


# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA  
ANANTAPUR | SATURDAY | 26 SEPTEMBER 2020

WEATHER



Max: 33.0°C  
Min: 19°C  
RH: 53%  
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Cloudy sky.  
Misty morning. Max/Min temp. 33/19 °C



## WORLD | 7

**Retired generals oppose Trump, to back Biden**



## SPORTS | 8

**Kohli fined ₹12 lakh for slow over rate**



CASES	(+83,898)
58,96,544	
DEATHS	(+1,082)
93,357	

STATE GOVT BUILDINGS	(+2,381)
1,81,627	
TELANGANA	(+10)
1,080	
ANDHRA PRADESH	(+7,073)
6,61,458	
	(+45)
5,606	

WORLD CONFIRMED CASES	3,26,42,738
DEATHS	9,90,772
COUNTRIES AREAS WITH CASES	213

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## Aurobindo eyes Kakinada deep port

### State government encourages takeover as it feels Adani may not pursue earlier plan

**N. VAMSI SRINIVAS | DC VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 25**

After taking a majority stake in the Kakinada SEZ, Aurobindo Realty is said to have set its eyes on the Kakinada deep water port. A top delegation from the Aurobindo group visited the port a few days ago and held discussions on port operations.

Sources having knowledge about the developments told *Deccan Chronicle* that the company was keen on diversifying into the marine sector and the port provides a better platform to begin.

*Deccan Chronicle* in these columns on September 1 had reported that Aurobindo was holding talks with GMR for the Kakinada SEZ as part of its plan to bid for the Centre-

● **TOP DELEGATION** from the Aurobindo group visited the port a few days ago and held discussions on port operations.

● **GMR ON Friday** made an official announcement on selling its 51 per cent stake to Aurobindo for ₹2,600 crore.

● **THE YSRC** government took a tough stand and ordered a forensic audit into allegations of swindling of revenue by KSPL.

● **THE AUDIT** firms were looking at KSPL's sub-contracts with Bothras and Sharat Chatterjee Company sponsored pharma park. Sources said the top brass of the Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy government had encouraged the takeover as it was under the impression that the Adani group, which earlier concluded the deal with GMR, might not aggressively pursue the project. GMR on Friday made an official announcement on selling its 51 per cent stake to

Aurobindo for ₹2,600 crore.

"Besides acquiring the remaining 49 per cent stake in KSEZ held by Kakinada Infrastructure Holdings Pvt Ltd (KHIL), the pharma giant is exploring the possibilities of buying the existing port," sources said. Kakinada Sea Ports Limited, the present concessionaire of the port, owns KIHIL.

K.V. Rao, managing director of KSPL, enjoyed a rapport with all successive governments beginning with Dr Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy's in 2004. The YSR regime grossly compromised on the state's interest and removed crucial clauses including the minimum guarantee amount to benefit Rao's company. A former Rajya Sabha MP was instrumental in the government doling out benefits to KSPL.

Ironically, Telugu Desam supreme N. Chandrababu Naidu, who was in the Opposition during the changes, maintained a stoic silence, though he targeted YSR with corruption charges on all other projects.

The bonhomie continued after 2014 when Naidu

became Chief Minister. The Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy government, however, took a tough stand and ordered a forensic audit into allegations of swindling of revenue by KSPL.

"We are probing into allegations of KSPL showing less revenues to pay a smaller share to the state government," a senior infrastructure official said adding that two agencies — Kroll and a Chennai-based audit firm — were engaged for forensic audit.

The audit firms have been looking into KSPL's sub-contract arrangement with Bothras and Sharat Chatterjee Company. While the final reports are pending, the Aurobindo group is said to have begun exploring the takeover, sources pointed out.

## India loses case on Vodafone retro tax

**₹22,100 cr demand dismissed in global court**

**New Delhi, Sept. 25:** British telecom giant Vodafone Group plc on Friday won an arbitration against the Indian government over a demand for ₹22,100 crore in taxes using retrospective legislation.

An international arbitration tribunal ruled that India's demand in past taxes were in breach of fair treatment under a bilateral investment protection pact.

"The award is confidential, but Vodafone can confirm that the tribunal has found (it) in Vodafone's favour," Vodafone Group said in a statement. "We are studying the lengthy documents and can make no further comment at this time."

It was not immediately known if the Indian government will abide by the arbitration award. Sources said the tax demand was on the UK-listed company and Vodafone's India venture faced no liability. Vodafone India was later on merged with Aditya Birla Group's telecom company Idea.

Sources with direct knowledge of the matter said the government of India's liability will be restricted to about ₹75 crore.

Before the arbitration tribunal, Vodafone had challenged India's usage of a 2012 legislation that gave it powers to retrospectively tax deals like Vodafone's \$11-billion acquisition of 67 per cent stake in the mobile phone business owned by Hutchison Whampoa in 2007. It challenged the demand of ₹7,990 crore in capital gains taxes (₹22,100 crore after including interest and penalty) under the Netherlands-India Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT).

Tax authorities had in September 2007 served notice to Vodafone International Holdings BV (VIH-BV) for its alleged failure to deduct withholding tax from consideration paid to the Hutchison Telecommunications International Ltd. However, Vodafone challenged this in the

Supreme Court, which set it aside tax notice in January 2012, saying that the transaction was not taxable in India and so the company had no obligation to withhold tax. In May that year, Parliament passed the Finance Act 2012 that amended various provisions of the Income-Tax Act, 1961, with retrospective effect to tax any gain on transfer of shares in a non-Indian company which derives substantial value from underlying Indian assets. In January 2013, the company was served a tax notice of ₹14,200 crore after including interest on the principal amount. A year later, Vodafone challenged the tax demand.

Sources said the company in April 2014 served the notice of arbitration after out-of-court dispute resolution talks failed. Vodafone has always maintained that there is no liability and that it will vigorously defend any allegation that it is liable to pay tax. — PTI

## SPB music to play in films as legend exits world stage

**DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, SEPT. 25**

Renowned playback singer S.P. Balasubrahmanyam, known in nearly every household as SPB and Balu, passed away at 1.04 pm on Friday at MGM Healthcare Hospital in Chennai, where he was under maximal life support.

He was 74. He is survived by his wife, a daughter and a son, S.P. Charan. SPB's body would be laid to rest with police honours, a Tamil Nadu government press release said.

From the hospital, his body was taken to his home, where fans poured in to pay tributes and police had a tough time regulating the crowds, particularly in ensuring the maintenance of physical distancing.

The singer's last rites would be held at a family farmhouse on the outskirts of Chennai on Saturday morning and the cortege would leave from home on Friday night, sources said.

Balasubrahmanyam was admitted on August 5 follow-



**ON PAGE 4**  
**A GOLDEN VOICE FALLS SILENT**

ing mild Covid-19 symptoms. His condition worsened and he was on life support for Covid-19 and pneumonia since August 14. On Thursday his condition deteriorated, triggering a spate of 'get well' messages from his fans and well-wishers all over the world on social media.

He was in the hospital for a total of 52 days. He had tested negative for Covid-19 on September 4. At the time of admission, the singer had said in a video message that the infection was "very mild" and he would return home in two days.

Born in Nellore in Andhra Pradesh in 1946, he made his debut as a playback singer on December 15 with *Sri Sri Sri Marayada Ramanna*, a Telugu movie, and went on to win the national award for best singer six times and state awards in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka several times.

The nation honoured the legendary singer, who also directed music in many films and acted in 74 movies, with the Padma Bhushan in 2011 and the Padma Shri in 2001.

Fans noted he could could whistle, mimic any sound or voice and had the ability to blend stammer, laughter, cough or give a voice form to any emotion in his songs.

■ **Page 4: Condolence messages pour in for SPB**

## Video shows ring stolen from dead Covid-19 patient

**AVINASH P. SUBRAMANYAM | DC TIRUPATI, SEPT. 25**

A Covid-19-designated State hospital, which is run by Sri Padmavathi Medical College for Women (SPMC) and is attached to Sri Venkateswara Institute of Medical Sciences (SVIMS) here has been embroiled in a controversy after a video shot inside the hospital premises, shows a dead person being relieved of his jewellery. This has gone viral on social media.

SVIMS-SPMC hospital has treated more than 3,407 patients till the second week of September and achieved a success rate of 87 per cent. Also, more than 1,79,266 RT-PCR tests were conducted at VRDL, which is attached to the hospital. For all its achieve-

ments on the corona front, it is now at the receiving end after the CC cameras in ICU captured workers stealing the gold ring of a Covid-19 deceased patient.

The video has created ripples in political circles with many slamming the government authorities for not keeping a tab on activities in the hospital.

Sources told this newspaper that a middle-aged man hailing from Chowdepalli in Punganur mandal, who had tested positive for Covid-19, admitted about 10 days back. His health deteriorated on Thursday and he passed away on the same day. Family members noticed that a gold ring and a mobile phone of the deceased were missing.

■ **Page 3: Outsourced worker involved in theft**

## Bihar polls from October 28

**VINEETA PANDEY and NAYEAR AZAD NEW DELHI/PATNA, SEPT. 25**

The Assembly elections in Bihar will be held in three phases starting from October 28, chief election commissioner Sunil Arora announced on Friday. This will be the first election to be held under the shadow and spread of Coronavirus that has claimed over 58 lakh people in India.

In Bihar, which is still recovering from floods in several areas, over 1.74 lakh cases were detected and its daily fresh cases continue to be over 1,000.

However, since the Assembly's term expires on November 29, the Election Commission has tried to wind up the poll process after Dasara but before Diwali and Chhath festivals by holding the polls in three phases.

Voting for 243 Assembly

seats in Bihar will be held on October 28, November 3 and November 7, and the results will be declared on November 10.

The EC warned candidates and parties against use of the social media for hate speeches and mischiefous purposes.

The EC is yet to decide on the bypolls for one LS seat and 64 Assembly seats in other states, a meeting for which will be held on September 29.

## Onion price hits ₹50 per kg in AP

**MD ILYAS | DC VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 25**

The abnormal hike in onion prices is bringing tears to people in these pandemic-destroyed times as onions turned ₹50 per kg against the normal price of ₹15 to ₹20 per kg.

Already facing financial difficulties due to the impact of the lockdown, this huge increase in onion prices is a big burden on ordinary people. The recent rains damaged onion crops in Rayalaseema, Maharashtra and Karnataka which were major suppliers of onions to AP. Hence the shortage, upsetting the demand-supply ratio, has caused the abnormal price hike.

Further, the removal of onions from essential commodities list by the union government is going to raise onion prices further due to the absence of control by the government. Onion was priced at ₹44 per kg in the Rythu bazaars and ₹50-60 per kg according to size and quality in the open market on Friday in AP.

Polimetta Malleswari and G. Bhavani, women consumers, said that the onion is an essential ingredient in all foods and people cannot avoid buying onions. They said that already people are facing severe financial diffi-

culties due to loss of work, cuts in salaries and absence of proper business due to the corona crisis and this hike of onion prices has only worsened matters.

Recalling the supply of onions through Rythu bazaars at a subsidised price of ₹25 per kg last year by the government, they demanded that the government initiate measures to control the prices of onions and further to supply them through Rythu bazaars at subsidised rates.

CPM executive committee member, Ch. Babu Rao, alleged that the union and state governments totally failed to control the prices of essential commodities and the removal of onion from the list of essential commodities created the conditions for the abnormal price hike.

He said that the purchasing power of people has dropped due to decreased income in this corona crisis but the onion prices increased abnormally due to the syndication of market powers. He said that removal of onions from essential commodities would not help farmers but surely be helpful to multinationals and corporations.

■ **Page 3: Vegetable prices burning pockets**

## ANOTHER FIR FILED ON AP FORMER A-G

**DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 25**

The Andhra Pradesh police on Friday booked a fresh case of cheating, criminal conspiracy and breach of trust against former advocate-general Dammalapati

Srinivas, his wife Nagarani and brother-in-law N a n n a p a n e n i Seetharamaraju and a few others acting on a complaint from a retired lecturer, Kode Rama Mohan Rao.

■ **Full report on Page 2**

## Farmers intensify agitation over farm Bills

**DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs HYDERABAD, NEW DELHI, SEPT. 25**

Farmers blocked roads in several parts of the country on Friday, protesting against the three agri-marketing Bills passed on Sunday by Parliament.

The most widespread protests were in Punjab and Haryana, and demonstrations were reported from Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Kerala and Karnataka as part of the 'Bharat bandh' call given



**Farmers protest against the farm Bills passed by the Centre at Ambala on Friday.**

— PTI

by farmer unions. In Telangana, the Congress and Left parties

held demonstrations in Hyderabad and elsewhere in the state. TRS rallies to

highlight the recently amended revenue Acts saw leaders criticising the farm Bills. Over 30 organisations had given a separate Punjab bandh call, which appeared to be near total. A tractor was set on fire by protesters in Punjab's Barilana.

A three-day rail roko that began on Thursday is also underway in Punjab, with farmers squatting on the tracks at many places in Punjab and the railways suspending many trains. Shiromani Akali Dal chief Sukhbir Singh Badal drove

a tractor while his wife and former Union minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal sat beside him in Muktsar district.

Prominent Punjabi singers like Harbhajan Mann and Ranjit Bawa took part in a farmers' protest in Nabha.

In the capital, hundreds of farmers, on foot, two-wheelers and tractors, were stopped at Delhi's border with UP, their agitation disrupting traffic in Noida and Ghaziabad.

■ **More reports on Page 5**

## SUDDEN | DEATH Villagers see bad omen; pesticide suspected to be cause

## Siberian pelicans found dead in AP

**K.M.P. PATNAIK | DC VIZIANAGARAM, SEPT. 25**

Hundreds of pelicans from Siberia have been found dead in and around Chellamnaduvalasa of Seethanagaram mandal in Vizianagaram district, about 130 km from Visakhapatnam.

The bird deaths were occurring for about a week, locals said. It is suspected that pesticide poisoning could be the reason.

The villagers, shocked at the unusual death of these winged guests, alerted veterinary department offi-

cials to protect the remaining birds. Villagers see the death of the birds as a bad omen. Villagers said thousands of Siberian birds arrive in their village in the last week of June for the nesting season. The birds leave between November and December along with their offspring.

The locals never harm the birds; rather they protect them from poachers and predators. They have also punished a few people for harming the birds in the past. Tourists usually visit the village for a glimpse of

● **CHELLAMNAIDUVALASA** village elders said more than 300 birds were found dead near the trees and a few other places

the birds in November.

Chellamnaduvalasa village elders said more than 300 birds were found dead near the trees and a few other places in the village during the last few days. They fear that the birds may have contracted some infection and died.

A veterinary team, led by surgeon Ch. Lalitha, head

of the animal disease diagnostic centre, visited the village and conducted a post-mortem on a few dead birds. It sent samples to the Animal Biological Research Institute at Vijayawada to find out the reason for the deaths. The birds usually perch on tamarind trees where they build nests.

