

IN BRIEF

30-yr-old constable shoots self, dies

Ghaziabad: A constable deployed for the security of Rajya Sabha member Anil Agarwal allegedly shot himself dead in the MP's residential premises at Kavi Nagar in Ghaziabad district, police said on Monday. Following the incident, Constable Gaurav Kumar, 30, a native of Saroorpur village in Baghpat district, was rushed to a hospital where he was declared brought dead, said Kavi Nagar SHO Nagendra Chaubey. Kumar had shot himself with his service carbine with the bullet piercing his chin and coming out of the skull, he said, adding the body has been kept at the hospital for autopsy. No suicide note was found on the spot where the constable shot himself dead, said Chaubey. The BJP MP's driver, Sanjay, told police that the constable shot himself dead, apparently while talking to his family members on the phone as his earphone was plugged in his ear, said Chaubey. The driver said he was having a stroll outside the under-construction area when he heard the gunshot and rushed inside the room where the constable was lying in a pool of blood with his carbine lying nearby, the SHO said.

700kg buffalo meat seized in Noida

Noida: Three men were arrested in Noida on Monday for alleged cruelty against animals after 700 kg of buffalo meat was seized from them, police said. The accused, who were held from Sector 8 under Sector 20 police station limits, have also been booked under laws related to the Covid pandemic, they said. "Those held have been identified as Faizal Qureshi, a Noida local, Gulfaam and Naeem, both hailing from Meerut district," according to a police statement. "Police found 700 kg of buffalo meat from the accused men along with two normal knives and a chopper knife," it added. An FIR has been lodged against the trio under IPC sections 269 (unlawfully or negligently spreading infection of any disease dangerous to life), 270 (malignant act likely to spread infection of disease dangerous to life) besides provisions of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, police said.

IGL provides spray pumps to SDMC

New Delhi: Citing lack of funds, the South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) has started approaching the corporates to seek support to carry out its civic responsibilities. At a function on Monday, the IGL (Indraprastha Gas Limited) handed over 24 motorised spray pumps to the SDMC under the CSR (corporate social responsibility) initiative. The event was attended by SDMC standing committee chairperson Tulsi Joshi, additional commissioner (health) Randhir Sahay, IGL MD A.K. Jana, and other officials from both the organisations. "This initiative was undertaken in view of the financial crisis faced by the SDMC as we are not getting funds that we are supposed to get. Now we are reaching out to corporates to fulfil our immediate needs," said Ms Joshi.

'Enjoy sweet with anything but sugar'

New Delhi: Always thought of eating those gulab jamuns or jalebis stacked on a tray in the sweet shop but couldn't? You were terrified it would make your weighing machine needle swing further right and your personal physician would yell at you. But now here is sweet without sugar. Sounds fun? It is. Sugar is sweet to taste but everything about it is bitter—full of harmful chemicals that can play havoc with your health from your tooth to your eyes to your heart. Each organ of your body dreads sugar. But worry not. Here is something which should cheer you up. Have sweets made of natural sugars like maple syrup, jaggery, dates, palms, and what-have-you! Ved Pohojia, a famous name in Delhi and a creative maverick, is launching along with two associates an innovative concept for the city's foodies—sweets from home and across the globe, but without using sugar. The name of his experience store sums it up, 'Anything But Sugar.'

Says Gaurav Wasan collected donations in his name

Baba ka Dhaba owner files

plaint against YouTuber

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 2

Kanta Prasad, the owner of popular eatery 'Baba Ka Dhaba' in south Delhi's Malviya Nagar, has filed a complaint against Instagram influencer Gaurav Wasan for misappropriation of funds, police said on Sunday.

Prasad (80) had shot to fame after a video of him tearfully recounting the desperation of the months since the lockdown was shared widely across social media platforms recently.

Ironically, Prasad's despair had come to light when Wasan captured the eatery owner breaking down as he talked about his struggles in a video shared on the YouTuber's social media account.

In his complaint to



Kanta Prasad and Badami Devi serve food at Baba Ka Dhaba, nearly a month after its owners plight became viral on social media and revived their livelihood at Malviya Nagar in New Delhi.

police, Prasad said Wasan shot his video and posted it online and convinced the public on social media to donate money to the eatery owner.

He further alleged that Wasan "intentionally and deliberately shared only his and his family/friends

bank details and mobile numbers with the donors and collected huge amount of donation through different mode of payments i.e bank account/wallets without providing any information to the complainant".

The owner of the food

joint also accused the YouTuber of not providing details of the financial transactions to him.

"We received the complaint yesterday at the Malviya Nagar Police Station and the matter is being probed. No FIR has been registered yet in the case," Atul Kumar Thakur, deputy commissioner of police (South), said.

After the video went viral, Baba ka Dhaba was the cynosure of many eyes across the country, including celebs from showbiz who posted appeals asking people to go there and get themselves a meal.

A day after the heart-breaking video, #Babakadhaba was trending on Twitter and the food joint was flooded with more customers than it had seen in 30 years of being in business.

School principals not in favour

of postponing CBSE exams

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 2

Several school principals in the national capital and adjoining areas are not in favour of postponement of the CBSE board exams next year in view of continuing closure of schools due to the Covid pandemic. The school principals believe that the postponement of board exams will not be a right move as it will impact the schedule of higher education entrance exams and admission processes as well, which will be disturbing for students.

The move comes amid a surge in Covid-19 cases in the city with over 5,000 positive cases reported in the last few days. Delhi transport minister Kailash Gahlot said all the precautions against the spread of Covid-19 have been put in place for resuming the interstate bus services.

The Delhi Transport Infrastructure Development Corporation (DTIDC), which operates the interstate bus terminals, said in an order that the interstate bus services will reopen at the Sarai Kale Khan, Kashmere Gate, and Anand Vihar ISBTs from November 3.

The concerned additional general managers of ISBTs will be responsible for implementation of the standard operating procedures (SOP) prepared for resuming the services. The buses will be sanitised by the respective depots of bus operators at the point of origin and before departure from the respective ISBT. Thermal checking of both passengers and bus crew at boarding and at the point of entry to ISBTs will also be mandatory. In addition to these measures, testing camps for rapid and RT-PCR tests have also been set up at the ISBTs, to deal with asymptomatic passengers identified through thermal screening.

The highest single-day spike till date here — 5,891 cases — was recorded on Friday.

Forty-two new fatalities were recorded, pushing the death toll to 6,604, according to the latest bulletin issued by the Delhi health department on Monday.

The tally of active cases on Monday stood at 33,308, as per the bulletin. The bulletin said the

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board exams next year before May and further reduce syllabus as schools still continue to remain closed due to the Covid pandemic.

Delhi deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia had also raised the issue at NCERT's council meeting last month chaired by

Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal "Nishank".

"Postponing the board exams can have some serious repercussions on the students' growth and performance preparing via remote learning. As this session was attributed to getting familiar with remote learning tools, by both the students and teachers," said Priyanka Barara, Principal, Delhi International School.

"With no concrete update on vaccines, we don't see parents allowing their wards to return to school. Therefore, we would not like to repeat the pattern of losing time again by supporting the delay in board exams," she added.

City records 4,001 cases, death toll 6,604

AGE CORRESPONDENT
with agency inputs
NEW DELHI, NOV. 2

The national capital recorded 4,001 fresh Covid cases on Monday, taking the infection tally to over 3.96 lakh, even as the positivity rate hovered around 11 per cent, authorities said.

These fresh cases came out of the 36,665 tests conducted the previous day.

Delhi had recorded over 5,000 daily cases for five days on the trot, ending Sunday when 5,664 new cases were recorded.

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Kejriwal should call an all-party meeting to fight Covid: Bidhuri

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 2

Leader of Opposition in Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri has expressed concern over the growing cases of corona in the city and demanded that chief minister Arvind Kejriwal should call an all-party meeting immediately to discuss ways to control the pandemic in time.

In a letter to Mr Kejriwal, Mr Bidhuri pointed out that before the Delhi Disaster Management Authority

total number of cases has climbed to 3,96,371 and the positivity rate stands at 10.91 per cent.

Meanwhile, ICU beds with ventilators at most top private hospitals in Delhi have been fully

occupied amid a massive surge in Covid cases in the last few days, according to official data.

The online Corona Dashboard of the Delhi government showed that at 5:20 pm on Monday, out

of 1,244 ICU beds with ventilator facility, only 394 were vacant. At Max hospitals at Saket (51 total ICU beds with ventilators) and Shalimar Bagh (15), Fortis hospitals at Vasant Kunj (seven) and Shalimar Bagh (five), Apollo Hospital, BLK Hospital (seven), the vacancy showed nil.

At the Delhi government-run LNJP Hospital, a dedicated Covid facility, out of the 200 ICU beds with ventilators, only eight were vacant, according to the dashboard.

However, at Rajiv Gandhi Super Speciality Hospital (RGSSH), another dedicated Covid facility, 196 of the 200 such beds were vacant as at 5:20 pm.

The number of vacant ICU beds with ventilators again ran low at Safdarjung Hospital (one out of 54) and AIIMS Trauma Centre (five out of 50), RML Hospital (six out of 28), the data showed.



A worker sprays water on trees in an attempt to reduce dust pollution in New Delhi, on Monday.

Farm fire share in pollution 40%, but Opp. in denial: Rai

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 2

Delhi environment minister Gopal Rai on Monday targeted the BJP and the Congress over the issue of stubble burning, saying the share of farm fires in Delhi's pollution has soared to 40 per cent but opposition parties were in denial. According to the ministry of earth sciences' air quality monitor, Safar, the share of stubble burning in Delhi's pollution rose to 40 per cent on Sunday, the maximum so far this season.

It was 32 per cent on Saturday, 19 per cent on Friday and 36 per cent on Thursday, the second highest this season so far.

"We have been saying it again and again that stubble burning is a major reason behind severe levels of pollution in Delhi around Diwali, but the BJP and the Congress say the share of farm fires in Delhi's pollution was just 4 to 6 percent, whereas statistics show it has increased to 40 per cent," Rai told reporters.

He said the government has been doing everything possible to curb biomass burning, and vehicular and dust pollution, "but what should we do about stubble burning?"

Last year, the stubble contribution to Delhi's pollution had peaked to 44 per cent on November 1, according to Safar data.

Nasa's satellite imagery showed a large, dense cluster of fire dots covering

IMD: Delhi's air improves due to high wind speed, but still 'poor'

New Delhi, Nov. 2: Pollution levels in the national capital dipped on Monday with high wind speed aiding dispersion of pollutants, even as farm fires continued to rage in neighbouring states.

The city recorded a 24-hour average air quality index (AQI) of 293, which falls in the "poor" category. It was 364 on Sunday, with stubble burning contributing 40 per cent to Delhi's pollution and negating the effect of better ventilation.

An AQI between 0 and 50 is considered "good", 51 and 100 "satisfactory", 101 and 200 "moderate", 201 and 300 "poor", 301 and 400 "very poor", and 401 and 500 "severe".

The Air Quality Early Warning System for Delhi said a "significantly" large number of fires were observed over Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh on Sunday which is likely to impact the air quality in Delhi-NCR and northwest India.

Punjab and parts of Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. Mr Rai said strict action on the ground was more important than creating new commissions.

The Centre introduced a new law recently through an ordinance that put in place a powerful Commission for Air Quality Management in the NCR and Adjoining Areas to curb air pollution.

No manufacturing units in new industrial areas: CM

New Delhi, Nov. 2: In an ambitious plan to tackle Delhi's persisting pollution problem and attracting IT and related businesses, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal announced on Monday no manufacturing units will be allowed in new industrial areas of the city and these zones would be available only to services and hi-tech industries.

The move will also boost Delhi's economy, besides helping the city become a hub of hi-tech and service industries which include IT-enabled services, call centres, software and hardware sector, and media programme production as they will now be provided land at cheaper rates by authorities in industrial areas.

Addressing an online press conference, Kejriwal said the Centre has okayed the Delhi government's proposal by changing the definition of industry in

the Delhi Master Plan 2021 and issued a notification to implement it. Hi-tech and services activities will now be recognised as industry in the city.

Even the existing manufacturing units will be given an option to shift to the services sector under the new policy, which, many feel, is aimed at regaining the edge that Delhi has lost to its suburbs like Noida and Gurgaon in the services sector over past few decades, besides tackling the pollution issue.

Mr Kejriwal said the existing manufacturing units, which cause pollution, will be given the option to shift to service or hi-tech industry. However, no action will be taken against the existing manufacturing units and they can continue their operations, but they will also be encouraged to make the shift, a government official clarified.

Delhi records coldest morning of season, mercury at 10.8°C

New Delhi, Nov. 2: The national capital recorded a minimum temperature of 10.8 degrees Celsius on Monday, the lowest this season so far, according to the India Meteorological Department.

