WAYS TO BOOST TIES WITH MALE

Male, Nov. 10: Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla on Tuesday held a series of meetings with the Maldivian leadership and the Opposition and discussed ways to further strengthen India's relations with the island nation, and reviewed the progress of key infrastructure projects under the \$1.3 billion bilateral package. Shringla, who was on a two-day visit to the Maldives, held a joint meeting with Minister for National Planning, Housing and Infrastructure Mohamed Aslam, Minister of Economic Development Fayyaz Ismail and Minister of Finance Ibrahim Ameer.

On Monday, Shringla also called on President of Maldives Ibrahim Mohamed Solih and Speaker of the People's Majlis Mohamed Nasheed.

"FS@harshvshringla held a joint-meeting with Minister for National Planning, Housing & Infra Dvpt @AslamAslamtey Minister of Economic Dvpt@faya.i& Minister of Finance @iamerur; they assessed progress in 8 infrastructure projects part of the \$1.3 billion bilateral package," the High Commission of India in the Maldives tweeted.

India is carrying out a wide-range of infrastructure projects in the Maldives, including Greater Male Connectivity Project (GMCP) and other projects such as port, roads and reclamation, expansion of airports, building of a new Cricket Stadium and cancer hospital and development of fisheries. Shringla also met Maldivian Home Minister and leader of the Adaalah Party Imran Abdulla and sought the party's cooperation in further strengthening the bilateral relations.

The religious conservative Adaalah party is part of the Maldivian Democratic Party-led ruling coalition. "Foreign Secretary @harshvshringla @HarshShringla met Home Minister & leader of the Adaalah Party @ShimranAb; FS sought continuing cooperation of the Adaalah Party in ensuring the success of #IndiaMaldives relations," it said. — PTI



People wave the national flag and hold portraits of Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev as they celebrate in the streets of the capital Baku on Tuesday, after Armenia and Azerbaijan agreed a ceasefire. — AFP

Russian peacekeepers head for Nagorno-Karabakh as war ends

Moscow, Nov. 10: A dozen planes filed with Russian peacekeepers headed for Nagorno-Karabakh on Tuesday, hours after Armenia and Azerbaijan agreed to halt fighting over the separatist region and amid signs this ceasefire would hold where others hadn't.

The truce came after significant advances by Azerbaijani forces that the Nagorno-Karabakh leader said made it impossible for their side to carry on — but angered many Armenians, who stormed government buildings overnight, demanding the Parliament invalidate the agreement. Dozens of protesters gathered again Tuesday morning in front of the parliament building in the Armenian capital of Yerevan. Armenia and Azerbaijan have been locked in a conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh for decades. The region lies within Azerbaijan but has been under control of ethnic Armenian forces backed by Armenia since a separatist war there ended in 1994.

Heavy fighting erupted in late September — the biggest escalation of the conflict in a quarter-century — and has left hundreds, possibly thousands, dead. Several cease-fires announced over the past six weeks crumbled almost immediately, but the

current agreement appeared to be holding, with neither side reporting any more fighting since it came into force. It came days after Azerbaijan pressed its offensive deeper into the region and took control of the city of Shushi, which is strategically positioned on heights overlooking the regional capital of Stepanakert. Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinian said on Facebook that calling an end to the fight was "extremely painful for me personally and for our people." But on Tuesday he explained that he was left with no choice, saying the army had told him it was necessary. "We found ourselves in a situation when there was no alternative to signing the agreement," Pashinian was quoted by Russia's Interfax news agency as saying.

Nagorno-Karabakh's separatist leader Arayik Harutyunyan echoed Pashinian's sentiment. He said: "Had the hostilities continued at the same pace, we would have lost all of Artsakh (an Armenian name for Nagorno-Karabakh) within days." Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev referred to the agreement as a "glorious victory" on Twitter, and Azerbaijanians flooded their capital city to celebrate. Russia's Defence Ministry said that 12

● **THE TRUCE** came after significant advances by Azerbaijani forces that the Nagorno-Karabakh leader said made it impossible for their side to carry on — but angered many Armenians, who stormed government buildings overnight, demanding the Parliament invalidate the agreement.

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planes carrying peacekeepers and military equipment departed for the region Tuesday. A total of 1,960 Russian peacekeepers are to be deployed in Nagorno-Karabakh under a five-year mandate. The pact calls for Armenian forces to turn over control of some areas it held outside the borders of Nagorno-Karabakh, including the Lachin region, where the main

road leading from Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia passes through. The agreement calls for the road, the so-called Lachin Corridor, to remain open and be protected by Russian peacekeepers. The agreement also calls for transport links to be established through Armenia linking Azerbaijan and its western exclave of Nakhchivan, which is surrounded by Armenia, Iran and Turkey.

Nagorno-Karabakh military have reported over 1,200 troops killed in the six weeks of fighting. Azerbaijan hasn't disclosed its military losses. Scores of civilians have also been killed and wounded on both sides.

Nagorno-Karabakh has been under the control of ethnic Armenian forces backed by Armenia since a 1994 truce ended a separatist war in which an estimated 30,000 people died. Sporadic clashes occurred since then, and full-scale fighting began on Sept. 27. Several cease-fires had been called but were almost immediately violated. However, the agreement announced early Tuesday appeared more likely to take hold because Azerbaijan has made significant advances, including taking control of the strategically key city of Shushi on Sunday. — AP

Boris cautiously welcomes bugle of virus vaccine

London, Nov. 10: UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson has cautiously welcomed the promising results from the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine and warned people not to rely on this news as a solution as it is still "very, very early days".

Addressing a briefing from 10 Downing Street here on Monday, Johnson urged the British public not to "slacken" their resolve as it is still "very, very early days", even as he confirmed that the UK had pre-ordered 40 million doses of the Pfizer vaccine — enough for about a third of the UK population, taking into account that two doses each are required.

"The Pfizer/BioNTech Vaccine has been tested on over 40,000 volunteers and interim results suggest it is proving 90 per cent effective at protecting people against the virus. But we haven't yet seen the full safety data, and these findings also need to be peer-reviewed," said Johnson.

"We have talked for a long time, or I have, about the distant bugle of the scientific cavalry coming over the brow of the hill, and tonight that toot of the bugle is louder. But it is still some way off. And we absolutely cannot rely on this as a solution," he said. He reiterated that it is "crucial" not to overdo things and follow the lockdown rules strictly until December 2, after which England is set to revert to a tiered lockdown system.

"We cannot let our enthusiasm (about a vaccine) run away with us. It is more vital now than ever that we follow the basics," said the prime

REGULATOR HALTS BRAZIL VACCINE TRIALS

Sao Paulo, Nov. 10: Brazil's health regulator has halted clinical trials of the potential Coronavirus vaccine CoronaVac, citing an "adverse, serious event." The decision posted on Anvisa's website Monday night elicited immediate surprise from parties involved in producing the vaccine.