"Prima facie we suspect the birds might have consumed pesticide in the agriculture fields close to Swarnamukhi river. The birds feed on snails that are largely found in the fields,"

Dr Lalitha said. Telikunchi and Telineelapuram are the two other villages in Srikakulam district where a large number of pelicans and painted storks from Siberia arrive every year. There were no reports of bird deaths there.

"Only open billed storks arrived in Telikunchi and there is no sign of birds at Telineelapuram," said divisional forest officer Sandeep Krupavaram. Sources said a few storks died in Telineelapuram two years ago and the reason was not known.



## OTHER STORIES

AP ANNOUNCES  
NEW EXCISE POLICY  
FOR YEAR 2020-21SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC  
VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 25

The state government announced a new excise policy for the year 2020-21, allowing the Andhra Pradesh state beverages corporation limited (ABSBCL) to continue to retail Indian made foreign liquor and foreign liquor through the 2,934 retail outlets for the period from 01-10-2020 to 30-09-2021, following the norms of AP excise rules, 2019.

The state government issued GO MS No. 279 on Friday announcing the new prohibition and excise policy in respect of retail outlets.

Accordingly, the same number of 2,934 retail outlets existing as on Sept. 30, 2020 will be fixed for the year 2020-21 and the licence period is to be one year as contemplated in the AP excise rules, 2019. The APSBCL will continue to sell liquor by shop and will run retail outlets.

The commissioner of prohibition and excise is permitted to renew the existing retail outlets being run by APSBCL under Rule 8 of the AP excise rules, 2019 on payment of an annual licence fee as fixed by the state government. The directions of the Supreme Court are to be followed on the sale of liquor on highways. No shop will be permitted or renewed on the road from Tirupati railway station to Alipiri via RTC bus stand, Leela-mahal circle and other areas falling under the Tirupati municipal corporation area.

The commissioner is permitted to establish walk-in shops (elite shops) in the state if required but without any change in the number of retail outlets permitted. An intensive campaign is to be taken up to educate the people on the evils of consumption of liquor and other intoxicants.

The APSBCL's Managing Director is directed to implement track and trace in all retail outlets for transparency in sale transactions. He will prepare and communicate a manual for the operation of retail outlets from the fixing of rent to cash remittances to save the state revenue.

RAYACHOTI  
MUNICIPALITY TO  
GET ADDL DE, EENAGESWARA RAO  
BALLEDA | DC  
KADAPA, SEPT. 25

Government chief whip G. Srikanth Reddy said that municipal and urban development minister Botsa Satyanarayana assured appointment of an additional DE and an EE in the engineering department of Rayachoti municipality.

He met the minister at the camp office in Vijayawada on Friday and discussed the development of Rayachoti municipality.

In view of the growing population in the municipality, the minister responded positively to the request to sanction posts of an additional DE and an additional EE to oversee development works, Mr Srikanth Reddy said.

The minister also assured that good officials would be appointed to complete the construction of underground drainage in the town.

CPM ACTIVISTS  
TRY TO LAY SIEGE  
MINISTER'S OFFICEDC CORRESPONDENT  
TIRUPATI, SEPT. 25

Tension prevailed at the camp office of Industries minister Mekapati Gowtham Reddy when CPM leaders and activists tried to lay siege to the office in Nellore on Friday. However, their bid was foiled by the police who took the party workers into custody before the situation became worse.

As the doors of the camp office were closed, agitators led by Deputy Mayor Madala Venkateswarlu, party leaders B. Krishnaiah and Khaleel staged a protest in front of the premises and raised slogans against the minister and the state government.

The protesters alleged that the state government lacks concern for the construction workers and demanded new welfare schemes to better the lives of workers. When the agitators tried to break into the minister's camp office, the alert officials prevented their bid by taking them into custody.

● **THE PROTESTERS** alleged that the state government lacks concern for the construction workers

Officials asked to procure  
every grain from farmers

## Restrain repetition of Nellore incident: Chief Minister

MD ILYAS | DC  
VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 25

Chief Minister, Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, directed officials to avoid a repetition of the Nellore incident and to procure all crops from farmers through Rythu Bharosa Kendras (RBK) at minimum support prices (MSP).

The paddy farmers of Nellore failed to get a good price to their yield due to the exploitation of middlemen. Mr Jagan conducted a review meeting on the preparedness and procurement of agriculture produce in the CM camp office at Tadepalli on Friday. He sought procurement of agriculture produce to the tune of ₹3,300 crore in this season and directed officials to put display boards with MSPs at every RBK.

Asking officials to procure 62 lakh metric tonnes of paddy against the total

● **THE STATE** government procured crops like maize, corn, jowar, onion, tomato, banana, tobacco during the previous Rabi season, spending ₹3,200 crore

production of 93.61 lakh metric tonnes in Kharif season, Jagan asserted that RBKs will be serving as paddy procurement centres in near future.

Instructing officials to display the MSP of each crop at RBKs, Jagan asked them to educate farmers on the crops that need to be avoided and ways to maximise the yield for more profits.

The state government procured crops like maize, corn, jowar, onion, tomato, banana, tobacco during the previous Rabi season, spending ₹3,200 crore. Similarly, this year, Jagan

instructed the officials to purchase ₹3,300 crore worth of crops in Kharif through the market intervention fund and help the farmers.

Asking joint collectors to take responsibility in educating farmers on the government initiatives, Jagan said that the farmers should be told in advance about procurement at RBKs and local MLAs should also be involved.

Directing the marketing department (Markfed) to purchase 30 per cent of the crops in the villages and provide marketing facilities for the remaining 70 per cent, Jagan told officials to prepare crop plans, focus on e-marketing platforms and integrate purchase centres and agent data in the outer market to e-marketing platforms.

Telling officials to promote the sortex variety of rice and also keep the bro-

ken rice for value addition, Jagan asked officials to increase the CCI purchase centres to ensure proper marketing for the crops and to safeguard the farmers from suffering losses.

Officials informed Jagan that 10 types of crops are being procured in Kharif and also 3,000 centres were established for purchasing paddy. With the help of CM-APP, the entire process of crop procurement and marketing is being monitored. Discussing the purchase of cotton, Jagan gave strict orders to avoid scams in the procurement of the crops and make clear, transparent purchases benefiting the farmers.

Agriculture minister Kurasala Kannababu, civil supplies minister, Kodali Venkateswara Rao, special secretary for agriculture, Poonam Malakondiah, commissioner for marketing, Pradhyumna, and others were present.

STIR AGAINST  
AGRI BILLS FOILEDDC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 25

The police took into custody several Left party leaders here on Friday while they were taking out a rally from MB Bhavan to the collector's camp office protesting agriculture bills.

The CPI national secretary, K. Narayana, state secretary K. Ramakrishna, CPM state secretary P Madhu, former minister and farmers' leader Vadde Sobhanadeswara Rao, CPM executive committee member Ch. Babu Rao and others started to the collector's camp office with cadres and farmers.



Police arrest CPM state leader P. Madhu and women leaders and activists who were protesting against the Central government's three Farmers Bill, at Sub-Collector's office in Vijayawada on Friday.

— DC

Farmers' leaders burn  
agri bills in KadapaDC CORRESPONDENT  
KADAPA, SEPT. 25

The copies of the agriculture bills were burnt at the office of the AP Farmers' Association here on Friday.

Demanding their immediate withdrawal, Narayana, state vice-president of the association,

said bills passed by Parliament would cause severe loss to the farmers in the future.

Mr Narayana accused the Narendra Modi government of trying to corporatise the agricultural sector in the name of one country-one market.

It's unfortunate that YSR Congress and Telugu

Desam supported the bills, while NDA partner Shiromani Akali Dal opposed them.

Association district secretary Dastgiri Reddy, Agricultural Labour Union district secretary V Anvesha, CITU district secretary Srinivasu and others participated in the protest.

Fresh case booked against  
former advocate-generalN. VAMSI SRINIVAS | DC  
VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 25

The AP police on Friday booked a fresh case of cheating, criminal conspiracy and breach of trust against former advocate general Dammalapati Srinivas, his wife Nagarni and brother-in-law Nannapaneni Seetharamaraju and a few others.

Acting on a complaint from a retired lecturer, Kode Rama Mohan Rao, the Mangalagiri Rural police filed an FIR against on September 22 under sections 120b, 420, 406 and 506 of Indian Penal Code.

The AP High Court already stayed an FIR registered by the Anti Corruption Bureau against the former advocate general and others in a case relating to the Amaravati land scam.

According to the complainant, he was induced to buy two flats in a proposed residential complex, Lakeview Apartments, at Krishnayapalem in Amaravati and he paid an advance of ₹50 lakh. Rao said he was taken to the office of Capital Housing Projects Pvt Ltd where he was introduced to the accused who boasted of Srinivas' influence in government and his alleged ability to get things done. As per the ministry of corporate affairs records, Seetharamaraju is one of the directors of Capital Housing Projects.

The accused took him to the project site and made him believe that the former AG's wife owns a vacant plot nearby where a star hotel project was coming up. The com-

plainant alleged that the accused took another ₹73 lakh towards the vacant plot. "I transferred the amount from my daughter's NRO account," the retired lecturer said, adding that the accused registered only one flat on July 24 last year before he left for the United States.

On his return, the complainant found that the registered document for one flat was faulty and no link documents were provided. The accused also did not register any vacant plot till date and threatened to indict him in false cases using their clout. "We also found that the proposed complex is incomplete," Rao said.

When contacted, the Mangalagiri police confirmed that they booked an FIR against Srinivas and others.

OVER 2 LAKH  
CASES PENDING IN  
AP HC: RS MEMBERDC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 25

As many as 2,03,024 cases are pending in the AP High Court and 5,82,069 in various lower courts in Andhra Pradesh as on September 17.

Rajya Sabha member from the state Parimal Nathwani said that this information was provided by Union minister of law and justice Ravi Shankar Prasad in the Upper House in response to a question raised by him. Mr Nathwani said that he wanted to know whether the Covid-19 pandemic caused piling up of cases and the steps taken to reduce the pendency. Mr Prasad replied A new software 'Patch and Court User Manual' was developed to help in smart scheduling of cases and prevent overcrowding in courts.

Furniture manufacturing  
park in Nellore soonAVINASH P.  
SUBRAMANYAM | DC  
TIRUPATI, SEPT. 25

With the Central government issuing various sops for the furniture manufacturing industry in the country, as part of the Atmanirbhar Bharat, the state government is planning to set up a mega industrial park, especially meant for the furniture manufacturing, in Nellore district.

Confirming the development with the *Deccan Chronicle*, Industries minister Mr Mekapati Gowtham Reddy said that they have plans to set up a mega industrial park to house furniture manufacturing units in a sprawling area of 1,500 acres in Nellore district.

"Nellore district has a geographical advantage of a long coastline and the seaports which are essential for imports and exports. Majority of the timer imports are being landed in the country through Krishnapatnam port from where it is being transported to the furniture manufacturing units in Gujarat. By setting up an industrial park here, the transport cost

● **THE FURNITURE** park will boost the manufacturing sector in the state and also improves the employment opportunities locally

● **THE MEGA** industrial park will house furniture manufacturing units in a sprawling area of 1,500 acres in Nellore district

will come down, which further boosts the units to enhance their production and improves local opportunities as well," the minister said.

The Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) recently proposed measures for 20 champion sectors including the furniture segment, to turn India into a manufacturing hub, as part of the Atmanirbhar Bharat. For the furniture segment, DPIIT suggested no import duty on raw materials in a bid to make this sector organised with its supporting units and make the country a global

furniture hub. The DPIIT, which released specific guidelines for the establishment of furniture manufacturing units, has been examining suitable areas in the country to house the manufacturing units by bringing in plug and play infrastructure, especially around the ports. Taking advantage of this opportunity, the state government sent proposals to the centre, to examine the possibilities for setting up the industrial park in Nellore, which the Krishnapatnam port, located 190 km north of the Chennai Port and 18 km east of the Nellore city.

"We have applied to the centre and yet to receive a positive response from them. In a recent NITI Ayog meeting, I took this matter to the notice of the heads of union ministry, who responded on a positive note. We are expecting a positive reply soon," Mr Gowtham Reddy said, while adding that if everything goes as planned, the furniture park will boost the manufacturing sector in the state and also improves the employment opportunities locally.

## NO | ACTION Farmers seek revival of Chennai sugar factory, other agri-based units and setting up of cold storages

## Government agricultural allied industries idle in state

NAGESWARA RAO  
BALLEDA | DC  
KADAPA, SEPT. 25

It is unfortunate that on the one hand agriculture is being promoted in Kadapa but there is no agricultural allied industry.

Agriculture is gradually developing in the district. The preference for agricultural and horticultural crops is increasing. Even if the yield is good for the farmer, there are no ways to provide adequate income. For the marketing facility of high-yielding products to be good, agro-based industries are essential.

Only then will the farmer be more reassured and without loss at the hands of merchants. However, there is no agricultural allied industry in the district.

Existing industries have been shutdown for decades but no attempt is being made by the government to re-open them. The Chennai cooperative sugar factory, the proposed bulk milk centre organised by women in Kadapa and the Government Apsa juice factory in Railway Kodur, the milk processing unit at Proddatur are all still idle. No leader has concentrated on opening these plants,

which have greatly helped to overcome the income burdens of peasantry.

When Jagan Mohan Reddy was sworn in as CM, he promised to revive the Chennai sugar factory when he first visited Jammalamadugu last June. Until then, a government-appointed three-man committee has come and gone but so far no funds have been granted. The committee said that a total of ₹40 crore is needed to revive the industry. The report also states that the machines will work with minor repairs.

However, there has been no government action reg-

● **THOUGH THE** state government is giving top priority to agriculture, it is not paying equal attention to revival of several agri-based units

● **EVEN IF** the yield is good for the farmer, there are no ways to provide adequate income.

arding the factory. There are 314 employees waiting to get their salaries for the last 16 months. The previous TD government released ₹35 crore to the Chennai sugar factory along with the Tenali, Chittoor, Nellore and Renigunta factories. But these funds are also not deposited into the factory account.

The Apsa juice factory was also shutdown till 1997

and the farmers faced problems to sell their horticultural products. A private management took over the responsibility of this factory from the year 2000 onwards. They continued operations only for two years and then it was shutdown. If the industry is revived and the capacity increased and maintained, the farmers of the area will be greatly benefited.

Farmers are appealing to the government to set up cold storages in Rajampet, Railway Koduru, Rayachoti and Pulivendula areas as horticulture is on the rise. The dairy industry has the highest priority after agriculture in the district. The dairy centre in Proddatur was closed years ago. The government recently signed an agreement with Amul to develop dairy products. However, it is also unknown whether Proddatur dairy is among the proposals.

Noticing the interest of the farmers in the dairy products, the then Chief

Minister Dr Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy, decided to set up a dairy for women only on government land next to the JMJ college in the suburbs of Kadapa. The compound wall was also constructed. Necessary work has been undertaken to supply the required water resources from the Penna river. It was decided to start with a capacity of 25,000 litres per day and gradually increase it. After his demise, no one cared about the dairy unit.