Normally, the Safdarjung Observatory, which provides representative data for the city, records a minimum of 14 to 16 degrees Celsius in the first week of November.

The mercury dips to 11-12 degrees Celsius by the last week of November, according to IMD officials. Kuldeep Srivastava, the head of the regional forecasting centre of IMD, said Delhi's has been witnessing a trend of low minimum temperatures due to the absence of cloud cover.

Clouds trap some of the outgoing infrared radiation and radiate it back downward, warming the ground.

There hasn't been much snowfall in the hills, so cold winds from that region are yet to start affecting Delhi's weather, he said.

According to Mahesh Palawat, a climate expert at Skymet Weather, a private forecasting agency, absence of strong western disturbances which cause humid winds to blow is also a reason behind the below normal minimum temperatures.

Dry and cool northerly winds have been prevailing. The minimum temperature is expected to drop below 10 degrees Celsius by the weekend as no strong WD is likely in the next 10 days, he said.

On Sunday, the city recorded a minimum temperature of 11.4 degrees Celsius.

The month of October was the coolest in 58 years in the national capital, according to IMD. The mean minimum

temperature in October this year was 17.2 degrees Celsius, the lowest since 1962, when it was 16.9 degrees Celsius, it said.

Normally, Delhi records a mean minimum temperature of 19.1 degrees Celsius in October.

The city recorded a mean minimum temperature of 17.5 degrees Celsius in October 2007, according to IMD.

On Thursday, Delhi recorded a minimum temperature of 12.5 degrees Celsius, the lowest in October in 26 years.

The last time Delhi recorded such a low temperature in October was in 1994.

The national capital had recorded a minimum of 12.3 degrees Celsius on October 31, 1994, according to IMD data.

The city recorded the all-time lowest temperature (9.4 degrees Celsius) on October 31, 1937, Srivastava said.

RELIGIOUS HARMONY



Uber cab driver Abdul Qadeer has arranged water bottles, savouries, snacks, masks and other items inside his cab in New Delhi on Monday. Qadeer has been driving a cab since 2016 and started providing all kinds of essential items to all his passengers free of cost for more than two years to spread peace and harmony among them regardless of their religion.

— PTI

SHORT TAKES

NITISH: WILL RJD DELAY SALARIES FOR 10L JOBS?

Patna: Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar on Sunday said providing 10 lakh jobs, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav's main poll promise, would cost the exchequer ₹1.44 lakh crore annually, and wondered if his rival would shelve other development works or delay salaries to implement his pledge.

Addressing constituents in five assembly segments through a virtual rally called 'Nishchay Samwad', Kumar also said his government has changed the state's industrial policy and that "we will be able to invite several industries".

Tejashwi has promised he would sanction 10 lakh government jobs in his very first cabinet meeting if the 'Mahagathbandhan' is voted to power.

"That is impossible, they won't get the chance to govern," Kumar said.

"But for what he (Tejashwi) has said, it will cost the state exchequer ₹1.44 lakh crore annually... Should they shelve all other development work?"

He said earlier nobody used to get salaries in time and recalled that several teachers and university professors had told the CM during his Vikas Yatra in 2005 that they did not get salaries in time.

"We fixed that. Now what do they want to do? Again not paying salaries? Will there be no other (development) work?" Kumar said. **PTI**

MODI LIKELY TO WIND UP BIHAR CAMPAIGN TODAY

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 2

As the battle for Bihar enters its final phase, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi are all set to address rallies in the Seemanchal area of the state.

While the Prime Minister will be winding up his election tour of Bihar on Tuesday, Mr. Gandhi will carry on with his campaign and address another couple of rallies the next day as well.

A senior leader of Bihar Pradesh Congress Committee said that in all likelihood Mr. Gandhi might conclude his election engagements by holding a joint press conference with RJD leader and Grand Alliance's CM face, Tejashwi Prasad Yadav, on Wednesday.

The Congress leader will address two rallies at Bihariganj in Madhepura and Araria on November 4.

Daughter of Sharad Yadav, Subhashini Rao, and sitting MLA Abidur Rahman are set to take on JD(U)'s Niranjan Kumar Mehta in Bihariganj and Sagufa Ajim in Araria seats respectively.

Bihar Congress leaders are also mobilising their resources to ensure that the rallies of the former Congress president at Korha in Katihar and Kisaniganj on Tuesday are a grand success and work in favour of sitting MLA Poonam Paswan and Izharul Hussain, who are pitted against the BJP's Kavita Singh and Sweeti Singh respectively.

CRUCIAL CONTEST IN MP AS VOTING TO BE HELD TODAY

Bhopal/Lucknow/Ahmedabad, Nov. 2: Voting will be held on Tuesday for by-elections to 54 assembly constituencies in 10 states including 28 seats in Madhya Pradesh where the BJP is locked in a keenly-fought contest with the Congress to save its government.

All eyes are riveted on Madhya Pradesh where the BJP which has 107 MLAs in the assembly, with an effective strength of 229, needs at least eight more MLAs for a simple majority.

The stakes are high for the Congress too as it had sitting MLAs in 27 seats out of 28 in the state.

The saffron party is fielding 31 candidates in MP, Gujarat and Karnataka who had won from the Congress ticket but switched sides and resigned, necessitating the byelections in those states.

In Uttar Pradesh, the BJP, which has a comfortable majority in the Assembly, is locked in a battle of prestige on the seven seats six of which it had won in the last election while one was with the Samajwadi Party.

In Gujarat, the bypolls are being held in eight seats after the Congress MLAs resigned ahead of the Rajya Sabha polls in June this year. Five of them later joined the ruling BJP and are contesting again.



Security personal carrying VVPATs and EVMs leave for polling booths from a distribution centre ahead of the second phase of Bihar assembly elections, in Patna on Monday.

— PTI

Tejashwi, 4 ministers in fray as Bihar votes in 2nd phase today

2.5 cr voters will decide the fate of nearly 1,500 candidates today

Patna, Nov. 2: The stage is set for the second and, arguably, the most crucial of the three phases of Bihar assembly elections in which over 2.85 crore voters are eligible to decide the fate of nearly 1,500 candidates on Tuesday.

Voting will take place on November 3 in 94 assembly segments, more than a third of the 243-strong assembly spread across 17 districts, all of which but three — Patna, Bhagalpur and Nalanda — are situated north of the Ganges.

Notable among the candidates is the RJD's Tejashwi Yadav, the opposition Grand Alliance's chief ministerial candidate, who has been aggressively trying to cash in on the anti-incumbency factor against the Nitish Kumar government.

The 31-year-old is seeking re-election from

Raghopur in Vaishali district which he had wrested back for his party from the BJP's Satish Kumar in 2015. The BJP leader had defeated Yadav's mother Rabri Devi, a former chief minister, in 2010.

The BJP has retained its trust in Satish Kumar, hoping that the giant killer will be able to do a repeat of 2010 when, like this time, JD(U) president and Chief Minister Nitish Kumar was with the NDA.

Tejashwi's elder brother Tej Pratap Yadav is trying his luck from Hasanpur in Samastipur district, shifting his base from Mahua in Vaishali. There were said to be fears in the RJD camp that Tej Pratap's bid to retain Mahua could be challenged by the NDA through his estranged wife Aishwarya as its trump card. She is already taking an active part in the campaign for her

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father Chandrika Roy in Parsa, which he has represented a number of times and is seeking to retain on a JD(U) ticket this time.

All the four assembly segments in the capital city Patna Sahib, Kumhrar, Bankipur and Digha are also going to polls in the second phase.

All these are held by the BJP.

State minister Nand Kishore Yadav is in the fray trying to retain Patna Sahib for a seventh consecutive term.

Multiple-term MLA

Nitin Nabin faces a challenge in Bankipur from Congress candidate Luv Sinha, who is the son of actor-turned-politician Shatrughan Sinha, a two-time local MP who lost the seat when he entered the fray after quitting the BJP.

The BJP has retained as its candidates Arun Sinha and Sanjiv Chaurasia for Kumhrar and Digha respectively.

Seven constituencies of Nalanda district, to which Chief Minister Nitish Kumar belongs, also go to polls in the second phase.

Barring Hilsa, represented by the RJD's Shakti Singh Yadav, and Bihar Sharif, which two-term MLA Sunil Kumar retained on a BJP ticket in 2015, all the remaining five were won by the JD(U).

The assembly segment named after the district is represented by state minister Shrawan Kumar who

is seeking re-election from the seat.

The JD(U) has suffered a setback in the reserved Rajgir seat where its sitting MLA Ravi Jyoti, a former police inspector, is now the fray on a Congress ticket.

Two other ministers Ram Sevak Singh (JDU) and Rana Randhir Singh (BJP) are trying their luck from Hathua and Madhubani in Gopalganj and East Champaran districts respectively. The ministers are sitting MLAs from the respective seats.

Many bahunis or their wives, sons, brothers or other close relatives are also contesting a number of seats.

Of the 1,463 candidates in the fray on the 94 seats, nearly 10 per cent are women. Among the 2.85 crore voters, females account for 1.35 crore. **— PTI**

'Majority of Bihar candidates have criminal record'

NAYEAR AZAD
PATNA, NOV. 2

Bihar election watch (BEW), a wing of Association of Democratic Reforms (ADR) has released a data to reveal that most of the political parties have fielded candidates with criminal cases for the ongoing Assembly elections in Bihar.

The report released by the ADR shows that out of 3722 candidates analysed 2166 have declared criminal cases out of which 915 have serious criminal cases pending against them.

As per the data, in the first phase of polls, out of 1066 candidates in the fray, 327 had declared criminal cases. Data also reveals that 104 candidates did not inform the public about the pending cases against them.

In the second phase of polls scheduled on November 3, the percentage has gone up from 31 to 34 per cent. Political parties in this phase have fielded 891 candidates with criminal cases out of which 389 have serious criminal cases pending against them.

Similarly in the third phase, to be held on November 7, out of 1204 candidates in the fray 653 candidates have criminals cases out of which 282 have serious cases pending against themselves.

The RJD which is the main opposition party and a senior grand alliance partner in Bihar has topped the list followed by the BJP, the Congress, LJP and JD(U).

Data revealed that 115 candidates in the fray

● **THE REPORT** released by the ADR shows that out of 3722 candidates analysed 2166 have declared criminal cases out of which 915 have serious criminal cases pending against them

● **AS PER THE** data, in the first phase of polls, out of 1066 candidates in the fray, 327 had declared criminal cases. Data also reveals that 104 candidates did not inform the public about the pending cases against them

have declared cases related to crime against women. Out of these 12 candidates have rape charges pending against them. While 73 have murder charges pending against them.

The ADR in its report adds that the direction of the supreme court had no effect on the political parties in the selection of candidates as they have again followed their old practice of giving tickets to around 32 per cent candidates with criminal cases. All major parties have given to 37 per cent to 70 per cent candidates who have declared criminal cases against themselves.

The report says that the Supreme Court in its directions on February 13, 2020, had specifically instructed political parties to furnish reasons for selection of such candidates. As per the mandatory guidelines, the reason for such selection has to be with reference to qualifications, achievements and merit of the candidates.

TEJASHAWI CREATES HISTORY WITH 19 RALLIES IN 24 HOURS

Patna: For the first time in the history of Indian politics, Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav set a record on Saturday by conducting 19 rallies in a one day, in poll-bound Bihar.

The 31-year-old leader Yadav broke the record of his own father Lalu Prasad, who has been credited with conducting 16 rallies in one day.

The party's only "star campaigner" Tejashwi tweeted that he could

only complete the tumultuous task with the support, love and cooperation of the people.

"The strong enthusiasm within the youths for change is a witness that this bureaucratic government is going to end and the people's government is coming in Bihar," he said.

He addressed all the rallies in different districts of Bihar, which are scheduled for the second phase of polls on November 3. **— PTI**

Ex-Cong MP Annu Tandon joins SP

Lucknow, Nov. 2: Former Unnao MP Annu Tandon on Monday joined Samajwadi Party within days of quitting the Congress, expressing dissatisfaction with the functioning of its Uttar Pradesh unit.

Tandon joined the Samajwadi Party along with AICC joint secretary Shashank Shekhar Shukla and UPCC general secretary Ankit Parihar and nearly 150 party workers in a small function at the SP headquarters in presence of Akhilesh Yadav.

Speaking on the occasion, Yadav defended his party alliance with the Bahujan Samaj Party before the 2019 general elections on the ground of a need to stop communal forces from coming to



Annu Tandon

power.

He also rejected BSP chief Mayawati's assertion earlier during the day that her party was not going to have any alliance with the BJP.

People know better, said Akhilesh Yadav, seeking to reject Mayawati's denial of any move by her party to have an alliance with the BJP, speculation triggered by her earlier statement that she would defeat SP candidates in the Rajya Sabha polls even if that meant having to go along with the BJP.