The potential vaccine is being developed by Chinese biopharmaceutical firm Sinovac and in Brazil would be mostly produced by Sao Paulo's state-run Butantan Institute. Sao Paulo state's government said in a statement it "regrets being informed by the press and not directly by Anvisa, as normally occurs in clinical trials of this nature." Butantan said in a statement that it was surprised by Anvisa's decision and that it would hold a news conference Tuesday. The CoronaVac shot has already stirred controversy in Brazil. — AP

minister. England's deputy chief medical officer Prof Jonathan Van-Tam, who joined Johnson at the briefing, said he was "hopeful" that the first vaccine could be seen by Christmas after Pfizer's announcement earlier on Monday that its vaccine candidate has proven 90 per cent effective in a large trial. "This is a very important scientific breakthrough," said Prof Van-Tam. — PTI

Covid triggers OCD in kids

London, Nov. 10: Children and young people with obsessive thoughts and compulsions may experience their OCD, anxiety, and depressive symptoms worsen during a crisis such as the Covid-19 pandemic, according to a new study.

While previous research had shown that trauma and stress can trigger or worsen obsessive-compulsive disorder, or OCD, the current study, published

in the journal BMC Psychiatry, assessed how children and young people with the condition experience the ongoing pandemic. In the study, scientists, including those from Aarhus University in Denmark, sent a questionnaire to two groups of children and young people between the ages of seven and 21.

They said one group had been diagnosed with OCD in a specialised section at

the Centre for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry — and all had been in contact with a therapist at the hospital.

The other group consisted mostly of children and young people who had been diagnosed years ago, identified through the Danish OCD Association. According to the study, a total of 102 children responded to the questionnaire. — PTI

SPIRITUAL | OASIS

Master plan in the video shows a massive amphitheatre overlooking the shrine

Images of Abu Dhabi's 1st Hindu temple released

Dubai, Nov. 10: The majestic stone façade of the first Hindu temple coming up in Abu Dhabi will be adorned with scenes from Hindu epics, scriptures and ancient stories from India, as well as motifs popular in the Gulf countries, according to a media report on Tuesday.

The temple management of the BAPS Hindu Mandir in Abu Dhabi has released the first images of the final design of the traditional stone temple and the hand-carved stone pillars that have been taking shape in India, the *Gulf News* reported. The visuals of the final design of the temple have been released through a video that chronicles the progress of the temple right from the inception of

its concept till the pouring of the UAE's largest single pouring of fly ash concrete for the raft foundation of the temple.

The foundation stone of the temple was laid in April last year and work started from December. Dubbed a spiritual oasis for global harmony, the temple's final master plan revealed in the video shows a massive amphitheatre overlooking the shrine, the daily reported. A library, a classroom, a majlis and a community centre have also been featured within the compound in Abu Mureikha area. Waterfalls flanking the steps to the entrance of the shrine, and water bodies circling the temple complex can also be seen in the video.

The design of the master plan was completed in early 2020, and optimised engineered during the slowdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic, a spokesperson of the temple told the *Gulf News*. "This is the first time the visuals of the final design have been released through the video," said Ashok Kotecha, BAPS Hindu Mandir spokesperson. "The work on the historic temple is progressing with the support of the community and guidance from the leadership in India and the UAE. While navigating the challenges produced by COVID-19 and adhering to local best practices during the pandemic, stone work has continued in India," Kotecha said.

Kotecha said key values

and tales of universal wisdom, and the authentic ancient art and architecture would be revived through the stone carvings used for the temple.

"The stories and carvings include diverse portions of India's geography and Hindu belief systems. This would include [epics] Mahabharata and Ramayana as well as the Puranas and regional histories. In fact, this Mandir will be uniquely identified by its intricate mandorla [facade] which will share many traditional value tales from throughout India as well as unique designs of the Gulf," he said. The intricate carvings of the temple range from figurines only a few inches tall to statues of many metres. — PTI



The temple management of the BAPS Hindu Mandir in Abu Dhabi has released the first images of the final design of the traditional stone temple.

DECCAN Chronicle

11 NOVEMBER 2020

Act responsibly, heed NGT ban on crackers

The decision of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) to impose a total ban on all kinds of firecrackers in the National Capital Region from November 9 to 30, and extend it to all cities and towns where the average of ambient air quality is “poor” is welcome. The NGT has mandated that only green crackers that pollute less will be allowed in cities and towns where air quality is “moderate” or below. In other towns and cities, the state governments are given the freedom to impose more stringent restrictions. The duration for bursting of crackers has been limited to two hours during festivals.

The NGT decision comes in the wake of the extreme poor air quality reported in the national capital and elsewhere in the country in the winter season and the renewed threat the Coronavirus has been posing of late to the lives of people.

With fog and crackers, the air quality is sure to go down further, inconveniencing even healthy citizens. That apart, the ban on crackers will have a salutary effect on the fight against Covid-19 as the pandemic is resurfacing as a wave in Delhi and some other states.

Cracker bursting is a community activity in most places and can turn into a super-spreader event. It can be fatal for some people who are suffering from the disease, which impairs, among others, the lungs most. The ban would, thus, help the nation save precious lives.

But the purpose will be served fully only if the state governments and more importantly, the people, took it seriously and implemented it wholeheartedly. It is natural for governments to be hesitant in pouring cold water on the festive spirit and invite the wrath of the people, though some states such as Rajasthan and Odisha have already banned crackers. The procrastinators have a ruse now in the form of the order of the NGT, and can go all out and ensure that the order is implemented in its spirit.

But there is only so much the governments can do on public health; it should primarily be the concern of the public.

They must come forward and understand why the tribunal and governments have been forced to come out with such restrictive orders. Reports from the ground suggest that there is little progress in the way Indians grasp the enormity of the threat the pandemic is, and that they go ahead with their lives and manners throwing caution to the wind. They swarm markets, shops, malls, public places and places of worship as if the virus either did not exist or has vanished.

Since neither is true, it is incumbent upon them to restrict themselves and keep the virus at bay.

The Union government should intensify the Jan Andolan awareness campaign but is for the people to pick the right lessons from the nation's experiences and protect themselves. Celebrations and festivals are a yearly phenomenon; life is but a once-in-a-lifetime offer. It's important that we live on to celebrate them.

Hope across sectors

Valuations on the Indian equity markets soared on Tuesday after a report jointly issued by drug makers — Pfizer from the United States and BioNTech from Germany — announced a significant success in the development of a vaccine for the most infectious Covid-19 disease. While the broader Indian markets were mirroring euphoria witnessed around the world, India's benchmark index BSE Sensex hit an all-time high on Tuesday.

The vaccine may not be available immediately. However, it gives hope to businesses across sectors like aviation, travel and hospitality, tourism, movies among others that were shut because of the highly human contact nature of their operations. It will reopen a significant part of the economy which is either shut or severely underperforming. The rise in the Sensex and the Nifty was primarily driven by bank stocks, which indicate an optimistic assessment of the economy by investors.

