

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

COIMBATORE | THURSDAY 22 | OCTOBER 2020

## WEATHER



**Max:** 31°C  
**Min:** 22°C  
**Rainfall:** Nil

## ASTROGUIDE

**Sarvari:** Aippasi 6  
**Tithi:** Shashthi/ Saphthami  
**Star:** Ketta/ Moolam  
**Rahukalam:**  
1.30 pm to 3 pm  
**Yamagandam:**  
6 am to 7.30 am

### PRAYERS

**Fajar:** 4.48 am  
**Zohar:** 12.00 noon  
**Asar:** 3.16 pm  
**Maghrib:** 5.51 pm  
**Isha:** 7.02 pm

## 5 dead as blast rips through Karachi building

**Islamabad/Karachi:** A powerful explosion ripped through a four-storey building in Pakistan's Sindh province, killing at least five people and injuring 20 others, police said. At least two floors of the building near Maskan Chowrangi in the Gulshan-e-Iqbal area in Karachi were severely damaged, leading authorities to fear that the toll may rise.

## COUNTER

## POINT



**Selling onions is more profitable and safe!**



## Khadse quits BJP for NCP; says Fadnavis destroyed his life

**Mumbai, Oct. 21:** Simmering since his unceremonious exit from the Devendra Fadnavis-led ministry in 2016, senior Maharashtra BJP leader Eknath Khadse on Wednesday quit the party and will join the Sharad Pawar-led NCP later this week.

Speaking to reporters, Khadse blamed Fadnavis for “destroying his life” and his political career, over three decades of it spent in strengthening the BJP in Maharashtra.

NCP minister Jayant Patil said Khadse will join the NCP on Friday, ending prolonged speculation over the latter's next political move. Khadse has been sulking after he had to resign from the Fadnavis-led ministry in 2016 over corruption allegations. Patil, who is also the state NCP chief, said with the joining of a seasoned leader like Khadse, who was also former leader of opposition in the state Assembly, the NCP will be strengthened, particularly in north Maharashtra's Khandesh region, from where Khadse hails. The seniormost minister in the Fadnavis ministry, Khadse resigned as revenue minister in 2016 over land grab allegations. — *PTI*



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**26 industrial projects worth ₹25,213 crore approved**



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**Don says will win by ‘bigger’ margin**

## SPORT | 8

**RCB beat KKR by eight wickets**



## 11 Afghans in visa queue die in Kabul stampede

**Kabul (Afghanistan), Oct. 21:** At least 11 women were trampled to death when a stampede broke out Wednesday among thousands of Afghans waiting in a soccer stadium to get visas to leave the country, officials said.

Attaullah Khogyani, the spokesman for the governor of the eastern Nangarhar province, said another 13 people, mostly women, were injured at the stadium, where they were trying to get visas to enter neighboring Pakistan. He said most of those who died were elderly people from across Afghanistan.

Separately, at least 36 Afghan police were killed in an ambush by Taliban militants in northern Afghanistan, officials said. — *AP*

## ₹3,737 CR BONANZA

## Centre to give bonus to over 30 lakh employees

**New Delhi, Oct. 21:** The government on Wednesday decided to give ₹3,737 crore bonus to 30.67 lakh central government employees to encourage spending during the festival season and add to demand in the economy. The decision to give a productivity-linked bonus and non-productivity-linked bonus for 2019-2020 was taken at the Union Cabinet meeting, Minister of Information and Broadcasting Prakash Javadekar told reporters.

The bonus ahead of Vijaydashami and Diwali will encourage the middle-class to go out and spend and thus add to the demand in the economy, he said.

The bonus will be disbursed in a week's time. “Payment of Bonus to non-

gazetted employees for their performance in the preceding year is usually made before Durga Puja/ Dussehra season.

The government is announcing the Productivity Linked Bonus (PLB) and ad hoc bonus for its non-gazetted employees to be disbursed immediately,” a press release said.

The Productivity Linked Bonus (PLB) for the year 2019-2020, having financial implications of ₹2,791 crore, will benefit 16.97 lakh non-gazetted employees of commercial establishments like Railways, Posts, Defence, EPFO, ESIC, among others. Non-PLB or ad-hoc Bonus, which is given to non-gazetted central government employees, will benefit 13.70 lakh staff. — *PTI*

## BJP-AIADMK alliance begins to show cracks

**G. BABU JAYAKUMAR & D. SEKAR | DC CHENNAI, OCT. 21**

The BJP and AIADMK have still not seen eye to eye on who would be the chief ministerial candidate of the alliance in the event of the two parties facing the Assembly elections in 2021 together, if one were to go by the contradictory statements made by two leaders on Wednesday.

While fisheries minister D Jayakumar told media persons in the morning that the AIADMK's Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami was undoubtedly the common chief ministerial candidate of the alliance, BJP State president L Murugan begged to differ a couple of hours



**AIADMK's Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami is undoubtedly the common chief ministerial candidate of the alliance”**

— **D. JAYAKUMAR, Fisheries minister**



**The chief minister candidate for Tamil Nadu will be decided by my party's high command in New Delhi”**

— **L. MURUGAN, BJP State president**

later.

Murugan was speaking to the media after inaugurating a central Chennai office of the BJP in Choolai when he said that the chief minister candidate for Tamil Nadu would be decided by his party's high command in New Delhi.

This tug of war has been going on for quite some

time even before the question of the chief ministerial candidate was raised within the AIADMK. But after Palaniswami was declared as AIADMK's candidate after several rounds of discussions, the party has been firm on having its leader at the helm of the government if at all the mantle falls on the alliance. ■ **P3**

## Chinese soldier handed over at LAC in Ladakh

**DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, OCT. 21**

The Indian Army late Tuesday night handed over the Chinese soldier who had strayed across the Line of Actual Control to the People's Liberation Army at the Chushul Moldo meeting point in Ladakh.

The Chinese soldier, identified as Corporal Wang Ya Long, was handed back to China after the completion of all formalities. He was caught by the Indian Army in the Demchok sector of eastern Ladakh on Monday.

He was provided medical assistance, including oxygen, food and warm clothes, to protect him from the vagaries of extreme altitude and harsh climatic conditions.

## Farooq quizzed again on JK cricket funds scam

**YUSUF JAMEEL | DC SRINAGAR, OCT. 21**

Former chief minister and National Conference (NC) president Farooq Abdullah was on Wednesday again summoned by the Srinagar wing of Enforcement Directorate (ED) to its office here where he

was grilled by its officials in connection with an alleged multi-crore scam in Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association (JKCA).

This was the second time in three days that the octogenarian politician had to face the cross-examination by the ED officials.

## Gorkha leader Gurung surfaces after 3 years

**RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, OCT. 21**

In a dramatic move, absconding Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJM) founder Bimal Gurung on Wednesday took a U-turn and dealt a heavy blow to the BJP ahead of the Assembly election in West Bengal next year. Accusing

the saffron party of not fulfilling its “commitment” towards the separate statehood demand of “Gorkhaland”, he quit the NDA, leaving the BJP stunned.

With talk of an alliance with Trinamul Congress on his lips, Mr Gurung also offered full support to chief minister Mamata Banerjee

to help her return to power for the third consecutive time.

His announcement came after he surfaced in Kolkata in the afternoon for the first time in the past three years, when he was on the run with more than 150 cases, including under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, against him

for spearheading a violent movement in Darjeeling for “Gorkhaland” in the middle of 2017.

Travelling by car, Mr Gurung went to Gorkha Bhavan in Salt Lake first. However, he could not enter as the police personnel were guarding the building. Later, at a hotel, he alleged: “Though we were a con-

stituent of the NDA 2009 onwards, the Central government led by the BJP did not fulfil its commitment of finding ‘Gorkhaland’ as a permanent political solution for the hills. It has not included 11 Gorkha communities in the list of Scheduled Tribes. We were cheated. So we are quitting the NDA.”



Union home minister Amit Shah lays a wreath at the Police Memorial on the occasion of the National Police Commemoration Day, in New Delhi, on Wednesday. — *PTI*

## Police forces being modernised to tackle new challenges: Shah

**New Delhi, Oct. 21:** The government is undertaking a comprehensive modernisation programme to prepare the country's police and paramilitary forces for newer challenges in terrorism, cyber-crime and border security, Union home minister Amit Shah said here on Wednesday.

Shah laid a wreath at the National Police Memorial in Chanakyapuri to pay homage to the slain policemen and addressed a joint column of police and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) on the occasion of Police Commemoration Day. The

day is observed in memory of 10 CRPF personnel who were killed in an ambush by Chinese troops in 1959 in Ladakh's Hot Spring area.

Armies of the two countries are currently locked in a military standoff in the Ladakh area.

“The work of police is witnessing new challenges and new dimensions in the areas of terrorism, fake currency, narcotics control, cybercrime, arms smuggling and human trafficking. It is a challenge to prepare the police forces for the new dimensions that have emerged in the last 2-3 decades,”

Shah said.

“We have prepared a comprehensive modernisation programme for the police, and I am hopeful that in the coming days the Modi government will prepare them (police personnel) to meet these challenges,” he said.

He said the government is bringing in technology to make the country's borders “impregnable” and detailed preparations are being made on this subject. The use of technology and the promptness of troops will go hand-in-hand and “we will be able to better secure our borders”, he said. — *PTI*



## SP's Ram Gopal Yadav files nomination for Rajya Sabha election

**Lucknow, Oct. 21:** Samajwadi Party leader Ram Gopal Yadav on Wednesday filed his nomination papers for the November 9 Rajya Sabha election, officials said.

He reached the Vidhan Bhawan along with party president Akhilesh Yadav and other senior leaders to file his candidature.

The election to 10 seats of Rajya Sabha in Uttar Pradesh is scheduled for November 9. Ram Gopal Yadav, whose tenure in the Upper House of Parliament is due to end next month, was the only candidate to file the nomination papers on Wednesday, they said.

The main opposition Samajwadi Party with 48 legislators can ensure the victory of one candidate. At present, there are 304 MLAs from the BJP, 18 from the BSP, nine from the Apna Dal, seven from the Congress and four from the Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party.

Five MLAs are Independents or from small parties. The tenure of 10 Rajya Sabha members from the state is coming to an end on November 25.

These include four members of the Samajwadi Party, Ram Gopal Yadav, Chandra Pal Singh Yadav, Ravi Prakash Verma and Javed Ali Khan, and three from the BJP, Hardeep Singh Puri, Arun Singh and Neeraj Shekhar. The Congress' PL Punia and the Bahujan Samaj Party's Veer Singh and Rajaram are also among these 10 members. Uttar Pradesh elects 31 members to Rajya Sabha, out of which the BJP currently has 17, the SP has eight, the BSP has four and the Congress has two. — *PTI*

## India's contribution will be critical to fighting Covid: Vardhan

**New Delhi, Oct 21:** India's contribution will be critical to fighting Covid-19, especially when it comes to making vaccines for the whole world, health minister Harsh Vardhan said on Wednesday, assuring that the government has accorded top-most priority to research and manufacturing to ensure that the vaccine reaches the last person.

He made the remarks while virtually addressing

the World Bank-IMF annual meeting on “Unleashing the South Asian Century through Human Capital for All” and “Investing in Covid-19 Vaccines and Primary Healthcare Delivery System”.

He said that the National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration is working on all aspects, besides designing innovative approaches to distribute vaccines in rural and remote regions, the health

ministry said in its statement.

The health minister said the present research agenda for Covid-19 has been to provide an affordable vaccine as well as to ensure its equitable distribution.

Currently, three Indian pharma companies in partnership with foreign or domestic research institutes are expediting the trials of vaccine, the statement said.

The biggest benefit that



India has is that it has a robust immunization program in place and it is also implementing the largest

● **The health minister said the present research agenda for Covid-19 has been to provide an affordable vaccine as well as to ensure its equitable distribution**

immunization programme of the world, with nearly 27 million newborns targeted annually, the minister said.