Defending his party's alliance with the BSP in 2019, Yadav said, "The alliance with the BSP was necessary to stop the BJP."

— PTI

On poll eve, Shivraj, Nath exchange barbs

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY
BHOPAL, NOV. 2



Shivraj Chouhan



Shivraj Chouhan

With barely 24 hours left for the crucial assembly by-elections in Madhya Pradesh, chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Congress veteran Kamal Nath on Monday indulged in name-calling to show each other in poor light in public.

While Mr Chouhan has refused to withdraw the 'papi' (sinner) tag given by him to Mr Nath, the latter literally called him a liar.

"Mr Chouhan calls me a 'papi'. Let him explain what sin I have committed? All his (Mr Chouhan's) assertions that I have not implemented farm loan waiver promises and also held back students' scholarships when I was chief minister are utter lies. Mr Chouhan is

shamelessly dishing out lies", Mr Nath told reporters here.

He said crop loans of around 27 lakh farmers were written off when he was chief minister. His government was planning to waive farm loans of the rest of the beneficiaries in 2 phases, but it was pulled down.

Mr Chouhan however stood by his remarks saying that Mr Nath has committed fraud on farmers

by going back on his promise to waive their crop loans within ten days of coming to power in the state.

He said Mr Nath had resorted to manipulation to keep lakhs of deserving farmers out of the loan waiver scheme by imposing numerous conditions in the implementation of the proposal, when the latter was the chief minister.

"Lakhs of farmers had been deprived of the bene-

fit due to this," he told reporters here.

The chief minister regretted that thousands of farmers were declared defaulters by their banks due to the failure by the Kamal Nath government to reimburse the debts to them, thus denying them fresh loans by the banks.

"Mr Nath had sinned by causing miseries to the farmers by turning them defaulters," he said.

Mr Chouhan said welfare schemes such as incentives to the new mothers, meritorious students and newly married couples belonging to poor families were withdrawn during the Kamal Nath government.

"I will always call him 'papi' for snatching away the incentives given to the poor during my last tenure as chief minister," Mr Chouhan said.

CONG MLA AMONG 50 ARRESTED FOR ANTI-MACRON STIR

Bhopal: Madhya Pradesh Congress MLA Arif Masood was among 50 people who were arrested for staging a protest here last week against French President Emmanuel Macron over a cartoon row in violation of restrictions put in place to curb the COVID-19 outbreak, a police official said.

Masood, an MLA from Bhopal, and 49 others were arrested by the police on Sunday and later released on bail as offences registered against them were bailable, he said. They were set free from a police station after they furnished bail bonds. **— PTI**

NORTHERN RAILWAY	
1 st CORRIGENDUM	
No. 256-Sig/SPL/TKJ/219/TKD A&C	Dated:- 02.11.2020
Sub:- 1 st corrigendum to tender notice No. 256-Sig/SPL/TKJ/219/TKD A&C dt. 29.10.2020 in connection with tender for the work of Outdoor and Indoor Work with part supply of Signalling materials in Connection with the work of replacement of signalling gears with EI at Tughlakabad A and C Cabin in DELHI Division of Northern Railway".	
The following item of above tender notice may be read as under:-	
As per original NIT	Revised as per this corrigendum
Cost of Tender - Rs. 5,20,27,391.15 (Rs Five Crore Twenty Lakh Twenty Seven Thousand Three hundred Ninety One and Paise Fifteen Only)	Tender No. 256-Sig/SPL/TKJ/ 219/TKD A&C dt. 29.10.2020 may be treated as cancelled.
Closing date - 11.00 Hrs. on date: 23.11.2020	
Date of opening- 11.30 Hrs. on date: 23.11.2020	
2408/20	
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE	

New Okhla Industrial Development Authority	
Noida	
Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida-201301 (U.P.) Website: www.noidaauthorityonline.com	
E-TENDER NOTICE	
E-Tenders are invited from firms/contractors registered with UPLC Lucknow for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened/downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on Noida Authority's official website: www.noidaauthorityonline.com & http://etender.up.nic.in Please ensure to see these websites for any changes/amendments & corrigendum etc.	
A (1) 31/DGM(JAL)/AO/SM(JAL)-I/2020-21, M/o W/s (Repair of Damaged MS Line Near Khoda T_Point and Rajat Vihar Sector-62), Noida. Cost - Rs. 17.73 Lacs.	
The above tenders can be uploaded by date 16.11.2020 upto 5.00 PM. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on date 17.11.2020 at 11.00AM.	
B (1) 42/DGM(JAL)/AO/SM(JAL)-I/2019-20, Development of Sector-74 (S/F of 160 KVA D.G. set at UGR-74 in Sector-116), Noida. Cost - Rs. 16.53 Lacs.	
The above tenders can be uploaded by date 09.11.2020 upto 5.00 PM. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on date 10.11.2020 at 11.00AM.	
Office : Sector-5, Noida	SENIOR MANAGER (JAL)-I Noida
CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA	

SHORT TAKES

CONG QUESTIONS
CBI'S SILENCE IN
SUSHANT'S CASEBHAGWAN PARAB
MUMBAI, NOV. 2

Maharashtra Congress on Monday alleged that the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is under pressure from the Modi government to keep silence on actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death probe till the Bihar Assembly elections are over.

"The All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) panel has said in its report that Sushant had died by suicide. It's been a month since the AIIMS report has been made public and there is no action nor any statement issued by CBI as yet," said Sachin Sawant, general secretary and spokesperson of Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC), before asking further "Itna Sannata Kyu Hai Bhai?" (Why is there so much of silence?)

Sawant tweeted, "Is the CBI following code of conduct for Bihar elections in the #SushantSinghRajputCase? Has the Narendra Modi-led government told them (CBI) to keep matters in abeyance until Bihar elections are over?"

Rajput (34) was found dead at his apartment on June 14. The BJP had accused the Uddhav Thackeray-led Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi (MVA) coalition government and Mumbai Police of inept handling of the investigation into Rajput's death.

The investigation of the case was handed over to the CBI from Mumbai Police in August after an order from the Supreme Court.

NCB: DEEPIKA'S
MANAGER
UNTRACEABLESAURABH JOSHI
MUMBAI, NOV. 2

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) officials said that Karishma Prakash, manager of actor Deepika Padukone, has refrained from appearing for questioning in the drugs probe pertaining to the Sushant Singh Rajput's suicide, claiming that she is untraceable. The officials had summoned her after the NCB officials had seized drugs from her residence a couple of weeks ago. The officials said that despite asking her to appear for probe several times, she has not responded to the summons.

The NCB had seized 1.7 gram of cannabis and CBD oil bottles from the residence of Karishma days after she was questioned over her chats with Deepika where the latter was asking for drugs from Karishma. The probe revealed that she had been the point person to supply narcotic substances to Deepika and investigation is being conducted on who all in Bollywood get narcotics from her.

"She needs to be questioned in connection with the fresh seizure and hence she was summoned more than once. She is however yet to appear and we are trying to trace her," said investigators.

SC REFUSES TO
EXTEND SECURITY
OF EX-JUDGE

New Delhi, Nov. 2: The Supreme Court on Monday refused to extend the security of former special judge S.K. Yadav who had pronounced the verdict in the Babri Masjid demolition case and acquitted all 32 accused, including BJP veterans L.K. Advani, M.M. Joshi and Uma Bharti.

A bench, headed by Justice R.F. Nariman and also comprising Justices Navin Sinha and Krishna Murari, was considering the former judge's request to continue his personal security in view of the sensitivity of the case decided by him on his last day in office.

"Having perused the letter, we don't consider it appropriate to provide security," the bench said.

On September 30, the special court had acquitted all 32 accused in the case saying there was no conclusive evidence that they were part of any conspiracy to bring down the disputed structure in Ayodhya.

The 16th century mosque was demolished on December 6, 1992 by 'kar sevaks' who believed that it occupied the site where Lord Ram was born, the destruction triggering riots that left hundreds dead in the country and widening rifts between the communities. — Agencies



People, flouting social distancing norms, visit a crowded Sadar Bazar market in New Delhi on Monday during the festive season, amid the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic. — PTI

Fearing 2nd wave, Punjab
expands contact tracing

Sharing of suspicious CT scans by hosps with health department made must

AGE CORRESPONDENT
with agency inputs
NEW DELHI, NOV. 2

With 45,231 fresh cases, India on Monday recorded 82.29 lakh total cases of Coronavirus. At the same time, 75.44 lakh people have recovered from the deadly virus, taking the national recovery rate to 91.68 per cent.

In the last 24 hours, 53,285 persons were discharged from medical supervision including Maharashtra deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar, who was admitted to a hospital after testing positive for Covid-19 last month.

The active cases too are on the downside and stand at 5.62 lakh which comprise 6.83 per cent of the total caseload. Union health ministry officials said the number of active cases of Covid-19 remained below six lakh for the fourth consecutive day.

Kerala and Delhi continue to report a very high number of cases pushing Maharashtra to number three position now. However, Maharashtra is still registering a high number of daily deaths due to Covid-19.

The overall fatalities due to the virus in the country has reached 1.22 lakh with 496 new deaths taking the case fatality rate to 1.49 per cent.

Meanwhile, Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh ordered expansion of Covid-19 contact tracing to 15 persons

Out of 736 spl trains, 327
have waitlisted passengers

New Delhi, Nov. 2: Out of the 736 special trains currently in operation, 327 have passengers in the waiting list, the Railways said on Monday, indicating a major surge in demand from people keen on travelling even as the Coronavirus pandemic refuses to die down.

According to data provided by the Railways, the average occupancy of these special trains is around 92 per cent. "We are monitoring these 327 trains daily. Once we determine the nature of the waitlist — for how many days is the waitlist and how long — we will run clone trains on those routes. We have been saying that we will introduce trains wherever necessary, but they will be only reserved trains and will follow all Coronavirus protocols," said Railway Board Chairman and CEO

and made it mandatory for hospitals and laboratories to share suspicious CT scans with the health department, as part of measures to strengthen Covid management amid projections of a second wave in Punjab, Punjab CM office said. Meanwhile, the

V.K. Yadav at a press briefing on Monday.

The Railways, which had suspended all passenger train services since the lockdown in March, has so far earned ₹3,322 crore as revenue from the segment, which is 90 per cent less than what it earned during the same period last year, Yadav said.

Other than the 736 special trains being operated, the Railways is also running 200 services of the Kolkata Metro, 2,276 Mumbai suburban services, 20 special clone trains and 436 festival special trains from October 20 to November 30.

Yadav said while the overall occupancy of the 736 trains is around 92 per cent, 19 trains have occupancy below 30 per cent, 44 have occupancy between 30 per cent and 50 per cent, 83 trains have occupancy between 50 per cent and 75

per cent and 327 trains have waitlisting.

Yadav also said besides Mumbai, the Railways is geared to begin suburban services in other cities. Discussions are underway with the West Bengal and the Tamil Nadu governments in finalising modalities for the resumption of suburban services there, he said.

While passenger trains have all but stalled, the Railways' freight business seems to be speeding forward with incremental loading of over 14.32 metric tonne over October 2019. In October this year, the freight revenue was ₹869 crore more than last year and it also saw the highest ever automobile loading. While 320 rakes of automobiles were loaded in October 2020, as many as 162 were loaded in 2019 which is around a 97.5 per cent increase. — PTI

ODISHA GOV,
WIFE TEST +VE
FOR COVID-19AKSHAYA KUMAR
SAHOO
with agency inputs
BHUBANESWAR, NOV. 2

Odisha Governor Professor Ganeshi Lal on Monday announced that he and his wife have tested positive for the Covid-19.

The news was shared on his official Twitter handle which mentioned: "Hon'ble Governor and first lady have tested Corona positive." He has also advised all those who have come in close contact with him recently to get themselves tested.

Meanwhile, the Covid-19 tally in Odisha mounted to 2,93,214 with 1,389 fresh cases on Monday, while nine more fatalities pushed the death toll to 1,340, a health department official said. Of the new cases, 798 were reported from different quarantine centres and 591 detected during contact tracing. Khurda district, of which Bhubaneswar is a part, registered the highest number of new cases at 142, followed by Cuttack (101) and Sundargarh (100).

Taking to Twitter, the health and family welfare department said, "Regret to inform the demise of 9 Covid positive patients while under treatment in hospitals."

measure by amending the Rajasthan Epidemic Act, with Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot asserting that face masks are the sole anti-Covid vaccine as of now.

The House passed the Rajasthan Epidemic (Amendment) Bill, 2020 by voice vote.

Rajasthan Assembly on Monday passed a Bill making it mandatory for people to wear face masks in both private or public means of transport and while attending any social or political events.