The farmers want the present government to focus on this so that it will benefit the farmers.



## ASTROGUIDE

**Sarvari:** Dakshinayana  
**Tithi:** Adhika-Ashwayuja Suddha Dasami till 7.03 pm  
**Star:** Uttarahadha till 7.28 pm  
**Variyam:** 11.42 pm to 1.23 am (Sunday)  
**Durmuhurtam:** 6.09 am to 7.44 am  
**Rahukalam:** 9 am to 10.30 am  
**HUIRI CALENDAR**  
**Safar ul Muzaffar 7, 1442 AH**  
**PRAYERS**  
**Fajar:** 5.31 am  
**Zohar:** 12.26 pm  
**Asar:** 4.28 pm  
**Maghrib:** 6.05 pm  
**Isha:** 7.21 pm  
**SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.08 AM**  
**SUNSET TODAY 6.25 PM**  
**MOONSET 11.51 PM**  
**MOONRISE 12.36 AM**

## COUNTER POINT



**How to get noticed? Let's stage a dharna at NCB office!**

## SHORT TAKES

## CIVIL SERVICES PRELIMS ON OCT 4 AT 68 CENTRES

**DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 25**

The Civil Services (Preliminary) Examination-2020 will be held on October 4 at 68 centres in Tirupati, Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada and Anantapur, in two sessions: from 9.30 am to 11.30 am and 2.30 pm to 4.30 pm.

Praveen Prakash, principal secretary (political) to government of Andhra Pradesh, said that the collectors of the districts concerned would act as coordinating supervisors of the exams. Two senior IAS officers each for Visakhapatnam and Vijayawada and one each for Anantapur and Tirupati would be appointed as observers. About 30,199 candidates will write the exam.

## 40,000 STUDENTS ABSENT FOR APEAMCET

**DC CORRESPONDENT KAKINADA, SEPT 25**

The AP Eamcet 2020 examinations, held in 14 sessions for both engineering and agriculture and medical have been completed on Friday. The preliminary key for the examinations will be released on Saturday, and the AP Eamcet office will receive objections on the key up to September 28. As many as 2,32,733 students out of 2,77,598 attended the AP Eamcet examination, and 40,865 students were absent for both engineering and medical and agriculture.

The Eamcet 2020 convener Prof V. Ravindra said that engineering exam was held in nine sessions and 1,56,899 students out of 1,56,899 attended, registering 84.38 per cent turnout and 29,47 students were absent. The agriculture and medical examination was held in five sessions and 75,834 students out of 87,652 attended, registering 86.52 per cent turnout and 11,818 students were absent.

## HAVE THIRST FOR KNOWLEDGE: CIVILS RANKER

**DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 25**

Mallavarapu Suryateja, who has secured 76th rank in the Civil Services this year, said thirst for knowledge and hard work would help students reach top positions in the intensely competitive world.

Vignan's Nirula Institute of Technology and Science for Women felicitated Mr Suryateja at Guntur on Friday, in which Tobacco Board chairman and IAS officer Addanki Sridhar and others participated. Mr Suryateja said that he had dreamt of becoming an IAS officer since his childhood and his determination to reach his goal had grown as he grew up. He recalled his days at Vignan school where the teachers and its founder Lavu Rattaiah instilled inspiration in him to achieve his goal.

## Balu had special bond with hometown

Nellore district goes into mourning after hearing demise of legendary Balasubrahmanyam

**PATHRI RAJASEKHAR I DC NELLORE, SEPT. 24**

S.P. Balasubrahmanyam had a strong bond with Nellore, his native city, and the people, especially his classmates and childhood friends.

Born on June 4, 1946, to S.P. Sambamurthy, an exponent in Harikatha, and Sakunthalamma at Konetimpeta in Chittoor district, Balu went to primary school at Srikalahasti. He studied in VR High School and VR College in Nellore before he enrolled at the JNTU College of Engineering, Anantapur.

He discontinued his studies early due to typhoid and joined as an associate member of the Institution of Engineers, Chennai.

Though he settled in Chennai after he established himself as a singer, Balu always kept in touch with his friends and relatives in Nellore. His mother stayed in their ancestral house at Tippirajuvuri Street in Nellore till her demise in February last year.

In memory of his parents, Balasubrahmanyam donated the house to the Kanchi Sankara Peetam to run a Veda patasala and renovated the building, spending nearly ₹10 lakh. Balu had two brothers and five sisters. He paid his sisters in lieu of their share in the house while donating the building, said Tunga Siva Prabhath Reddy, a family friend.

"He was planning to come to Nellore for the opening of the Veda patasala but the Coronavirus infection changed all plans," said Prabhath Reddy.

Veerisetty Hazarath Babu, another family friend, said Balu had installed his father's statue at Kasthurba Kalakshethra in Nellore. Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu, then a Union minister, along with film actor Kamal Haasan and noted director

## OUTSOURCED WORKER INVOLVED IN THEFT

From page 1

They alleged that when they tried to lodge a complaint with the hospital's security, they were turned away. They later approached the higher ups, who ordered a probe.

The enquiry revealed that an outsourced worker had stolen the gold ring and the mobile phone, sources said.

Meanwhile, after the video clip went viral, state health minister Alla Krishna Srinivas, who ordered a probe into the incident, spoke to the SVIMS Director, Dr B. Vengamma, and directed her to initiate stringent action against those involved in the incident.

On a complaint from her, Alipiri police identified the outsourced worker with the help of a video clip.

"The worker has been taken into custody and he pleaded guilty. He also handed over the jewellery and the mobile phone to the police, which will be handed over to the family on Saturday. The worker will face criminal proceedings", an official from SVIMS said.

## POOR | RAINS

**Production has come down in north Andhra**

## Vegetable prices burning pockets

**V.K.L. GAYATRI | DC VISAKHAPATNAM, SEPT. 25**

With the prices of vegetables shooting through the roof, consumers are having trouble buying any at all.

During the past two weeks, almost all vegetable prices have increased every day. Prices of the much-in-demand onion already crossed ₹50 in the main markets and retailers are selling onions at ₹55 per kg.



A file photo of S.P. Balasubrahmanyam with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and M. Venkaiah Naidu.

## Groomed a generation of musicians, says V-P

**DC CORRESPONDENT NELLORE, SEPT. 25**

Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu said he was shocked to learn of the tragic demise of S.P. Balasubrahmanyam whom he has known for several decades.

"It is truly an irreparable loss to the world of music and a deeply emotional moment for me personally. SPB, or Balu as he was fondly called by his innumerable admirers, came from Nellore, my native place. I have had

immense admiration for him as I heard his rapturous melodies, his passionate love for his mother-tongue and the extraordinary manner in which he groomed a whole generation of talented, young musicians," Venkaiah Naidu observed.

In a press release, the Vice-President said Balu has left a void in his heart and the hearts of millions of music lovers across the world.

"His mellifluous voice has been unfortunately muted by the vicious

virus." "However, his genial smile and infectious humour will remain etched in our memories. His extraordinary renditions of songs will keep resonating in our consciousness for a very long time to come. I pay my reverential homage to this legendary musician whom I have had the pleasure of knowing so closely. I pray to the Almighty to give his family the strength to cope with this most unexpected loss".

Prabhat. Recalling his 60-year association with Balu and his family, Hazarath Babu said the singer was ajatha sathru, a person without enemies.

"He was very kind and down to earth despite his popularity all over the country" Hazarath Babu said.

Meanwhile it was mid-morning on September 9, 1969, when three men and a woman came to

## JAGAN SADDENED, SHOCKED OVER SPB'S DEATH

**DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 25**

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy expressed profound grief over the demise of singing legend S.P. Balasubrahmanyam. Telugu Desam chief and former chief minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and other leaders also expressed shock and grief over the death of SPB.

In his condolence message, Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan described the singer as a household name, not only in the Telugu states but the entire country, as an iconic playback singer in Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Hindi, Malayalam and numerous other Indian languages.

Mr Jagan said, "Sripathi Panditaradhya Balasubrahmanyam, popularly known as SPB, has been the refreshing notation of film music spanning over five decades enthralling the connoisseurs and common people alike through his multifaceted talent." He conveyed his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.

Mr Chandrababu Naidu said the demise of Balu saddened him, a wonderful era in the film industry concluded with his exit. Naidu conveyed his sympathies to the bereaved family.

Simhachalam temple prasadam counter clerk Pasarla Suryanarayana and asked him for a ticket to perform a marriage at the temple.

The fee was ₹100. They paid up and Suryanarayana gave them the receipt. Asked whose names should be mentioned in the receipt, the prospective groom said S.P. Balasubrahmanyam and Savitri.

## LIQUOR SMUGGLED INTO THE STATE FROM TN SEIZED

**AVINASH P. SUBRAMANYAM | DC TIRUPATI, SEPT. 25**

The Special Enforcement Bureau officials on Friday seized 4,605 quarter bottles of non-duty paid liquor, illegally smuggled into the state from Tamil Nadu in boats via Pulicat lake, in Venadu village of Sullurpeta mandal in Nellore district.

According to Sreedhar, Additional SP, SEB, a team led by Sullurpeta Circle Inspector Venkateswara Reddy along with SIs K. Srinivasa Rao and G. Venu conducted raids at a garden located in Venadu village in Sullurpeta limits.

In the raid, the team found 4,605 bottles of liquor worth ₹65,1840. The accused have dumped the liquor in an isolated garden in the village. The SEB team also arrested one of the accused Polaiiah and a manhunt was launched to nab the other two accused identified as Mani and Naresh.

Based on the confession of one of the accused, police learnt that they have smuggled the liquor in boats via Pulicat lake from Tamil Nadu in a bid to trade them in the state. A case was registered and further investigation is on.

## ₹35.85 LAKH WORTH GUTKA, KHAINI PACKETS

**DC CORRESPONDENT KAKINADA, SEPT. 25**

The Indrapalem police seized 7,17,110 gutka and khaini packets worth of ₹35,85,550 near an aqua pond near Turangi village of Kakinada Rural Mandal and arrested four people.

The Kakinada Incharge DSP Aritakula Srinivasa Rao told the reporters on Thursday that the Gutka trader Numa Harinath carried Gutka and Khaini stuffed into husk bags from Odisha to Kakinada. While they were unloading the cargo into a godown, the police led by Indrapalem Sub-Inspector K. Nagaraju Raju conducted raids and caught the Gutka and Khaini bags. He said that one auto and also ₹21,350 cash was seized.

## Nellore people recall association with singer SPB

**DC CORRESPONDENT NELLORE, SEPT. 25**

The demise of SP Balasubrahmanyam (SPB) has sent shock waves in Nellore district. Though everyone was aware that he was undergoing treatment for Covid-19 at MGM Hospital in Chennai for the past 40 days, they were firm that he would conquer the dreaded virus.

Noted lyricist and his close associate, Vennelakanti Rajendra Prasad said he penned a song on Nellore at the instance of Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu and Balu was supposed to sing it while noted director Kodandarami Reddy was entrusted with the job of filming the song.

"Without Balu I don't know what we will do with the project now," Vennelakanti said with heaviness in his voice.

Attributing his entry and success in the world of cinema to the legendary playback singer, he said Balu's demise is an irrepressible personal loss to him.

"Balu garu recommended my name to music director Chakravarthi and I instantly wrote a song for the tune given by the latter. I noticed the eagerness in SPB's eyes to know about Chakravarthi's reaction after the test. He was distinctly delighted when I said that I had passed the test," Vennelaganti recalled.

Another close associate of SPB, Yanamandra Naga Devi Prasad, who organises the popular

Thyagraja Aradhana festival every year, said his father Yanamandra Venkateswara Sastry and Balu's father Panditaradhya Samba-moorthy had started the programme way back in 1965.

"They used to collect alms while singing Keerthanas of Sri Thyagaraja on the streets of Nellore. We are continuing the tradition with the blessings of SPB," he said.

He recalled an incident where SPB's father advised Balu not to come for Aradhana festivals after public disturbed the programme of Carnatic exponent and guru of K.J. Jesudoss, Chennai Vaidyanatha Bhagavatai, in order to obtain autographs of SPB's in the 1970s.

Though he stopped coming to the festivals, he was extending his support as a lifetime president of Bikshatanaapoorvaka Thyagaraja Aaradhana Utsavams. He has been coming for the event for the past five years, Prasad said.

Expressing grief, senior TD leader Somireddy Chandramohan Reddy recalled his association with Balasubrahmanyam while adding that he is unable to digest the fact that he was no more.

Industries and IT minister Mekapati Goutham Reddy said he was deeply saddened by the passing away of the Gana Gandharva.

"You filled joy in every music lover's house with your melodious voice. Your demise is a huge loss to the world of music."

## SPB leaves without seeing his statue

**VADREVV SRINIVAS | DC KAKINADA, SEPT. 25**

Legendary playback singer S.P. Balasubrahmanyam breathed his last without seeing his statue for which he had commissioned a sculptor at Kothapet in East Godavari a year ago.

The sculptor wanted to give the statue on June 4 on the singer's birthday, who had announced a national award to the sculptor. However, the programme was postponed because of Covid.

"The statue will be ready in the next three or four days. But SPB breathed his last without seeing his statue," said Vudayaraj Rajkumar Devagutapu, shedding tears.

"We had carved his father's statue, which has been installed in Nellore. Last year, he placed an order for statues of his father and mother that were to be installed in his house, which was given to 'Veda Vidyalayam' at Nellore. Baluji spent a day at my house last year. This January, he announced the national award to me and actor K. Satyanarayana, which

were to be given on June 4 but was postponed due to Covid-19. Sadly, Baluji left the world without seeing his statue," lamented Rajakumar.

SPB has sung a song on Adikavi Nannayya University, the lyrics for which were penned by Dr Venigalla Rambabu. The faculty and students, who are proud of the song, have expressed condolences to the unfortunate demise of SPB.

Meanwhile, several people expressed grief and shock at the news. According to sources, he was, at one point, very disappointed with Kakinada, where he went in 2005 to participate in a TV Show. He expected his old friends at Kakinada would meet him. He brought a special brand of stimulating drink with him from Chennai to entertain his old friends.

"But they could not meet Baluji at the time due to other engagements and the singer was disappointed," recalled Sunkara Annaram, who produced *Prayanamlo Padanisalu*, *Peddillu Chinnullu* and *Samsaram Lo Sarigamalu*. All songs were sung by SPB.

## TRACTOR TROLLEY MOWS DOWN 3

**DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUPATI, SEP. 25**

A mother and her two children were killed after their scooter was hit by a tractor-trolley, which got separated from the engine, on Bakarapeta ghat road in Chittoor district on Friday. While the mother P. Jamuna, 30, and her son Deepak Kumar, 8, died on the spot, her daughter Meenakshi died while undergoing treatment at the SVRR government hospital in Tirupati.