This assessment goes against claims made by several analysts that the Indian economy would take a year or two to crawl back to its size in March 2020. However, the bullishness of investors, who look at future earnings before taking investment decisions, should keep us optimistic about the return of normalcy in the economy.

Another factor that has been driving the growth in equity markets across the world, including India, is the victory of Democratic candidate Joe Biden in the US Presidential elections. Investors were happy about the election result because they expected global trade would return to normalcy under the Biden administration. However, with incumbent US President Donald Trump preparing for protracted legal challenges to invalidate mail-in votes that predominantly favoured Mr Biden and several grey areas existing in the US electoral system, the field is still open in Washington. It would be ideal for Indian investors to be cautious and watchful about the unfolding events in US politics.

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Subhani



India-US ties might be stronger under Biden

Vishnu Prakash

It was difficult to believe one's eyes when the so-called leader of the free world stood before the cameras to announce that his opponent was trying to “steal” the just-concluded American presidential elections, which he claimed he had already won, with barely half the votes tabulated. In the supercharged atmosphere, such an incendiary assertion was bound to spark protests and violence across the nation. Unfortunately, it did.

India may not be a perfect democracy, but it has a fairly enviable record of peaceful transition of power, notwithstanding the heated rhetoric. Even Mrs Indira Gandhi, having imposed an ill-advised Emergency in 1975, bowed out of office gracefully upon losing at the hustings in 1977. Every credit goes to India's Election Commission for meticulously organising the gigantic parliamentary elections last year, involving a 850-million strong electorate.

Curiously, the United States doesn't have a Federal Electoral Commission. Each of the 50 states and Washington D.C. is responsible for holding the elections and framing procedural/policy guidelines, even without judicial oversight. As such, there is a wide variation in practices. Some states allow early voting by all, some don't. Some use EVMs, while others have only paper ballots. Some undertake simultaneous or early ballot counting, while the others do so only after the polls have closed.

Even more unique is the institution of an “Electoral College” which actually elects the President and vice-president. An eligible voter votes for the President and the Veep, but also for the elector. Both the popular and the Electoral

College votes are tallied, but the latter takes precedence. At least five times in US history has a candidate won the popular vote while his rival has taken office by virtue of garnering a majority in the Electoral College.

The Electoral College is a historical legacy. America's 1787 constitutional convention was not ready to bestow universal franchise and was bitterly divided over allowing semi-literate or underprivileged individuals to choose the President.

That is when a compromise was struck. Political parties could nominate their representatives to contest for the Electoral College. Towards the end of the 18th century only property-owning white American men were enfranchised, who comprised just six per cent of the population. Women got the right to vote only in 1920. Surprisingly, the system has worked extremely well till now.

However, not even America's founding fathers could have foreseen and insulated the electoral architecture against an iconoclast and narcissist like Donald Trump, for whom the ends justify the means. As of November 9, he continues to claim victory and vows to wage a futile legal battle to get the results annulled or the ballots recounted, essentially on frivolous grounds.

All the same, much to the relief of the world and a majority of the American people, former vice-president Joe Biden is all but certain to be the next occupant of the White House. His running mate, Kamala Devi Harris, half black and half Indian, will become the first woman and the first non-white person to become the vice-president of the United States.

The question that is uppermost in the minds of most Indians is about Mr Biden's disposition

towards India and China. Some analysts contend that he would be soft towards China and Pakistan. It would be recalled that in October 2008, Islamabad had conferred the “Hilal-i-Pakistan” (Crescent of Pakistan), its highest civilian honour, on him “in recognition of... consistent support for Pakistan”. That said, the geostrategic scenario has undergone a sea change in the past five years, and Pakistan has been totally exposed. Its utility for the US has diminished, and it is now firmly in the Chinese camp, which makes it a bigger suspect.

At the same time, China has grievously erred by overtly stepping up its efforts to displace America as regional hegemon. It challenged the might of the US by flexing its military muscle with most maritime neighbours, some of whom, like Japan and Philippines, are under the US security umbrella. It also aims to wrest the crown as world leader in innovation, infotech and biotech. Through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), China is expanding its economic and strategic footprint across the globe. As these directly threaten America's primacy, no US President, not even an internationalist like Joe Biden, can afford to turn a Nelson's eye.

On the other hand, Mr Biden has stayed invested in India-US relations for decades. He has visited India several times and officially once while he was vice-president in 2013. He has been an admirer of India's democratic moorings and pluralism. As a senator, he voted in favour of India-specific motions at least six times. He backed the civil nuclear agreement with India as well as India's permanent membership of the UN

There is a growing convergence in our regional and global outlook. We particularly view Chinese aggression, ambition and threats from a similar prism.

Security Council.

Earlier this year he assured the Indian American community: “I'll continue to believe and continue... standing with India and confronting the threats it faces in its own region along its borders.”

In any event, leaders are guided by national interests in cultivating ties with other countries. India and the US have over 60 dialogue mechanisms in addition to the “2+2” ministerial consultations encompassing a wide range of subjects, including the economy, trade, education, energy, science and technology, security and defence, outer space, counterterrorism and cyber security, in addition to regional and international issues. It is natural for the world's largest and (soon to be) third largest economies to enhance their synergies.

There is a growing convergence in our regional and global outlook. We particularly view Chinese aggression, ambition and threats from a similar prism. It is said that “where you stand in the world has a good deal to do with where you sit”. And there are a handful of matters where our interests do diverge, such as India's ties with Iran and Russia. This is primarily due to our geographical and security imperatives.

It is reasonable to expect, therefore, a continued emphasis and attention on infusing greater momentum in bilateral ties. America's interest in the “Indo-Pacific concept” or the “Quad” should remain undiminished. Given the trajectory that China is following, it is not inconceivable for India to opt for an enhanced partnership with the US. “If the US and India become closer friends and partners, then the world will be a safer place”, Mr Biden had observed 15 years ago. It's time to make that happen together!

The writer is a foreign affairs analyst and a former Indian high commissioner to Canada and ambassador to South Korea

LETTERS

FIGHT PANDEMIC

Most of the people are not wearing masks and not maintaining physical distance. Police should take stringent action including imprisonment if necessary, to force people to wear masks. People should cooperate with the police and the government in the fight against Covid-19.

P. Samuel Suresh
Hyderabad

FIRECRACKERS

It is sad that Hyderabadis can pollute during Diwali (*NGT's ban not applicable. Hyd can burst crackers, DC, Nov. 10*). Whether green or not, all crackers emit fumes, gases and particulate matter. The large-scale bursting of crackers nullifies the advantage of green crackers. Diwali is the victory of good over evil which can be celebrated as a festival of lights without polluting the environment. We must realise that when Diwali celebrations started in ancient times there were no crackers and present scientific temper is against it.

Dr O. Prasada Rao
Hyderabad

EXIT POLLS FAIL

The results of Bihar proved to be a big failure of exit polls in the country. This trend clearly indicates that exit polls are always not trustworthy and reliable. Analysts slip at some point in assessing the pulse of the voter. However, a big salute to those who displayed their choice cleverly and silently in exercising their franchise.