The Assembly provided for the new anti-Covid

Kerala: Ex-secy
of CM listed
as an accusedGILVESTER ASSARY
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
NOV. 2

The Kerala Vigilance and Anti Corruption Bureau (VACB) has arraigned Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's former principal secretary M. Sivasankar as an accused in a corruption case registered in connection with irregularities in awarding the contract of a housing project to a private firm.

Sivasankar was found to have received an iPhone as a gift from the private firm that got the contract for the ₹20 crore housing project under Kerala government's Life Mission programme in Wadakkanchery, in Thrissur district. One of the iPhones purchased by Unitac Company was allegedly given to Sivasankar by gold smuggling case key accused Swapna Suresh.

Sivasankar has been made fifth accused along with Swapna Suresh, Sarith and Sandeep Nair who are sixth, seventh and eighth accused respectively in the case.

A report in this regard has been filed by the VACB before the vigilance special court in Thiruvananthapuram. The vigilance argument is that even if a government official accepts an iPhone as a gift or commission, it would be treated as a bribe under the anti corruption law.

Sivasankar is currently in the custody of Enforcement Directorate (ED) in connection with the money trail in the Kerala gold smuggling case. The vigilance is likely to question him once his ED custody period ends.

The vigilance case against Sivasankar has come as a major setback for the government as the officer was monitoring at least five mega projects including Life Mission. The investigation agency has already sought details of the projects which were monitored by Sivasankar.

The Wadakkanchery Life mission housing project corruption case pertains to the alleged payment of ₹9 crore as commission to various persons including government officials and middlemen.

The ₹20 crore housing project is sponsored by UAE based NGO Red Crescent. Earlier, the CBI had initiated a separate probe into the matter following a complaint filed by Congress MLA Anil Akkara regarding violation of Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act. He alleged that the foreign funds for the housing project was received by private construction companies; Unitact Builders and Developers and its subsidiary Sane Ventures which amounted to violation of the provisions of FCRA.

Educational institutes
reopen in Assam after
seven months' gap

Guwahati, Nov. 2: Educational institutions, barring primary schools, reopened in Assam on Monday with all Covid-19 regulations in place after remaining closed for seven months due to the pandemic, officials said.

Classes remained suspended for students till class five but resumed for those from class six onward, they said.

Colleges, engineering colleges, universities, polytechnics, private educational institutions, government and private training and coaching institutes in the state reopened as per the government order.

They followed the standard operating procedure (SOP) of the government on sanitisation. The number of students per class room were limited and they came in batches as per the staggered time-tables, according to the heads of the institutions.

The students, teachers and non-teaching staff were seen wearing face masks and maintaining social distance in compliance with Covid-19 protocol. Attendance of the students was not made com-

pulsory and they were given the liberty to opt for online classes.

However, those who attended classes were required to provide no objection certificates from their parents as per the SOP. The government SOP, published in newspapers on Monday, said the universities are to prepare their individual SOP for their students to attend classes in accordance with the Covid-19 protocols and the guidance issued by the union ministries of home affairs, education, health and family affairs.

State education and health minister Himanta Biswa Sarma told newsmen, "For Assam today is a challenging day."

Schools and colleges have reopened from today."

As per the government SOP published on Monday, classes from one to five will remain suspended until further orders, attendance of students must not be enforced but purely based on parental consent with NOC and a staggered time table would be followed with the total number of students less than 20. — PTI

Won't share stage with
Gurung: Binay TamangRAJIB CHOWDHURI
KOLKATA, NOV. 2

Sending a strong message to West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee of disagreement, present Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJM) president Binay Tamang, who appeared to remain her ally till recently, ruled out on Monday of sharing the same "political and administrative" stage with his rival, Bimal Gurung in the party because of his involvement in multiple cases including the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

Lashing out at Gurung, he also demanded 'judicial' steps against the accused GJM top gun since he has been absconding. Tamang's disagreement came a day ahead of a meeting called by Banerjee in the state secretariat Nabanna in Howrah to placate him and his deputy Anit

● PRESENT GORKHA Janmukti Morcha (GJM) president Binay Tamang's has demanded 'judicial' steps against the accused GJM top gun Bimal Gurung since he has been absconding for three years.

Thapa in the anti-Gurung faction of the GJM over their followers' continuous protests across Darjeeling assuming Gurung's return to the hills.

This was also the first time when he spoke out against the erstwhile GJM president after his dramatic appearance in Kolkata on October 21 from three years' exile. He had then announced his exit from the BJP-led NDA over the separate statehood demand of Gorkhaland and pledged to support the Trinamul supremo in alliance in the Assembly election next

year.

In Siliguri Tamang said, "We are not ready to work with Gurung. We are not going to share any political and administrative platform with him and Roshan Giri (Gurung's long-time lieutenant). He is a fugitive leader. He has got so many cases which are around 150 including the UAPA. Since the judiciary is there, a judicial process should follow."

He and Thapa, who is also the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration president, are expected to attend the meeting with the Chief Minister on Tuesday.

The duo had met her last during her North Bengal visit a month ago. A section of TMC leaders suspect Tamang's change in tune might be prompted by the BJP which perhaps cultivated him, after losing Gurung, to keep the Gorkhaland issue alive ahead of the Assembly elections.

Poet Munawwar Rana booked
over remarks on French killings

Lucknow, Nov. 2: An FIR has been registered against Urdu poet Munawwar Rana for allegedly defending the recent killings in France over a caricature of Prophet Muhammad, police said on Monday.

Rana had made the controversial comments in an interview to a news channel after three people were killed in a knife attack at a church in Nice last week.

A few weeks ago, an assailant had decapitated a French middle school teacher who showed caricatures of Prophet Muhammad for a class on free speech.

The case against Rana has been lodged at the Hazratganj police station in Lucknow on Sunday under various Indian Penal Code sections, including 153A (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion and doing acts prejudicial to main-



Urdu poet Munawwar Rana poses for a photograph at his residence in Lucknow on Monday, after an FIR was registered against him. — PTI

nance of harmony), 295A (deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings), an officer said. The poet has also been booked under IPC Section 505 (statements conducting public mischief) and Section 66 of the Information Technology Act, the officer said.

Police have lodged the FIR taking cognisance of the TV interview and a

probe is on, the officer said. In a purported video clip of the interview that went viral on social media, Rana can be heard saying: "If any person makes such a bad cartoon of my father or mother, then I will kill him."

Asked if he is supporting the entire incident, he said, "I will kill him..." When contacted by PTI, Rana said the comments were misconstrued and it

was made in the context of India.

"If anyone makes an indecent and vulgar picture of our gods and goddesses — Lord Ram, Goddess Sita and Saraswati, and the person making it is a Muslim or anyone else, I will kill such person as he is spreading hatred," he said.

"And it requires immense courage to kill a person hailing from your family or community. The person who made the cartoon (in France) had done a wrong act and the person who murdered the cartoonist did an extremely wrong act," Rana said.

The poet asserted that he did not endorse murders taking place anywhere in the world, pointing out that in the Ballabgarh case in Haryana, he had tweeted that both the youths should be shot at the same place where they had shot dead a 21-year-old woman last week. — PTI

THE ASIAN AGE

3 NOVEMBER 2020

‘Love jihad’ is a diversion, enforce rule of law in UP

If Uttar Pradesh with its 20.4 crore people were a country, it would have been the seventh-most populous in the world. It is number two among Indian states when it comes to ease of doing business but languishes at the bottom in terms of governance, based on a transparent Public Affairs Index-2020, prepared by a non-governmental organisation headed by former ISRO chairman K. Kasturirangan. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanadh came to power with the promise of maintaining rule of law but reports of him undermining administration of criminal justice through encounter killings are plenty; data says more than 125 persons have been killed in more than 6,476 encounters in the last three years of his rule. The gang-rape and murder of a teenager and the inhuman treatment meted out to the girl even after her death and to her family has earned the state administration universal condemnation.

Such stark realities and contradictions notwithstanding, Adityanath has discovered a new enemy of his state: ‘love jihad’, the derogative term used by the right wing for the marriage between Muslim men and Hindu women. The Chief Minister has even promised to bring in a law to fight such marriages. If that won’t suffice, he has threatened those who “play with our sisters’ respect: If you don’t mend your ways your ‘Ram naam satya’ (chant associated with Hindu funerals) journey will begin.” The Chief Minister has a judicial verdict to bank on: A single bench of Allahabad high court said conversion for the sake of marriage is not admissible before the law. The

Chief Minister of Haryana, a state which has the worst sex ratio betraying the poor rights women enjoy in the state, has joined hands with his Uttar Pradesh counterpart and is contemplating introducing a law to curb ‘love jihad’.

The right to freely profess, practise and propagate one’s religion is a fundamental right guaranteed by India’s Constitution. Marriages in India are legalised by civil laws governing various communities and religions. Then there is the Special Marriage Act, 1954, that allows any two people to marry irrespective of their religious affiliations. Marriage, in the eye of the law, is a civil contract between two consenting adults and there are enough legal tools to punish fraudsters who enter into it with ulterior motives. The state has, and should have, very little role in what two adults do; it definitely has no business playing ‘father’ and ‘brother’ of damsels in distress.

The Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister is not only known for his headline Hindutva ideology but also for his pro-business policies and actions. The state’s ascent to the top in terms of ease of doing business is no accident. He has time and again talked about the importance of attracting investment, domestic and foreign. If he means business, then he would rather focus on creating an open and liberal environment that welcomes multi-nationals than plunging his state into the dark ages with its archaic mind-sets. It cannot afford to be a paradox any longer.

Economy: Hope, with caution

The Goods and Service Tax (GST) collection for the month of October — one of the two festive months for the Hindu community — has been on expected lines with the GST Council reporting a gross collection of a little over ₹1 lakh crore. The fact that the gross GST collection in October this year at ₹1,05,155 crores was 10 per cent more than ₹95,379 crore collected in the same month last year is very heartening. Other economic indicators such as the sale of automobiles and industrial growth have been promising. Major carmakers such as Maruti Suzuki and Hyundai Motors have reported highest-ever monthly sales in October. The two-wheeler segment, which was considered to be badly affected by Covid-19 pandemic, appears to be wriggling out of comma, with Hero MotoCorp posting all-time high monthly sales in October.

IHS Markit India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers’ Index (PMI), which tracks the manufacturing sector in the country, reported a historically-sharp monthly expansion in production by companies in October. This is the consecutive third month of expansion in industrial production and suggests a revival of animal spirits among the manufacturing sector as the severity of Covid-19 infections begins to wane in the country. Data from power consumption too validate the reports of economic revival. According to Power System Operation Corporation Limited, India’s power consumption rose by 13 per cent in October 2020 to 110.94 billion units (BU) compared to 97.84 billion units in October 2019.

While all economic indicators paint a rosy picture of India’s economic revival, the government must not get complacent in its efforts to support the economy in getting on its feet. Since the spike in demand is still driven by retail consumption, it could as well be a pent-up demand being released during the festive season. The government must, therefore, remain cautious and hold its horses till it hopefully sees a similar growth curve in the non-festive months.

THE ASIAN AGE

T. VENKATRAM REDDY
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Subhani



As US votes today, the world holds its breath



K.C. Singh

Late Tuesday afternoon in India is when the United States begins voting to decide whether President Donald Trump gets a second term or, like in his episode ending line in serial Apprentice, people say “you are fired”. The stakes are high both for America and the world as the policy schism between Democrats and Republicans has never been wider in decades, on a slew of domestic and global issues.

Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt in How Democracies Die devise four core behavioural warning signs in politicians that endanger democracy. These are when ruling politicians (1) reject, in words or action, the democratic rules of the game; (2) deny the legitimacy of opponents; (3) tolerate or encourage violence; or (4) indicate a willingness to curtail the civil liberties of opponents, including the media. Alexander Hamilton, a founding father of the United States, wrote in the Federalist Papers: “History will teach us, of those men who have overturned the liberties of republics, the great number have begun their career by paying obsequious court to the people: commencing demagogues, and ending tyrants”.

President Trump has displayed all these symptoms and with the Supreme Court now in his pocket, with a 6-3 majority of conservative judges, he is likely to unravel the liberal-compassionate socio-economic order evolved since the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt in late 1930s.

American Presidents are elected indirectly by an Electoral College, created with graded advantage for smaller states, disproportionate to their population. The US hav-

ing been formed as a union of independent states, the smaller units negotiated checks on the power of the larger states. India’s states, contrariwise, were carved out from a unitary India, while merging en masse quasi-independent states under rulers, after Independence. In fact, a major reorganisation of states occurred only after 1956 on a linguistic basis. This process continued till last year when Jammu and Kashmir was reorganised.