The accident occurred when the deceased, hailing from Gollapalli village, were heading towards Bakarapeta from Ithepalle. A tractor-trolley, which



S. P. BALASUBRAHMANYAM | 1947 - 2020

# A golden voice falls silent

ANUPAMA SUBRAMANIAN | DC CHENNAI, SEPT. 25

The celebrated playback singer, who enthralled movie fans with over 40,000 songs in 16 languages and lent his voice to several matinee idols on screen, strode the world of film music for more than five decades. Remarkably, his voice never lost its timbre with age and he was busy almost up to the day he was admitted to a hospital in Chennai.

A winner of six national awards, Shripathi Panditha-dradyula Balasubrahmanyam, more readily identified by three letters SPB by the film fraternity and millions of fans, was born in Nellore in 1946. His father Sambamurthy was a Harikatha artiste who had also acted in plays. Though SPB developed an interest in music at a very young age, he was also interested in academics. He enrolled in JNTU, Anantapur, to pursue his engineering and for some reasons had to drop out of college. He joined as associate member of the Institution of Engineers, Chennai, and pursued his passion of music and started performing in music competitions. He was adjudged the best singer at a competition by musicians S.P. Kodandapani and Ghantasala who were on the jury panel. Kodandapani later became his mentor and the rest is history.

Balasubrahmanyam made his debut as a playback singer on December 15, 1966, with the song *Sri Sri Marayada Ramanna* composed by his guru Kodandapani in a Telugu movie. After recording a Kannada song, he made his debut in Tamil with the number *Athaanodu Ippadi Irundhu Eththanai Naalaachu*, a duet with L.R. Eswari in M.S. Viswanathan's composition for the film *Hotel Ramba*, but unfortunately the film was never released. A duet with P. Susheela, *Iyarkai Ennum Ilaya Kanni* in the 1969 film *Shanti Nilayam*, featuring Gemini Ganesh and Kanchana was a big hit.

Industry pundits recall that SPB was personally selected by the iconic star M.G. Ramachandran (MGR) to sing a song for his production venture *Adimai Penn*, featuring him and late CM Jayalalitha and directed by K. Shankar. The song was *Aayiram Nilave Vaa*, which took SPB to dizzy heights.

A time soon came when he was singing for the likes of MGR, Sivaji Ganesan and Gemini Ganesan in M.S. Viswanathan's compositions on par with top playback singers like T.M. Soundararajan and P.B. Srinivas. He also recorded songs with all top women singers like P. Susheela, S. Janaki, Vani Jayaram and L.R. Eswari. Thus began the SPB era. In Telugu, he was

singing for N.T. Rama Rao, Akkineni Nageswara Rao, Krishna and Sobhan Babu. Balasubrahmanyam's association with Ilayaraja began even before the maestro came to the industry. In their early days, SPB used to sing in towns and villages all over south India and Ilayaraja, then an unknown harmonium and guitar player, accompanied him and played in his concerts. Donning several hats as a singer, music director, actor, voice artiste and film producer, SPB worked predominantly in Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Hindi and Malayalam. He won six national film awards for best male playback singer for his works in four different languages — Telugu, Kannada, Tamil and Hindi — besides 25 Nandi Awards from Andhra Pradesh for his work in Telugu cinema and numerous other state awards from Tamil Nadu and Karnataka governments. Without a background in classical music, he had to toil in rendering the famous songs in *Sankarabharanam* which were in high classical notes after KVM chose him over ace playback and classical singers like K.J. Yesudas and Balamuralikrishna.

He had successful collaborations with Ilayaraja and S. Janaki and the trio's songs were a huge hit from late 1970s and throughout 1980s. SPB and Raja won national awards together for their collaborations in films like *Saagara Sangamam* in 1983, *Swathi Muthyam* in 1986 and *Rudraveena* in 1988.

SPB's rose to prominence in Bollywood started right from 1989 when he sang for Salman Khan for the film *Maine Pyar Kiya*. Besides winning many awards, Balasubrahmanyam continued as the "romantic singing voice" on the soundtracks of Khan's films for almost a decade. SPB was identified as Salman Khan's voice in the '90s and he consolidated his position as an Indian playback singer.

In the '90s, he worked with other composers like Vidyasagar, S.A. Rajkumar, Deva and M.M. Keeravani and his collaboration with AR Rahman turned out to be a bigger hit. ARR and SPB joined hands right from the former's debut film *Roja*, *July Maadham*, *Pudhiya Mugam*, *Kizhaku Cheemayile*, *Duet* and *Minsara Kanavu*, and the last one fetched him the sixth national award for *Thanga Thamarai Magale*.

SPB directed music in 46 films in four south languages. Some notable works are *Padamati Sandhya Ragam* and *Thurpu Velle Railu*. SPB has always been a lucky mascot for Rajinikanth's intro songs. The ace singer's last few renderings include *Petta's Marana Mass* and *Chumma Kizhi* from *Darbar* composed by Anirudh. SPB also acted in 76 films, making him a multi-faceted singer.

For someone with no formal training in classical music, the heights SPB scaled were not something that even well-trained singers could reach



SPB with legendary Ghantasala

'Balu', fondly called by many of his friends such as Ilayaraja, was born on June 4, in Nellore in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh

He made his debut as a playback singer on December 15 with *Sri Sri Marayada Ramanna* in a Telugu movie, composed by his guru Kodandapani



Susheela and SPB recording one of their memorable duets

He won his first national award for the Telugu movie *Sankarabaranam* for his song *Omkaara Naadanu*



'80s: SPB had successful collaborations with Ilayaraja and S. Janaki and the trio's songs were a huge hit from late 1970s and throughout 1980s.

His duet with P. Susheela, *Iyarkai Ennum Ilaya Kanni* in film *Shanti Nilayam*, featuring Gemini Ganesh and Kanchana was a big hit. The song *Aayiram Nilave Vaa*, in *Adimai Penn*, starring MGR took SPB to dizzy heights



SPB won his second national award for the Hindi movie *Ek Duuje Ke Liye*

SPB bagged two national awards for his songs in the Telugu movies *Sagara Sangamam* and *Rudraveena*

SPB gets the Padma award from Prez Prathiba Patil



HIS COLLABORATION WITH A.R. RAHMAN turned out to be a huge hit. ARR and SPB joined hands right from the former's debut film *Roja* through *July Maadham*, *Pudhiya Mugam*, *Kizhaku Cheemayile*, *Duet* and *Minsara Kanavu*



Prime Minister Modi presenting a memento to SPB on Sankranti to mark the golden jubilee of his singing career in New Delhi on Jan. 16, 2016.



IN THE unfortunate demise of Shri SP Balasubrahmanyam, our cultural world is a lot poorer. A household name across India, his melodious voice and music enthralled audiences for decades. In this hour of grief, my thoughts are with his family and admirers. *Om Shanti*

**NARENDRA MODI**, Prime Minister

## TOP 10 TELUGU HITS OF SPB

1. *Omkara Nadanu Sandhana* (1979, Sankarabharanam)
2. *Vedam Anuvuvuna* (1983, Saagara Sangamam)
3. *Sirimalle Neeve Virajallu Kaave* (1977, Pantulamma, Telugu)
4. *Abhinava Thaaravo Naa Abhimana Thaaravo* (1978, Sivaranjani)
5. *Gajje Ghallu Mantunte* (1976, Siri Siri Muvva)
6. *O Bangaru Rangula Chilaka* (1975, Thota Ramudu)
7. *Medante Meda kaadu* (1968, Sukha Dukhalu)
8. *Thanivi theeralede Naa Manasu Nindalede* (1972, Gooduputani)
9. *Ravi Varmake Andani Oke Oka* (1979, Ravanude Ramudaithe)
10. *Nenoka Prema Pipasini* (1978, Indra Dhanassu)

**SPB** has also given voice for various stars including Kamal Haasan, Rajinikanth, Salman Khan, Vishnuvardhan, Nagesh, Gemini, Arjun, Raghuvaran and Karthik in various languages. He also dubbed for Ben Kingsley in the Telugu-dubbed version of the film *Gandhi*.



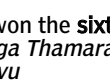
**SPB AS AN ACTOR** Films in three languages. Notable films as an actor include *Keladi Kannani*, *Sigaram*, *Thiruda Thiruda*, *Kadhalan*, and *Naanayam*. He was also part of some TV serials and shows.

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**SPB HAS ALSO BEEN A MUSIC DIRECTOR** films in four south languages. Some of the notable works among them are *Padamati Sandhya Ragam* and *Thurpu Velle Railu*.

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The singer was presented with the Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan



SPB won the sixth national award for song *Thanga Thamarai* in the Tamil movie *Minsara Kanavu*

SPB bagged the national award for his Kannada song in the movie *Sangeetha Sagara Ganayogi Panchakshara Gavai*

SURESH KAVIRAYANI | DC

**1 JANAKI FIRST SPOTTED BALU:** S.P. Balasubrahmanyam wanted to study engineering and join government service. That was the wish of his father. Balu, as he was affectionately known, was not interested in singing for films, and had not learnt music though he used to participate in singing competitions. When he was studying engineering in Anantapur, he participated in a competition in Gudur, where the chief guest was the famous playback singer S. Janaki. Balu won the first prize, and Janaki asked him to try singing in films as she found something special in his voice. He replied that he did not know music. To this, Janaki said she too did not know music but was singing in films. That's the first time that SPB's talent was spotted by the film industry.

**2 KODANDAPANI THE GOD-FATHER:** Balu followed her advice, reached Madras (now Chennai) and tried singing but was rejected as his voice was considered not mature enough. He was hardly 18 at that time. After two years, he participated in a singing competition in Madras, organised

by the Andhra Social Cultural Club. The judges were the renowned playback singer Ghantasala and popular music directors Pendyala Nageswara Rao and Susarla Dakshinamurthy. After the first day, an elderly person who had watched the competition came up to Balu and asked him if he would sing in films. Balu again replied, "No, I am not interested." The elderly man repeated his question and Balu asked him who he was. The old man replied: "My name is Kodandapani." Having composed music for a couple of films by that time, Kodandapani asked Balu to come to his studio and introduced him to producer Bhavanarayana. The producer also felt that Balu's voice was not mature enough. Balu returned to his hometown. One and a half years later, Kodandapani called Balu again and got him to sing for 'Maryada Ramanna' in 1967. That was not to be his debut, however. Producer and writer M.S. Reddy asked Balu to sing for the dubbed film, 'Kala Chakram', which was released first, in 1966. He sang all the



Veteran singer P. B. Srinivas kisses SPB.

songs in that film, and Maryada Ramanna released only later.

**3 SEPARATE VOICES FOR NTR AND ANR:** Balu sang more than 40,000 songs in about 14 languages. He was one of the busiest singers of his time, and used to sing for top actors of the generation like N.T. Rama Rao, A. Nageswara Rao, Krishna, Sobhan Babu, Krishnam Raju and the next

generation of actors like Chiranjeevi, Balakrishna, Venkatesh and Nagarjuna. For all the actors he sang with his own voice, but when it came to ANR and NTR he used to change his voice to match that of the actor. Even for comedy actors like Allu Ramalingiah and Raja Babu, Balu used to change his voice.

**4 13 HINDI SONGS IN ONE DAY:** Balu's first Hindi film as a

playback singer was *Ek Duuje Ke Liye* (1981). L.V. Prasad produced the film which was the remake of the Telugu 'Maro Charitra'. Balachander directed the Hindi remake too. Both Balachander and Prasad wanted Balu to sing all the songs in the Hindi version, but music directors Lakshmikanth-Pyarelal were reluctant. After SPB sang a solo, they liked his voice and continued with him. At one time, SPB recorded 13 songs for them in a day. He was among the best known playback singers in Mumbai at that time, as Mohammad Rafi, Kishore Kumar and Mukesh had all passed away. SPB got the national award for his song in *Ek Duuje Ke Liye*.

**5 SANKARABHARANAM GOT HIM INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION:** In Balu's long and illustrious career, *Sankarabharanam* was a milestone. K. Viswanath was the director and he initially wanted veteran classical singer Mangalampalli Balamurali Krishna to render the songs which were based on Carnatic music. Music director K.V.

Mahadevan, however, kept his faith in Balu. The songs were a huge hit and are considered classics today. The film released in 1980 and changed Telugu cinema. SPB won a national award for his song in the film. The songs of the film are considered to be among among Balu's best. The film was screened in international film festivals. He and K. Viswanath continued their collaborations in films like *Sagara Sangamam*, *Siri Vennela*, *Saptapadi* and *Struthilayalu*.

**6 THE ONLY CONTROVERSY WITH KRISHNA:** In Balu's career of more than 50 years, he was never involved in any controversy either professionally or on the personal front, but for one. Balu sang for Krishna in many films but there was a break in between when the actor picked new singers. Producers and music directors requested both of them to put their differences aside and work together. Lyric writer Veturi Sundarama Murthy mediated between the two. Later, Balu went to Krishna's studio and met him there. From then on, he sang for Krishna.

## Condolence messages pour in for SPB

From Page 1

After his demise was announced by the hospital, condolence messages poured in from all over with President Ram Nath Kovind leading the nation in paying tributes to the musical genius, who had sung over 40,000 songs in several languages during a career spanning over half a century. The President said: "In the passing of music legend S.P. Balasubrahmanyam Indian music has lost one of its most melodious voices."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in a post on Twitter: "Our cultural world is a lot poorer. A household name across India, his melodious voice and music enthralled audiences for decades."

Governors Tamilisai Soundararajan of Telangana state and Biswabhusan Harichandan (AP), Chief Ministers K. Chandrasekhar Rao and Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy were among those who condoled the death of SPB. Describing SPB as 'brother', Dr Soundararajan wondered if the man born in Telugu soil and earned fame in Tamil Nadu had been called by the heavens to sing there.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami described the singer as God's gift to the Indian musical world in the 20th century.



## SHORT TAKES

### 92 IPS OFFICERS TRANSFERRED IN MP

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC BHOPAL, SEPT. 25

Madhya Pradesh government on Friday effected a major reshuffle of police officers ahead of upcoming by-elections in 28 Assembly constituencies, schedule of which may be declared on September 29.

As many as 92 Indian Police Service (IPS) officers were transferred in the reshuffle exercise.

The reshuffle in the police department comes hours after the Election Commission announced that a decision on holding by-elections to vacant Lok Sabha and Assembly constituencies in different states would be taken on September 29.

Congress has taken strong exception to the decision by the Shivraj government to go in for large scale transfer of police officers immediately after Election Commission indicated to announce schedule of by-elections in 28 assembly constituencies in MP after four days.

"The Election Commission indicated the schedule of by-elections in 28 assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh would be announced on September 29. That means the model code of conduct for polls has come into force informally in the state. The state government violated the model code of conduct by effecting a massive reshuffle in the police department. We have lodged a complaint with the Election Commission seeking revocation of the transfer orders", Congress spokesman here J.P. Dhanopia said.

The BJP, however, denied any violation of election rules by the state government by shuffling the police officers.

"First of all, the Election Commission has not announced the schedule so far and hence, model code of conduct is not in force in Madhya Pradesh now. Besides, model code of conduct is only enforced in districts where assembly by-elections are held. Congress is trying to mislead the people," BJP spokesman here Rajneesh Agrawal said.