## SHORT TAKES

## Sanitary workers stage stir in Chengalpet

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, OCT. 21

Close to 80 sanitary workers working for the Chengalpet municipality on contract basis boycotted work on Wednesday and staged a protest demanding that the civic body pay their salary dues immediately.

Workers from 33 wards in Chengalpet district joined together and staged the protest inside the municipality office.

The workload had doubled since the third week of March. In spite of risk involved in helping the Covid-19 patients by distributing medicines and carrying out cleaning work in the contaminated zones and executing their work sincerely, they were not paid salary for the last few months.

Following the protest, the Chengalpet town police and municipality officials held a talk with the protestors. Based on their assurance, the workers gave up the protest and resumed work.

## Gold worth ₹45 L in paste form seized by Chennai Customs

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, OCT. 21

The Chennai air customs at the airport seized gold worth Rs 45.4 lakh on Tuesday. Based on intelligence that gold was likely to be smuggled from Dubai, four passengers Sirajideen Jafar (27), Anish Rahman (24), Sathakathulla (24) and Sahubar Ali (39), all from Ramanathapuram (T.N.) who arrived by Air India Express Flight IX 1644 from Dubai on Tuesday night were intercepted at the exit on suspicion of carrying gold.

On questioning, they confessed to being carrying bundles of gold paste concealed in the rectum. On searching 17 bundles of gold paste were recovered from their rectum. In all, 864 grams of gold valued at ₹ 45.4 lakhs was recovered from the goldpaste and the same was seized. Total 864 grams of gold of 24 K purity valued at ₹45.4 lakh was recovered and seized under the Customs Act, 1962. Further investigation is under progress.

## Rare twin transplant in Chennai hospital

**Chennai:** A first of its kind combined liver and kidney transplant on a 35-year-old man from Delhi was performed at the Gleneagles Global Health City (GGHC) in Chennai during the Covid-19 pandemic with help from two live donors. The patient with a medical history of a renal failure & chronic liver problem (fatty liver) was airlifted from Delhi, where doctors decided to defer the transplant surgery as he was also suffering from cardiac shock and low BP, a press release from the hospital said. The entire transit process from Delhi to Chennai was seamlessly co-ordinated as it was highly challenging since the patient had multiple complications and was also obese (130 kg). Even as he was treated for the various complications, a complete medical evaluation was carried out on the patient's wife and sister, who were the liver and kidney donors respectively. Patient was discharged on the 16th day after the surgery. "Patient as well as his sister and wife are hale & healthy," the release added.

## Work in progress



## Egmore police commissioner's old office to turn museum

N. SAMPATH | DC  
CHENNAI, OCT. 21

Work has begun to convert the 178-year-old iconic Metropolitan Police Commissioner's office in Chennai Egmore into a museum.

During the British rule in 1842, the headquarters of the Chennai Metropolitan Police was functioning at Vepery. Later, it was relocated to Arunagiri. Mudaliar's 36,000 sq ft bungalow on Egmore Pantheon Road.

Then the rent for the bungalow was ₹165 per month. Following the enactment of the Police Act of 1856, a stable police force was established. Following this, the

Arunagiri Mudaliar building was bought by the police for ₹21,000.

Due to lack of space and inability to renovate the old building, the new commissioner's office was built on the 1.73 lakh sq ft site with 8 floors on the premises of the additional commissioner of municipal traffic police, on Sampath Road. The police commissionerate has been functioning in this building since 2013.

As many as 100 workers are involved in the renovation and beautification of the old commissioner's office. Work is underway to renovate the rooms and turn them into museums. The museum is scheduled to open in next February.

This is the second police museum in Tamil Nadu. A police museum has already been set up in Coimbatore.

The Egmore museum houses important historical documents of the police, important announcements made about the police at that time, weapons used by the British police, early uniforms of the Tamil Nadu police, photographs of belts, sniffer dogs, historical news packages, wireless instruments and artifacts. The names of the policemen who lost their lives in service are engraved on a wall. Police officers hope the museum will bring to the public the heritage of the Tamil Nadu police.

## Cab driver held for posting woman's obscene photos on FB

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, OCT. 21

A 30-year-old man was arrested for posting objectionable pictures of a woman on Facebook in the city.

The man identified as Sarath Kumar, a call taxi driver, had morphed a photo of the woman while mentioning that she was available for sexual favours round the clock.

Police said a complaint was received at Shankar Nagar police station given by the woman's husband on October 18.

The complainant said that an unidentified man

had morphed the photo of his wife and mentioned that she would be available for sexual favours. The woman recently noticed her photo making rounds on Facebook and informed her husband.

Shankar Nagar police transferred the case to the Cybercrime wing of the Chennai police to trace the fake Facebook user.

When the police posing as a customer contacted the number given on the Facebook post to enquire about the woman, the accused allegedly asked to transfer Rs 500 through GPay, in return for the

woman's phone number.

Police traced his bank account and tracked him to Manapakkam in the city.

The accused Sarath Kumar was arrested by the police on Tuesday.

During an investigation, he confessed that he had uploaded a morphed picture of the woman to Facebook to earn fast bucks. Police said Sarath Kumar was a habitual offender and had tarnished the image of several women in Chennai.

He was produced before Tambaram magistrate and lodged at Puzhal prison.

## Sero survey: 1/3 of Chennai population exposed to Covid

**Chennai, Oct. 21:** Tamil Nadu reported just over 3,000 fresh coronavirus cases for the second straight day, taking the tally to 6.97 lakh on Wednesday while results of a sero survey showed nearly one third of the population in the city has been exposed to the pathogen.

The results of the second sero survey conducted here recently to detect the transmission of coronavirus has shown an overall positivity rate of 32.3 per cent, authorities said.

This was more than the number of those found affected by the virus during the first survey conducted in July.

"Results of Chennai Sero survey-II: Serosurvey

**The results of the second sero survey conducted here recently to detect the transmission of coronavirus has shown an overall positivity rate of 32.3 per cent, authorities said**

samples tested- 6,389 out of which 2,062 are positive for IgG antibodies presence with overall positivity of 32.3 per cent," Greater Chennai Corporation said in a brief statement.

The first phase of the survey, with a sample size of around 12,000, had revealed (on September 1)

that a fifth of the population (21.5 per cent) in the metropolis had an exposure to the pathogen.

On Wednesday, the state logged 3,086 new cases taking the tally to 6,97,116 while the death toll touched 10,780 with 39 more fatalities.

Chennai added 845 cases, taking its infection count to 1,92,527.

Recoveries continued to eclipse fresh infections and 4,301 patients were discharged from various hospitals as the aggregate of those cured so far climbed to 6,50,856, a health department bulletin said.

Coimbatore recorded 314 fresh cases and Salem 198 while the remainder was scattered across the state.

Tenkasi (7), Ariyalur (8) and Perambalur (9) were among districts that recorded less number of new cases.

The active cases continued to fall and stood at 35,480 as on date.

Those dead include a man and woman aged 40 and 84 respectively and except one all had co-morbidities.

Chennai's toll rose to 3,556 while in neighbouring Chengelpet it stood at 643.

Chengalpet and another neighbouring district Tiruvallur accounted for 41,845 and 36,510 cases.

A total of 81,782 samples were tested, taking the cumulative specimens examined to 91,93,849, the bulletin said.

—PTI

## TEACHER HELD FOR SEXUALLY ABUSING BOY

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, OCT. 21

Police have arrested a teacher for allegedly sexually abusing a class nine student in Palur in the Chengalpet district.

The accused, identified as Karthik, a resident of Melmanapakkam in Palur in the district, was a tutor. He taught mathematics for class 5-8 students via online. Police said the victim, a 15-year-old boy, assisted Karthik during the classes.

As per the complaint lodged by the victim's parents, Karthik forced the victim into homophobic sex and reportedly videotaped it. He then allegedly threatened the boy of dire consequences if he told anyone about the incident, said the officials.

The teacher had been abusing the child for the last three months. Recently, the boy's parents noticed changes in his behaviour and spoke to him, when he recounted the assault. The victim's family confronted him and handed him over to the police. When the officials arrested Karthik and questioned him, he confessed to having committed the crime. The Palur police booked Karthik under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (Pocso) Act, 2012, the official said.

J. STALIN | DC  
CHENNAI, OCT 21

The Madras high court has asked additional advocate general P.H.Arvinth Pandian to instruct the registrar of co-operative societies to file a report suggesting ways and means to expedite the process of opening the mirror accounts for farmers in the branches of the Central Cooperative Banks in the state, to enable them to avail and withdraw the crop loan.

Justice N.Anand Venkatesh passed the interim order on a petition filed by P.V.Saravanan, challenging the new procedure introduced by the registrar of co-operative societies for withdrawal of loan amount by farmers.

Following the grievance expressed by the petitioner that there is no sufficient infrastructure to open the mirror account for all the farmers in order to avail the loan facility and therefore, there is an inordinate delay in getting the loan and consequently, the farmers have been put to untold hardship, Justice Anand Venkatesh had on October 13, 2020, in order to understand the steps taken by the authorities to open the mirror account for the farmers and how fast the process can be



completed, besides to give necessary directions to expedite the whole process (after getting the details), requested AAG Arvinth Pandian to circulate a short note in this regard during the next date of hearing i.e., on October 16, 2020.

In his present interim order, the judge said pursuant to the earlier orders passed by this court on October 13, 2020, a note has been circulated by the registrar of cooperative societies explaining the various steps taken for opening the mirror account for the farmers, who want to avail the loan facility. Paragraph 7 in the note explains the arrangements that have been made by the Central Cooperative Banks for opening mirror accounts for the farmers residing in the rural areas, the judge added.

The judge said the details provided along with the note with regard

to the crop loans that has been disbursed from August 1, 2020, to September 30, 2020, shows that in 36 districts, a total of 2,90,033 farmers have availed of the loan after opening of the mirror account and a total of Rs 2256.21 crore have been disbursed. The main concern that has been expressed was that there were nearly 4,450 Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies in Tamil Nadu consisting of nearly 90 lakh members. The manpower available in the Primary Agricultural Cooperative Society was totally disproportionate to the total number of farmers, who want to avail the farm loan and therefore, it will take a long time to open mirror account to each and every one of the farmers. Therefore, some method has to be devised to see if the process of opening the mirror account can be expedited by bringing in more manpower to collect the applications from the farmers and submit the same to the Central Cooperative Bank branches, the judge added.

The judge said AAG Arvinth Pandian submitted that he will take specific instructions in this regard and report to this court during the next date of hearing on October 28, 2020

## Apollo launches post-Covid recovery clinics

**Madurai:** The Apollo Hospitals Group on Wednesday announced the launch of Post-Covid Recovery clinics across the hospital network.

The post-Covid recovery clinics will address the rising number of patients who have recovered from Covid but are suffering from the mid and long term persistent effects of the infection.

The clinics will be manned by a team of specialists including neurologists and immunologists to help patients deal with the aftermath of Covid-19 and restore them to health.

In Madurai, the post-Covid Recovery Clinic will be conducted at the Apollo Speciality Hospitals, Madurai, according to a press release.

The recovery clinics will initially be launched in Apollo hospitals treating Covid in Chennai, Madurai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Mysore, Kolkata, Bhubaneswar, Guwahati, Delhi, Indore, Lucknow, Mumbai and Ahmedabad.

— DC

## Micro-plasma oxidation system introduced by CMRL

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, OCT. 21

The Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) has introduced a micro-plasma oxidation system in an attempt to reduce exposure of chemicals being used for sanitisation of rolling stock and stations.

The CMRL, in a press release on Wednesday, said that Chennai was the first Indian metro that ventured into the micro-plasma oxidation system which is able to produce an aqueous stabilized ozone on demand to avoid exposure of harsh chemicals during sanitisation.