The US system worked fine till the white working and middle classes felt threatened by demographic changes, and perceived loss of their way of life, and economic stagnation caused first by the oil crisis of the 1970s and then by globalisation of the deindustrialisation of vast areas. These states, now referred to as the Rust Belt, are like Michigan, the old car manufacturing hub of the US, or the steel industry in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, which produced one-third of the national steel output in the 1920s but collapsed in the mid-1980s. This caused a geographical bipartisan split in national politics, creating a wall of so-called “red” (Republican) and “blue” (Democratic) states, with more or less pre-determined voting preferences. For instance, California, with the largest haul of 55 electoral college votes, is home to technology innovation and a growing Latino population, swung to the Democrats in 1992. It has since voted for them in increasing numbers in each successive election. Similarly, the states of the Northeast, including global financial centre New York, favours the Democrats. Large parts of the Midwest and beyond, constituting America’s food bowl, vote Republican.

Thus, presidential elections really boil down to

The US system worked fine till the white working and middle classes felt threatened by demographic changes, and perceived loss of their way of life

the “swing states”, which can tilt either way and impact the election result. In 2016, Mr Trump managed his 304 Electoral College votes, crossing the 270 required for a win, with 46.1 per cent of the popular vote. He did this by carrying Michigan (16), Wisconsin (10) and Pennsylvania (20) by narrow margins, which in the past were pro-Democrat. In addition, he swept Florida (29) and North Carolina (15). But the election this time, conducted under the shadow of Covid-19, has seen almost 100 million people, nearly 70 per cent of the 2016 vote, do early voting. In-person early voting is fine but mailed votes have led to disparate rulings about their receipt deadlines. Emboldened by his sway over the higher courts, Mr Trump is preparing to tie up postal ballots in legal challenges if he emerges ahead in votes cast in-person in crucial states.

Joe Biden needs to wrest one, or more, swing state early to stymie Mr Trump. Three states — North Carolina, Florida and Ohio — will be reporting early with their postal and in-person votes. A win in one of them can signal a change in the popular mood against the incumbent and the game is over. Three more states that Mr Trump carried in 2016 — Iowa, Arizona and Georgia — are in play this time as demographic changes are altering the electoral map in the so-called Sun Belt states in the South. That explains the Houston hoopla in September 2019 where the “Howdy Modi” rally saw President Trump’s tango with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Texas has almost 125,000 Indian voters. However, a recent YouGov.com poll indicated that over 70 per cent were pro-Biden. The moral is that while the

diaspora may express nostalgic euphoria at essentially Indian political events on their soil, at election time they consider bread-and-butter issues like immigration policies and inclusive politics.

Mr Biden has led consistently in national and crucial state pre-election polls, despite Mr Trump’s aggressive attempt in two debates to kill the challenger’s momentum. The race has narrowed in the last few weeks. Mr Trump’s supporters may intimidate non-white voters on election day to suppress voting. But due to the pandemic or intimidation fears, many Democratic voters may have already cast their votes, as shown by the huge early voting numbers. But if an exceptionally heavy turnout on November 3 swells the overall vote, the outcome is more difficult to guess, as independents’ voting intent is less decipherable.

Interestingly, Bihar’s second polling phase is the same day as the US election. Major department stores in metropolitan cities, including the iconic Bloomindale’s in New York, are shuttering stores fearing possible violence if Mr Trump trails or prematurely claims victory. This is more reminiscent of Bihar’s electoral past than expected in the world’s most powerful democracy. For India, the outcome will be a mixed blessing. Mr Trump, in a second term, may look to moderate his China-baiting, cut deals with Russia over West Asia, increase pressure on Iran and bring trade back to the India-US table. Mr Biden may resurrect old alliances, maintain a positive engagement with India, but also adopt a less confrontational China policy. India may also find his focus on democracy, human rights and the freedom of the media irksome, unless the government here curbs its religio-cultural evangelism. For the next 24 hours, the entire world will be literally holding its breath.

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

LETTERS

MAKE IN INDIA

Manufacturing has been the backbone of all nations. In India, too, manufacturing has been given higher importance than the service and agricultural sectors. The ‘Make in India’ initiative is designed to make manufacturing reach 25 per cent of the GDP. For this, the manufacturing industry must play not just a significant role, but a leading one. India needs to concentrate on sectors that have contributed greatly to the success of manufacturing and still hold immense growth potential. These sectors include chemicals, pharmaceuticals, electronics, steel and automobiles. With proper government support, these sectors can drive manufacturing growth and provide employment to millions.

Neha Jamal Chandigarh

STILL THE ‘STAR’

THE SUPREME COURT on Monday stayed the Election Commission order which revoked the “star campaigner” status of former Madhya Pradesh chief minister Kamal Nath for model code violation during the campaign for the bypolls to 28 Assembly constituencies in the state. The order becomes infructuous as the campaigning has ended and the voting is on November 3.

Sankar Paul
Chakdaha, West Bengal

BOGEY TO POLICY

THE CHIEF MINISTER of Haryana has said he is seriously looking into “love jihad”, a word popular among fringe groups to deride interfaith marriages. This type of vengeance is causing many deaths. The spectre of “love jihad”, especially of Hindu women being forced to convert to Islam for marriage, is an issue that Hindutva organisations have frequently brought up. What worked earlier as a tool for fearmongering at the grassroot levels has now become policy at the upper echelons of the government.

M.R. Jayanthi
Ghaziabad, UP

Every Monday the best letter of the week wins ₹500. Email: asianage.letters@gmail.com.

Aakar Patel



Is PM ignoring reality about our economy & Covid handling?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has recently given an extraordinary interview to a leading business newspaper. It is confident in outlook, breezy in tone and out of place with our current reality.

He assumes he had done not only the right thing in managing the Covid-19 pandemic but done something other nations have not done. This, according to him, has saved lives in this country. He says: “I am no health expert, but my assessment is based on numbers. I think we should assess our coronavirus fight against the metric of how many lives we are able to save.”

He did not provide any numbers, but he doesn’t need to because they are public. India has the second most infections in the world and currently has the third highest number of fatalities.

The one other nation India is comparable with in terms of population, China, controlled the epidemic in one stroke. Its peak came on one day, February 12, and

then its spread was contained in some way.

Our sister nations around us, like Bangladesh and Pakistan, culturally and geographically comparable, have fared more than twice as well as us both in terms of infections per lakh population and deaths. On what grounds can we assume that the Narendra Modi government has done comparatively well? He seems to think we should compare ourselves to Brazil, Italy and the United States. But why?

He makes the claim that India, the second most infected nation in the world, “is a world model of public participation without any coercive enforcement”. India actually had the worst lockdown in the world, forced on it by the Union government which invoked the Disaster Management Act. People were punished and jailed by the State for going back home without work, food or shelter. People were run over by trains because they had walked on the tracks to avoid the

police on the highways. This is what coercive enforcement is. Perhaps the definition is different in Gujarat.

That unprepared, arbitrary lockdown did not save lives — there is no relation between the spread of infections and the weeks that India spent in forced hibernation — but it did help skewer the economy. The Prime Minister is confident that the August and September data shows that the economy is “back on track”. Back on track to where?

India’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth was in sequential decline for two years before the pandemic hit. It has been falling every quarter for 10 quarters since January 2018. Growth was three per cent before Covid-19 pandemic. What are we getting back on track to?

Also, if he seems to think that we will be back to where we were in February soon, he has the wrong advisers. One quarter of the GDP fell off between April and June. The best we can hope for in the July-

September quarter is that it doesn’t decline further, but it will. Even if it doesn’t, to recover the lost quarter of India’s GDP will take two years. Meaning that, after two years, we may be back to where we were in February this year. That is not “back on track”.

The Prime Minister continues to speak of a \$5 trillion economy. On one hand, this is a banal thing. India’s economy, at whatever pace, will reach there at some point (assuming no magical strokes like demonetisation or lockdowns are forthcoming to slow it down).

But to assume that it will happen in 2024, as Prime Minister Modi does, is to be unaware of what has happened in the past three years. He said in the interview: “Most people who are pessimistic remain in doubt. If you sit among them, you will hear only things of despair and despondency.”

No, it is called being in touch with reality and being able to read the numbers.

It is hard to tell whether the

Prime Minister is unable to confront the reality or whether he is so supremely confident in his abilities that he can convince the rest of us that the reality is different from our perception of it.

If we pretend that China hasn’t occupied the lands that our Army was patrolling till February, then they haven’t crossed the Line of Actual Control.

If we compare ourselves to Brazil and Italy and not China and Pakistan, our coronavirus numbers will look excellent. If we make up meaningless phrases like this one from the interview — “Atma Nirbhar Bharat is not just about competition but also about competence, it’s not about dominance but about dependability, it’s not about looking within but about looking out for the world” — then that is a substitute for trying to right an economy that has been in the doldrums for over 30 months.

The writer is a columnist and a senior journalist



HILLARY CLINTON @HILARYCLINTON

However you're turning out the vote for Biden-Harris over the next four days, thank you for doing it. Future generations will ask what we did to affect the outcome of this pivotal election.



BARACK OBAMA @BARACKOBAMA

You could be the difference between someone making it out to the polls or staying home. And many states could be decided by a handful of votes. Join me and make some calls for Joe.



LADY GAGA (@LADYGAGA)

HEY TIM HEY @realDonaldTrump SO HAPPY IM GLAD TO BE LIVING RENT FREE in your HEAD. #BidenHarris. Heeeeey Donald... #WINNING (also, what is a fracking?)

US on edge as 77% fear violence

Last-minute scramble for votes by Trump and Biden; no clarity on timing of the result

POLL LINGO: NAKED BALLOTS TO A RED MIRAGE

WILMINGTON, Del. (Reuters) - Every U.S. presidential election has its own lingo, like the "hanging chads" on voting cards in Florida that led to a landmark court battle in 2000. Below is some of the jargon used in the days leading up to the Nov. 3 election pitting President Donald Trump against his Democratic challenger Joe Biden.

NAKED BALLOTS

Sixteen states require voters to return mail ballots in a special "secrecy" envelope. Ballots that don't arrive in the envelope will be considered "naked" and might be disqualified. Celebrities including Naomi Campbell, Chris Rock and Sarah Silverman disrobed in a video to promote proper voting procedures, "the least sexy thing a completely naked person can say," according to actor Josh Gad, who also stripped for the video by activist group Represent. Us, which has promoted anti-graft resolutions, says it does not endorse either candidate.

RED MIRAGE/BLUE SHIFT

Fearing crowded polling places amid the Coronavirus pandemic, a record number of Americans, particularly Democrats, cast mail-in ballots this year, and counting them could take days. As a result, initial results on Election Day may show Republicans, indicated by red on election maps, holding large leads in battleground states, which counts mail-in ballots received three days after Nov. 3. As ballots are tallied in the ensuing days, that "red mirage" could fade, giving way to a "blue shift." Experts see a possible "blue mirage" and "red shift" in Florida and North Carolina.

SPOILED BALLOTS

Ballots that are improperly marked can be rejected as spoiled. Trump said in a tweet the phrase "can I change my vote" was trending on Google and urged Americans to submit a new ballot for him. Some states allow voters to request a new absentee ballot but first they have to request their original ballot be marked as spoiled.

DUELLING ELECTORS

The Electoral College allots electors to states based on population, and the candidate who wins the popular vote gets its electors. But legal experts say Trump could try to convince Republican lawmakers in closely contested states to approve the Republican slate of electors based on early vote tallies. As more ballots are counted, Biden might be certified as the winner. The result: Dueling electors and an outcome that could be determined by Congress.

COURT PACKING

Republicans confirmed Amy Coney Barrett as a Supreme Court justice on Oct. 26 to replace the late Ruth Bader Ginsburg, a hero to many for her advocacy for women's issues. Democrats had argued Ginsburg's seat should be filled after poll. Some have suggested that a Biden Administration could expand the court beyond its traditional nine justices. Biden has said he will establish a bipartisan commission to consider changes to the court system, which he said is "getting out of whack."

POLL WATCHERS

The Republican National Committee is mobilizing thousands of supporters to monitor early voting sites and ballot drop boxes, looking for irregularities such as people dropping off multiple ballots in states where that generally is not allowed. This marks the first presidential election in nearly four decades in which the Republicans can engage in "ballot security" activities without prior review and approval from the Department of Justice.

Washington, Nov. 2: The US presidential campaign enters its final day Monday with a last-minute scramble for votes by Donald Trump and Joe Biden, drawing to a close an extraordinary race that has put a pandemic-stricken country on edge.

But while campaigning will halt and voters will have their say on Tuesday, many questions remain over how soon a result will be known due to a flood of mail-in ballots and possible legal challenges.

About three-quarters of Americans are concerned about riots and violence after election day, according to a new poll by JL Partners-Independent.