Lalitheswara Raju Valluri
Hyderabad

50 YEARS AGO IN

DECCAN Chronicle

Gen. De Gaulle passes away

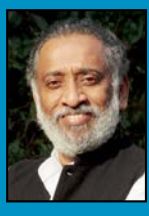
COLOMBEY-LES-DEUX- EGLISES, Nov. 10

General De Gaulle, towering figure of modern French history, died suddenly in his country home here last night and will be buried in the simple country churchyard of this east French village.

His death, at the age of 79, shocked France and the world, leading President Georges Pompidou to declare “General De Gaulle is dead. France is a widow.”

The General's death appears to have stemmed from a condition often linked to a hardening of the arteries. It came as a complete surprise as there had been no previous report that the General had suffered any ill-health since his resignation as President in April, 1969.

Dilip Cherian
Dilli Ka Babu



Gehlot denied his choice of chief secretary

N.K. Arya, the new chief secretary of Rajasthan, is not the first choice of state chief minister Ashok Gehlot for the position. Until the last moment, the last working day of outgoing chief secretary Rajeev Swarup, the Gehlot government hoped to push for a tenure extension for Mr Swarup. But the Centre denied its consent and Mr Arya was drafted in, superseding eight IAS officers in the process. He was additional chief secretary for finance. Besides appointing Mr Arya, the government also effected a major reshuffle involving 21 senior IAS officers.

The drama was building for some time. Sources say that Mr Gehlot had worked hard to ensure Mr Swarup was appointed chief secretary in early July this year and then pushed for his extension. It is said that to appoint Mr Swarup to the state's top post, the chief minister reportedly “struck a deal”

with the previous chief secretary D.B. Gupta who was slated to retire in September. Under this supposed deal, Mr Gupta resigned in July and was immediately appointed advisor to the CM for a year and Mr Swarup stepped in as his successor.

The babu grapevine has it that Mr Swarup endeared himself to the chief minister during the Gehlot-Sachin Pilot standoff, which may not have gone down well with the Centre.

HAVE ‘COOLING-OFF’ PERIOD FOR BABUS, SAYS EC

The Election Commission (EC) is now likely to recommend to the Centre a “cooling off” period for IAS, IPS and other officers who join politics soon after retirement or after resigning the service. Sources say that the poll panel was jolted into this line of thinking after former Bihar DGP Gupteshwar Pandey resigned

from the IPS in September and promptly joined a political party barely weeks before the Bihar Assembly elections. His resignation was accepted immediately, even though government regulations stipulate that an officer who wishes to join private employment after service needs to wait a year after retirement or resigning from service.

Though the demand for a cooling-off period is not a new one and is usually raised around election time when babus who have political ambitions often quit to join a political party. The government has so far rejected it, arguing that barring former babus from joining politics immediately after leaving service can be interpreted as an infringement of their right to equality.

But the poll panel is now keen to ensure that the government insists on a cooling-off period for AIS officers seeking to join poli-

tics, just as it does for those seeking corporate jobs. The commission is yet to work out the modalities of how long this cooling-off period should be, but sources say it could be at least two years.

FOREST TRANSFERS IN UTTARAKHAND: A U-TURN

The forest department of Uttarakhand and the state government seem to be at odds with each other. The government recently cancelled all the transfers of forest department officials done between September and October for violating an order that prohibited transfer of any official during 2020-21. Apparently, the department has done around a dozen such transfers without first seeking clearance from the state government.

Earlier, in July, sources say, the government had revoked the transfer order of 11 deputy conservator of forests (DCFs) within 48

hours of the issuing of the orders. At the time, Anand Bardhan, principal secretary, forest department, had issued a terse statement saying that it was a government order “and we are simply following it”.

However, according to sources, several Indian Forest Service (IFoS) officers say that the order was revoked since the transfer list contained several names that were not presented before the civil service board for transfers. Further, some officers on deputation were given additional charge, which is apparently against the rules. According to a Supreme Court ruling, no transfer can be done without the approval of the civil services board. So why was this being done? That's a mystery.

Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@Twitter.com. Let's multiply the effect.

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	43,277.65	1.60
Nifty 50	12,631.10	1.37
S&P 500*	3,543.39	-0.20
Dollar (₹)	74.18	-0.03
Pound Sterling (₹)	98.27	-0.96
Euro (₹)	87.57	0.50
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	50,338,662	1.31
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	43.14	0.74
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.916	0.040
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.961	0.003

* As of 8:30 PM IST

States may cut capital outlay on infra by 40%: Icra

Impacted by the pandemic, states are likely to cut capital outlay on infrastructure by up to 40 per cent, Icra said. States account for 37-40 per cent of the total infrastructure capital expenditure. Major states together had a budgeted capital outlay of over Rs 5.7 lakh crore for 2020-21 against Rs 5.1 lakh crore in 2019-20. "The capital outlay on infrastructure by states could decline 10-40 per cent in FY2021," Icra said.

WhatsApp adds shopping button to push catalogue



WhatsApp said it has added a new shopping button on its app to make it easier for people to discover a business catalogue to get details about the goods and services offered by a firm. More than 175 million people message a WhatsApp Business account every day. Previously, people had to click into the business' profile to see if it had a catalogue. Now, the shopping button, resembling a storefront icon, will lead to catalogue.

SBI board nod for divesting UTI Trustee stake

SBI said its board has approved divestment of over 8.5 per cent holdings in UTI Trustee Company. It said the nod from the executive committee of the central board is for divesting 8,510 equity shares constituting 8.51 per cent of the bank's stake in UTI Trustee Company Pvt Ltd. As per Sebi regulation, no sponsor of a MF, its associate or group firm can have 10 per cent shareholding or voting rights in another mutual fund.

Crompton promoters sell ₹1,630 cr shares

Macritchie Investments Pte Ltd and Amalfiaco Ltd, promoters of Crompton Greaves Consumer Electricals Ltd, offloaded the firm's shares worth over Rs 1,631 crore through open market transactions. Macritchie sold over 1.89 crore scrips at an average price of Rs 296.54 per scrip, valuing the deal at Rs 561.23 crore, as per bulk deal data on NSE. Amalfiaco offloaded over 3.6 crore shares at Rs 296.57 apiece.