● **CONGRESS HAS** taken strong exception to the decision by the Shivraj government to go in for large-scale transfer of police officers.

## TIGRESS FOUND DEAD IN MP RESERVE FOREST

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC BHOPAL, SEPT. 25

A 3-year-old tigress was found dead in Badhavgarh reserve forest in Madhya Pradesh, a senior forest officer said on Friday.

The decomposed body of the big cat was found in Damokhar buffer range in Bandhavgarh tiger reserve late on Thursday.

"A patrol party of forest officials spotted the carcass of the tigress in a drain in Damokhar buffer range. The body had several injury marks and was infested by maggots. The veterinary doctors suggested that the carcass may be 2-3 days old", field director of Bandhavgarh tiger reserve Vincent Raheem said.

Prima facie, the cause of death may be due to territorial fights since pug marks of another tiger were found at the spot, he added.

However, the exact cause of death could be ascertained after postmortem, he said.

This was the fourth such incident in Bandhavgarh tiger reserve in the last five months. Three tigers died in territorial fights in the reserve forest in April.

## CBI begins probe into Life Mission's deal with Dubai's Red Crescent

GILVESTER ASSARY | DC THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, SEPT. 25

In a development that has annoyed the ruling LDF in Kerala, the Central Bureau of Investigation on Friday initiated a probe into Life Mission's financial dealings with Dubai-based Red Crescent.

The CBI probe comes close on the heels of the state Cabinet on Wednesday asking the state Vigilance and Anti Corruption Bureau to

probe the Life Mission allegations.

The BJP and the Congress had alleged that the state government had ordered the vigilance probe to buy time.

The Central Bureau of Investigation filed an FIR in a special court in Ernakulam on Friday in connection with the allegations related to the financial deal.

The case was registered on the basis of a complaint filed by Congress MLA Anil

Akkara who alleged that corruption to the tune of ₹9 crore was involved in the construction of 140 flats in Wadakkancherry (his constituency) under the Life Mission project.

The project had run into a controversy after one of the key accused in the gold smuggling case reportedly said that ₹1 crore found in her bank locker was the "commission" she received for clinching the construction project for Unitac Builders.

# Challenges Nitish face include Coronavirus, unemployment

Polls are crucial for BJP after setback in Jharkhand and Maharashtra

NAYEAR AZAD | DC PATNA, SEPT. 25

The Assembly elections in Bihar, the first amid the Coronavirus pandemic, will be held in three phases in October and November.

Primary challenges faced by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar led NDA would be the Coronavirus crisis, unemployment, law and order scenario and flood situation. He is trying to retain power in Bihar for the fourth term this year.

The ruling NDA and the RJD-led Mahagathbandhan are the two major political alliances contesting against each other. The NDA is trying to reach out to its voters with "Vikas" (development) and "15 years of good governance versus 15-years of jungle raj" narrative against the Opposition parties.

Bihar election is crucial for the NDA especially BJP as it suffered massive electoral setbacks in two states — Jharkhand and Maharashtra in 2019.

"Our party workers are excited after the dates were announced by the election commission. We are confident that the NDA will win more than 220 seats but the grand alliance will be completely wiped out after the polls as they neither have a leader nor policies for the development of the state", BJP spokesperson Nikhil Anand said.

Bihar BJP in-charge Bhupendra Yadav in a



A worker removes a hoarding of Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar in Patna on Friday, as per model code of conduct following announcement of Bihar Assembly election dates.

tweet said that "the results of the Lok Sabha will be repeated during the Assembly elections this year. The NDA is going to win this election with a three-fourth majority".

Nitish Kumar-led NDA had come to power in Bihar after defeating 15 years of Lalu-Rabri regime in 2005.

During 2015 Assembly elections the JD(U) along with RJD and Congress had formed a grand alliance and defeated the BJP with a huge margin. However, in July 2017 after the CBI registered corruption cases against RJD chief Lalu Yadav and his son Tejashwi Yadav, Nitish Kumar returned to

NDA and formed a government with the support of BJP.

In 2019, Lok Sabha polls the BJP in alliance with JD(U) and LJP had clinched 39 out of 40 seats in the state.

Meanwhile, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav in his reaction said that his party's contest in the

elections is with BJP. He said that "people are not happy with Nitish Kumar and they will get rid of this government after the polls".

Tejashwi Yadav and his elder brother Tej Pratap also led a massive protest against farm bills, which were passed in parliament recently.

## Kerala up in arms over farm Bills

DC CORRESPONDENT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, SEPT. 25

Farmer organisations affiliated to the Left parties held protests across Kerala on Friday against farm Bills passed by the Parliament and to express solidarity with the nationwide agitation called by the Kisan Coordination Committee.

A satyagraha was organised by Left-led farmer organisations in front of the Kerala Raj Bhavan here. All India Kisan Sabha national vice-president S. Ramachandran Pillai who inaugurated the protest, accused the Centre of systematically bringing in big corporates into the farm sector.

The farm Bills were passed without detailed discussions in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha

and without discussing the matter with the states and farmers' organisations.

Kisan Sabha national secretary and chairman of the joint Kisan Council Sathyan Mokeri lashed out at the Centre for passing the 'anti-farmer' Bills.

The Kisan organisations organised satyagraha in front of Central government offices in 253 centres across the state.

The Kerala Cabinet on Wednesday had discussed a proposal on challenging the farm Bills in the Supreme Court.

The proposal is being vetted by the state law department.

The state government says the Centre passed the Bills without even discussing with the states and it is against the federal principles of the country.

## Coronavirus toll may cross 1-lakh mark in a week

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, SEPT. 25

India's death figures due to coronavirus continue to rise on a daily basis taking overall fatalities to 92,290 till Friday with 1,141 new deaths recorded in the last 24 hours. Going by this rate, the toll may cross one lakh mark in another week or so.

The total number of Covid-19 cases in the country has crossed 58.18 lakh with 86,052 new case. India registered the highest number of tests in a single day with nearly 15 lakhs tests conducted in the last 24 hours.

Over 47.56 lakh patients have recovered so far out of which 81,177 patients recovered in the last 24 hours and the national recovery rate now stands at 81.74%.

Of the total new cases detected, 75% are found to be concentrated in ten states/UTs. Maharashtra had more than 19,000 new cases while Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka contributed more than 7,000.

Similarly, 73% of the new recovered cases have been reported from ten States/UTs — Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Delhi, Kerala, West Bengal and Assam. Maharashtra continues to lead with more than 17,000 new recoveries. Andhra Pradesh contributed more than 8,000 to the single day recoveries.

Meanwhile, top medical journal The Lancet in its editorial said India is facing a dangerous period with regard to Covid-19.

"The rapidly growing case numbers, alongside the continuing relaxation of restrictions, are creating an atmosphere of fatalism mingled with false optimism that undermines effective use of non-pharmaceutical interventions such as masks and physical distancing. The epidemic in India is far from over, with a potentially huge burden of mortality and morbidity to come unless public health measures are used and adhered to. Without clear and honest communication of the risks of Covid-19 to the population, stemming the epidemic will be impossible," the editorial said.

Questioning the transparency of data provided by government, The Lancet said that the Indian government reports a case fatality rate which is much lower than the reported rate in other countries, but it is difficult to know if the numbers are comparable.

It added the authorities are presenting the current situation in India with a "too positive spin" which not only clouds reality but also hampers vital public health initiatives.

"Perpetuating unrealistic claims or failing to honestly

## TARUN GOGOI IN ICU AFTER DROP IN OXYGEN LEVEL

MANOJ ANAND | DC GUWAHATI, SEPT. 25

The Director of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Randeep Guleria on Friday reviewed the health condition of former Assam chief minister Tarun Gogoi who has been admitted to the intensive care unit (ICU) at the Guwahati Medical College Hospital (GMCH), following a drop in his oxygen saturation level. He had tested Coronavirus positive last month.

Informing that Guleria reviewed the health of veteran Congress leader through a video conference, Assam health minister Himanta Biswa Sarma told reporters that Guleria expressed satisfaction with the line of treatment of GMCH. He suggested some additional tests for Gogoi. He will also send a faculty from AIIMS to look after the former chief minister and if necessary he would be shifted to AIIMS, the minister said.

Assam health minister, principal secretary of the health department Samir K. Sinha, Lok Sabha MP and Gogoi's son Gaurav Gogoi also attended the video conference.

According to reports, the 85-year-old leader, who was admitted at a private cabin of the hospital, was shifted to ICU to monitor his health effectively. His condition was stated to be stable now.

Assam Congress president Ripun Bora also visited the hospital on Thursday to enquire about the health condition of veteran Congress leader.

Gogoi, who was chief minister for three consecutive terms from 2001 till 2016, had tested Covid-19 positive on August 26, following which he was admitted to the GMCH. The Assam government has constituted an eight-member team of doctors to monitor his health parameters regularly.

report negative news creates uncertainty among the public and health-care professionals, discouraging people from taking preventive action or taking public health messages seriously. India has the expertise in medicine, public health, research, and manufacturing to lead the nation through the Covid-19 pandemic. To capitalise on these attributes, the country's leaders must respect scientific evidence, expert commentary, and academic freedom, and not provide false optimism," the editorial said.

## Maha Deputy CM pays tribute to Pt. Upadhyay, deletes tweet later

- **REMEMBERING UPADHYAY**, Pawar wrote in Marathi, 'Tributes to the founder of Jana Sangh and senior leader Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay on his birth anniversary.'
- **CHIEF MINISTER** Uddhav Thackeray also offered floral tribute to Upadhyay at his private residence 'Matoshre'.

paid tribute to Upadhyay.

Remembering Upadhyay, Pawar wrote in Marathi, "Tributes to the founder of Jana Sangh and senior leader Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay on his birth anniversary."

However, after an hour, the tweet was deleted by Ajit Pawar, which raised several eyebrows. And Ajit Pawar's explanation for deletion of the tweet also insinuated that it was done on the instructions of his uncle

and NCP chief Sharad Pawar.

When asked why he wrote tribute to Upadhyay and then deleted it, he said, "We speak good about people who are no more and that is why I had tweeted. But in politics, we have to listen to our seniors." However, he did not elaborate on it further.

Meanwhile, Thackeray offered floral tribute to Upadhyay at his private residence 'Matoshre'.

## Modi likely to address UNGA today

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, SEPT. 25

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to address the United Nations General Assembly during the General Debate on Saturday. He is presently scheduled as the first speaker.

Since the UNGA this year is being held in the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic, it is being conducted mostly virtually.

Prime Minister's address will therefore be via a pre-recorded video statement broadcast at the UNGA hall

in New York.

Some of the priority issues for India during 75th session of United Nations General Assembly are to promote strengthening of global action on counter-terrorism and India will push for more transparency in the process of listing and delisting of entities and individuals in sanction committees.

India is seeking inclusive and responsible solutions for international peace and security, effective response to international terrorism, NORMS (New Orientation

for a Reformed Multilateral System), technology for all and streamlining of peace-keeping.

Being one of the largest troop-contributing countries, India wants to engage intensively in finalising of mandates for UN peace-keeping missions.

While looking at promoting its role as a net health service provider, India will highlight contribution to global cooperation against Covid-19 by aiding more than 150 countries and as a pharmacy to the world.

## MODI, SUGA REITERATE COMMITMENT TO PROMOTE COOPERATION

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, SEPT. 25

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday held a telephonic conversation with the new PM of Japan Suga Yoshihide during which the two leaders reiterated their commitment to promote cooperation. During their 25 minute conversation, PM Suga expressed

commitment to work with India towards achieving a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific".

"Had a very good conversation with PM Suga Yoshihide. We exchanged views on the progress in our relationship in the last few years, and the future direction of our Special Strategic and Global Partnership," Modi said.



# DECCAN Chronicle

26 SEPTEMBER 2020

## Dig in for the long haul: Chinese not going soon

We may be in for a very long haul in eastern Ladakh and perhaps across the entire LAC: the standoff with China that began in May isn't ending anytime soon, and the nation had better get used to it. While the two countries agreed, at the sixth round of the corps commanders' talks on Monday, to stop sending more troops to the frontline, there is no real way each side can verify what the other is doing, besides satellite imagery which is often misleading. India and China also agreed, in a "candid and in-depth exchange of views", to "refrain from unilaterally changing the ground situation" and "avoid taking any action that may complicate the situation". Such pious sentiments, issued a day after the talks, are all very well, but appear completely out of sync with the reality on the ground. It should be noted that even if China and India don't send any additional troops to the LAC, the People's Liberation Army has 50,000 soldiers there, with heavy artillery, tanks, armoured carriers, and the Indian Army has a matching number of troops and equipment. The important thing is that there wasn't an iota of progress on the disengagement process: with the Chinese side refusing to budge on withdrawal of its forces from the Finger area and elsewhere, and go back to its pre-April 2020 positions — despite the 14-hour-long negotiations, attended for the first time by a MEA joint secretary.

After foreign ministers S. Jaishankar and Wang Yi agreed in Moscow on a five-point action plan to reduce tensions, Monday's agreement not to engage in "escalatory behaviour" is perhaps the first significant step forward, but one has to wait and see if it holds for a reasonable period. To reiterate, one can only hope for small steps at a time. The two armies have to remain dug in across the harsh terrain in sub-zero temperatures through the winter, and perhaps beyond. India's only advantage is that having occupied the Kailash range's strategic heights overlooking the Spanggung Gap's entry points in Chushul on August 29-31, the PLA can't take it by surprise as it did in May-June. The Chinese side is demanding that India withdraw from these heights, which New Delhi has rightly rejected, saying as the first transgressions were by China. The PLA is preventing Indian Army patrols, it has to make the first move to disengage.

There are fears if the Chinese can't be forced to leave soon, the change in the LAC's alignment might become permanent, to India's disadvantage. That is why the Army must be in readiness, prepared to retaliate for any Chinese action, including by firing if required, and remain watchful for mischief elsewhere on the LAC, such as Arunachal Pradesh. The Chinese are masters at the long game, in tiring out their opponents, and India needs a lot of patience. It will be costly too, as our economy is weaker than China's, and the additional spending on defence is something we can ill afford, especially now. But it must be done, we have no alternative.

## Deano transformed cricket

Tragic as the death of the Victorian cricketer Dean Jones in India is, his emotional ties to the subcontinent may have been destined to end this way. The Australian batsman helped transform the modern game by showing the way in a more energetic mode of playing as batsman, bowler or fielder in the limited-overs game in which each run seems to matter more towards defining victory or defeat. A positive attitude towards batting in a team's cause and raw courage in standing up to the challenge of pace like that of the West Indies in their heyday enabled him to leave a grand imprint on the game, especially in an epochal World Cup victory in India under Allan Border in 1987 that reshaped the history of Australian cricket.