Almost three out of four voters (72%) describe themselves as "very or very concerned about post-election violence", according to the survey. Concerns are greater among President Trump's supporters - 77% said they fear violence and unrest. Among former Vice President Biden's supporters, 73% described these concerns.

Those factors, along with an unprecedented convergence of social justice protests, Coronavirus precautions and President Trump's fear-mongering campaign, have led to apprehension over whether unrest could erupt.

Taking no chances, businesses in some cities have boarded up windows, while across the country the harsh political climate has led to fierce debate, in some cases even dividing families.

As proof of how much Americans have been galvanized - and perhaps frightened by the pandemic - a record of more than 93 million people have cast early ballots, including in-person and mailed votes, according to the nonpartisan US Elections Project.

— Agencies

Will host meet of democracies: Joe

Fayetteville (US), Nov. 2: Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden has said that if elected, he will convene a global summit of democracies in the first year of his presidency to counter the "rising authoritarianism" in the world and address issues of election security and human rights.

Biden accused President Donald Trump of "embracing" every autocrat in the world which he said has undermined America's credibility. "One of the things that have hurt us so badly, is that this president has embraced every thug and every

autocrat in the world, in ways that have undermined our credibility," he said during a conference call.

"I'll energise the community of democracies to counter the rising authoritarianism we see in the world. In my first year, we're going to host a summit of the democracies to address election security, human rights, etc." Biden said.

Responding to questions on China, he said trade, human rights and security are the three main issues. Criticising President Trump's policies toward China, he said, "Trump caved to Chinese leaders every time. He let them off the hook, started a trade war, etc."

"Trump gave them the green light to put millions of Chinese Uighurs in concentration camps," he said. His campaign has termed the alleged HR violations of Uyghur Muslims in China's Xinjiang region as "genocide" and called for a global effort to make a united stand against the "oppression". — PTI



US President Donald Trump arrives for a Make America Great Again rally at Fayetteville Regional Airport in Fayetteville, North Carolina on Monday. — AFP

Biden names 800 major fundraisers

Washington, Nov. 2: Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden has released the names of major fundraisers, including Indian-Americans, who helped him raise at least \$100,000 for his election campaign this year.

The list, released on Sunday, contains the names of 800 major donors, including a few dozen Indian-Americans.

Topping the list of Indian-Americans are well known community leaders Swadesh Chatterjee, Ramesh Kapoor, Shekar N. Narasimhan, R. Rangaswami, Ajay Jain Bhutoria and Frank Islam.

Among other prominent Indian-American bundlers are Neil Makhija, Rahu, Prakash, Deepak Raj, Raj Shah, Rajan Shah, Radhika Shah, Jill and Raj Singh, Nidhi Thakar, Kiran Jain, Sony Kalsi and Bela Bajaria. Indian-American Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal has also been listed as a bundler.

Given that the list of bundlers includes all those

who have raised more than \$100,000, the number of Indian-Americans in far less than those of former presidents Barack Obama and Bill Clinton campaigns. Some of the traditional Indian-American Democratic donors like hotelier Sant Chatwal are missing from the list. According to *The Wall Street Journal*, the list of "bundlers" includes the who's who of Democratic

politics, including former and current governors, senators, Cabinet secretaries and big names from Hollywood. Film producer Jeffrey Katzenberg, writer and director Lee Daniels, LinkedIn co-founder Reid Hoffman; media mogul Haim Saban and former US Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker are on the list, the daily said.

— PTI

FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY



93 million Americans have already cast ballots

11 precincts in New Orleans could still be without power on Tuesday

1,100 prominent members of the Asian-American community endorse Joe Biden, Kamala Harris

300 lawsuits already have been filed over the election in dozens of states across the country



127,000

127,000 ballots cast at drive-thru voting places in the Houston area not to be tossed out after the Texas Supreme Court on Sunday denied a Republican-led petition

Idli and any kind of 'Tikka' fav Indian dishes: Kamala

New York, Nov. 2: Democratic Vice Presidential nominee Kamala Harris has listed Idli with a "really good Sambar" and "any kind of Tikka" as her favourite Indian dishes. Born to a Jamaican father and an Indian mother, Harris, is the first Indian-origin and first Black woman to be picked by a major American political party for the top post. Harris, responding to a question on what her favourite Indian dishes are, said: "So South Indian, it would be Idli with... a really good Sambar, and then North Indian — probably

any kind of Tikka".

The 56-year-old California senator, after being chosen by Democratic Party's presidential candidate Joe Biden as his running mate in August, reflected on her proud Indian heritage during her maiden address to the Indian-American community and recalled how her mother Shyamala Gopalan always wanted to instill in her a "love for good Idli".

She had taken a trip down the memory lane, mentioning her "long walks" in Madras (now Chennai) with her grandfather who would tell her about the

"heroes" responsible for the birth of the world's largest democracy. In a video posted on Twitter on Sunday, Harris answered some questions asked by Instagram users. On what she is doing to take care of her mental health on the campaign trail, she said that she works out every morning, speaks with her kids and loves to cook. Asked what her plan is to ensure a sustainable and eco-friendly future for the coming generations, Harris said Biden and she are prepared to make commitments with timelines to achieve zero emissions by 2050. — PTI

PROLONGED VOTE COUNT: DON READY FOR LEGAL BATTLE

Fayetteville (US), Nov. 2: US President Donald Trump has denied that he is planning to prematurely declare victory after the presidential polls are over on Tuesday and hinted that he is gearing up for a legal battle against a vote count that stretched past Election Day. "No, no that was a false report," Trump told reporters on Sunday at the Charlotte airport in North Carolina amidst a news report that he is planning to prematurely declare victory on the election night.

Americans have rushed to vote early, already casting nearly 92 million mail-in ballots that could take days or weeks to be counted in some states — meaning a winner might not be declared in the hours after polls close on Tuesday. Trump indicated that his team was gearing up for a legal battle.

Trump lamented Supreme Court's rulings that allowed for Pennsylvania and North Carolina to count absentee ballots that are postmarked before Election Day but arrive shortly after Tuesday. "I think it is a terrible thing when ballots can be collected after an election. I think it is a terrible thing when people or states are allowed to tabulate ballots for a long period of time after the election is over because it can only lead to one thing," Trump said.

"We are going in the night of — as soon as the election is over — we are going in with our lawyers," he said as he criticised the decision taken by the Supreme Court to allow ballots to be received after Election Day in several battleground states. — PTI

HARRIS SEEKS DECISIVE MANDATE FROM AMERICANS

Fayetteville (US), Nov. 2: Democratic Vice Presidential nominee Kamala Harris has sought a decisive mandate from Americans so that no amount of legal battle can overturn the poll results.

US President Donald Trump on Sunday denied that he is planning to prematurely declare victory after the presidential polls are over on Tuesday, but hinted that he is gearing up for a legal battle in the counting of mail and absentee votes post the election.

He criticised the decision taken by the Supreme Court to allow ballots to be received after Election Day in several battleground states.

"Well, first of all, we plan to decisively win this election so I don't, I don't think we're going to need to get to that point," 56-year-old Harris told reporters during a day of hectic campaigning with stops in this North Carolinian city and in Georgia.

Over the past few days, polls indicate that the November 3 presidential election is getting tighter, even though Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden continues to maintain substantial lead over Republican incumbent President Donald Trump.

— PTI

ELECTION | EVENT

Drive-in car rallies are very selective in nature

Honking gets new meaning

Fayetteville (US), Nov. 2: Honking has got a new meaning in the US politics with the annoying sound replacing clapping, cheers and even boos in election campaigns, in particularly the drive-in car rallies of Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden and his running mate Kamala Harris. Drive-in car rallies have become a signature election event of the Democratic Party which has taken the innovative path

wherein a select group of supporters gather in a parking lot to be addressed by the party's top leadership as part of its efforts to maintain social distancing due to the Coronavirus.

Both Biden, 77, and Harris, 56, ask their supporters sitting in their cars to honk to express their sentiments. In fact, honking in the election rallies of the Democratic Party has replaced all kinds of emotion in election rallies. In the election rallies of Republican incumbent President Donald Trump, thousands of his supporters cheer, clap and

chant slogans like "We Love You" and "Four More years." Most of these drive-in car rallies are very selective in nature and they are not publicised. In their rallies, it's all honking.

The level of honking reflects the sentiments, happiness and anger of their supporters. On Sunday at a drive-in rally attended by less than 100 cars, invited by the local campaign officials, every time Harris' supporters got excited with her remarks, they honked. Every time she was critical of Trump, they honked. Every time she spoke about

"Black Lives Matter", they honked. It was once in a while that some of the supporters peeked out of their car windows. Those who were standing outside their cars ensured that they were maintaining social distancing as they clapped.

There were no cheers at all. Same was the case with shouting slogans. Unlike the Trump rallies, which are publicised locally much in advance and people are encouraged to participate, the car drive-in rallies of Biden and Harris are by invitation only.

— PTI



Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden hugs his granddaughter Finnegan Biden during a canvassing kick-off event in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on Sunday. — AFP

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	39,757.58	0.36
Nifty 50	11,669.15	0.23
S&P 500*	3,309.28	1.20
Dollar (₹)	74.42	-0.42
Pound Sterling (₹)	95.79	-0.004
Euro (₹)	86.57	0.42
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	51,286▲103	0.20
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	37.95	0.01
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.890	0.008
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.838	-0.021

* As of 8:30 PM IST

Singh to continue as NTPC chief till July 2025



The NTPC board approved the extension of tenure of chairman and MD Gurdeep Singh till July 31, 2025. Singh's extended term will start from February 4, 2021. Singh had taken over as the CMD of NTPC on February 4, 2016.

Aditya Puri to join Carlyle as senior advisor



Aditya Puri, who retired as HDFC Bank CEO and MD last week, will be guiding global private equity major Carlyle on investment opportunities across Asia as a senior advisor. Puri will advise the Carlyle team and provide guidance on the evolving market landscape and new investment opportunities, Carlyle said. He will also be advising Carlyle's investment professionals and portfolio management teams.

Tax payers generate 4.95 cr e-invoices: Govt

Tax payers generated 4.95 crore e-invoices in the first month of the launch of the service, the ministry of electronics and IT said. Besides e-invoices, 6.41 crore e-way bills were generated in October, which was highest in any month since the launch of the service. "According to NIC, within the first month of introduction itself, more than 495 lakh e-invoices were generated on the NIC portal by 27,400 taxpayers," the ministry said.

Coromandel Intl posts 17% rise in Q2 profit

Coromandel International reported a 17 per cent year-on-year rise in consolidated net profit after tax at Rs 589 crore for the September 2020 quarter. Total income was lower at Rs 4,620 crore against Rs 4,867 crore in the year-ago quarter. Standalone net profit after tax for the quarter rose to Rs 582 crore versus Rs 503 crore. Total income stood at Rs 4,605 crore against Rs 4,865 crore.

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■ Year-ago quarter had gains from Gruh sale HDFC profit more than halves in Q2

Mumbai, Nov. 2: Mort-gage lender HDFC Ltd's profit after tax declined by more than half to Rs 4,600 crore on a consolidated basis in the September quarter. It had reported a profit after tax of Rs 10,389 crore in the year-ago quarter.

It said during the quarter ended September 30, 2019, Rs 8,000 crore pertained to profit on loss of control of a subsidiary, Gruh Finance. The stake sale of Gruh Finance by the housing finance player was to facilitate the merger of Gruh with Bandhan Bank. On a standalone basis, its net profit dropped 27.56 per cent to Rs 2,870 crore in the September quarter as against Rs 3,962 crore in the previous year. It provided Rs 662 crore for tax in the reporting quarter.

"In reality, profit (in Q2 FY21) is higher by as much as 27 per cent compared to last year after you remove dividend income, profit on sale of investments and expected credit loss (ECL) provisions," HDFC VC and CEO Keki Mistry said. Its dividend income and profit on sale of investments during the quarter stood at Rs 323 crore as against Rs 2,701 crore in the same quarter of the previous fiscal.

"In accordance with the directions by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority, the Corporation has not received any dividend from its investments in banks and insurance companies during the current finan-



cial year so far, it said.

Provisioning, including provisioning for the impact of Covid-19, was Rs 436 crore compared to Rs 754 crore in the year-ago quarter.

The net interest income (NII) for the quarter ended September 30, 2020, grew 21 per cent to Rs 3,647 crore compared to Rs 3,021 crore in the previous year.

Net interest margin for the quarter ended September 30, 2020, stood at 3.3 per cent and for the half-year ended stood at 3.2 per cent.

Gross non-performing loans as of September 30, 2020, stood at Rs 8,511 crore or 1.81 per cent of the loan portfolio.

The non-performing loans of the individual portfolio stood at 0.84 per cent while that of the non-individual portfolio stood at 4.19 per cent.