Pandemic helps nearly 80% schools to adopt tech

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, NOV. 10

Covid-19 has helped faster technology adoption by schools. While only 15 per cent of the schools in India had working computers prior to Covid-19, now almost 80 per cent of them have made some level of technology adoption. Covid-19 has disrupted the education sector and forced them to adopt tech-

nology faster. Prior to the pandemic, out of the 15 lakh schools in the country, only 2.6 lakh or 14 per cent had working computers. This includes 35 per cent private aided schools, 30 per cent private unaided schools, 9.8 per cent government schools and 7 per cent other schools. However, in the case of higher education, about 85 per cent of the 55,000 colleges had working comput-

er facilities, as per a study by Bengaluru-based RedSeer Consulting and Mumbai-based Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI). "Schools and other education institutes were caught off guard after the onset of Covid and lockdowns. However, despite low technology maturity, both in terms of device/infrastructure readiness and teacher's technological

readiness, schools were remarkably resilient in adjusting to the "new normal"," said Anil Kumar, founder, RedSeer Consulting. In the past six months, technology adoption has been at different levels across schools. Less than five per cent schools use dedicated/advanced tech solutions like teacher-centric tools and administration management. Almost

20 to 30 per cent schools are using live tuitions, sharing digital content through shared cloud, e-mail and the like. Another 45 to 55 per cent schools have basic digital communication through WhatsApp and similar platforms and they share pre-recorded digital content. However, 15 to 25 per cent schools have shut down, with no tech adoption. Further, 75 per cent of

the surveyed school students are making use of live lectures to connect with the teachers, which used to be under 10 per cent before the lockdown - an eight-fold jump. Private schools performed above average with 90 per cent students and parents making use of technology to join live classes, while this was 60 per cent for government schools. However, not a significant difference in

pattern was observed in bigger cities and smaller cities. In the case of colleges, 80 per cent students are making use of live lectures to connect with the teachers, which earlier would be close to 30 per cent, a 2.5 times jump. Engineering colleges were equipped with technology requirements. But non-engineering colleges were also able to catch up fast.

■ Banks say it's a money losing proposition

Promote only RuPay card, FM tells banks

FALAKNAAZ SYED MUMBAI, NOV. 10

Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday asked banks to promote only RuPay cards and ensure that the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) becomes a brand-India product. But bankers argue that with no MDR charges on transactions, RuPay cards give zero revenue and they lose money on it. Besides, the card is not as competitive for customers as MasterCard, Visa and American Express cards.

Addressing the 73rd annual general meeting of the Indian Banks' Association (IBA) virtually, Sitharaman said, "I would not think it is necessary today in India when RuPay is becoming global, for Indians to be given any other cards first

than RuPay itself. So, promote Rupyay cards. Make sure that the NPCI becomes a brand-India product, which can be promoted elsewhere in the globe and NPCI therefore should be a priority." "Whoever needs the card, RuPay will be the only card you will promote," she said. MDR, or merchant discount rate, usually 1 to 3 per cent of a transaction, is the fee charged to a merchant by payment processors for debit and credit card services. After the government revoking merchant charges on digital payments, Rupyay debit cards seem to have lost their popularity with the banks, which are choosing Visa and MasterCard. An IIT-Bombay study authored by Prof. Ashish Das has revealed that RuPay is facing differen-

tial treatment in the pricing structure. The study found that fewer RuPay debit cards were being issued by banks from September 2019 to August 2020. The study also revealed that only 65 lakh debit cards were issued in August 2020, compared with 4.6 crore cards in the same period of 2019. A senior banker said, "RuPay is India's own card. There is no MDR on RuPay card, but banks generally lose money when MDR is not there, as there is a cost involved. So banks are happy to promote Visa and MasterCard. Even the RBI's Pathak committee had suggested not to make MDR zero. So the government has to relook at its decision." "Secondly, MasterCard and Visa are already established international companies. The transac-

tion experience is seamless and they burn money to attract and retain customers with so many offers such as free lounge access at airports, campaigns, etc. On the other hand, the transaction drops are high with UPI transactions. The government should have a reasonable MDR to help us recover expenses on RuPay," added the banker. Sitharaman also gave lenders a deadline up to March 31, 2021 to link all bank accounts with Aadhaar. "I want Aadhaar card-seeded accounts." "... by March 31, 2021, every account should have a PAN where needed and where applicable, and Aadhaar in every one of your accounts," she said. She also said banks should discourage non-digital payments and promote digital transactions.

MS LAUNCHES NEXT-GEN XBOX GAMING CONSOLES

SUPANTHA MUKHERJEE & SAM NUSSEY STOCKHOLM/TOKYO, NOV. 10

Microsoft Corp on Tuesday launched two models of its Xbox gaming console, seven years after the debut of the previous version, to capture a pandemic-driven boom in consumer spending on games. The Xbox Series X—which the company has described as the "world's most powerful console"—will retail for \$499.99 and a lower-priced Xbox Series S will sell for \$299.99. The strategy offers consumers greater choice but the compact Series S faces criticism for being less powerful than the Series X, with less storage capacity and lacking advanced "ray tracing" graphics for titles like Capcom's "Devil May Cry 5." Xbox will compete with Sony Corp's 6758.T PlayStation 5, scheduled to launch on Thursday. PS5 is widely viewed as leading the console race due to its bigger fan base and a broader range of exclusive gaming titles available at launch. —Reuters

INDIA-BOUND NEW LAND ROVER DISCOVERY REVEALED

MICHAEL GONSALVES PUNE, NOV 10

The Jaguar Land Rover, the Tata Motors-owned British marque, which took the covers off the new Land Rover Discovery in the UK is all set to enter the Indian luxury car market next year. The updated 2021 model the fifth generation Discovery SUV is aimed at rejuvenating sales of what was formerly one of its best-selling models. It will be introduced in the Indian market next year.



Sensex in 43K zone

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, NOV.10

The bulls were unstoppable for the seventh consecutive session, as the global market rallied on hopes of a coronavirus vaccine hitting drug stores soon, fresh cases in India falling to 38,000 and the NDA seemed taking a comfortable lead in Bihar elections. The Sensex closed above the 43,000-mark for the first time at 43,277.65, gaining 680.22 points and the Nifty -50 closed at 12,631.10, up 170 points. However, underperformance and profit taking in the broader market shows the market rally is getting stretched now and could see some profit taking before Diwali. The BSE



Mid-cap Index fell 0.10 per cent while the Small-cap fell 0.48 per cent against Sensex's rise of 1.60 per cent. The volatility index, NSE's India VIX, rose 7.28 per cent to 21.58. Foreign portfolio investors pumped another Rs 5,627.32 crore into equities, as per the provisional data, making it Rs 20,340.45 crore investment in the last four sessions post-the US presidential

elections. FPIs have net invested Rs 15,874 crore in November so far. The domestic institutions, meanwhile, have been booking profit and were net sellers by Rs 2,309.19 crore on Tuesday. Devarsh Vakil, deputy head of retail research, HDFC Securities, said, "Indian markets shot up on positive overnight cues from global markets and Asian peers opening higher." Banking stocks continued to outperform, as the Nifty Bank Index gained a massive 3.89 per cent. At the same time IT and pharmaceuticals stocks corrected while beaten down stocks such as those tied to travel and leisure, movie theaters, and theme park moved up.

Premji most generous Indian in FY20: Hurun

Mumbai, Nov. 10: Wipro's Azim Premji donated Rs 22 crore a day, or Rs 7,904 crore, in a year to emerge as the most generous Indian in FY20 and topped a list of philanthropy.