Not many foreigners of Dean Jones' time took to the subcontinent. A liberal-minded Jones was different and he sought out assignments in India, Pakistan and Afghanistan as a commentator. After a gaffe on air in likening a bearded South African batsman's appearance to that of "a terrorist", Jones reconciled to only being a part of studio cricket shows. In his 'Professor Deano' persona, he used his head for figures to present cricket in quirky and engaging fashion and carved a niche in the field of the "talking heads" of sport.

A brave Jones may have died deaf very early in his career as he dominated the opening parts of Tied Test II at Chepauk in Chennai in September 1986 when he compiled a mammoth 210 in 503 minutes of sapping heat and humidity, besides the discomfort of the foul smell emanating from the polluted Cooum River flowing nearby. Jones was so dehydrated that he was thrown into a bathtub filled with ice cubes in his hotel room to cool him down and then dragged to a hot shower to make him feel "human" and fit to resume batting, but only to be put on saline drips in a hospital that night. Alas! a stroke took him in his Mumbai hotel room at the relatively young age of 59.

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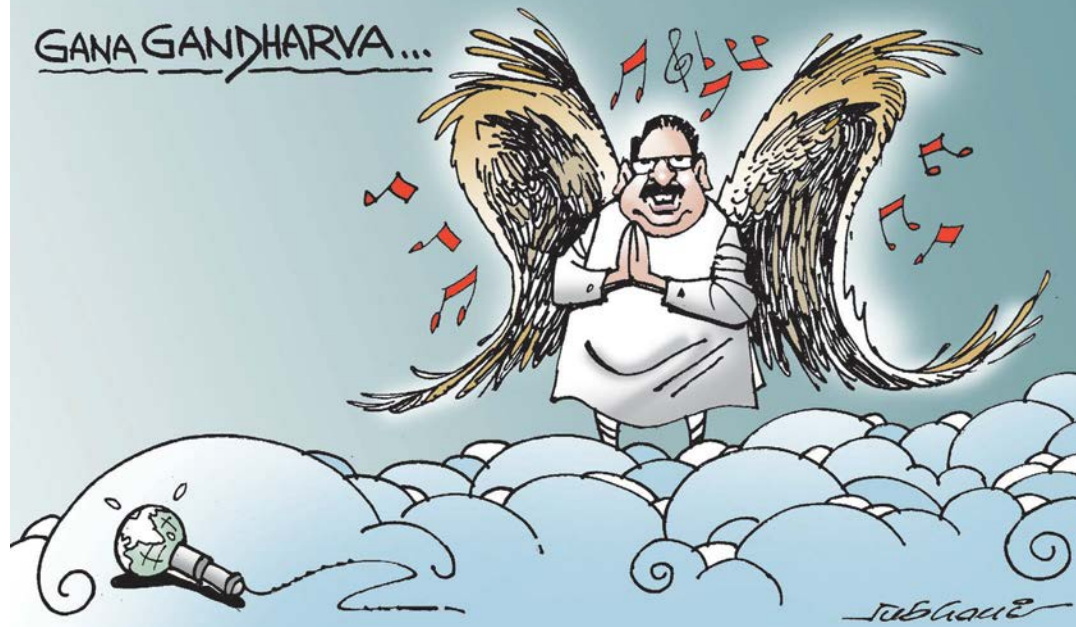
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Subhani



## Can fury over farm bills trigger wider Opp. stir?



Anand K. Sahay

Far & Near

For the first time in India, a motion of no-confidence was moved against the deputy chairman of the Rajya Sabha earlier this week. It's another matter that it was rejected. To save the two agriculture bills — on which Prime Minister Narendra Modi appears to have staked so much — from possibly falling in the Upper House, Harivansh, as the presiding officer, appeared to shabbily disregard the rules, leading to the Opposition parties expressing their mistrust in him.

Mr Harivansh stubbornly refused the Opposition's demand for a formal vote to test whether the government actually had a majority to pass the intended legislation. It's quite clear that to press for a vote is no longer your right even inside the Parliament of India. All these years formal voting has been permitted the minute any member in either House has demanded a "division".

On this occasion, however, the deputy chairman chose to impose voice voting when the House was in a state of turmoil caused by stiff opposition to the rules being imposed by him even by parties that normally vote with the government. The deputy chairman no doubt acted to help the intended legislation sail through on the strength of lung power. It's clear that if the presiding deity is with you, that's practically nine-tenths of the law.

These were truly "historic" bills, to quote the PM, in the sense that they will make history. The laws that these will bring about have the intent of deepening capitalism in

agriculture by slowly strangulating the long-standing MSP regime — evidently a bad old "socialist" construct — through which the government offers an assured minimum price to farmers to prevent them from going to the wall. The path will be cleared for businessmen to do all the food-grain procurement to bring farm produce to cities at prices that the market dictates.

The effect of these laws may take time to come to fruition. For the time being, the government has hastily announced even an increase in the MSP to placate farmers who are on the warpath. But when the desired results begin to kick in with the passage of time, Indian agriculture, which has been described as a "gamble on the monsoon", will also carry the additional feature of being a gamble on the market. The fate of approximately 50 per cent of the population that subsists on agriculture — about 70 million people — will be determined eventually by how the stock market, the money market and the foreign trade market are faring.

Naturally, bedlam ensued of a kind not seen before in the Rajya Sabha. To hide the shame, the live telecast of Rajya Sabha TV was abruptly cut. The microphones of the Opposition members were switched off. It was a blatant effort to ensure that people do not get to see the methods being deployed on the government's behalf in Parliament. It was darkness at noon that was on display.

If China or North Korea had a multi-party system and a real Parliament,

this is what might have been expected. But they don't. So that makes us a special category of "democracy", a foretaste of the New India that is being promised as India ostentatiously lays claim to being the "vishwa guru".

Before Mr Harivansh announced a voice vote, it seemed that the ruling party's opponents might just have the upper hand in terms of numbers as some of the government's regular allies from among the Opposition parties were switching sides on this particular vote since it concerned millions of farmers, and they didn't wish to be seen ranged against the growers of food, whose condition is pitiable at the best of times.

Year after year, we have seen gripping images of farmers casting away the healthiest-looking onions and tomatoes — fruits of their toil — on the roads instead of selling them to traders at ridiculous market-determined prices because the MSP regime does not cover such crops. What if the MSP went and rice and wheat now had to be flung away in the wind by our agriculturists?

A defeat for the government on the agriculture bills in Parliament topping a farmers' agitation gripping Punjab. Haryana and several other parts of North India would have been a signal event, coming on top of the news of 24 per cent negative rate of growth, the worst among all countries of the world, shooting Covid-19 figures (again the worst in the world), and China sitting on our territory in Ladakh, barely 200 km out of Leh. The looming defeat

**Mr Harivansh stubbornly refused the Opposition's demand for a formal vote... It's quite clear that to press for a vote is no longer your right even inside the Parliament of India**

had to be prevented at any cost, and Mr Harivansh offered his services, although he is not from the BJP-RSS stable.

What is important is that the no-confidence move against the deputy chairman was signed by as many as 12 non-NDA parties, including several that have loyally supported the Narendra Modi government for a long time, behaving as a loyal Opposition. These decided to make common cause with the government's (and the BJP's) inveterate opponents — the Congress, the Left parties, the RJD and AIADMK, and lately the Trinamul Congress.

The flash unity and loss of faith has come on the heels of the Akali Dal, the BJP's oldest remaining ally (the Shiv Sena departed last year), withdrawing its Cabinet minister from the Modi government. Although the Akalis have not quit the ruling alliance at the Centre, and it is still unclear if they will so, for many years the two parties have had a fairly tense relationship as partners.

What is fundamental to the unusual Akali Dal decision to withdraw itself from the Union Cabinet, catching the BJP wholly unawares, and the unprecedented events in Rajya Sabha, is the spontaneity seen in the protest of farmers in various parts of North India.

The government is doing its best to head off a nationwide action by farmers by offering unrealistic promises and announcing a hike in MSP for certain crops. But it is clear as day that the continuance of MSP runs against the logic of the two laws cleared by Parliament. Not for a long time in the country have we seen a coming together in protest by a robust constituency even as legislation was in the making. The test of the Opposition will be if it can translate its actions in the legislature with channelling a wide variety of people's grievances on the ground.

### LETTERS

#### INDIA'S JOB MESS

India is in a hell of financial mess, especially the middle class (*Jobless rate rises as Centre turns stingy, private cos stop expansion, DC, Sept. 25*). No doubt that Covid-19 was a reason, but Modi government's wrong financial and social policies are the main reason. The biggest problem in India now is that most of state governments hardly bother about development and Centre is not in a position to advice. The Centre does not have an effective economic policy since the start.

P. Panduranga Rao  
Krishna district

#### OUR BALU

The demise of legendary singer S.P. Balasubrahmanyam has left a void in Indian cine music. His record of singing around 50,000 songs in 16 Indian languages in his five-decade career is unparalleled. The multi-talented singer was busy encouraging budding singers through one Telugu channel and other available platforms for 25 years till recently just before he became ill a couple of months back. His passion for Telugu is such that whenever he got a chance to talk before audience he never failed to impress upon others about the importance of learning, speaking and encouraging one's own language.

Dr D.V.G. Sankararao  
Vizianagaram

### 50 YEARS AGO IN

## DECCAN Chronicle

#### Delhi-Moscow direct Telex opened

BEIRUT, Sept. 25. King Hussein and Guerrilla chief Yasser Arafat have agreed to an immediate ceasefire throughout Jordan, the King announced on Amman Radio.

Sudanese President Jaafar Al-Nimeiry, head of Cairo by the Arab heads of state, read a statement on the radio from Mr Arafat confirming the ceasefire agreement.

Field Marshal Al-Majali ordered army, security and militia units to strictly respect the ceasefire and to give all possible assistance to the Red Cross to facilitate its humanitarian mission."

Saeed Naqvi  
Wide Angle



## BJP impunity in House stems from Opp. fear of exposure

With 303 seats in a House of 540 members, and only 37.36 per cent of the popular vote, the BJP can rush through bills with lightning speed, pummeling any effort at debate. How does this happen? After all, 237 members on the Opposition benches is not a negligible number.

The BJP's impatience with the Constitution is obvious but blame also lies with the Gandhi trio on two counts: neither have they been able to pull together a coalition with any punch, nor have they moved out of the way so that others can.

The salience given to the Gandhis by the media keeps them in the public eye as wishful thinkers with a determination to revive the Congress. This comes across as a massive roadblock in the way of any Opposition unity. They know that such a revival is impossible but harping on the belief serves a purpose: it obstructs opposition unity and sustains their relevance to no useful end. The media is content with the simplicity of the Tweedledum versus Tweedledee narrative.

In recent times, a story that has waffled out of the Gandhi enclosure is one of differences between them. Sonia Gandhi, with reliable retainers like Ahmed Patel is averse to rocking any boat. Status quo, uncomfortable

though it be, is about the best she sees for the brood in the given circumstances. Her listless politics is also a function of her indifferent health.

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's status quoism derives from her personal anxieties, family problems and an inability to cope with responsibilities. Ask Kishori Lal Sharma, appointed years ago to nurse the "family burroughs" of Rae Bareilly and Amethi, and he will guardedly spill the beans. The poor fellow's Stan Hardy (as in Laurel and Hardy) moustache greyed waiting for Priyanka to address the "Congress volunteers". But Priyanka, like Godot, never showed up.

Rahul Gandhi, meanwhile, is being more assertive about beliefs he has long held and which approximate to the line Rajiv Gandhi enunciated at the 1985 Congress Centenary in Mumbai chastising the "power brokers". Is Rahul Gandhi looking for that kind of a platform?

In 1969, when his grandmother, Indira Gandhi, split the Congress away from the "power brokers", the regional satraps, the capitalists were, in a sense exposed. They eventually joined up with the RSS, Socialists in the Bihar movement of 1974 under the leadership of arch-Gandhian, Jayaprakash Narayan.

The 1969 split had a Left-Right

dimension to it because it was in the context of the Cold War. In the post Cold War world "Inequality" has emerged as the principal affliction of democracies where people's demands are dismissed as "populism". Crony capitalism thrives but no political party is allowed to find its feet if it intends to harness the discontent of the people who have borne the brunt of, say, the extended lockdown in India. There is a huge Left-of-Centre space for the Opposition to occupy. It does not have to be terribly ideological. All it has to do is to make available to the people social benefits such as health, education, housing, et cetera. Surely Rahul is aware of this opening.

Politics these days is at a standstill because of the lockdown, of course, but also because of what I call the "Eulalie" syndrome. This light-hearted diversion comes from Wodehouse. The resourceful Jeeves has come to the assistance of his master, Bertie Wooster, at a particularly challenging moment. Roderick Spode, the Earl of Sidcup, has become a permanent social menace in a country house which is Bertie's favourite haunt. How to cut down Spode's bombast? That is Bertie's challenge. Jeeves provides the panacea. Bertie has to sneak upto Spode and whisper, "I know all about Eulalie." Bertie fol-

lows Jeeves' advice. The result is electric. Spode becomes white as a sheet and collapses in the chair like a deflated balloon. It turns out that before Spode began to float in London's high society, he owned a store called Eulalie which sold lingerie known for its bras with bold designs. Eulalie, then is harmless blackmail. But the blackmail which has become the staple in contemporary politics is brutal.

After the BJP's stunning victory in UP in 2017, the Opposition, armed with data on electoral fraud, sought Sonia Gandhi's permission to hold a press conference. She refused to get involved in "controversies". Likewise, she backed away from "snoogate" which had both Modi and Amit Shah in difficulties.

Take a look at Lucknow. Jockeying has begun for the 10 Rajya Sabha seats from UP. Conventional wisdom concedes eight to the BJP and one to the SP. One would have expected the Opposition to jointly keep the BJP out on the solitary remaining seat. But individual party leaders are in an almighty state of funk just in case the Enforcement Directorate comes knocking at their door.

Even though the Opposition has a comfortable majority in the UP Upper House, the BJP rammed through nearly a hundred bills with-

out any vote. A petrified Akhilesh Yadav is hiding behind columns to avoid political leaders who are pressing him to approach the Supreme Court. What if Yogi Adityanath sets the dogs on him? In fact, Lucknow would appear to have been a rehearsal for the real show in Parliament.

In uniformed cities like New Delhi these examples of the ruling party's impunity, away from the media's critical glare, enhance an impression of the BJP's invincibility. Forgotten are dismal economic figures and a simple catalogue: the party is not in power in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Odisha, West Bengal, Punjab, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Delhi. Just as your eye settles on these facts, *India Today* thrusts before you its poll results: Modi's approval ratings are 78 per cent. Like the Priest in Kurosawa's *Rashomon*, you walk away nodding your head, "What is the truth?" The climax, of course, is the audacity of ramming through bills in Parliament. Slowly what is being brought into focus is a need for a new Constitution.

The writer is a senior journalist and commentator based in New Delhi



## IN BRIEF

## Fire breaks out at Huawei office

**Beijing:** A huge fire broke out in southern China on Friday at an unfinished Huawei research facility, sending massive plumes of smoke over the industrial city of Dongguan. The blaze started at a Huawei building on Alishan Road, where the company is developing a research base, according to the city government. It was extinguished after 140 firefighters were called to the scene, the local fire brigade said in a separate statement. Footage broadcast online by state media channel CCTV showed dark clouds of smoke billowing out of a blue and white building near Songshan Lake. Huawei's spokesperson said the company could not yet provide details on the fire.