This technology, which is used in high-end defence and medical applications, makes surrounding air chemical-free. The CMRL in association with ETA Purification has developed a system to use the technology to disinfect rolling stock and stations.

The produced aqueous-based disinfecting agent is approximately 10-1000 times more effective than other chemicals against bacteria and viruses. The sanitation process can be completed in just a few minutes. This system requires only ordinary water as input and no chemical is needed.

## Trans woman entrepreneur found killed

DC CORRESPONDENT  
COIMBATORE, OCT. 21

The body of Sangeetha, the chief of Coimbatore Transgender Association, was found dumped in a plastic drum with cut wounds at her house in Coimbatore on Wednesday. Sangeetha, 60,

was residing near Sai Baba Colony. Recently, Sangeetha had started a restaurant here, 'Covai trans kitchen', was completely and successfully operated by transgenders. According to police, while the restaurant was showing signs of increase in turnover within

30 days of launch, suddenly Sangeetha went missing for the past couple of days. Her mobile phone remained switched off.

Sai Baba Colony police found her body with cut wounds all over dumped inside a plastic drum kept near the door of her house.

## Residential property sales up

T. SUDHEESH | DC  
CHENNAI, OCT. 21

Despite rattled by the lockdown, Chennai's residential real estate market marked a jump in the last quarter (Q3) from the previous quarter of the year.

A market study carried out by the research wing of JLL, a multinational property consultancy firm, has found that sales in Chennai witnessed an eight-fold increase in new launches, from 182 units in Q2 to 1,487 units in Q3.

The western suburbs including Porur, Ambattur and Padi accounted for nearly 80 percent of the new

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launches. A trend of increased preference for gated communities due to the health crisis has been observed among homebuyers.

Out of a total of 1,570-unit sales recorded during the quarter, the southern and western suburbs including Padur, Navalur, Perumbakkam and

Keelkattalai contributed over 80 percent. Maximum sale was witnessed in the affordable and lower-mid segments.

"Further easing of lockdown restrictions and the upcoming festive season are expected to help in bringing buyers back to the market. While the residential real estate market remains

unpredictable, favourable supply dynamics could deliver potential upside for both homebuyers and developers," said Siva Krishnan, managing director, JLL Chennai.

The study found that residential sales across the seven markets (Mumbai, Delhi NCR, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai, Pune and Kolkata) picked up by 34 percent compared to Q2. Mumbai accounted for 29 percent of the total sales in the quarter while 22 percent of sales was contributed by Delhi NCR. Growth in sales was also driven by stronger demand in Chennai, Hyderabad and Pune.



## SHORT TAKES

**SC to examine if edu institutions, varsities fall under consumer law**

**New Delhi, Oct. 21:** The Supreme Court has agreed to examine the question as to whether an educational institution or university can be sued under the consumer protection law for deficiency in services, saying there have been "divergent views" of the top court on the issue.

A bench of Justices D Y Chandrachud, Indu Malhotra and Indira Banerjee has admitted an appeal filed by Manu Solanki and other students of a medical course against Vinayaka Mission University at Salem in Tamil Nadu, alleging deficiency in services. "Since there are divergent views of this Court bearing on the subject as to whether an educational institution or University would be subject to the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act 1986, the appeal would require admission. Admit," the top court said in its order of October 15. It asked lawyer Soumyajit, appearing on behalf of caveator university, to file the response within six weeks to the appeal filed against a decision of the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDR). — PTI

**TN launches sale of onion at ₹45 a kilo, Stalin alleges hoarding for price rise**

**Chennai, Oct. 21:** The Tamil Nadu government on Wednesday launched sale of onions through its farm fresh outlets at a subsidised cost of Rs 45 a kilo in the wake of the commodity's spiralling price and said 150 tons were being procured.

The DMK, meanwhile, alleged that hoarding was behind the price rise and asked the AIADMK government to not implement the Centre's three farm laws in Tamil Nadu.

Launching the sale, Minister for Cooperation Sellur K Raju said onion would be available at the rate of Rs 45 a kilo at the state-run farm fresh outlets, including mobile shops.

Subsequently, efforts would be taken to extend the onion sale through Public Distribution System shops as well after studying the market dynamics, he said.

The retail prices of onion in Tamil Nadu has crossed Rs 100. Raju told reporters that the government has entered into an agreement with the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India for procurement of more than 150 tonnes of onion and "we will get adequate quantity of onions," Raju told reporters.

Factors like rains have led to the price rise and this was not unusual as such a scenario was witnessed even during the previous DMK regime, he said.

He ruled out any scope for hoarding onions. In 2009 and 2010, the price of onion touched ₹110 a kilo, he claimed and added that despite the price rise, the then DMK government did not take any measures at that time to intervene and lower it.

**26 industrial projects worth ₹25,213 crore approved**

**Chennai, Oct. 21:** Twenty six industrial projects worth Rs 25,213 crore, assuring creation of just over 49,000 jobs, were on Wednesday accorded approval by a high power committee headed by Chief Minister K. Palaniswami.

The companies which committed the investments had already signed Memorandum of Understanding with the state government.

The approval for the

**The committee, in the last two rounds of meetings, had already given its consent for 34 projects worth ₹15,000 crore that would see creation of 23,000 new jobs**

projects would ensure creation of 49,003 jobs, an official release said.

The committee, in the last two rounds of meetings, had already given its consent for 34 projects worth ₹15,000 crore that would see creation of 23,000 new jobs.

Some of the significant investments include ENES Textile Mills (RAM-RAJ), MRF Ltd, Wheels India Ltd, Ather Energy, Integrated Chennai Business Park (DP World), Seoyon E-HwA Automotive India Pvt Ltd, Mobis India Ltd, the

release said.

The projects would come up in Chennai, Chengalpeta, Kanchipuram, Thiruvallur, Ranipet, Tiruppur, Namakkal, Coimbatore, Perambalur and Krishnagiri.

Deputy Chief Minister O. Panneerselvam, electricity minister P. Thangamani and senior government officials took part in the meeting, the release said.

— PTI

**Dalit panchayat chief on protest path**

**R. VALAYAPATHY | DC TIRUCHY, OCT. 21**

Tension prevailed for a while when Kruthiga Arunkumar, president of the Perugamani village panchayat, began an indefinite fast in front of the Gandhi statue at Perugamani near Tiruchy on Wednesday, in protest against the vice-president and other members boycotting the meetings convened by her as she is a Dalit.

She told mediapersons that Senthilkumar, member of the 8th ward, and others made false and baseless complaints against her before Tiruchy district collector S. Sivarasu recently.

Upon information, Nir-mala, commissioner of the Andanallur panchayat union, went there and assured Kruthiga that she will take suitable action and that all members of the panchayat will attend the meetings convened by her besides taking the issue to the district collector.

Following this, Kruthiga gave up her agitation.

**Strengthening ties**

Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami hands over a sapling to Singapore high commissioner Simon Wong in Chennai on Wednesday. — DC

**All not well between two parties****FROM P1**

The BJP, however, seems to be not very sure of letting the AIADMK lead the government in the event of the alliance romping home in the elections. In fact, during a visit to Chennai, its national general secretary C. T. Ravi expressed a desire to contest in all the 234 constituencies in the state, which in other words was that the BJP would like to go it alone without the AIADMK's support.

Also the manner in Governor Banwarilal Purohit, who is primarily seen as a BJP man, is dragging his feet on giving his approval for the Bill providing for 7.5 per cent reservation to students from government schools in the admission for medical colleges in the state, clearly indicates that all is not well between the two parties.

The recent statement of

Union Home Minister Amit Shah that the BJP was basically waiting for actor Rajinikanth to start his party so that it could align with it for the elections and that it would look at the AIADMK only if the actor did not float his own outfit is another indicator that the alliance is not on firm ground anymore.

Besides, it is learnt that many leaders in the AIADMK consider the BJP as a bugbear that could be safely abandoned before the elections. Since many in the party believe that there is still a strong anti-BJP sentiment in the State and that it could only jeopardize their prospects in the elections if they were together, the popular view is to jettison the BJP.

Aggravating the anti-BJP feelings within the party is the BJP's open support to Anna

University Vice Chancellor M. Surappa, whom the AIADMK wants to be thrown out immediately. AIADMK is angry with Surappa for throwing cold water on its plan to gain popular support through the cancellation of arrears papers of university students.

Surappa ensured that the government plan was not implemented by invoking the AICTE to speak against the government move, besides not supporting the bifurcation of Anna University, the Bill on which is also pending approval at Raj Bhavan.

So, going by the various statements made by different leaders it looks as though the AIADMK was enduring the BJP as an ally out of political compulsions and that the BJP too was sticking to it only because it has not found an alternative partner.

**SHOPS, RETAIL OUTLETS CAN FUNCTION TILL 10 PM**

**Chennai, Oct. 21:** All shops, restaurants and commercial complexes in the state will be allowed to function till 10 pm from Thursday in view of the festive season and to facilitate further economic recovery, Chief Minister K. Palaniswami said on Wednesday.

Barring shops located in full containment zones, all others could function up to 10 pm by following the SOPs to prevent the spread of Covid-19, Palaniswami said in an official release on Wednesday.

Shops are presently allowed to remain open till 9 pm.

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**Central help sought for delta paddy farmers: Minister**

**G. SRINIVASAN | DC THANJAVUR, OCT. 21**

The State government has written to the Central government for relaxing the norms with respect to moisture content in paddy procured to help the farmers of Cauvery delta districts whose Kuruvai paddy has been affected by rain, said R. Kamaraj, state food minister, here on Wednesday.

He inspected the direct purchase centre of the Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation at Thennamanadu in Thanjavur district and enquired with farmers about paddy procurement.

"We have written to the Central government to give permission to procure Kuruvai paddy with moisture content up to 22 per cent. We are not rejecting paddy with moisture content more than 17 per cent and are taking that paddy also at DPCs to help farmers" said Mr Kamaraj.

He said that only 10 per cent of the Kuruvai area are yet to be har-

vested in the delta districts of Thanjavur, Tiruvallur and Nagapattinam. In Thanjavur district, out of 1.45 lakh acres on which Kuruvai had been cultivated, harvest has been completed in 1.25 lakh acres. In Tiruvallur and Nagapattinam out of one lakh acres cultivated, paddy on 90,000 acres were harvested.

He said that DMK president M.K. Stalin is playing politics by stating that farmers are not getting good price for paddy.

"We are now paying ₹1,950 per quintal of paddy. During DMK regime it was only Rs 1,100 per quintal. During this Kuruvai, we procured 65 lakh bags of paddy in 21 days," he said.

Dayanand Kattaria, additional chief secretary, food, co-operation and civil supplies, Sudadevi, managing director, TNCS and M. Govinda Rao, Thanjavur district collector accompanied the minister.

**LTTE SUPPORTERS TREND 'METHAGU' HASHTAG**

**G. BABU JAYAKUMAR | DC CHENNAI, OCT. 21**

In the run up to the release of the trailer for the upcoming biopic of LTTE leader V. Prabhakaran on Wednesday evening, his supporters worldwide made a Tamil hashtag 'Methagu' trend on Twitter since morning.

'Methagu', meaning His Excellency, is the name of the biopic, scheduled for international release on November 26. Credits given in the digital posters say that the film was being brought out by Tamil Elazha Thirakalam, directed by T. Kittu, produced by Riyaz and music is by Praveen.

But LTTE supporters in India and abroad have been tweeting photographs, videos and quotes of Prabhakaran ensuring that the hashtag trended. Besides, eulogizing the Tamil leader as the 'identity of Tamils' in tweets, users even described him as 'the most honest and most talented and most loved leader of Tamils.'

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**Though not much details of the film surfaced from the sea of tweets, vignettes from the past were put out to highlight the greatness of the leader. One of them was a video of a speech by journalist Anita Pratap, who is credited with getting the first interview of Prabhakaran when he was living in Chennai way back in 1984.**

Pratap in the visual says that she had interviewed

many big leaders subsequently in her career but did not remember anything they said. Only one statement of the Tamil leader, who was then barely 29 years, was still fresh in her mind.