"If the Honourable Supreme Court order of maintaining the classification of accounts as status quo till further orders were not to be considered, the non-performing loans would have been only two

basis points higher at 1.83 per cent of the loan portfolio; with individual NPLs at 0.88 per cent and non-individuals NPLs at 4.19 per cent," the lender said.

The provisions as of September-end stood at Rs 12,304 crore. The provisions carried as a percentage of the exposure at default (EAD) is equivalent to 2.60 per cent.

The overall collection efficiency for individual loans for the month of September 2020 (the first month after the moratorium) was 96.3 per cent. The collection efficiency for non-moratorium customers stood at 99.5 per cent.

During Q2 FY21, individual loan application receipts grew 12 per cent and approvals grew by 9 per cent compared to the corresponding quarter of the previous year. Individual disbursements during the quarter were at 95 per cent levels of the previous year.

HDFC shares ended at Rs 2,042.65 apiece, up 6.24 per cent on BSE.

—PTI

Reliance Cap in bid to sell stake in arms to cut debt

New Delhi, Nov. 2: Reliance Capital Ltd (RCL), part of debt-ridden Anil Ambani-promoted Reliance Group, has invited bids for sale of its subsidiaries, including Reliance General Insurance and Reliance Nippon Life Insurance, to repay loans of about Rs 20,000 crore.

According to sources, the process for inviting expression of interest (EOI) for its key assets was launched on October 31, with a view to unlock value of its underlying businesses and targets to make RCL debt free.

EOIs invited for all or part of RCL's stake of subsidiaries Reliance General Insurance, Reliance Nippon Life Insurance Company, Reliance Securities, Reliance Financial Limited and Reliance Asset Reconstruction Limited.

The monetisation process is run under the aegis of Committee of Debenture Holders and the Debenture Trustee Vistra ITCL India Ltd, which represents 93 per cent of outstanding debt of RCL, sources said.

The company proposes to exit from its wholly owned Reliance General Insurance Company Limited with paid up capital of Rs 252 crore as of September 30, sources said, adding that 51 per cent stake in Reliance Nippon Life Insurance Company is also for sale.

—PTI

Manipal to acquire Columbia Asia Hospitals in India for ₹2,100 cr

New Delhi, Nov. 2: Leading multi-specialty healthcare provider Manipal Hospitals on Monday said it has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire Columbia Asia Hospitals in India.

According to sources, the acquisition will be for Rs 2,100 crore.

The company intends to acquire 100 per cent stake in Columbia Asia Hospitals Pvt Ltd (Columbia Asia). The transfer of ownership to Manipal Hospitals is expected to be completed post regulatory approvals, the healthcare providers said in a statement.

"We are very pleased to welcome Columbia Asia Hospitals to the Manipal family and proudly acknowledge their outstanding track record of healthcare delivery of a very high standard over the years," Manipal Education and Medical



Group (MEMG) chairman Ranjan Pai said.

"This is the start of an exceptional journey for us and together with Columbia Asia, we are now bigger, stronger and uniquely positioned to meet the growing expectations of the communities we serve across the country," he added.

Together, the combined entity will have a presence of 27 hospitals across 15 cities with over 7,300 beds and a pool of more than 4,000 doctors and over 10,000 employees, the statement said.

Columbia Asia Hospitals commenced operations in India in 2005 in Hebbal, Bengaluru and currently operates 11 hospitals across the country, it added.

"This combination of Columbia Asia and Manipal Hospitals is very exciting because of the strong cultural alignment between the two companies and the opportunity it provides for continued growth," Columbia Pacific Management chairman Dan Baty said.

The acquisition of Columbia Asia offers a geographical and cultural fit, and provides Manipal Hospitals a larger national footprint, the statement said.

The advisor for Manipal Health Enterprise was Allegro Capital and Columbia Pacific was advised by Morgan Stanley, it added.

—PTI

Centre transfers ₹6,000 cr to 16 states, 3 UTs

**FC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, NOV. 2**

In an effort to meet the goods and services tax (GST) revenue shortfall, the Centre on Monday transferred loans worth Rs 6,000 crore as the second tranche to 16 states and three Union territories (UTs) under a special borrowing window. With this amount, the government has already facilitated total loans of Rs 12,000 crore till date under the special window to states and UTs to

meet the shortfall in GST compensation cess collections.

"The finance ministry said the "amount was raised at a weighted average yield of 4.42 per cent. This amount will be passed on to the states/UTs at the same interest rate, which is lower than the cost of borrowings for the states and UTs, thus benefitting them."

The 16 states and three UTs that received funds include Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Goa,

Gujarat, Haryana, HP, Karnataka, MP, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, UP, Uttarakhand and the UTs of Delhi, J&K and Puducherry.

Twenty-one states and three UTs have opted so far for the special window under Option 1 presented by the Union government. "The loans raised by government are released on a back-to-back basis to states/UTs, in lieu of GST Compensation Cess releases," the ministry said.

Emergency credit line for MSMEs extended by a month

New Delhi, Nov. 2: The government on Monday extended the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) for MSMEs by one month till November 30, as the scheme has so far failed to meet the target of Rs 3 lakh crore.

The scheme was valid till October-end. It was launched as part of the Aatmanirbhar Bharat package announced by finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman in May to mitigate the distress caused by coronavirus-induced lockdown, by providing credit to different sectors, especially micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

The scheme has been extended till November 30 or till such time that an amount of Rs 3 lakh crore is sanctioned under the scheme, whichever is earlier, the finance ministry said in a statement.

The step has been taken in view of the opening up of various sectors in the economy and the expected increase in demand



during the ongoing festive season.

"This extension will provide a further opportunity to such borrowers who have not availed of the scheme so far, to obtain credit under the scheme," it said.

According to data uploaded by member lending institutions on the ECLGS portal, an amount of Rs 2.03 lakh crore has been sanctioned under the scheme to 60.67 lakh borrowers so far, while an amount of Rs 1.48 lakh crore has been disbursed.

Under the scheme, fully guaranteed and collateral-free additional credit to MSMEs, business enterprises, individual loans for business purposes, and Mudra borrowers is

provided to the extent of 20 per cent of their credit outstanding as on February 29, 2020.

Borrowers with a credit outstanding up to Rs 50 crore as on February 29, and with an annual turnover of up to Rs 250 crore are eligible under the scheme.

Interest rates under the scheme are capped at 9.25 per cent for banks and financial institutions (FIs), and 14 per cent for non-banking financial companies (NBFCs).

Tenor of loans provided under the scheme is four years, including a moratorium of one year on principle repayment.

A Rs 30,000-crore special liquidity scheme was closed on the due date as even less than a quarter of funds were disbursed to stressed NBFCs.

About Rs 7,227 crore were disbursed to NBFCs from the approved applications worth Rs 11,120 crore—received from 39 proposals—of non-bank lenders by the special entity set up for the purpose.

—PTI

Essel Group sells two tollways to NIIF

Mumbai, Nov. 2: The National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIIF) on Monday said it has acquired two assets—Dichpally and Devanahalli tollways—from Essel Group, marking its entry into the roads and highways sector.

The deal size was not disclosed by the fund.

The acquisition is done through the NIIIF Master Fund, and the projects will be managed by Athaang Infrastructure, NIIIF's proprietary roads platform backed by a team of professionals.

Subhash Chandra's debt-laden Essel Group has



been in talks with NIIIF to sell these assets since last year for an estimated Rs 1,500-1,800 crore.

Essel Dichpally Tollway is a 60-km four-lane toll road in Telangana and has been in operation for over seven years, connecting Hyderabad and Nagpur. Essel Devanahalli

Tollway is a strategic arterial 22-km six-lane toll road in Karnataka, connecting Bengaluru city and the airport and is a part of NH44 (erstwhile NH7). It has been in operation for over six years.

Vinod Giri, managing partner at NIIIF said this is the first investment that the fund has made in the roads sector.

NIIIF is a collaborative investment platform for international and domestic investors, anchored by the Centre and manages over \$4.3 billion of equity capital commitments across its three funds.

—PTI

BMW LAUNCHES X3 M IN INDIA, PRICES START AT ₹99.9 L

**MICHAEL GONSALVES
PUNE, NOV. 2**

BMW, India's second biggest luxury carmaker, on Monday introduced the first-ever X3 M in India for Rs 99.90 lakh to cash in on the festive season.

The X3 M is the first mid-size SUV with German BMW's M package in India which would be imported into the country.

The X3 M has no direct rivals in India as there is no mid-size SUV available in India at this price point



with such performance in tow.

The BMW X3 M is powered by a new 3.0-litre, 6-cylinder M TwinPower turbo engine, which is the

most powerful straight-six petrol engine in the entire M lineup. The engine manages to churn out 486 PS of power and offers 600 Nm of torque.

The high-revving M engine is paired to an 8-speed M Steptronic transmission and sends power to all wheels with the M xDrive powertrain. The X3 M can clock 0-100 kmph in 4.2 seconds and achieves a top speed of 250 kmph. It offers four driving modes that optimise performance.

AGILE MODEL

Company moves to trust and outcome-based working culture

Work from anywhere, Tata Steel tells staff

New Delhi, Nov. 2: Domestic steel maker Tata Steel on Monday announced a new work model for its employees which allows them to work from home for up to 365 days a year.

The new 'Agile Working Models' policy is effective from Sunday, Tata Steel said in a statement.

Tata Steel said that it is moving towards a "trust and outcome-based working culture" and to give more flexibility to its employees.

Under the new models, effective November 1, even officers who are required to be based out of a particular location can now work from home for unlimited days in a year, it said.

Once the pandemic situation normalises, the policy will enable company's officers to move to a location of choice, giving the employee the flexibility



to operate out of any location in the country, the company said adding the policy will be piloted for a year and based on adaptability and feedback, the policy will be reviewed after one year.

Suresh Dutt Tripathi, vice-president, human resource management, Tata Steel, said that flexible working not only por-

trays an organisation's intent to create a workplace for the upcoming generations but also solidifies its intent to cater to the needs of its diversified workforce across geographies.

The pandemic has helped move away from the traditional thinking of productivity being contingent upon fixed hours of work

within an office environment and bust many of the myths around remote working, he said.

The policy will ensure better work-life balance, will give more flexibility to choose where one lives as the daily work commute shifts out of consideration, provides working opportunities to new parents at their convenience, and ensures continuity of work for persons with disabilities in their respective work enabled environment.

"Flexible working provides greater freedom to choose locations and make essential life decisions such as supporting families, be it ageing parents or spouses with non-transferrable jobs. This will help in retaining and enriching our key talent from across the country and attract workforce for location agnostic roles," Tripathi added.

—PTI

HDFC PROFIT MORE THAN HALVES IN Q2

Mumbai, Nov. 2: Mortgage lender HDFC Ltd's profit after tax declined by more than half to Rs 4,600 crore on a consolidated basis in the September quarter. It had reported a profit after tax of Rs 10,389 crore in the year-ago quarter.

It said during the quarter ended September 30, 2019, Rs 8,000 crore pertained to profit on loss of control of a subsidiary, Gruh Finance. The stake sale of Gruh Finance by the housing finance player was to facilitate the merger of Gruh with Bandhan Bank.

On a standalone basis, its net profit dropped 27.56 per cent to Rs 2,870 crore in the September quarter as against Rs 3,962 crore in the previous year.