## THAILAND SUES FACEBOOK TWITTER

**Bangkok, Sept. 25:** Thailand's government lodged complaints with police on Thursday against Facebook and Twitter, alleging they failed to comply with court orders to block content judged illegal under Thai law.

Minister of Digital Economy and Society Buddhipongse Punnakanta said at a news conference that it was the first time his ministry has taken such action against the social media companies under Thailand's Computer Crime Act.

It has prosecuted website and account owners and users in the past. The ministry filed the complaints at the police Technology Crime Suppression Division, where Buddhipongse said the companies had failed to meet 15-day deadlines issued by the courts to block hundreds of accounts. He said the targeted sites were banned because they contained illegal content related to online gambling, pornography, drugs or the monarchy, a highly sensitive subject.



French Prime Minister Jean Castex and French interior minister Gerald Darmanin arrive at the scene where several people were injured near the former offices of the French satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* following an attack by a man wielding a knife in Paris on Friday.

— AFP

## Terror probe opened after 2 stabbed in Paris

**Paris, Sept. 25:** French terrorism authorities are investigating a double-stabbing outside the former Paris offices of a satirical newspaper where a dozen people were killed in 2015, and two suspects have been arrested in Friday's violence, authorities said.

France's counterterrorism prosecutor said authorities suspect a terrorist motive because of the place and timing of the stabbings: in front of the building where *Charlie Hebdo* was based until the Islamic extremist attack on its cartoonists and at a time when suspects in the 2015 attack are on trial across town.

Prosecutor Jean-Francois Ricard said that the chief suspect in Friday's stabbings was arrested, along with another person. Ricard said the assailant did not know the people who were

stabbed, two workers in a documentary production company who had stepped outside for a smoke break.

The suspects' identities have not been released, and it is unclear exactly what prompted the attack. An investigation was opened into "attempted murder in relation with a terrorist enterprise," according to an official at the terrorism prosecutor's office. French Prime Minister Jean Castex said the lives of the two wounded workers are not in danger. He offered the government's solidarity with their families and colleagues. *Associated Press* reporters at the scene saw police flood the neighborhood in eastern Paris near the Richard Lenoir subway station, which remained cordoned off hours later. Children were sequestered in nine schools while police scoured the area, but were

later released, according to the Paris school district.

"All the team at *Charlie Hebdo* offers support and solidarity to its former neighbors and colleagues at PLTVfilms and to the people hit by this odious attack," *Charlie Hebdo* tweeted.

The prime minister noted the "symbolic site" of the attack, "at the very moment where the trial into the atrocious acts against *Charlie Hebdo* is under way." He promised the government's "unfailing attachment to freedom of the press, and its determination to fight terrorism."

The two people confirmed injured worked for documentary film company Premieres Lignes, according to founder Paul Moreira. He told *BFM* television that the attacker fled into the subway, and the company's staff members were evacuated. — AP

## Retired generals, admirals endorse Biden in US polls

4-star officers who served under Don also back Dem US Prez candidate

**Washington, Sept. 25:** More than 200 retired generals and admirals endorsed Joe Biden for president in a letter published on Thursday, saying he had the character and judgment to serve as commander-in-chief instead of President Donald Trump, who has failed "to meet challenges large or small."

Some of the officers who signed the letter supporting Biden had retired only in the past few years, including Air Force Gen. Paul Selva, who served as vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff under Trump before he retired in August 2019; Vice Adm. Gardner Howe, a Navy SEAL leader who also retired last year; and retired Adm. Paul Zukunff, who oversaw the Coast Guard until 2018.

The list of signatories featured 22 retired four-star military officers, among them Navy Adm. Samuel Locklear, who oversaw all US forces in the Pacific from 2012 to

2015, and Adm. Harry Ulrich, who commanded U.S. naval forces in Europe during President George W. Bush's administration.

The retired top brass signed the letter backing Biden along with nearly 300 other former national security officials and diplomats.

William Webster, the former director of the CIA and the FBI, was among the signatories, along with five former defense secretaries: William Perry, William Cohen, Chuck Hagel, Leon Panetta and Ash Carter.

"My own personal view is that I have a duty to be involved in civic matters of the nation that I'm a citizen" of, retired Adm. Steve Abbot said of his decision to sign the letter.

Abbot served as commander of the U.S. Sixth Fleet and commander of Naval Striking and Support Forces in Southern Europe, and he later became Bush's acting homeland security adviser. — AFP

## DESPITE TRUMP ATTACKS, BOTH PARTIES VOW ORDERLY ELECTION

**Washington, Sept. 26:** President Donald Trump's refusal to commit to a peaceful transfer of power if he loses drew swift blowback on Thursday from both parties in Congress, and lawmakers turned to unprecedented steps to ensure he can't ignore the vote of the people.

Amid the uproar, Trump said anew he's not sure the election will be "honest." Congressional leaders, including Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, rejected Trump's assertion that he'll "see what happens" before agreeing to any election outcome. Many other lawmakers — including from Trump's own Republican Party — vowed to make sure voters' wishes are followed ahead of Inauguration Day in January.

And some Democrats were taking action, including formally asking Trump's defense secretary, homeland security adviser and attorney general to declare they'll support the Nov. 3 results, whoever wins.

Asked as he departed the White House for a campaign rally if the election is only legitimate if he is the winner, Trump said, "We'll see." The president said he wants to "make sure the election is honest, and I'm not sure that it can be."

Trump's attacks on the upcoming vote — almost without modern precedent in the US — are hitting amid the tumult of the campaign, as partisan tensions rage and more Americans than ever are planning to vote by mail because of the coronavirus pandemic. — AP

## China to produce 1b vaccine doses

**Beijing, Sept. 25:** China's Covid-19 vaccine development programme is in a "leading position" and Beijing is on track to produce over 600 million doses by the end of the year, officials said on Friday.

China has been bullish about the development of its coronavirus vaccine as scientists around the world race to halt the deadly pathogen which has caused global chaos and killed almost a million people. Health officials told

● **BRAZIL HAS** postponed Rio de Janeiro's famed carnival for next year, the latest spectacle hit by the pandemic as governments across the globe struggle to contain a surge in coronavirus infections.

● **BRAZIL NOW** has the world's second highest death toll after the United States — nearly 1,40,000 fatalities — and is still battling to bring the virus under control.

reporters at a press conference on Friday that China expects to produce 610 million vaccine doses by the end of this year, with annual production capacity to reach at least one billion doses next year.

Eleven Chinese vaccines have now entered clinical trials, with four in Phase Three trials that are "progressing smoothly", said Wu Yuanbin from the Ministry of Science and Technology.

"At present, China's

Covid-19 vaccine research and development work is overall in a leading position," said Wu.

We've seen that the vaccines' safety is good and there have been no serious adverse reactions." Hundreds of thousands of essential workers at ports, hospitals and other high-risk areas have already been given an experimental vaccine since July, officials said, claiming that the programme had also gained the support of the World Health Organisation (WHO). — AFP

## FINANCIAL Chronicle

ANANTAPUR | SATURDAY | 26 SEPTEMBER 2020

## quick BITES

INDICATORS	%
Sensex	37,388.66 2.28
Nifty 50	11,050.30 2.27
S&P 500*	3,267.82 0.65
Dollar (₹)	73.61 0.39
Pound Sterling (₹)	94.01 0.03
Euro (₹)	86.01 0.19
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	49,551.71 353
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	41.78 -0.16
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.038 0.046
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.659 -0.005

\* As of 9:30 PM IST

## Hetero launches patient pack of Favir 800/200

Hetero on Friday launched the first-ever 'Patient Compliant Pack' of Favir 800/200 for the treatment of mild-to-moderate symptomatic Covid-19 patients in India. Favir 800/200 will be available in a patient-friendly pack containing 16 tablets of Favir 800mg and 2 tablets of Favir 200mg, priced at ₹2,640. Favir 800 mg has been approved by the Drug Controller General of India.

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## Centre used states' ₹47,272cr GST funds to close fiscal gap

CAG says Centre violated GST Act through unauthorised use

**New Delhi, Sept. 25:** The CAG has found that the Union government in the very first two years of the GST implementation wrongly retained ₹47,272 crore of GST compensation cess that was meant to be used specifically to compensate states for loss of revenue.

In its audit report of government accounts, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) flagged that the amount was to be credited to the non-lapsable GST Compensation Cess collection fund for payment to states for loss of revenue due to implementation of GST since 2017, but the government did not do so, and thus violated the GST law.

"The GST Compensation Cess Act, 2017, provides for levy of cess for the purpose of providing compensation to the states for loss of revenue arising due to

## BREACH OF TRUST

● CAG said the Centre used this money for "other purposes" which "led to an overstatement of revenue receipts and understatement of fiscal deficit for the year".

● According to CAG, the Finance Ministry accepted the audit observation and stated in February 2020 that the proceeds of cess collected and not transferred to Public Account would be transferred in the subsequent year.

implementation of GST for a period specified in the Act," CAG said.

As per the Act and the accounting procedure, the entire cess collected during the year is required to be credited to a non-lapsable Fund (the GST Compensation Cess Fund) which shall form part of the Public Account and shall be used for the purpose mentioned i.e., for providing compensation to states for loss of revenue.

CAG said out of the ₹62,612 crore GST Compensation Cess collected in 2017-18, ₹56,146 crore was transferred to the non-lapsable fund.

In the following year (2018-19), ₹54,275 crore out of ₹95,081 crore collected was transferred to the fund.

The short transfer in 2017-18 was ₹6,466 crore and in 2018-19 it was ₹40,806 crore, CAG said adding the Centre used

this money for "other purposes" which "led to an overstatement of revenue receipts and understatement of fiscal deficit for the year".

The short-crediting was a violation of the GST Compensation Cess Act, 2017. The issue of compensation cess is driving a wedge between the Centre and states at the GST Council, the highest decision making body of the GST regime that had subsumed 17 different central and state taxes such as excise duty and VAT.

States have not been paid their promised compensation for letting go their powers to levy taxes on goods and services since last fiscal. The Centre says a slowdown in the economy has meant that not enough money is being collected by way of cess that is levied on luxury and sin goods. — PTI

## Centre plans \$4.6b sops to boost battery factories

**New Delhi, Sept. 25:** India plans to offer \$4.6 billion in incentives to companies setting up advanced battery manufacturing facilities as it seeks to promote the use of electric vehicles and cut down its dependence on oil, according to a government proposal seen by *Reuters*.

A proposal drafted by NITI Aayog, a federal think tank chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, said India could slash its oil import bills by as much as \$40 billion by 2030 if electric vehicles were widely adopted.

The proposal is likely to be reviewed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his cabinet in the coming weeks, said a senior government official, who was not authorised to

comment on the matter and declined to be identified. NITI Aayog and the Indian government did not respond to requests for comment.

The think tank recommended incentives of \$4.6 billion by 2030 for companies manufacturing advanced batteries, starting with cash and infrastructure incentives of ₹900 crore (\$122 million) in the next financial year

which would then be ratcheted up annually.

"Currently, the battery energy storage industry is at a very nascent stage in India with investors being a little apprehensive to invest in a sunrise industry," the proposal said.

India plans to retain its import tax rate of five per cent for certain types of batteries, including batteries for electric vehicles, until 2022, but will increase it to 15 per cent thereafter to promote local manufacturing, the document said.

Though keen to reduce its oil dependence and cut down on pollution, India's efforts to promote electric vehicles have been stymied by a lack of investment in manufacturing and infrastructure like charging stations. — *Reuters*

## CFOs' optimism falls to record low levels

**New Delhi, Sept. 25:** The optimism level among chief financial officers (CFOs) about India's financial and macro-economic conditions during the third quarter this year has witnessed a decline of 15 per cent and touched record low level, according to a survey.

Dun & Bradstreet Composite CFO Optimism Index showed a decline of 15 per cent on quarter-on-quarter basis to 74.2 during Q3 2020, bringing the index to a record low.

The survey covered nearly 350 chief financial officers (CFOs), who were asked a set of questions

regarding the financial performance of their companies and the overall macroeconomic scenario for the corporate sector in the forthcoming period.

"The steady rise in total infected cases and the spillover effects of the lockdown measures have undermined the optimism levels," said Arun Singh, Global Chief Economist, Dun & Bradstreet.

Further, the lack of space for demand stimulus coupled with subdued consumer demand have constrained the pace of economic activity, the Dun & Bradstreet economist said. — PTI

## HEALTH, HYGIENE ITEM LAUNCHES JUMP 18-FOLD

**New Delhi, Sept. 25:** FMCG companies introduced total 1,897 products in health and hygiene segment in March-August, registering over 18-fold jump as compared to the preceding six months, said a report from data analytics firm Nielsen.

The companies introduced products in categories including liquid toilet soaps, antiseptic liquids, analgesic between March-August 2020, the report noted.

Before the Covid-19 pandemic, between September 2019 to February 2020, only 102 products were introduced in health & hygiene space. — PTI



## SHORT TAKES

## Messi blasts Barca for Suarez sack

**Madrid:** Lionel Messi bid an emotional farewell on Friday to Luis Suarez, the day after the Uruguayan striker had said tearful goodbyes to Barcelona after the club sent him to Atletico Madrid. "Today I went into the dressing room and the awful truth hit me," Messi posted on *Instagram*, before renewing his criticism of club management. "You deserved to be sent off as what you are: one of the most important players in the history of the club," Messi wrote. "And not to be fired in the way they did it. The truth is that at this point nothing surprises me anymore," the post added. Messi has a long-running feud with club president Josep Maria Bartomeu which intensified after Barcelona were humiliated 8-2 by Bayern in a Champions League quarterfinal in August. Messi tried to force his exit from Barcelona but finally accepted that he would have to see out the final year of his contract. — *AFP*

## Gurpreet, Sanju adjudged best

**New Delhi:** Indian men's team goalkeeper Gurpreet Singh Sandhu and women's squad's mid-fielder Sanju were on Friday declared the winners of the All India Football Federation (AIFF) Footballer of the Year awards for the 2019-20 season. This is the first time Gurpreet has received the award, and in the process he became the second goalkeeper after Subrata Paul in 2009 to be named the AIFF Player of the Year. Gurpreet was elected as the winner on the basis of votes from Indian Super League and I-League club coaches. — *PTI*

## Bottas revs to the top at Russian GP

**Sochi:** Valtteri Bottas topped the times for Mercedes ahead of Renault's Daniel Ricciardo in Friday morning's crash-hit opening free practice at this weekend's Russian Grand Prix. The Finn, who is 55 points adrift of Mercedes team-mate Lewis Hamilton in the title race, clocked a best lap in one minute and 34.923 seconds. This left him half a second clear of the Australian on the smooth-surfaced circuit and six-tenths ahead of third-placed Max Verstappen of Red Bull. Defending six-time champion Hamilton, who is one win short of equalling seven-time champion Michael Schumacher's career record 91 victories, remained in the Mercedes team garage for much of the session after flat-spotting his tyres and did not clock a truly competitive lap time. He was classified down in 19th. — *AFP*

## Milan, Spurs in Europa play-offs

**Milan:** AC Milan midfielder Hakan Altintop scored twice to give his team a 3-2 home victory over Norwegian club Bodo/Glimt in Europa League qualifying. There were no major upsets as Tottenham, Celtic, Wolfsburg, PSV Eindhoven and Sporting Lisbon all advanced to the play-off round. With Zlatan Ibrahimovic sidelined with the Coronavirus, Lorenzo Colombo also scored for the seven-time European champion. After scoring four goals against Southampton in the Premier League on Sunday, Son Heung-min netted again for Tottenham in a 3-1 win against Shkndija in North Macedonia. Erik Lamela and Harry Kane also had a goal each. — *AP*

## Prithvi is big Shaw

## Youngster's half-century sets up win for Capitals

**Dubai, Sept. 25:** Delhi Capitals beat Chennai Super Kings by 44 runs to register their second consecutive win in the Indian Premier League here on Friday.