"Nature is my friend, life is my philosopher and history is my guide," he told her, she says, adding that he had the greatest sense of foresight and deep understanding of history. That quote was repeated in many of the tweets of the day, which inci-

dentally, according to a few tweets, was historic because a British court removed the ban on LTTE in a case filed by overseas Tamils.

Some of the other famous quotes of Prabhakaran that were mentioned in the tweets were: 'traitors are more dangerous than enemies,' 'people cannot give up their cause, their rights for fear of defeat' and 'if one is determined to die for the truth even the common man can create history.'

Then among the photographs uploaded were many showing him in army fatigues. There is one in which he arm wrestles with a small girl for which has been given the caption 'man of humanity.'

Another photograph depicts an Indian army officer saluting Prabhakaran, who is in civil attire, and a supporter says that he commanded 'his valour, ethical war skill and uncompromised stand on the Eelam liberation movement.'

**Rural consumers in doldrums over onion price hike**

**M. ARUL OLI | DC TIRUNELVELI, OCT. 21**

The arrangement made by the state government for selling onion at a subsidised price through the Amma Farm fresh outlets will only help a small section of the consumers in the urban areas as the vast majority of consumers in the rural areas feel they were left in the lurch to manage the onion price hike by themselves with no state-owned outlets to ensure onion at a low rate.

The onion priced at ₹60 to 65 just a few days ago in Tirunelveli district, however on Wednesday was sold at ₹100 to 120 at Tirunelveli town market, which is the supplying point for the small retail onion traders in the villages in the district. Meanwhile, people in Tirunelveli city get the same onion through the Amma Farm fresh outlet, set up by the co-operative department, at a subsidised rate of Rs 45 from Thursday.

Even the mobile units of



Minister Sellur Raju inspects onions.

— DC

the farm fresh shops do not reach the villages, as according to an employee of the state co-operative department in Tirunelveli, the mobile units have been set up to benefit the city consumers

unable to reach the farm fresh outlets.

"Launching the subsidised price scheme at the farm fresh outlets in the urban areas is only a partial solution to the problem. The problem

could be solved only if the state government directly procures the short supplied commodity and ensures adequate supply throughout the state by easy transportation," said Mahibalan, a small vegetable trader, who complained that many bigger traders, foreseeing a shortage of supply from Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh due to the rains, had already hoarded the commodity worsening the situation further.

Bahirathan, an onion farmer from Surandai in Tenkasi district, however said that the onion mandi owners from Tirunelveli, have procured onion from the farmers for just ₹35.

He added that as the state government's power to regulate sale and purchase of farm produces and essential commodities have been curtailed by the enactment of the central farm bills, hoarding of essential commodities and their price hike would worsen further in the coming years.



## SHORT TAKES

INDO-US 2+2  
TALKS CONFIRMED  
ON OCT. 26, 27DC CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, OCT. 21

United States Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo and Secretary of Defense Mark T. Esper will indeed visit New Delhi on October 26 and 27 and will hold talks with their Indian counterparts S. Jaishankar and Rajnath Singh on October 27 as part of the Indo-US 2+2 talks at the foreign and defence ministerial level, New Delhi finally announced on Wednesday, adding that the agenda would “cover all bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest”.

In a separate late evening statement, the United States said the talks were “to advance the U.S.-India Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership and expand cooperation to promote stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific and the world”. Mr. Pompeo meanwhile will separately visit Sri Lanka, the Maldives and Indonesia after his visit to India.

The tense situation on the Sino-Indian border in the Ladakh sector and Chinese military brinkmanship in Asia are bound to figure during the Indo-US talks, observers point out.

“India will be hosting the third India-US 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue on 27 October 2020 in New Delhi. U.S. Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo and Secretary of Defense Mark T. Esper will be visiting India on 26-27 October 2020 to participate in the Dialogue. From the Indian side, Raksha Mantri (Defence Minister) Shri Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar will lead the delegations from the Ministries of Defence and External Affairs, respectively,” the Ministry of External Affairs announced late on Wednesday evening.

It remains to be seen whether India and the US will ink the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) defence pact for “greater geospatial information-sharing” during the forthcoming Indo-US 2+2 talks. The BECA is the third proposed defence pact between the two countries after the signing of the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement in 2016 and the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement in 2018. With the US going to presidential polls soon, the forthcoming dialogue is expected to be the last major engagement between the US and India in the current tenure of the Donald Trump presidency.

NOTICE TO MP GOVT  
OVER INDUCTION OF  
NON-LEGISLATORSRABINDRA NATH  
CHOUDHURY | DC  
BHOPAL, OCT. 21

Madhya Pradesh high court on Wednesday issued notice to Chief Minister Shivravi Singh Chouhan and state Assembly speaker Rameswar Sharma over induction of 14 non-MLAs as ministers in the state government. 14 Congress MLAs had resigned from Assembly in March leading to the fall of 15-month-old Kamal Nath government. They later quit Congress and joined BJP.

They were inducted in the Shivravi ministry later. The court has set December 14 this year as the next date of hearing in the case. The court was responding to a petition filed by one Aradhana Bhargav seeking suspension of the ministers from their posts.

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## HC relief



Dhakis, traditional drummers, wait to be booked by members of community puja pandals for performance during the Durga Puja festival, in Kolkata on Wednesday. The Calcutta High Court on Wednesday partly modified its order on community Durga Pujas, allowing drummers to perform within the no-entry zones of the marquees. — PTI

PLA soldiers find it difficult  
to adapt to high altitudes

Soldiers confused, completely disoriented due to hypothermia in cold

VIKRAM SHARMA | DC  
HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

Extreme climatic conditions in the high altitude areas along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh — which has been witnessing massive build-up of troops both by Indian Army and the People's Liberation of Army (PLA) since the last few months — has started to take a toll on the PLA soldiers.

Corporal Wang Ya Long of the PLA, who was apprehended by the Indian Army when he strayed across the LAC in Demchok sector on Monday — was heavily disoriented due to the extreme weather, which led him to cross over the LAC, hardly realising that he had walked over to the Indian side.

After more than 36 hours in custody of the Indian Army who interrogated him, the Corporal of the PLA was handed over to the Chinese military at the Chushul-Moldo border point on Tuesday night.

Sources in the know of the developments disclosed to *Deccan Chronicle* that Wang Ya Long was heavily disoriented and gasping for breath when he was caught by the Indian troops at Demchok on Monday. This was precisely why the Indian Army provided medical assistance including oxygen besides warm clothes

Army Chief to commission  
INS Kavaratti in Vizag todayDC CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, OCT. 21

The indigenously built anti-submarine warfare (ASW) stealth corvette INS Kavaratti will be commissioned into the Indian Navy on Thursday, with the ceremony performed by Army Chief Gen. M.M. Naravane at the Visakhapatnam naval dockyard.

INS Kavaratti has a

and food. “But for the timely medical assistance, the Chinese soldier could have died,” they said. Discounting the theory that the Chinese Corporal was on an espionage mission, they said there is nothing to suggest that it was a deliberate act by the Chinese side. However, all standard procedures of interrogating a Prisoner of War was followed by the Indian Army and it was only after making it extremely clear that there was nothing suspicious about the Chinese soldier that he was handed back to his military.

While China claimed that their soldier “went missing while helping

state-of-the-art weapons and sensor suite capable of detecting and prosecuting submarines. In addition to its anti-submarine warfare capability, the ship also has a credible self-defence capability and good endurance for long-range deployment.

Touted as a potent stealth ASW corvette, the Kavaratti was indigenously designed by the Navy's in-house

the local herdsmen find lost yak near the India-China border,” there could also be a possibility of Corporal Wang Ya Long making an attempt to desert his Army, unable to bear the extreme climatic condition, but inadvertently ended up on the Indian side. “He appears to have genuinely lost his way and we do not rule out the possibility of him being a deserter or at least making an attempt at that,” sources said adding that the Yak theory by the Chinese was not convincing.

Over the last one month, ever since massive mobilisation of men and material began taking place on both sides, multiple obstacles and

Directorate of Naval Design and built by Kolkata's Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers.

It portrays the growing capability of the Navy and GRSE in becoming self-reliant through indigenisation. The ship has up to 90 per cent indigenous content and the use of carbon composites for the superstructure is a commendable feat for Indian shipbuilding.

barbed wire fences have been put in place by both the armies, making it impossible for anyone to cross over from those points. But the Corporal in PLA is said to have strayed across the LAC from the mountainous terrain, away from the points where obstacles have been put up.

Deployment on the high altitude regions can have a tremendous impact on the mental health of the soldiers. “Confusion or disorientation which is a symptom of advanced hypothermia is the main problem in the extreme cold. In such a condition, the individuals do not realise what is happening to them,” sources explained.

PAK INCREASES  
FORCES ALONG  
BORDER: INTELDC CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, OCT. 21

Intelligence agencies have cautioned that Pakistan Army has increased its presence both along the International Border (IB) and the Line of Control (LoC) over the last few weeks.

Basis specific intelligence inputs, sources say Pakistan Army has deployed special units of Border Action Teams (BATs) close to the LoC, primarily to push more militants into the Kashmir Valley. It is a known fact that Pak Army deploys BATs to help militants sneak into the Valley.

Sudden increase in presence of Pakistan Army near the LoC and the IB is being linked to a major infiltration being planned before the onset of winter in Kashmir, when most mountain passes get blocked due to inclement weather.

Both intelligence agencies and Army have concrete inputs that at least 250 to 300 militants are waiting at their launch pads close to the border areas, waiting for an opportunity to sneak into India.

EC ticks off parties for  
violating Covid normsLJP releases party's  
vision documentNAYEAR AZAD | DC  
PATNA, OCT. 21

LJP Chief Chirag Paswan on Wednesday released his party's manifesto for the upcoming Bihar Assembly elections.

During the event, Chirag Paswan said that the manifesto was based on his party's vision of “Bihar first” which will resolve many serious

problems being faced by the people of the state.

The manifesto promises to create job opportunities, better policies for education, health and industrial growth in the state. The vision document also emphasises on constructing a grand Sita temple in Sitamarhi on the lines of Ram Temple in Ayodhya to promote religious tourism in Bihar.

“Observance of the preventive measures including wearing a mask, use of sanitiser, observance of social distancing is a duty cast upon all the stakeholders in the larger interest of public health,” the ECI had said.

However, visuals of huge gatherings at campaign rallies in Bihar have left ECI miffed.

“Instances of such public meetings have come to notice of the ECI, where large number of crowds have assembled in utter violation of social distancing and the political leaders/campaigners are addressing the gathering without wearing masks in complete disregard of the guidelines/instructions issued by ECI,” it said.

Cabinet approves  
amendments to  
J&K panchayat ActDC CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, OCT. 21

In a significant decision, the Union cabinet on Wednesday approved the amendments made by the home ministry in the Jammu and Kashmir Panchayati Raj Act 1989, that enables setting up of a directly-elected 14-member district development council (DDC), which has led to fears that this will curb the powers of MLAs and members of legislative bodies. The amendments were made by the home ministry on October 16.

In another major decision, the Cabinet also approved the payment of bonus for 2019-2020 to 30.67 lakh Central government employees, which will cost ₹3,737 crores, and it is hoped will encourage spending during the festival season and add to demand in the economy. The government hopes that the bonus, ahead of Durga Puja, Dussehra and Diwali, will encourage the middle class to go out and spend, and thus add to demand in the economy, Union minister Prakash Javadekar told reporters after the Cabinet meeting. The bonus will be disbursed in a week's time.

The Productivity-Linked Bonus (PLB) for 2019-2020,

with a financial implication of ₹2,791 crores, will benefit 16.97 lakh non-gazetted employees of commercial establishments like the Railways, Posts, Defence, EPFO, ESIC, among others. The non-PLB, or ad-hoc bonus, which is given to non-gazetted Central employees, will benefit 13.70 lakh staff. It will cost the exchequer ₹946 crores.