SHORT TAKES

Shooter tests +ve but camp to go on

New Delhi: An athlete training in the national capital's Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range has tested positive for Covid-19, the Sports Authority of India said on Sunday but maintained that it will not hamper the ongoing national camp. Last month, SAI had approved a two-month long coaching camp for the Olympic core group shooters from October 15 to December 14. "An NCOE (National Centre of Excellence) athlete training at Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range in the 10 metre range has tested positive for the coronavirus. The athlete who last visited the range on October 28th in the second half of the day, intimated to his coach that his test result had come positive," SAI said in a statement. — PTI

AITA plans camp for elite players

New Delhi: The national tennis federation has decided to invite country's top players for a training camp at the DLTA with an aim to provide a platform for their return to competitive action from next year. The All India Tennis Association (AITA) has laid out a plan for top-20 elite men's and women's players for the camp, which may culminate with a national championship in the singles format among the assembled players in a bio-secure environment. The 21-day camp will first begin for the men's players from November 30. It will be followed by a women's camp from January 4. The camp will be held under the supervision of Davis Cup coach Zeeshan Ali, who will handle the project as Director of High Performance Training Camps (HPTC). He will be responsible for formulating a programme for the camp. — PTI

Lahiri ends T-11 at Bermuda golf

Southampton, Bermuda: Indian golfer Anirban Lahiri was left to rue small errors as he missed out on a top-10 finish, signing off Tied-11th with a four-under 67 in the final round of the Bermuda Championship here. Lahiri tied for most birdies made this week, but he also gave away a lot of bogeys, including a double bogey on the third day. On the brighter side, this season he has made the cut in each of his four starts with one Top-10, a T-11 and two other Top-40 finishes. Brian Gay, 48, claimed his fifth PGA Tour title with a playoff win over Wyndham Clark as he ended a winless streak since 2013. Gay and Clark ended the week on 15-under 269. — PTI

Legend Charlton has dementia

London: Manchester United and England great Bobby Charlton has been diagnosed with dementia. "Everyone at Manchester United is saddened that this terrible disease has afflicted Sir Bobby Charlton and we continue to offer our love and support to Sir Bobby and his family," United said in a statement on Sunday. The announcement came two days after Nobby Stiles, who won the 1966 World Cup and 1968 European Cup as Charlton's teammate, died after his own battle with the illness. In July, Bobby's brother and fellow England World Cup winner Jack also died after being diagnosed with dementia. — AP

Live on TV

CRICKET

IPL: Sunrisers Hyderabad vs Mumbai Indians from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

Women's Big Bash League: Hobart Hurricanes vs Melbourne Renegades from 9 am on Sony Six

TENNIS

ATP Paris Masters: Day 2 action from 3.30 pm on Sony Six

FOOTBALL

Champions League: Lokomotiv Moscow vs Atletico Madrid from 11.25 pm on Sony Ten 2; RB Salzburg vs Bayern Munich from 1.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 3; Real Madrid vs Inter Milan from 1.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 2; Manchester City vs Olympiacos from 1.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Six; Atalanta vs Liverpool from 1.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 1

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WIN-WIN GAME

Delhi beat Bangalore but both teams make play-offs

Abu Dhabi, Nov. 2: Delhi Capitals qualified for the Indian Premier League play-offs at number two position with a six-wicket win over Royal Challengers Bangalore here on Monday.

RCB also entered the play-offs after DC took more than 17.3 overs to complete their chase.

Invited to bat, Royal Challengers Bangalore scored 152 for seven in the stipulated 20 overs. Young Devdutt Padikkal top-scored with a 41-ball 50.

In reply, DC chased down the target with six balls to spare, courtesy calculative knocks from Shikhar Dhawan (54) and Ajinkya Rahane (60).

Earlier, Padikkal, who looked in good nick during his stay in the middle, smashed five fours and shared a 57-run stand with skipper Virat Kohli (29 off 24) for the third wicket.

The Capital pulled things back brilliantly in the middle overs.

Pacer Anrich Nortje (3/33) was the pick of the bowlers for Delhi Capitals, while Kagiso Rabada (2/30) picked up two wickets and Ravichandran Ashwin (1/18) took the important wicket of Kohli.

Padikkal and Josh Philippe (12) were circumspect in the powerplay overs. Rabada provided the Capitals with the early breakthrough off his very first ball, claiming the wicket of the Australian in the fifth over. — PTI



Ajinkya Rahane of Delhi Capitals plays a shot against Royal Challengers Bangalore in an Indian Premier League match at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi on Monday. — BCCI

SCORECARD

Royal Challengers Bangalore: J. Philippe c Shaw b Rabada 12, D. Padikkal b Nortje 50, V. Kohli c Stoinis b Ashwin 29, AB de Villiers run out 35, C. Morris c Pant b Nortje 0, S. Dube c Rahane b Rabada 17, W. Sundar (not out) 0, I. Udana c Iyer b Nortje 4, S. Ahmed (not out) 1. Extras (b-1, w-3) 4. **Total (for 7 wks, in 20 overs) 152.**

FOW: 1-25, 2-82, 3-112, 4-112, 5-145, 6-146, 7-150.

Bowling: Sams 4-0-40-0, Ashwin 4-0-18-1, Nortje 4-0-33-3, Rabada 4-0-30-2, Patel 4-0-30-0.

Delhi Capitals: P. Shaw b Mohammed Siraj 9, S. Dhawan c Dube b Shahbaz Ahmed 54, A. Rahane c Dube b Washington Sundar 60, S. Iyer c Mohammed Siraj b Shahbaz Ahmed 7, R. Pant (not out) 8, M. Stoinis (not out) 10. Extras (lb-3, w-3) 6. **Total (for 4 wks, in 19 overs) 154.**

FOW: 1-19, 2-107, 3-130, 4-136.

Bowling: C. Morris 2-0-19-0, Mohammed Siraj 3-0-29-1, Washington Sundar 4-0-24-1, I. Udana 2-0-24-0, Y. Chahal 4-0-29-0, Shahbaz Ahmed 4-0-26-2.

IPL POINTS TABLE

Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
Mumbai Indians	13	9	4	0	18	+1.296
Delhi Capitals	14	8	6	0	16	-0.109
Royal Challengers Bangalore	14	7	7	0	14	-0.172
Kolkata Knight Riders	14	7	7	0	14	-0.214
Sunrisers Hyderabad	13	6	7	0	12	+0.555
Kings XI Punjab	14	6	8	0	12	-0.162
Chennai Super Kings	14	6	8	0	12	-0.455
Rajasthan Royals	14	6	8	0	12	-0.569

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

'SHORT RUN' CAME BACK TO BITE US, SAYS RAHUL

Abu Dhabi, Nov. 2: Kings XI Punjab skipper K L Rahul believes that the "short run" that played a part in their opening IPL loss to Delhi Capitals massively affected their play-off chances despite a remarkable comeback in the second leg of the tournament.

KXIP finished on 12 points after losing their last game against Chennai Super Kings after winning five games on trot to raise visions of a play-off chance.

"It is disappointing. We had a lot of games in our pockets and we couldn't get over the line and we only have ourselves to blame. That short run game too (against Delhi Capitals on September 20), looks like it has come back to bite us,"

Rahul said at the post-match presentation ceremony.

Before that particular match went into Super Over, the TV footage showed that square leg umpire Menon had erred in calling Chris Jordan for a "short run" in the third ball of the 19th over, bowled by Kagiso Rabada.

The TV replays showed that Jordan's bat was inside the crease when he completed the first run, starting from the non-striker's end.

However to KXIP's horror, Menon gestured that Jordan has not completed the run and only one run was added to Mayank Agarwal and the Punjab team's total.

On their loss against CSK, Rahul said that it was all about not batting too well. — PTI

Mumbai stand in between Sunrisers and play-off spot

Sharjah, Nov. 2: Riding high on momentum, resurgent Sunrisers Hyderabad will back themselves to topple the mighty Mumbai Indians and qualify for the IPL play-offs here on Tuesday.

Thanks to their healthy run-rate, a win against Mumbai Indians should be enough to send Sunrisers into the final-four.

After taking a tough call to leave out the dangerous Jonny Bairstow from the playing eleven, Sunrisers have managed to find out the "right" balance.

Wriddhiman Saha has made an instant impact as David Warner's opening partner and the inclusion of Jason Holder has given them an all-round option.

Pacers Holder and Sandeep Sharma were extremely impressive, both upfront and at the death, in the last game against RCB.

NUMBERS GAME

HEAD TO HEAD

OVERALL: ● Matches: 15 ● Hyderabad: 7 ● Mumbai: 7 ● Tied: 1 (Mumbai Indians beat Sunrisers Hyderabad in Super Over after match ended in a tie)

MEETING IN 2019

● MI beat SRH by 40 runs in Hyderabad.

● MI beat SRH via Super Over in Mumbai.

MEETING IN 2020

● Mumbai beat Hyderabad by 34 runs in Sharjah.

FOR THE RECORD

● David Warner with 444 runs at an average of 37.00 in 13 innings of as many matches is the fourth highest run-getter in this IPL.

● Krunal Pandya, who has scored 986 runs at an average of 25.94 in 57 innings of 68 matches, needs 14 runs to become eighth batsman to complete 1,000 runs for MI in IPL.

— S. PERVEZ QAISAR

Add left-arm pacer T. Natarajan and trump card Rashid Khan to their bowling attack, it makes up for a well rounded attack.

Already assured of the top spot in the points table, Mumbai will be expected to

put up another ruthless show against Sunrisers.

The nature of surface in Sharjah has changed drastically with low-scores replacing 200-plus totals, which was the norm at the start of the season. — PTI

MPL to sponsor Team India kit

New Delhi, Nov. 2: Fantasy gaming platform Mobile Premier League's subsidiary arm 'MPL Sports Apparel and Accessories' is the new kit sponsor of the Indian cricket team for a period of three years.

A member of the Apex Council confirmed the development on Monday that BCCI has inked the apparel and merchandise deal with MPL, replacing Nike.

"Yes, Apex Council has passed the sponsorship deal for apparel of Indian team (men, women, A and U19).

"However the rate per match will be ₹65 lakh per game instead of ₹88 lakh that Nike was giving," the senior official said on conditions of anonymity.

It is learnt that BCCI will also get 10 per cent of the royalty from the sale of merchandise.

"MPL has formed an apparel manufacturing company. They will also pay an amount for merchandise contract. The deal will end in November, 2023," the source added.

While Puma and Adidas

● It is learnt that BCCI will also get 10 per cent of the royalty from the sale of merchandise.

had earlier picked up the bid papers for apparel sponsorship, they didn't fill the bid as they felt that the deal needed to be reduced to one third from the original bid.

Nike had a five year deal during which they paid ₹370 crore from 2016 to 2020 with a ₹30 crore royalty.

"No sporting apparel major was ready to pay that kind of money that Nike paid in current economic climate (due to Covid-19).

"One of the major reasons being merchandise items being very costly for common public," the source said.

MPL is currently associated with two IPL franchises (Kolkata Knight Riders and Royal Challengers Bangalore), one CPL franchise (TKR) and the cricket boards of Ireland and the UAE. — PTI

Bale is Tottenham's match winner again

London, Nov. 2: Gareth Bale soared into the air, connected with the ball and powered it into the net.

It's taken more than seven years but Bale was Tottenham's match-winner again. And they have only required three minutes on the field for the substitute to clinch a 2-1 victory over Brighton on Sunday.

A bit of relief and a lot of happiness, Bale said after being set up by Sergio Reguilon, who also switched from Real Madrid in September.

It's an incredible feeling, personally. Obviously you wish the fans were here to be able to celebrate.

Apart from the empty stadium, due to ongoing pandemic restrictions, this was the type of moment Bale imagined producing on his return to Tottenham after seven years.

Not like the effective second debut two weeks ago when Bale came on also with about 20 minutes remaining only to be part of a side that collapsed 3-0 to draw 3-3 with West Ham.

A lead protected this time, Jose Mourinho's side

THE RESULTS

Tottenham 2
(Kane 13-pen, Bale 73)
Brighton 1
(Lamptey 56)

Manchester United 0
Arsenal 1
(Aubameyang 69-pen)

Aston Villa 3
(Mings 62, Watkins 90+3-pen, Grellish 90+6)
Southampton 4
(Vestergaard 20, Ward-Prowse 33, 45, Ings 58)

Newcastle 2
(Wilson 56-pen, 84)
Everton 1
(Calvert-Lewin 90)

climbed to second in the Premier League on the day his former club Manchester United lost 1-0 at home to Arsenal.

Arsenal celebrated their first league win at Old Trafford in 14 years thanks to Pierre-Emerick

Aubameyang's penalty Manchester United is reeling from its worst start to a season in 48 years. — AP



Tottenham's Gareth Bale (right) celebrates with Eric Dier after scoring against Brighton & Hove Albion during their Premier League match in London on Sunday. — AP

Ronaldo returns with double in Juve's win

Milan, Nov. 2: Cristiano Ronaldo came off the bench to score a brace on his return from coronavirus as Juventus got back to winning ways in Serie A with a 4-1 victory against promoted Spezia on Sunday.

The champions ended a run of three consecutive draws to move third in Serie A, four points behind leaders AC Milan, who beat Udinese 2-1 earlier in the day thanks to a spectacular late winner from Zlatan Ibrahimovic.

Sassuolo overtook Juventus to reclaim second spot, two points behind Milan, after a 2-0 win over Napoli, their first ever success at the Stadio San Paolo.

Ronaldo replaced Paulo Dybala in the 56th minute in Cesena with the match level after Tommaso Pobega had cancelled out Alvaro Morata's opener for Juventus.

But the Portuguese striker put Juve in front just three minutes later.

Adrien Rabiot grabbed a third on 68 minutes, with Ronaldo scoring a second from the penalty spot with 15 minutes to go for his fifth goal in three league games this season.

"Cristiano is back. This is the important thing," said Ronaldo, who had been furious at missing Juventus' Champions League 2-0 defeat in mid-week by Lionel Messi's Barcelona.

IBRAHIMOVIC STUNNER

AC Milan extended their unbeaten streak as Ibrahimovic scored an acrobatic late winner to seal a win over lowly Udinese. The 39-year-old has scored seven goals in four league games having missed the other two after contracting Covid-19. — AFP