Sent into bat, DC made 175 for 3 and then restricted CSK to 131 for 7 to maintain their winning run.

Young Prithvi Shaw struck a fluent half-century and shared a 94-run opening stand with Shikhar Dhawan to guide Delhi Capitals to a powerful position.

Shaw made 64 off 43 balls in the company of Dhawan (35 off 27 balls, 3 fours, 1 six) to provide a superb start to DC's innings after being put into bat.

The duo started slowly, scoring just 36 runs of the first six overs of power-play before opening up to stitch 94 runs for the opening wicket in 10.4 overs.

Shaw got into his stride, hitting two consecutive boundaries off Deepak Chahar.

The Mumbai youngster didn't appear to rush things and played some attractive shots.

Once CSK skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni introduced the spin duo of Piyush Chawla and Ravindra Jadeja in the seventh over, both Shaw and Dhawan went on the offensive.

Chawla, who was taken apart by Sanju Samson in their previous game against Rajasthan Royals, came in for some rough treatment as did Jadeja who went wicketless in his four overs (0/44).

Dhawan after playing second fiddle for a while, joined the party and hit a couple of attractive boundaries and slogged Jadeja's first ball for a six over mid-wicket.

The DC openers hampered 58 in the next 4.4



Delhi Capitals batsman Prithvi Shaw plays a shot en-route to his half century during the IPL match against Chennai Super Kings at Dubai International Cricket Stadium in UAE on Friday.

— *BCCI*

## SCORECARD

**Delhi Capitals:** Prithvi Shaw st M. S. Dhoni b Piyush Chawla 64, Shikhar Dhawan lbw Piyush Chawla 35, Rishabh Pant not out 37, Shreyas Iyer c M. S. Dhoni b Sam Curran 26, Marcus Stoinis not out 5. **Extras:** (LB-5, W-3) 8. **Total:** (for 3 wickets, in 20 overs) 175. **FoW:** 1-94, 2-103, 3-161. **Bowling:** Deepak Chahar 4-0-38-0, Sam Curran 4-0-27-1, Josh Hazlewood 4-0-28-0, Piyush Chawla 4-0-33-2, Ravinder Jadeja 4-0-44-0. **Chennai Super Kings:** Murali Vijay c K.

Rabada b Nortje 10, Shane Watson c Hetmyer b Patel, Faf du Plessis c Pant b Rabada 43, Ruturaj Gaikwad run out 5, Kedar Jadhav lbw b Nortje 26, M. S. Dhoni not out c Pant b Rabada 15, R. Jadeja c Mishra b Rabada 8, Sam Curran not out 0. **Extras:** (LB-1, W-4) 5; **Total:** (For 7 wickets, in 20 overs) 131; **FoW:** 1-23, 2-34, 3-44, 4-98, 5-113, 6-130, 7-131. **Bowling:** K. Rabada 4-0-26-3, Axar Patel 4-0-18-1, A. Nortje 4-0-21-2, Avesh Khan 4-0-42-0, Amit Mishra 4-0-23-0.

## Wasn't at my best before match: KL

**Dubai, Sept. 25:** Kings XI Punjab captain KL Rahul, who made a scintillating century against Royal Challengers Bangalore, said he was lacking in confidence heading into the team's second IPL fixture.

Rahul starred with an unbeaten 132 off 69 balls as KXIP outplayed RCB by 97 runs here on Thursday.

"I have actually been not so confident (hitting it this well). I had a chat with Maxi (Glenn Maxwell) yesterday, he said how are you feeling, I said that I am not feeling completely in control of my batting, he said you must be joking, you are hitting really well," Rahul said at the post-match presentation.

He had already spoken about his fears leading up to the IPL, considering he was coming back after a five-month long break due to the Covid-19 pandemic. "Quite honestly I was nervous but I knew if I spend time in the middle, hit a few balls from the middle of bat, it will all settle down.

"I try to do (the same routine as I did when I was a

**I have actually been not so confident (hitting it this well). I had a chat with Maxi (Glenn Maxwell) yesterday, he said 'how are you feeling,' I said that I am not feeling completely in control of my batting, he said you must be joking, you are hitting well.**

— **K. L. RAHUL** after his match winning knock of 132 runs against RCB

player) but as a captain you have shortened time and you are running around and doing a lot of things," Rahul said.

He is captaining in the IPL for the first time. "I still try to maintain the same routine. Once I am in the middle and during the toss is the only time I feel like a captain and otherwise I try to balance being a player and the captain. It's as complete a team performance as it can get. We had few different plans going into this game," he further added. — *PTI*

## Virat slapped with ₹12 lakh for slow over rate

**Dubai, Sept. 25:** Royal Challengers Bangalore captain Virat Kohli has been fined ₹12 lakh after his team maintained a slow over-rate during their Indian Premier League match against Kings XI Punjab here.

RCB were thrashed by 97 runs in the match on Thursday night.

"As it was his team's first offence of the season under the IPL's Code of Conduct relating to minimum over-rate offences, Mr. Kohli was fined ₹12 lakh," the IPL said in a release.

The Indian batting mainstay had a forgettable outing at the Dubai International Stadium.

While he dropped two catches of centurion KL Rahul, which proved to be costly, Kohli also could not contribute anything substantial with the willow.

Kohli dropped Rahul twice — once in the 17th over at deep square-leg when he was batting on 83 and then again in the 18th over when he was on 89.



Virat Kohli

The lapses helped KXIP score an imposing 206 for 3, with Rahul doing the bulk of scoring.

## KOHLI TAKES BLAME FOR RCB FLOP SHOW

Royal Challengers Bangalore captain Virat Kohli took the blame for his team's flop show against Kings XI Punjab in the Indian Premier League.

Without hesitation, Kohli took the blame for dropping Kings XI Punjab skipper KL

Rahul catch, which contributed significantly to their defeat on Thursday.

Kohli felt had he not dropped two catches off the blade of Rahul, who remained unbeaten on 132, KXIP would not have been able to go past the 200-run mark.

"I have to stand in front and take the brunt of it, not the best day in the office, couple of important chances of KL when he was set and that cost us 35-40 runs at a later stage. Maybe if we restricted them to 180 we wouldn't have been under pressure from ball one of the chase," said Kohli.

KXIP posted 206 for three and RCB were bundled out for 109 in 17 overs.

"We know exactly where we went wrong and I have to put my hand up and say a couple of chances went down. There are days when these kind of things happen on the cricket field, they happen and we have to accept them," Kohli added. — *PTI*

## KKR &amp; SRH look to open account

**Abu Dhabi, Sept. 25:** Skipper Dinesh Karthik's tactical nous will once again be put to test when Kolkata Knight Riders take on a depleted Sunrisers Hyderabad in their second IPL fixture here on Saturday.

Much was expected from a revamped Kolkata Knight Riders set-up but it seemed Karthik did not learn from his past mistakes and made some inexcusable decisions that led to their complete capitulation against Mumbai Indians.

Once again, the batting position of their biggest hitter Andre Russell became the talking point in their 49-run loss to Mumbai Indians.

The Jamaican, who was their highest run-getter last season with 510 runs from 249 deliveries and the tournament's highest strike rate of 204.81, was seen at No 6 but by then the task had become extremely difficult.

Eoin Morgan also could not do much as the asking rate had shot past 13 by the time he came to bat at No.5.

In bowling too, there was a tactical blunder by holding back their ace spinner Sunil Narine till the last over of power play.

On a day, their biggest buy Pat Cummins failed miserably, Narine was given a go only when his IPL "bunny" Rohit Sharma was well set.

It really defied logic to see such a defensive strategy by a team now coached by Brendon McCullum who is known for his aggressive mindset. Known to put up a balanced side on the park, Hyderabad lacked strength and experience in their middle-order, failing miserably against Royal Challengers Bangalore.

Needing just 43 runs from last five overs, SRH lost their last seven wickets for

## NUMBERS GAME

## HEAD TO HEAD

## OVERALL:

- Matches: 17
- Kolkata won: 10
- Hyderabad won: 7

## MEETING IN 2019

- Kolkata Knight Riders beat Sunrisers Hyderabad by 6 wickets at Kolkata.
- Sunrisers Hyderabad beat Kolkata Knight Riders by 9 wickets.

## FOR THE RECORD

- Dinesh Karthik has won 17, lost 19 and tied one in 37 matches as captain in IPL. He won two and lost three in five matches as skipper for Kolkata Knight Riders against Sunrisers Hyderabad.

- Andre Russell who claimed 295 wickets at an average of 25.97 in 303 innings of 331 matches, needs just five wickets to become the ninth bowler to take 300 wickets in Twenty-20.

— *S. PERVEZ QAISER*

32 runs to lose the game by 10 runs. If that was not enough, injury to their all-rounder Mitchell Marsh has compounded their misery.

Skipper David Warner, after being run out in an unfortunate manner at the non-striker's end, will be keen to get into the act, while it remains to be seen whether Kane Williamson has recovered from his injury to bolster the batting department.

SRH bowling has always been impressive and it seems the think tank may bring in Mohammed Nabi to bowl alongside his fellow mate Rashid Khan while Bhuvneshwar Kumar will spearhead the pace attack. — *PTI*

## IPL POINTS TABLE

Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
Delhi Capitals	2	2	0	0	4	+1.100
Kings XI Punjab	2	1	1	0	2	+2.425
Mumbai Indians	2	1	1	0	2	+0.993
Rajasthan Royals	1	1	0	0	2	+0.800
Chennai Super Kings	3	1	2	0	2	-0.840
Royal Challengers Bangalore	2	1	1	0	2	-2.175
Sunrisers Hyderabad	1	0	1	0	0	-0.500
Kolkata Knight Riders	1	0	1	0	0	-2.450

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

## ‘Anil sir’s advice worked for me’

**Dubai, Sept. 25:** Kings XI Punjab's young spinner Ravi Bishnoi says head coach Anil Kumble has advised him to always stay calm and back his skills as a bowler.

The 20-year-old Bishnoi snared three wickets in an emphatic 97-run win over Royal Challengers Bangalore in the Indian Premier league (IPL) on Thursday night.

"Anil sir has always asked me to back strength in my bowling and skill. He asked me not to try too many things and try to be cool and calm in the middle," Bishnoi said at the post-match press conference.

The India U-19 World Cup player returned impressive

figures of 3-32 in his four overs against a side that boasts of the likes of Virat Kohli and AB de Villiers.

When asked, he sounded confident about bowling against the top players.

"Since we had a long camp before the IPL, I was preparing myself mentally as skill level is the same for everyone here. So being mentally strong and brave was my main focus.

"I told myself not to bowl lose deliveries which would allow them to attack me," further added the leg-spinner.

"We prepared well in our camp before the tournament here. We were focusing on mental strength and not bowling lose balls," he added. — *PTI*

## Live on TV

## CRICKET

**IPL:** Kolkata Knight Riders vs Sunrisers Hyderabad from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

**Australia Women vs New Zealand Women:** First T20 from 9.20 am on Sony Six, HD

**England Women vs West Indies Women:** Third T20 from 10.30 pm on Sony Six, HD

## FOOTBALL

**English Premier League:** Brighton vs Manchester United from 5 pm; Crystal Palace vs Everton from 7.30 pm; West Brom vs Chelsea from 10 pm; Burnley vs Southampton from 12.30 am (Sunday) on Star Sports Select 2, HD

**Spanish Premier League:** Alaves vs Getafe from 4.30 pm; Valencia vs Huesca from 7.30 pm; Elche vs Real Sociedad from 10 pm; Real Betis vs Real Madrid from 12.30 am (Sunday). All matches on LaLiga page on Facebook

## Italian League: Torino vs Atalanta from 6.30 pm; Cagliari vs Lazio from 9.30 pm; Inter Milan vs Fiorentina from 12.15 am (Sunday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

## FORMULA ONE

**Russian Grand Prix:** Practice 3 from 2.25 pm; Qualifying from 5.25 pm on Star Sports Select 1, HD

## TENNIS

**ATP Hamburg European Open:** Semifinals from 5 pm on Sony Six, HD

## BASKETBALL

**NBA Western Conference Finals (Game 5 of best-of-7):** Denver Nuggets vs Los Angeles Lakers from 6.30 am (Sunday) on Sony Six, HD

## UFC FIGHT NIGHT

Israel Adesanya vs Paulo Costa and other bouts starting from 7.30 am (Sunday) on Sony Ten 1, 2, HD



LeBron James (top centre) of Los Angeles Lakers shoots against the Denver Nuggets during the first half of the NBA Western Conference Finals play-off match in Lake Buena Vista, Florida, on Thursday. The Lakers won 114-108.

— *AP*

## LeBron, Anthony star as Lakers feast on Nuggets

**Orlando, Sept. 25:** Anthony Davis and LeBron James combined for 60 points as the top-seeded Los Angeles Lakers seized control of their Western Conference finals series with a 114-108 victory over the Denver Nuggets on Thursday.

James finished with 26 points, nine rebounds, and eight assists and Davis had 34 points as Lakers held on to beat the Nuggets and take a 3-1 lead in the best-of-seven series in the NBA's

quarantine bubble in Orlando, Florida.

Game five is Saturday in Orlando. The Lakers have wrapped up both their previous series in five games.

Canadian forward Jamal Murray led the Nuggets with 32 points and eight assists, while Jerami Grant finished with 17 for Denver. Serbia's Nikola Jokic was held in check most of the game and finished with a disappointing 16 points. He missed all four field goal attempts in the fourth.

James took it upon himself to guard Murray with the game on the line.

Denver has dug another big hole in these playoffs and if they are going to advance to the NBA finals they will have to come back from a 3-1 deficit for the third straight series.

Denver lost game four in each of their first two series against Utah and the Los Angeles Clippers before making a pair of historic comebacks.

— *AFP*

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