In Kashmir, meanwhile, after the changes made in the panchayati raj law, the DDCs will replace the district development boards, which were chaired by a Cabinet minister or a minister of state, and included MPs, MLAs and MLCs.

The decision to accept the amendments to the legislation was taken at the Cabinet meeting on Wednesday. Javadekar said the decision was people friendly and another step towards assimilation of the region's people with the mainstream after Article 370 was abolished in August last year and J&K was made a Union Territory, separating it from Ladakh, which too was made a Union Territory.

There are no legislative bodies in the region as they were abolished when Jammu and Kashmir was carved up into two Union Territories.

Covid-19 caseload  
shows steady dipDC CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, OCT. 21

As several European countries have started witnessing resurgence of a second wave of Coronavirus, India seems to be slowly coming out of its first wave as the fresh Covid-19 cases and deaths in the country continue to decline. On Wednesday, India's overall Covid-19 tally crossed 76.51 lakh with 54,044 new cases and 717 fatalities in a day. Total deaths in India so far due to the virus has been 1.16 lakh.

“India has sustained its trend of maintaining the active cases below the 7.5 lakh mark for the 2nd successive day. With a high number of Covid-19 patients recovering every day, India's steady trend of posting high levels of daily recoveries also continues. 61,775 recoveries were registered in the last 24 hours in the country compared to 54,044 new confirmed cases,” said the officials of Union health ministry.

**AP cases to touch 8 lakh soon:** Andhra Pradesh will touch the 8-lakh mark of total Covid-19 positive cases shortly. The state recorded 3,746 new Covid-19 cases, taking the tally to 7,93,299 and 27 deaths taking the death toll to 6,508, in the last 24 hours. As many as 7,54,415 patients were discharged after recovery while 32,376 patients are still active with the virus and are undergoing medical treatment, a state department bulletin said on Wednesday.

Among daily cases of confirmed coronavirus, East Godavari continues to lead with 677, followed by 519 in West Godavari, 503 in Krishna, 437 in Chittoor and 396 in Guntur.

**5,872 new cases in Karnataka:** Karnataka on Wednesday reported 5,872 new cases of Covid-19 taking the cumulative caseload to 7,82,773 while the death toll is 10,696 with 88 more related fatalities. A health department bulletin said 9,289 patients were discharged. Out of 5,872 fresh cases reported today, 2,717 cases were from Bengaluru urban alone. Out of 1,00,440 active cases, 99,493 patients are in isolation at designated hospitals and stable, while 947 are in ICU.

**Kerala inching towards 3.5 lakh cases:** Kerala's total Covid-19 tally has almost reached 3.5 lakhs on Wednesday when the state recorded 8,369 fresh cases while the death toll climbed to 1,232 with 26 fatalities. The government meanwhile ramped up testing and in the last 24 hours, 62,030 samples were tested. Recoveries also picked up and mounted to 2,67,082 while the total caseload stood at 3,48,791. Ernakulam reported the highest number of 1,190 cases on Wednesday, followed by Kozhikode 1,158, Thrissur 946, Alappuzha 820 and Kollam 742.

**TS reports 1,579 cases:** Telangana on Wednesday registered 1,579 new cases of Covid-19 infections taking the cumulative count to 2.26 lakh while five more fatalities pushed the toll to 1,287. Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) accounted for the most number of cases with 256, followed by Medchal Malkajgiri 135 and Khammam 106.

(With inputs from Vijayawada, Bengaluru, Thiruvananthapuram and Hyderabad)

Calcutta HC eases  
curbs during pujaDC CORRESPONDENT  
KOLKATA, OCT. 21

The Calcutta High Court on Wednesday upheld its ban on visitors' entry at all Durga Puja mandaps in West Bengal to curb overcrowding and the “superspread” of the Covid-19 pandemic, but partially relaxed the norms for organisers.

Rejecting a review petition by Durga Puja organisers, Forum for Durgotsob, of its Monday order, the division bench of Justices Sanjib Banerjee and Arijit Banerjee said the “no entry” order for visitors would not be changed.

Hearing arguments by Trinamul MP Kalyan Banerjee, the forum's advocate, the bench, however, modified its earlier guidelines for the puja committees. Under the fresh norms, the

number of committee members of a big puja spread across 300 square metres allowed to be inside the “no entry zone” covering the mandap has been increased to 60 from the earlier 25. However, only 45 can be present at a time, said Forum for Durgotsob general secretary Shashwata Basu. “It is a partial victory for us,” he added.

In case of a small puja, the maximum number who can be inside the “no entry zone” has been increased to 30 from the earlier 15. But only 15 will be allowed inside at a time. The organisers of both big and small pujas will have to display the names at their entrances by 8 am daily. The names can be updated too, that was not allowed earlier. The dhakis, kept out of the “no entry zones” earlier, have been allowed to perform but outside the puja mandaps.



## IN BRIEF

**Houston club shooting: 3 dead**

**Houston:** Three people were killed in a shooting at a Houston nightclub where about 30 people had gathered for an open mic night and authorities were searching early Wednesday for suspects, police said. Police had been called to the DD Sky Club at about 9:45 p.m. Tuesday on reports of multiple people dead inside, Houston Police Commander Caroleta Johnson said. Once there, officers found three people dead at the scene and a fourth person in critical condition, Johnson said. Investigators believe two men opened fire after a fight broke out, but officers don't yet have a clear description of the shooters. Kade Trammell, who was inside the club attending the open mic show, said he heard seven to 10 gunshots before he and his friends dropped to the floor and then fled. "We got really scared, we ran for our ... lives," he said. "Everybody starting running for their lives after the gunshots," he said.

**Five killed in Pak explosion**

**Islamabad/Karachi:** A powerful explosion ripped through a four-storey building in Pakistan's Sindh province, killing at least five people and injuring 20 others, police said. At least two floors of the building near Maskan Chowrang in the Gulshan-e-Iqbal area in Karachi were severely damaged, leading authorities to fear that the toll may rise. The death toll in the incident has increased to five, Faisal Edhi of the Edhi Ambulance Service said. Seven of the injured are said to be in critical condition. The security forces have cordoned off the area after the explosion. Police chief Mushtaq Mahar said the bomb disposal squad and anti-terrorism officials are yet to determine the cause of the explosion. A police official said that initial investigations suggested that the explosion could have been caused due to a gas leak. The official said that no trace of an improvised explosive device (IED) was found at the scene. The incident happened a day after five people were injured when an IED bomb exploded.

**UK navy seizes 450 kg meth**

**Dubai:** A British royal navy vessel seized 450 kilograms (990 pounds) of methamphetamine in the northern Arabian Sea in the largest-ever bust by a joint maritime operation in the region, officials said Wednesday. The HMS Montrose seized the drugs hidden aboard a stateless dhow, a traditional cargo ship that plies the Persian Gulf and surrounding waters, the joint task force said in a statement. The seizure took place last Wednesday. The task force said it was unable to say where the drugs came from, who manufactured them or their ultimate destination. However, Iran over the last decade has seen an explosion in the use of methamphetamine, known locally as "shishah" or "glass" in Farsi. That's bled into neighbouring Iraq as well. While drug lab busts have dropped in recent years in Iran, there appears to be an uptick in meth drug labs in Afghanistan.

**NASA CRAFT LANDS ON ASTEROID**

**Washington, Oct. 21:** After a four-year-long journey, NASA's OSIRIS-REx spacecraft successfully touched down on the rugged surface of asteroid Bennu on Tuesday, and unfurled its robotic arm to collect a sample of rocks dating back to the birth of our solar system to bring back to Earth, the US space agency said. The Origins, Spectral Interpretation, Resource Identification, Security, Regolith Explorer (OSIRIS-REx) spacecraft briefly touched the near-Earth asteroid to collect dust and pebbles from its surface for delivery to Earth in 2023.

Asteroid Bennu is currently more than 321 million kilometres from the Earth. It offers scientists a window into the early solar system as it was first taking shape billions of years ago and flinging ingredients that could have helped seed life on Earth, NASA said. If Tuesday's sample collection event provided enough of a sample, mission teams will command the spacecraft to begin stowing the precious primordial cargo to begin its journey back to Earth in March 2021.

# Pope nod for same-sex civil unions in interview

**Says homosexual people have the right to be in a family**

**Rome, Oct. 21:** Pope Francis endorsed same-sex civil unions for the first time as Pope while being interviewed for the feature-length documentary *Francesco*, which premiered on Wednesday at the Rome Film Festival.

The papal thumbs-up came midway through the film that delves into issues Francis cares about most, including the environment, poverty, migration, racial and income inequality, and the people most affected by discrimination. "Homosexual people have the right to be in a family. They are children of God," Francis said in one of his sit-down interviews for the film.

"What we have to have is a civil union law; that way they are legally covered." While serving as archbishop of Buenos Aires, Francis endorsed civil unions for gay couples as an alternative to same-sex marriages. However, he had never come out publicly in favour of civil unions as pope. The Jesuit priest who has been at the forefront in seeking to build bridges with gays in the church, the Rev. James Martin, praised the pope's comments as "a major step forward in the church's support for LGBT people."

"The Pope's speaking positively about civil unions also sends a strong message to places where



Pope Francis arrives for his weekly general audience in the Paul VI hall at the Vatican on Wednesday. — AFP

the church has opposed such laws," Martin said in a statement. One of the main characters in the documentary is Juan Carlos Cruz, the Chilean survivor of clergy sexual abuse whom Francis initially discredited during a 2018 visit to Chile.

Cruz, who is gay, said that during his first meetings with the Pope in May 2018, Francis assured him that God made Cruz gay. Cruz tells his own story in snippets throughout the film, chronicling both Francis' evolution on understanding sexual abuse as well as to document the Pope's views on gay people. Director Evgeny Afineevsky had remarkable access to cardinals, the Vatican television archives and the Pope

himself. He said he negotiated his way in through persistence, and deliveries of Argentine mate tea and Alfajores cookies that he got to the pope via some well-connected Argentines in Rome.

"Listen, when you are in the Vatican, the only way to achieve something is to break the rule and then to say, 'I'm sorry,'" Afineevsky said in an interview ahead of the premiere. The director worked official and unofficial channels starting in early 2018, and ended up so close to Francis by the end of the project that he showed the pope the movie on his iPad in August. The two recently exchanged Yom Kippur greetings; Afineevsky is a Russian-born Jew who lives in Los Angeles. But

"Francesco" is more than a biopic about the Pope.

Wim Wenders did that in the 2018 film *Pope Francis: A Man of His Word*, which premiered at the Cannes Film Festival.

"Francesco," is more a visual survey of the world's crises and tragedies, with audio from the pope providing possible ways to solve them. Afineevsky travelled the world to film it: the settings include Cox's Bazaar in Bangladesh where Myanmar's Rohingya sought refuge; the US-Mexico border and Francis' native Argentina. "The film tells the story of the Pope by reversing the cameras," said Vatican communications director Paolo Ruffini, who was one of Afineevsky's closest Vatican-based collaborators on the film.

Ruffini said that when Afineevsky first approached him with the idea of a documentary, he tried to tamp down his hopes for interviewing the Pope. "I told him it wasn't going to be easy," he said. But Ruffini gave him some advice: Names of people who had been impacted by the Pope, even after just a brief meeting. "I told him that many of those encounters had certainly been filmed by the Vatican cameras, and that there he would find a veritable gold mine of stories that told a story," Ruffini said.

— AP

# Trump paid \$1.8L tax in China for licensing deals

**Washington, Oct. 21:** President Donald Trump spent a decade unsuccessfully pursuing projects in China, operating an office there during his first run for president and forging a partnership with a major government-controlled company, *The New York Times* reported Tuesday.