Premji pipped HCL Technologies' Shiv Nadar, who had earlier topped the list collated by Hurun Report India and Edelgive Foundation, by a wide margin. Nadar's donations stood at Rs 795 crore for FY20 against Rs 826 crore in prior year. Premji had donated Rs 426 crore in the previous fiscal. Mukesh Ambani of Reliance Industries retained the third spot among the list of givers by donating Rs 458 crore against Rs 402 crore a year ago, it said. The pandemic had the corporate honchos repurposing their donations to fight Covid infections, and the top giver on this turned out to be Tata Sons with a Rs 1,500-crore commitment, followed by Premji at Rs 1,125 crore and Ambani's Rs 510 crore. A bulk of the corporate commitments seemed to have gone to the PM-CARES Fund, with Reliance Industries com-

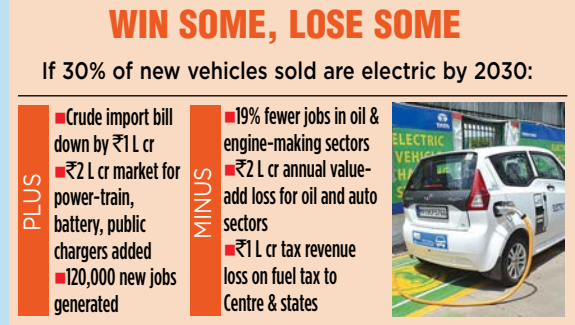


mitting Rs 500 crore, and Aditya Birla Group donating Rs 400 crore. The Tatas' commitment also includes a Rs 500 crore donation to the newly created fund. Premji's generosity pulled the total donations up by 175 per cent to Rs 12,050 crore in FY20, the list said. Azim Premji Endowment Fund owns 13.6 per cent of the promoter's shareholding in Wipro and has the right to receive all money earned from promoter shares. Individuals who have donated more than Rs 10 crore numbered 78 against 72 a year ago. With a donation of Rs 27 crore, Amit and Archana Chandra of ATE Chandra Foundation are the only professional managers to ever enter the list. —PTI

EV era: Oil bill to dip by ₹1 L-cr; govts to lose ₹1 L-cr revenue

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, NOV. 10

India can save Rs 1 lakh crore on crude oil imports annually if electric vehicles (EVs) were to garner 30 per cent share of new vehicle sales by 2030, says a study. Meeting the 30 per cent EV penetration target in 2030 will also have several environmental benefits, including a 17 per cent decrease each in primary particulate matter and nitrogen oxide and dioxide (NOx) emissions, 18 per cent reduction in carbon monoxide emissions, and a 4 per cent cut in greenhouse gas emissions relative to the business as usual scenario, found a study by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), a New Delhi-based think-tank. The higher EV penetration would also mean 19 per cent fewer jobs in the oil sector and the internal combustion engine-making sector combined. Further, the annual value-add loss in the oil and automobile sectors



could amount to about Rs 2 lakh crore. In addition, the central and state governments would lose over Rs 1 lakh crore in tax revenue annually from reduced sale of petrol and diesel. However, the increase in EV penetration could also increase the combined market size of power-train, battery and public chargers to over Rs 2 lakh crore in addition to creating 120,000 new jobs in this sector. Further, a substantial number of new jobs are likely to be created in emerging areas such as battery recycling, telematics, and allied construction and services.

"As India recovers from the pandemic, a focus on developing India's domestic EV manufacturing sector and increasing the penetration of electric vehicles in road transport would help deliver on jobs, growth and sustainability. This would require creating a robust and comprehensive transition plan for electric mobility that capitalises on the opportunities created in the form of improvement in balance of payments, new markets, and jobs generated," said Abhinav Soman, one of the authors of the study and a researcher at CEEW.

Blockchain-based platform launched for crop trading

JUSTINA VASQUEZ NOV. 10

Cerealia SA launched its blockchain-based physical agriculture trading platform for commercial use, allowing companies to trade wheat, sorghum and other commodities. The launch followed a series of pilot transactions beginning in 2018. Firms from Japan, Dubai, Ukraine, Turkey, Algeria and Brazil participated in a pre-launch period before the platform was released on Tuesday to the general trading community, according to a company statement. Transaction volumes range as large as 20,000 tonnes of grain.

The Pully, Switzerland-based company said it's the first to combine the need in the international Russian wheat market for a fast trading platform with a more thoroughly traceable execution programme. Russia is the world's top wheat producer. Transactions span wheat as well as corn, barley and other grains and vegetable oil markets. "Traders can now be 100 per cent certain they really did the trade, versus traditional over-the-phone brokerage," Andrei Grigorov, Cerealia's chief executive officer, said in the statement. "Instantly, they have digitally signed contracts and blockchain-

registered records 'forever'." Agricultural commodity blockchain trading platforms have been projects among both startups and heavyweights in recent years. Prime Shipping Foundation piloted bulk commodities payments via blockchain, shipping wheat from Russia to Turkey. Covantis SA was announced in 2018 after the world's largest agricultural commodities traders--Archer-Daniels-Midland Co., Bunge Ltd., Cargill, Cofco Group, Louis Dreyfus Co. and the agriculture arm of Glencore Plc -- teamed up to streamline trading. — Bloomberg

MAHINDRA BIDS ADIEU TO PLANE MANUFACTURING

Mumbai, Nov. 10: Mahindra Group on Tuesday said it has closed down its aircraft manufacturing business in Australia and is scouting for a buyer, more than a decade after venturing into high-cost plane-making business. The decision also comes little over a year after one of the planes, manufactured at the Australian facility, crashed in Sweden killing nine persons. In 2009, Mahindra Group acquired 75.1 per cent stake each in two Australian aerospace firms, Gippsland Aeronautics (Gipps Aero) and Aerostaff Australia, for Rs 175 crore as part of its plans to manufacture aircraft and allied components to service global market. "We have shut down our Gipps Aero business, which was into the manufacturing of 8- and 10-seater planes in Australia," Mahindra & Mahindra deputy managing director and group CFO Anish Shah told reporters in a post-earnings call. —PTI

SHORT TAKES

Alia first female director in PCB

Islamabad: The Pakistan Cricket Board has appointed a female director for the first time. Human resources executive Alia Zafar has been included among four new PCB directors. The others are finance executive Javed Kurieshi, economist Asim Wajid Jawad and corporate executive Arif Saeed. Zafar and Jawad were appointed for two-year terms. The PCB's new constitution makes it mandatory to include at least one woman among four independent directors on its board of governors. I welcome the newly-appointed independent members, especially Ms Alia Zafar, the first female independent member, which is a giant step forward in enhancing the PCB's governance structure, PCB chairman Ehsan Mani said. — AP