China is one of only three foreign nations — the others are Britain and Ireland — where Trump maintains a bank account, according to a *Times* analysis of the president's tax records. The foreign accounts do not show up on Trump's public financial disclosures, where he must list personal assets, because they are held under corporate names.

The Chinese account is controlled by Trump International Hotels Management LLC, which the tax records show paid \$188,561 in taxes in China while pursuing licensing deals there from 2013 to 2015. In response to questions from *The Times*, Alan Garten, a lawyer for the Trump Organisation, said the company had "opened an account with a Chinese bank having offices in the United States in order to pay the local taxes" associated with efforts to do business there.

He said the company had opened the account after establishing an office in China "to explore the potential for hotel deals in Asia." "No deals, transactions or other business activities ever materialised and, since 2015, the office has remained inactive,"

Garten said. "Though the bank account remains open, it has never been used for any other purpose." Garten would not identify the bank in China where the account is held. China continues to be an issue in the 2020 presidential campaign.

**THE COMPANY** (Trump International Hotels Management LLC) had opened an account with a Chinese bank having offices in the US in order to pay the local taxes associated with efforts to do business there

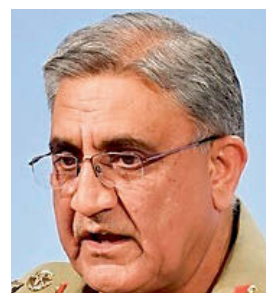
**ALAN GARTEN, lawyer for the Trump Organisation**

# Don says will win by 'bigger' margin

**Erie (US), Oct. 21:** US President Donald Trump has exuded confidence that he will win the November 3 election by a bigger margin than that of 2016 and urged his supporters to deliver a "thundering" defeat to his Democratic challenger Joe Biden. In his hour-long speech at an election rally here, Trump reiterated that his challenger Biden and his running mate Senator Kamala Harris, if elected, would convert the

US into a socialist country. "It's time to send a message to these wealthy liberal hypocrites by delivering Joe Biden, sleepy Joe, a thundering defeat on November 3rd. Got to get out and vote," Trump told his supporters in Pennsylvania on Tuesday. Trump asserted that his victory on November 3 is going to be bigger than that of 2016. "This is going to be bigger than four years ago."

— PTI



Qamar Javed Bajwa

# PROBE INTO ARREST OF NAWAZ KIN

**Karachi, Oct. 21:** Pakistan's Sindh Police chief has deferred his leave and asked his officers to set aside their leave applications for 10 days "in the larger national interest" after Army chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa ordered an inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the arrest of former premier Nawaz Sharif's son-in-law, an issue that brought the paramilitary forces and police in direct conflict in the country's largest city.

In a series of tweets, Sindh Police said on Tuesday that the "unfortunate incident" that occurred on the night of 18/19 October caused "great heartache and resentment" within its ranks, referring to the circumstances surrounding the arrest of Sharif's son-in-law Capt (retd) Muhammad Saifdar.

Opposition parties have alleged that the Sindh police chief was reportedly forcibly taken away by paramilitary Frontier Corps from his home in Karachi in the wee hours of Monday and pressurised to order for the arrest of Saifdar. "As a result, IG Sindh decided to proceed on leave and subsequently all ranks decided that they would also apply for leave to protest the humiliation meted out to Sindh police," it said.

It added, "This was a spontaneous and heartfelt reaction and made on an individual rather than a collective basis, because every single member of the department felt an acute sense of disrespect."

— PTI

# PAK MAY NOT EXIT FATF GREY LIST: REPORT

**Islamabad, Oct. 21:** Pakistan may remain on the grey list of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) as it has been unable to comply with six of the 27 points in the global terror financing and money laundering watchdog's action plan, a media report said on Wednesday.

The Paris-based global watchdog will hold its virtual plenary session from October 21 to 23. It will review Pakistan's progress on the 27-point action plan. The FATF had placed Pakistan on the grey list in June 2018 and asked Islamabad to implement a plan of action to curb money laundering and terror financing by the end of 2019, but the deadline was extended later on due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

— PTI

# Support for Thai royals



Royalist supporters take part in a rally to show support for the Thai royal establishment in Su-ngai Kolok District in Thailand's southern province of Narathiwat on Wednesday. — AFP

# Europe records weekly high of 927K cases

**Geneva, Oct. 21:** The World Health Organisation says Europe again reported a new high in the weekly number of Coronavirus cases during the pandemic last week, recording more than 927,000 cases.

The UN health agency said in its latest global report on the deadly Coronavirus pandemic that the continent saw a 25 per cent spike in confirmed cases last week and was responsible for 38 per cent of all new cases reported worldwide.

Russia, the Czech

Republic and Italy accounted for more than half of new Coronavirus cases in Europe.

The WHO report says the number of deaths in Europe also "continues to climb," and increased by one-third from the previous week.

The health agency says Slovenia reported a 150 per cent increase in cases in a week with a record 4,890 cases.

Slovenia also reported 1,924 Coronavirus deaths, compared to one week before.

— AP

# CDC: 300K more deaths in US

**New York, Oct. 21:** A new government report shows that since the Coronavirus pandemic began, the US has seen 300,000 more deaths than it usually would. The Centres for Disease Control and Prevention has been tracking how many deaths have been reported and comparing them with counts seen in other years. Usually, between the beginning of February and the end of September, about 1.9 million deaths are reported. This year, it's closer to 2.2 million — a 14.5 per cent increase. The CDC says the Coronavirus was involved in about two-thirds of the excess deaths. CDC officials say it's likely the virus was a factor in many other deaths too.

For example, someone with heart attack symptoms may have hesitated to go to a hospital that was

busy with Coronavirus patients. The largest segment of the excess deaths, about 95,000, were in elderly people ages 75 to 84. That was 21.5 per cent more than in a normal year. But the biggest relative increase, 26.5 per cent, was in people ages 25 to 44. Deaths in people younger than 25 actually dropped slightly. Deaths were up for different racial and ethnic groups.

— AP

# Sub-Saharan Africa has households that struggle to survive on \$1.90 a day

# One in six children live in extreme poverty: UN

**United Nations, Oct. 21:** An estimated one in six children — or 356 million globally — were living in extreme poverty before the Covid-19 pandemic began, and this is set to worsen significantly, according to a new World Bank Group and UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) analysis. Global Estimate of Children in Monetary Poverty: An Update', notes that sub-Saharan

Africa, with its limited social safety nets, accounts for two-thirds of children living in households that struggle to survive on an average of \$ 1.90 a day or less per person — the international measure for extreme poverty, while South Asia accounts for nearly a fifth of these children. The analysis shows that the number of children living in extreme poverty

decreased moderately, by 29 million, between 2013 and 2017.

However, UNICEF and the World Bank Group warn that any progress made in recent years, has been "slow-paced, unequally distributed, and at risk" due to the economic impact of the pandemic. "One in six children living in extreme poverty is one in six children struggling to

survive," UNICEF Director of Programmes Sanjay Wijesekera said.

"These numbers alone should shock anyone. And the scale and depth of what we know about the financial hardships brought on by the pandemic, are only set to make matters far worse. Governments urgently need a children's recovery plan to prevent countless more children and their families from reaching levels of poverty unseen for many, many

years," Wijesekera said. Although children make up around a third of the global population, around half of the extreme poor are children. The youngest children are the worst off — nearly 20 per cent of all of them below the age of 5 in the developing world live in extremely poor households, the report highlights.

— PTI



# DECCAN Chronicle

22 OCTOBER 2020

## Punjab makes a point, will other states follow?

The passage of four bills and a resolution by the Punjab Assembly seeking to undo the impact of the three recently passed Central laws to regulate farming could trigger a political war between the Opposition-ruled states and the Centre on agriculture, a state subject as per the seventh schedule of the Constitution.

While the unanimous resolution passed by the Assembly in the Congress-ruled state has asked the Centre to annul the Central laws and promulgate an ordinance making procurement of food grains on minimum support price (MSP) a statutory right of the farmers, the three state laws seek to address the grievances of the farmers who have been protesting against the Central laws. According to the Farmers' (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services (Special Provisions and Punjab Amendment) Bill, 2020, no sale of paddy and wheat will be valid in the state unless the rate of payment is equal to or above the MSP and its violation could attract imprisonment of not less than three years and a fine. The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) (Special Provisions and Punjab Amendment) Bill, 2020, provides for a fee to be levied on traders or electronic trading and transaction platforms for trade outside the mandis run by the Agricultural Produce Market Committees. The Bill amending the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, seeks to protect the farmers from attachment of land below 2.5 acres in recovery proceedings, insulating small farmers from the provisions of the Central law that facilitates contract farming. The Essential Commodities (Special Provisions and Punjab Amendment) Bill, 2020, empowers the state to set stock limits under extraordinary circumstances, a power the Central law had reserved for the Union government.

While the Central laws concerned made the mandis redundant by allowing farmers to sell outside them, the state law makes such trade unviable by making it a costly deal.

That these laws followed the exhortation of Congress president Sonia Gandhi to the states her party rules to take legislative route to checkmate the Centre's move makes their fate uncertain as governors can sit on them or consult the President, as per the constitutional provisions. It is highly likely that courts will be called upon to decide on the constitutionality or otherwise of the bills and the farmers will have to wait to benefit from them, if there is any.

It's pretty clear that the Capt. Amarinder Singh government is making a political point by moving the bills. The BJP had claimed that the Modi government was doing what the Congress had promised in its manifesto—to free up the mandis from all controls. The Congress, however, had explained that the party was aiming at reforms of the markets that were long overdue. It may be noted that the Punjab bills offer pretty little in terms of reforming them. If it really wants to support the farmers and win the argument on the issue of farm bills, the Congress government should make the functioning of the mandis transparent and non-exploitative. Whether it will walk the talk is the moot question.

## 'Rapist' trolls: Shame them

The cyber wing of the Chennai police should not stop with registering the case against the Twitter user who issued a rape threat to the daughter of award-winning film actor Vijay Sethupathi. The police should pursue the pervert, going by the Twitter handle @itsrithikrajh, in all earnestness and arrest him. Earlier, the five-year-old daughter of cricketer Mahendra Singh Dhoni was threatened similarly by a 16-year-old boy from Gujarat on Instagram. Though the police cracked down quickly and caught the boy, it is not clear what action was taken under the law, which would serve as a deterrent to every other pervert lurking in the shadows of social media.

Traditionally, rape threat has been used as a weapon by roguish men to establish their gender supremacy and to intimidate women they disliked. That it is now used freely in social media to silence women who have a mind of their own is one of the banes of modern society. It is a tragedy that not much has been done by the enforcing agencies so far to put an end to this cheap tactic employed by men running short of ideas and words to counter women intellectually.

Now that the trend has degenerated further, touching such an abysmal level wherein men threaten children just because they do not agree with their fathers' behavior, whatever it is, the crime has to be seen in a new light. Rape threat should be treated as a felony and dealt with accordingly by the police. Also, such persons need to be exposed to society with a view to telling all men that as a civilised society we have zero tolerance to rape and rape threat. Above all, we need to enlighten young men that such threats come out of men's impotence in dealing with themselves and their problems.

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Subhani



## Step up pressure on Xi; bring France into Quad



Claude Arpi

Since five months now, Indian and Chinese troops have stood face-to-face in the high Himalayas; in all probability, the standoff will continue during the cold winter months ahead in Ladakh.

It has consequences at many levels, not just militarily.

The first: what has President Xi Jinping achieved by trying to advance a few hundred metres in Galwan, Gogra or Pangong Tso?

Different motives have been attributed to the Chinese chess moves.

To cite a few, Beijing wanted to stop the Darbuk-Shyok-DBO Road, protect China's projects in Gilgit Baltistan (and Shaksam valley occupied by China); gain strategic advantages on the ground; enhance Chairman Xi's prestige; boost the standing of the People's Liberation Army; humiliate an arrogant competitor (India) in a period of weakness; it was even rumoured that Gen. Zhao Zongqi, the Western Theatre Command chief, thought he would get a seat in the powerful Central Military Commission after Ladakh.

China is today the loser: infrastructure development will continue, India will not renounce its legitimate claims on Gilgit-Baktistan, and so on.

Further, Tibet, Taiwan, Hong Kong or Xinjiang may come up for discussion in the not-too-far future and the "One-China" policy may be questioned in many quarters.

This didn't stop Zhao Lijian, the Chinese foreign ministry's "wolf warrior" spokesman, to continue with his anti-India tirades: "China does not recognise the so-called 'Ladakh Central Territory' and 'Arunachal Pradesh' illegally established by India, and opposes development of infrastructure construction in border dispute areas for the purpose of

military control."

This diplomat had the cheek to add: "Neither party should take any actions in the border area that would complicate the situation in order to avoid affecting the efforts of both parties to ease the situation." This was the day Beijing announced a new strategic road leading up to Metok, north of the McMahon Line.

A Chinese TV report said the Pai-Metok Highway will be completed by the end of September 2022: "After completion, the length of the road from Nyingchi City to Metok County [North of Upper Siang of Arunachal Pradesh] through Bomi County will be shortened from 346 km to 180 km, and the driving time will be shortened from 11 hours to 4.5 hours."

At the same time, the world is fast becoming aware of the constant double standards in Chinese propaganda, and for the first time it is taking steps to counter Beijing's moves.

Take France for example. In the past, Paris was often reluctant to offend China as it was "doing business" with Beijing. But things are changing; realising the danger of Chinese hegemony for the planet, French President Emmanuel

Macron recently appointed Christophe Penot, his ambassador to Australia, to the new post of ambassador for the Indo-Pacific.

The Sydney Morning Herald reported: "The coronavirus has catalysed European concern over Chinese government actions in Hong Kong, the treatment of Uyghurs in Xinjiang, military incursions into the South China Sea and political interference." In June, Mr Penot had already warned that international standards were increasingly called into question, adding that the current Covid crisis was likely accelerate the process: "France and Australia have a particular

responsibility here to ensure that the post-Covid world does not get worse and, if possible, that it becomes better than the world before."

The Australian newspaper commented: "France is the last European power to change its vision of China and the region. In September, Germany, Europe's largest economy, which has long enjoyed close ties with Beijing, released its first Indo-Pacific strategy focused on increasing diplomatic pressure on China."

### FRANCE IN THE QUAD?

A couple of years ago, I had asked an Indian observer why France was not included as a participant in the Quad. "Nobody thought of it", he had told me. This has changed after President Macron's visit to India in March 2018. Addressing a French gathering in New Delhi, the young President reminded his countrymen: "France is a power of the Indian and Pacific Oceans; we are present at Reunion, we are also there in French Polynesia and New Caledonia. And we are a maritime power, it is often forgotten but France is the second maritime power in the world. We have a strong navy, we have nuclear submarines equipped like few other powers in the world; a maritime surveillance capability through our own satellites and technologies; it is obvious we are a military and intelligence power ranking us among the first nations in the world."

France is ready to work with India on the oceans.

A few months earlier, C. Raja Mohan and Darshana Baruah had written for Carnegie India about *Deepening the India-France Maritime Partnership*: "As maritime security acquires greater salience in India's foreign policy, New Delhi is increasingly looking to

**In the past, Paris was often reluctant to offend China as it was 'doing business' with Beijing. But things are changing...**

leverage its strategic partnerships, particularly with Paris. Although India and France have joined forces on a number of issues since 1998, regional cooperation in the Indo-Pacific has never risen to the top of the agenda. However, this may be about to change."

After the Quad's last meeting in Tokyo last week, US spokesperson Cale Brown said the foreign ministers of the US, Japan, Australia and India had reaffirmed their collective efforts towards a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific: "they pledged to continue regular consultations to implement their vision of a peaceful, secure, and prosperous Indo-Pacific".

US deputy secretary of state Stephen Biegun more recently explained: "The Quad is a partnership driven by shared interests, not binding obligations, and is not intended to be an exclusive grouping. Any country that seeks a free and open Indo-Pacific and is willing to take steps to ensure that should be welcome to work with us."

It seems that Paris' vision could perfectly fit into this scheme. So why can't France join the four founding nations?

Emmanuel Lenain, French ambassador to India, answered the question in an interview with *India Today*: "Indo-Pacific is a priority. Both the leaders [Modi and Macron] have been working on that at least for the past four or five years. It is about values. We want an open, transparent Indo-Pacific. Now, what would be the framework. I don't think anything is exclusive... All like-minded countries should join efforts towards an open, transparent Indo-Pacific."

It sounds like the US secretary of state's definition.

Whether France joins or not, there is no doubt all these new collaborative efforts should be credited to President Xi and his reckless foreign policies. One more "loss" in his balance sheet.

*The writer is based in South India for the past 42 years. He writes on India, China, Tibet and Indo-French relations.*

### LETTERS

#### CHEAP DEPICTION

The offensive image depicting the Democratic vice presidential nominee Senator Kamala Harris as goddess Durga seen killing US President Donald Trump, who is depicted as buffalo demon 'Mahishasura' and Joe Biden as a lion guarding the vehicle of goddess Durga, which created outrage in US among Hindu American community is to be condemned in the strongest words. It is a shame that the niece of Kamala Harris, Meena Harris who is not only a lawyer but also an author and founder of Phenomenal Woman Action Campaign has stooped to such low levels of tweeting such an image which may bring disrepute to all Indians in the US.

**M.C. Vijay Shankar, Chennai**

#### BAN OPINION POLLS

WE HAVE just seen an opinion poll projecting the possible seats for different contesting parties in the coming Bihar Assembly elections, on a news channel. While past exit polls results have proved to be reasonably reliable, the same cannot be said of opinion polls. In fact, opinion poll results could very incorrectly reflect the actual ground situation and mood of the voters. Crucially, opinion polls could negatively influence voters' minds who could be misled by such polls. In the interests of having totally free and fair elections, it is therefore suggested that the Election Commission should consider banning opinion polls with immediate effect, not only for the Bihar elections but also for future State and Central elections.

**A. Mohan, Chennai**

#### TRUMP'S FEAR TACTICS

APROPOS REPORT *Trump inciting domestic terror: Michigan Gov* (Oct. 20). In India we often hear that political parties allegedly 'incite mobs' which resort to terrorism but the accusation by the Michigan Governor Ms Gretchen Whitmer that the US president Trump himself is inciting domestic terror is indeed preposterous and dangerous. And Mr Trump's rant to lock all of them up when the crowd chanted "lock her up" highlights his intolerance and imprudence. As Ms Nancy Pelosi, House Majority leader, has said perhaps "he is injecting fear tactics" to please the mobs. The GOP leaders may be trying to emulate India where the dissenters, mostly opposition leaders, are branded as anti-nationals, for inciting domestic terrorism, hauled-up under Section Act only to instil fear and prevent dissidence. The Democrats should thank their stars since they were not booked for sedition nor the US cops imitated their Andhra Pradesh counterparts who are tansuring the heads of dissenters.

**A. Seshagiri Rao, Chennai**

Dilip Cherian  
Dilli Ka Babu



## CIC sans chief, only 10 of 28 panels worked during lockdown

Fifteen years after the Right to Information (RTI) Act came into force, does the nation have more transparency or less? The story is quite sombre. More than 2.2 lakh cases are pending at the Central and State Information Commissions. Nine out of 29 information commissions are functioning without a chief, one-fourth of information commissioner posts are vacant and the state commissions in Jharkhand and Tripura are defunct. No new commissioners have been appointed.

Even the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) has refused to disclose details on the PM-Cares Fund stating that the fund is "not a public authority" within the ambit of the RTI Act!

The absence of a commissioner has serious ramifications for the effective functioning of the information commissions. But even the Central Information Commission, which hears second appeals against all central government departments and UTs, has been without a chief since August this year. Bimal

Julka, who headed the CIC for barely six months, demitted office in August, upon reaching the age limit stipulated in the Act.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, only 10 of the 28 information commissions worked and even these hardly heard any appeals.

Yet, it is not just the transparency law that has suffered. There are other vacancies in key organisations that indicate a drift not usually associated with the Modi sarkar. Sources say that the Public Enterprises Selection Board (PSEB) has been headless for more than a month after Rajiv Kumar, a former finance secretary, demitted office at the end of August and was appointed Election Commissioner in place of Ashok Lavasa. Similarly, the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal has been headless for more than seven months, among others.

Apparently, as many as six ministries and departments are awaiting regular secretaries. Some estimate that dozens of board-level positions in several central PSUs are lying vacant with no sign of

when these will be filled.

### BETTER LATE THAN NEVER

The 360-degree method of empanelment of officers has been a major administrative "reform" introduced by the Modi sarkar to judge the performance of officers. However, not all officials have been happy with it, since it allows retired officers to influence their careers. Many careers have been marred as a result, say sources.

But that may have changed, with the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) deciding not necessarily to act on the advice of the 360-degree committees, and even rejecting their recommendations as and when required. The case of UT cadre IAS officer G. Narendra Kumar is often cited as an example of the subjectivity often behind recommendations of these committees.

In September 2017, Mr Kumar who was posted in Puducherry was booked by the CBI for alleged irregularities in admission to postgraduate medical courses in private colleges. Though the allegations turned out to be false, Mr Kumar's

career was damaged. It is only now that his name has finally put on the list of the review empanelment order issued last month, after missing the opportunity for empanelment in 2018 due to the case against him. The consensus among babus is that Mr Kumar is among the best officials but suffers from the "disability" to network. Mr Kumar had got caught in the political battle between the chief minister and then lieutenant governor of Puducherry and has paid a price. Some retired senior officers are said to have played a part in this episode and their advice proved costly to Mr Kumar, in career terms.

The damage may have been done, but observers say that the government's belated move does send out a message that fair dealings may be delayed for a while, but not forever.

### NEW PORTFOLIOS FOR RBI DEPUTY GOVERNORS

The recent appointment of Reserve Bank of India (RBI)'s senior-most executive director M. Rajeshwar Rao as the deputy governor of the bank, has now led to a reallocation

of portfolios of the four deputy governors. Mr Rao replaced N.S. Vishwanathan, who stepped down three months ahead of the end of his tenure on health grounds. Mr Rao will oversee the department of regulations and also the departments of communication, enforcement, inspection, legal and risk monitoring.

The RBI's other three deputy governors are B.P. Kanungo, M.K. Jain and Michael Debabrata Patra. While Mr Patra will continue to look after the monetary policy department, Mr Jain will be in charge of central security cell, corporate strategy and budget departments, while Mr Kanungo will oversee coordination, currency management and external investments and operations. In April this year, the government had extended Mr Kanungo's tenure by a year.

Deputy governors of RBI are appointed for an initial period of three years and can be reappointed.

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



quick  
BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	40,707.31	0.40
Nifty 50	11,937.70	0.34
S&P 500*	3,448.44	0.15
Dollar (₹)	0.87	-0.15
Pound Sterling (₹)	96.02	-0.96
Euro (₹)	87.25	-0.82
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	51,354,444	0.87
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	41.93	-1.23
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.912	-0.019
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.817	0.021

\* As of 9:30 PM IST

## SBI offers 0.25% concession for home loans



State Bank of India on Wednesday announced up to 25 basis points (bps) concession on home loan rates as part of its festival offers. SBI home loan customers would get an interest concession of 25 bps for buying their dream homes of above ₹75 lakh based on CIBIL score and through YONO app.

## Centre plans sops for industry

More sectors likely to get production-linked incentives to boost manufacturing

## Focus on investments, jobs, reskilling: Report

SANGEETHA G  
CHENNAI, OCT. 21

The government should focus on increasing investments, creating jobs and skilling workforce for the next 10 years, else it may be on the path to a breakdown nation.