Bangla captain tests positive

Dhaka: Bangladesh Test captain Mominul Haque has tested positive for Covid-19 and he is undergoing home isolation, according to a report here. Haque's coronavirus positive result came close on the heels of another senior player Mahmudullah Riyad contracting the virus which forced him to miss the Pakistan Super League play-offs. Bangladesh Cricket Board chief physician Dr Debashish Chowdhury confirmed Haque's test result to local news website. Haque, on his part, said that he had mild fever and got himself tested. "I only came to know yesterday that I have tested positive for Covid-19. I had fever for the last two days. Even I am running temperature today. But otherwise, there aren't any other symptoms," Haque said. — PTI

Bairstow to make Big Bash debut

Sydney: England wicketkeeper-batsman Jonny Bairstow will make his Big Bash League debut this year after signing for the Melbourne Stars. The 10th edition of Australia's Twenty20 tournament begins on December 10, although the 31-year-old will not be available until after Christmas. "I've always watched the BBL no matter where I've been in the world and it will be nice to finally be a part of it," said Bairstow late Monday. "I know the Stars are one of the competition's profile clubs and have a track record of being in contention in finals." Bairstow will join forces with the likes of Glenn Maxwell, Marcus Stoinis and Adam Zampa at the Stars. "His experience and versatility will be a valuable addition to our batting line-up, and we've got several 'keeping options in the squad as well," said Melbourne coach David Hussey. — AFP

Pak whitewash Zimbabwe in T20

Rawalpindi, Pakistan: Leg spinner Usman Qadir grabbed four wickets to guide Pakistan to a 3-0 whitewash of Zimbabwe with an eight-wicket victory in the third Twenty20 here on Tuesday. The 27-year-old Qadir — son of the late star spinner Abdul Qadir — finished with 4-13 from four mesmerising overs to restrict Zimbabwe to a paltry 129-9 in 20 overs. That proved a walk in the park for the home team, which cruised to victory in 15.2 overs losing just two wickets. Pakistan lost Fakhar Zaman (21) and Haider Ali (27) but debutant Abdullah Shafique top-scored with 41 and saw Pakistan home with Khushdil Shah (36 not out). — AFP

Brief scores: Zimbabwe 129/9 (Chibhabha 31, Qadir 4/13, Wasim 2/27) lost to Pakistan 130/2 (Shafique 41, Khushdil 36)

Live on TV

CRICKET

Women's Big Bash League: Perth Scorchers vs Sydney Sixers from 9 am; Brisbane Heat vs Sydney Thunder from 1.35 pm on Sony Six

FOOTBALL

International Friendlies: Norway vs Israel from 10.30 pm on Sony Six; Turkey vs Croatia from 11.15 pm on Sony Ten 2, HD; Belgium vs Switzerland from 1.15 am (Thursday) on Sony Ten 1; Germany vs Czech Republic from 1.15 am (Thursday) on Sony Six; Netherlands vs Spain from 1.15 am (Thursday) on Sony Ten 2; France vs Finland from 1.40 am (Thursday) on Sony Ten 3

WWE

NXT: Bout: from 6.30 am (Thursday) on Sony Ten 1

MUMB-HIGH FIVE!

Rohit & Co. hammer Delhi by 5 wickets to take fifth IPL title

Dubai, Nov. 10: A peerless Rohit Sharma led defending champions Mumbai Indians to their fifth IPL title with a one-sided demolition of Delhi Capitals here on Tuesday, closing an immensely successful tournament that had to be played in a controlled environment amid the raging Covid-19 pandemic.

If last year's one-run win over Chennai Super Kings was an absolute cliffhanger, Rohit's aristocratic 68 off 50 balls made it an anti-climax with Mumbai Indians chasing the target of 157 in 18.4 overs.

Five IPL titles are certain to make Rohit the undisputed 'Numero Uno' player-cum-leader in the IPL Universe.

He has played way better knocks than this in the past and will play a few more special ones in the future.

But he might never play a more significant one considering the little whirlpool of controversy that his "once damaged and now on the mend hamstring" created.

The 'Hit-Man' has given an altogether new meaning to what has one known till now about crushing pain barriers.

A hamstring injury can be very painful but the manner in which India's regular white-ball skipper exploded inside the 'Ring of Fire' at the Dubai International Stadium, he was fighting a battle of his own.

The cover drive was about his class, the whiplash behind square was his swagger and the so very familiar "Rohit Sharma pull shot" was an assurance to BCCI president Sourav Ganguly that "All Is Well".

And to prove a point, he fetched those doubles, tap and run singles including a misjudged one that saw Suryakumar Yadav (19) sacrificing his wicket for his skipper and rightly so. The carrom ball bowled by Ashwin was deposited to point fence with a cracking square cut and the straight six off leg spinner Praveen Dubey was "Boss Man" written all over it.

There has never been an edition where a team has



Mumbai Indians captain Rohit Sharma (left) and team celebrate their win over Delhi Capitals in the final of IPL Season 13 in Dubai on Tuesday. — BCCI

●● If last year's one-run win over Chennai Super Kings was an absolute cliffhanger, Rohit's aristocratic 68 off 50 balls made it an anti-climax with Mumbai Indians chasing the target of 157 in 18.4 overs.

● Five IPL titles are certain to make Rohit the undisputed 'Numero Uno' player-cum-leader in the IPL Universe.

looked in a different league compared to seven others.

As Rohit had said earlier, it's not rocket science but investing in pure match-winners that has given Mumbai Indians such a menacing look.

Rome wasn't built in a day and neither a champion outfit that has now won five titles out of the

six finals it has played.

If Jasprit Bumrah wreaked havoc in the Qualifier one, Trent Boult (3/30) decided that final was his turn to inflict the damage and he did it with a first ball beauty that Marcus Stoinis will remember for years to come.

Nathan Coulter-Nile looked like a weak-link

but got the dangerous Rishabh Pant (56 off 38 balls) at the nick of time to put the brakes.

Rohit's batting only finished what looked inevitable but it was his captaincy that set it up.

Only 45 runs conceded in the last five overs during the DC innings was a game-changer as Shreyas Iyer (65 no off 50 balls) literally struggled during the end overs.

That was the time when save for Bumrah (0/28 in 4 overs), Boult and Coulter-Nile took the pace off the deliveries with slow bouncers and cutters making it difficult to hit.

And the decision to have off-spinner Jayant Yadav replace leg-spinner Rahul Chahar also proved to be a success. — PTI

KXIP LIKELY TO RETAIN RAHUL-KUMBLE

New Delhi, Nov. 10: Kings XI Punjab are likely to continue with the captain and coach combine of K.L. Rahul and Anil Kumble even after finishing sixth in a closely-contested 2020 Indian Premier League.

A team source said that the owners want Rahul and Kumble take the team forward in the 2021 edition, scheduled in less than six months.

Rahul, who captained the team for the first team this season, had another stellar season with the bat, amassing 670 runs at an average of 55.83. It was Kumble's first season with the franchise.

KXIP, who have never had a settled unit, have finally found a core group of players around whom a team



K.L. Rahul (left) and Anil Kumble.

can be built. That group includes Rahul, Mayank Agarwal, Nicholas Pooran, Mohammad Shami, Chris Gayle and youngsters like Ravi Bishnoi and Arshdeep Singh.

The management wants to plug the gaps in the middle order and bowling department, which has been an issue for a number

of years. "The owners are happy with captain and coach. Rahul was exceptional with the bat and team scripted a remarkable comeback in the second half of the season. Had that short run not being called in the first game (against DC), the team would have been in play-offs" the source said. — PTI

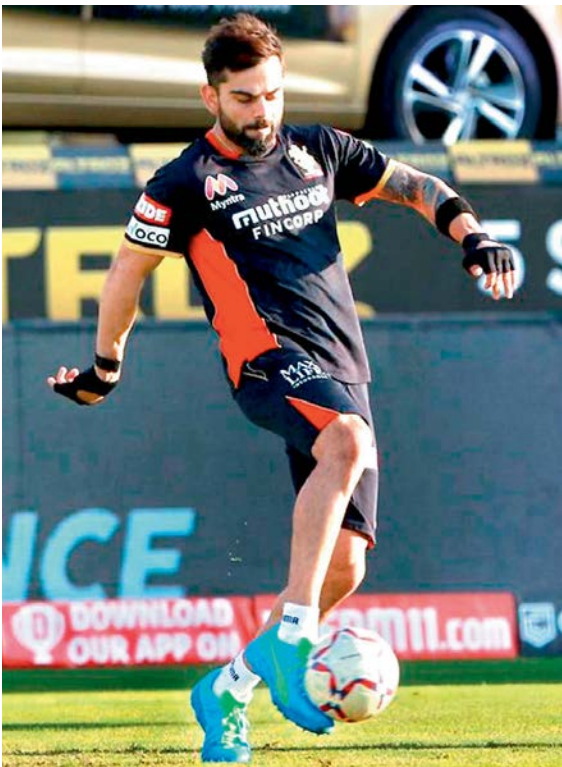
Waugh sad about Virat pullout

Sydney, Nov. 10: Australian great Steve Waugh said on Tuesday he was surprised and disappointed that India captain Virat Kohli will miss three Tests to be at the birth of his first child, with his absence detracting from the blockbuster series.

The 32-year-old and his Bollywood star wife Anushka Sharma are expecting a child in January, and Kohli has been given permission by the Indian cricket board to return home after the first Test in Adelaide, which begins on December 17.

While the absence of the superstar batsman could improve Australia's chances of regaining the Border-Gavaskar trophy, it is a blow to broadcasters and cricket chiefs already feeling the effects of a pandemic-affected year.

"I'm a little bit disappointed he's not going to



AUSTRALIA TOUR

be there — and a bit surprised," former skipper Waugh, who played 168 Tests, said.

"This was really shaping up as one the key series of his whole career after he's achieved just about everything. But obviously family comes first."

India are due leave this week for Australia, where they will spend two weeks in quarantine in Sydney before the first one-day international on November 27.

Kohli will lead India in three ODIs, three T20 and the first Test — a day-night match in Adelaide — before heading home.

The second Test starts in Melbourne on December 26 followed by matches in Sydney on January 7 and Brisbane on January 15, all played under strict bio-security protocols. — AFP

DRUMS BEAT FOR PUCOVSKI AFTER BACK-TO-BACK TONS

Sydney, Nov. 10: Australia's selectors were under pressure on Tuesday to pick Will Pucovski as an opening batsman for the Test series against India after the young prodigy smashed back-to-back double centuries.

The 22-year-old hit an unbeaten 255 for Victoria in the Sheffield Shield last week, sharing in a record opening stand of 486 runs with Marcus Harris against South Australia.

He followed it with 202 against Western Australia on Monday which saw former Australia captains add their weight to calls for him to open alongside David Warner, at the expense of incumbent Joe Burns.

"It's against a good team, India, but this kid's ready... Now is his time,"

former skipper Michael Clarke told reporters.

"Got to pick him. The fact this series is in Australia is a great way to get him into that Test team as well. He is playing in conditions he is accustomed to."

Fellow former captains Ian Chappell and Kim Hughes expressed similar sentiments, as did Mark Waugh.

"I would definitely be picking him for the first Test against India," Waugh told Fox Sports. "He should be picked as an opening batsman."

"Joe Burns has got a decent enough record, but his start to the season hasn't been ideal and he just hasn't nailed that spot down."

Selectors are finalising the squad for the first of four Tests against India in Adelaide on December 17.

BCCI INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR SELECTORS

New Delhi, Nov. 10: The BCCI on Tuesday invited applications for replacing three outgoing selectors in the senior men's committee. The deadline for sending applications is Sunday, November 15, with an age-cap of 60 years and a minimum eligibility criteria of 30 first-class matches.

However, it goes without saying that international experience (7 Tests or a combination of 10 ODIs and 20 first-class matches) will be given preference.

The three outgoing selectors are Devang Gandhi (East Zone), Sarandeep Singh (North Zone) and Jatinder Paranjape (West Zone).

While the BCCI has done away with the zonal policy officially, the convention has been to replace the candidate from the same zone as Sunil Joshi (South) replaced MSK Prasad, who was the chairman of the last committee.

Similarly, Rajasthan's Gagan Khoda was replaced by Railways' Harvinder Singh. — PTI

CA chief reveals Kohli missing Tests was on cards

Melbourne, Nov. 10: Cricket Australia chief executive Nick Hockley is not surprised by Virat Kohli's withdrawal from three Test matches here as he prepares for fatherhood in January, taking solace from the fact that the superstar will be there for a major part of the eagerly-awaited showdown across formats.

Kohli and his actor wife Anushka Sharma are expecting their first child in January. The BCCI has granted Kohli a paternity

leave and he will return to India after the opening Test, scheduled for December 17 in Adelaide.

Hockley, who is CA's interim chief executive, said that Kohli missing a major part of the Test series was expected but he is glad that the stylish batter will be available for three T20 Internationals and as many ODIs starting November 27.

"When they announced their pregnancy earlier, I think it was always on the cards," Hockley told

We're thrilled Virat is coming out for three ODIs, three T20s, the first ever day-night Test against India and we have to respect the fact he wants to be there for the birth of his first child.

— NICK HOCKLEY
Cricket Australia chief executive

Sydney radio station SEN. "We're thrilled Virat is coming out for three ODIs,



three T20s, the first ever day-night Test against India and we have to

respect the fact he wants to be there for the birth of his first child.

"Clearly, (he is) one of the game's absolute superstars. We're looking forward to seeing him here for seven out of the 10 matches," he said.

Hockley said both teams have enough stars to ensure that cricket fans will be hooked to the series. "You've got a good number of players from both sides who played the last series in Australia which India won. There'll

be a huge amount to play for ... it will be fascinating series."

Hockley said it looks highly unlikely that Kohli could get back to Australia to play the latter part of the series.

"I think it's pretty challenging (for him to return). Obviously a mandatory 14-day quarantine period," he said.

"Logistically it's very much more complicated and being brutal it's much harder than normal." — PTI

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