Since the 1990 reforms, six per cent real GDP growth in India was a given. It no longer is and the potential growth is estimated to be below 6 per cent from FY22-FY25, according to a report by Quantum India Advisors. India's labour force participation rate and the

employment rate have fallen consistently over the last five years. The employment situation has become worse. The Indian economy and its informal workforce suffered a major blow post the shocks of demonetisation, GST and the credit crisis.

Distress in rural India was ignited by demonetisation of November 2016. While rural areas haven't been hit as hard in the Covid-19 related lockdown, demand is yet to recover fully from past shocks. Lower aggregate demand in urban and rural India as a result of

the demonetisation suppressed corporate profits and gave little incentive to industry to invest in new capacity. This resulted in lower job creation.

Further, the government's self-imposed fiscal constraints have not helped in stimulating the flagging demand.

The report wants the country to focus on more investment and exports to drive growth and incomes. Emerging economies which have grown and broken out of the low income have all done it by investing, producing at large scale and exporting.

duction, he said.

"So, the kind of response that we received on the mobile phones where we have finalised the contours gives me a lot of confidence that there is

demand in the world now, to have a diversification of supply chains, and India can definitely take advantage," he said.

For global manufacturer, he said, the country pro-

vides a large domestic market other than the exports potential.

"So, this is a scheme that will give cash incentives for 5-7 years, and all the sunrise sectors and impor-

tant sectors are proposed to be covered in these areas," Bajaj said.

He added that "so, I think that with all these efforts and as finance minister (Nirmala Sitharaman) said we are seeing what all other things can we do (to boost manufacturing and economy)."

Speaking about raising infrastructure spending, Bajaj said the government is trying to cajole chairmen and managing directors of public sector enterprises to meeting their capital expenditure (capex) plan for the current financial year.

The government has been doing review meetings at all levels to push infrastructure spending, he said, adding that the finance minister recently announced another tranche of ₹37,000 crore going into the infrastructure spend. "While we are in the process of making our budget for the next year, we are also looking at what has been the expenditure this year and what is the extra requirement that is required by various sectors," he said. —PTI

## Small cities drive e-tail, sales up 48% in festive season

SANGEETHA G  
CHENNAI, OCT. 21

The e-commerce sector has clocked ₹22,000-crore or \$3.1 billion worth business during the first four days of the initial festive season sales event, according to the data of RedSeer Consulting. The seven-day festive sales event began on October 15.

E-commerce players have achieved 77 per cent of the predicted sales of \$4 billion or around ₹28,000 crore for the first festive sales event.

While RedSeer expects that the festive month from October 15 to November 15 will see total sales of \$7 billion, Forrester has predicted the total sales to be around \$6.5 billion. Of this, 75 per cent of \$4.8 billion sales could happen in the first seven-day event.

Going by RedSeer's estimation of \$4 billion, the e-commerce sector has seen a 48 per cent growth at \$4 billion in sales during the first event compared to the last year's \$2.7 billion. "Sharper sales growth against the last year, especially in the first three days, indicates that the industry is on track to reach or even surpass our forecasts of \$4 billion," said a researcher at RedSeer.

Some of the factors that have helped the growth are the demand growth in tier-2 cities driven by reverse migration, digital adoption and value offers post Covid-19. Flipkart saw over 666

● **GOING BY** RedSeer's estimation of \$4 billion, the e-commerce sector has seen a 48 per cent growth at \$4 billion in sales during the first event compared to the last year's \$2.7 billion.

● **SOME OF** the factors that have helped the growth are the demand growth in smaller cities driven by reverse migration to hinterland, digital adoption and value offers post Covid-19 pandemic.

million visits with over 52 per cent of these visits recording from tier-3 cities and beyond. It has seen 51 per cent growth in customers from tier 2+ markets in fashion.

Tier-3 customers drove the sale of large appliances with nearly 50 per cent demand coming from these cities. Of the 35 per cent new seller base this time, around 60 per cent were from tier-2 and tier-3 towns.

"Over 1.1 lakh sellers receiving orders, 66 per cent sellers, 91 per cent of new customers, and 66 per cent of new Prime sign-ups from small towns, shopping in five Indian languages and orders from over 98.4 per cent of India's pin-codes in just 48 hours — it's truly Bharat's biggest celebration on Amazon ever," said Manish Tiwary, Vice President, Amazon India after two days of the event.

## COFFEE-BREAK

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



**Aries:** Meeting household expenses may cause worry. Ongoing projects complete within deadline. You could be deceived by trusted people; be aware.



**Taurus:** You'd be interested in religious books on astrology or occult science. Visiting guests may get upset about something, but your family will cooperate fully.



**Gemini:** You may spend excessively on your souls. Expect good news. Money inflow increases your bank balance, making you very strong economically.



**Cancer:** Opponents may hamper your interests but won't dent your prestige. Expect many good opportunities to enhance your business/profession.



**Leo:** Avoid prejudging neighbours for their ideas. Expect obstacles while pursuing your academic career. Those trying hard to study abroad may get a favourable reply.



**Virgo:** You'll spend on costly and luxury items. Housewives acquire household articles. Real-estate businesspersons face hurdles in clinching deals. Personal property issues remain unresolved.

## You share your b'day with

Parineeti Chopra, Bollywood actress. She is best known for her roles in Ishqzaade, Shuddh Desi Romance and Hasee Toh Phasee amongst others.



**Libra:** It's a troublesome day for those who are unwell; with guests to care for, too. Health and long journeys add to expenses. Expect enlightening news. Divide work into three departments and delegate to meet targets.



**Scorpio:** Reinforce personal relationships with tender, loving care. Use your social and diplomacy skills around touchy situations, both in and outside work.



**Sagittarius:** Someone you know will give you a gift. Be polite with anyone negative, and step away. Romantic overtures are reciprocated though hesitant at first.



**Capricorn:** You'll spend peaceful and memorable moments with your family. Expressing your emotions to your beloved will strengthen your bond.

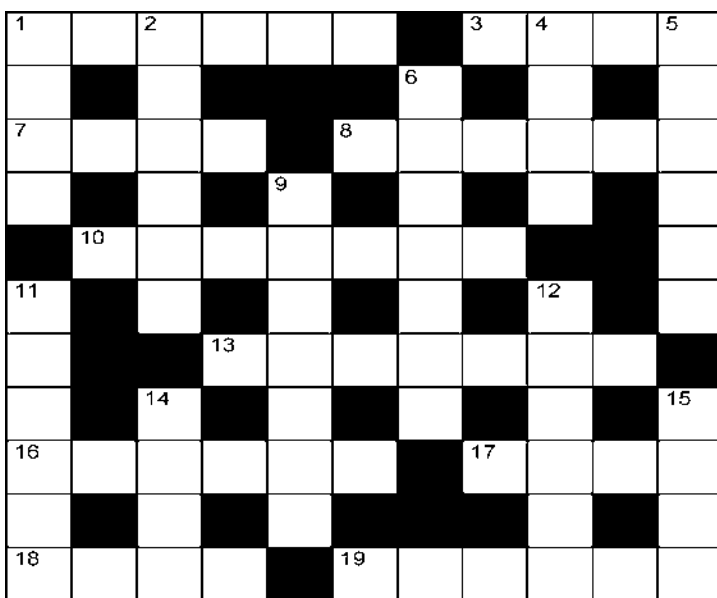


**Aquarius:** Someone at work tries to tarnish your image; be careful. Expect confrontations. Your busy schedule hampers time with your lover.



**Pisces:** True feelings speak automatically. An influential Scorpio offers you an opportunity to work with him. Avoid stress or it would aggravate problems. Business affairs continue as per plan. A job situation gets you edgy.

## QUICK CROSSWORD



## Across

1. Portray (6)
3. Diet (4)
7. Passage money (4)
8. Furtive (6)
10. Germ (7)
13. Fir cone (anag) (7)
16. Heart (6)
17. Fair-minded (4)
18. Without feeling (4)
19. On the cards (6)

## Down

1. Skilful (4)
2. Licence (6)
4. Space inside roof (4)
5. Chaos (6)
6. French wine (7)
9. Bent (7)
11. Out of order (6)
12. Drop in price (6)
14. Clip (4)
15. Brace (4)

## YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

- Across: 1. Profusion, 6. Inert, 7. Lodge, 9. Oust, 10. Source, 12. Infirm, 14. Sumo, 17. Spurn, 18. Amble, 19. Threatens.
- Down: 2. Reeks, 3. Fate, 4. Sallow, 5. Order, 6. Ironies, 8. Eyesore, 11. Fringe, 13. Flush, 15. Urban, 16. Pact.

## Word Mine

M  
I  
E  
N  
R  
A  
G  
N

TODAY'S RATINGS: 32 AVERAGE; 37 GOOD; 42 OUTSTANDING

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

Decoder: West			
North	South	East	West
3	1	2	4
5	7	6	8
9	11	10	12
13	15	14	16
17	19	18	20

Opening lead: ♠ A

## jumble

VAHYE  
ICIMM  
MLYHAN  
DUTBEG

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Yesterday's Jumbles: BLAND AUDIO TOOTHY SPIGOT  
Answer: He bought the shirt at the concert 30 years ago. To him it was an — OLD-T BUT A GOOD-T

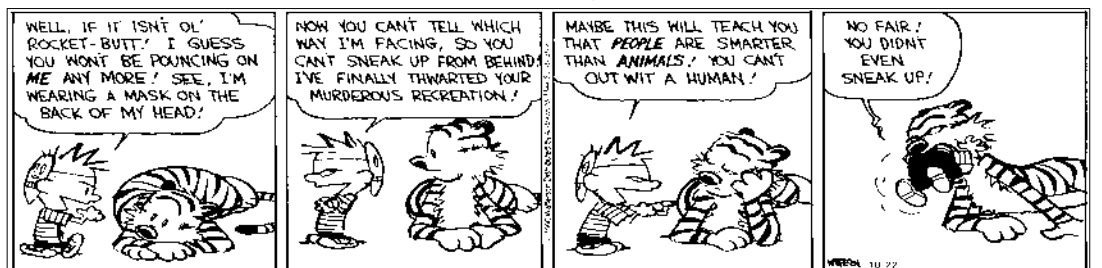
actual jump raise invites game opposite 5 points or more. So, it was a slight overbid, but he liked his good controls (aces and kings) and the excellent five-card spade support. South's game raise was also a tad optimistic.

South seemed doomed to lose two hearts and two clubs (as the diamond queen was not singleton or doubleton). But he saw one chance.

Declarer ruffed the third heart, drew trumps, played off dummy's diamonds, crossed to hand with a trump, ruffed the diamond jack on the board, cashed the club ace and played another club. When West won with his king, he had to return a heart, conceding a ruff-and-sluff.

Or, that is what declarer visualized. However, West saw the end-play coming. Under the club ace, he

## CALVIN AND HOBBS | Bill Watterson



## THE WIZARD OF ID | Parker and Hartsd



## ARCHIE | Bill Henry Scarpelli &amp; Craig Boldman



## BLONDIE | Dean Young and John Marshall



## ANDY CAPP | Reg Smythe



## TARZAN | Edgar Rice Burroughs



bridge

PHILLIP ALDER

## LOOKING FORWARD INTO THE PLAY

Cheess players need not just to analyze the position as it stands at a given moment, but mentally see where the pieces will be several moves into the future.

Looking down a deal for a bridge player is easier because the number of cards steadily dwindles. In a chess game, there may be no captures for quite a while, so all of the

pieces continue to clog up the board.

In today's deal, South is in four spades. What happens after West starts with three rounds of hearts? South's one-spade advance shows 0-8 points. So, if the doubler has insufficient strength to anticipate game opposite 7 or 8 points, he must pass. A raise to two spades invites game if advanced (doubler's partner) has a maximum. North's





## SHORT TAKES

## Anju vice-prez of athletics body

**New Delhi:** Incumbent Adille Sumariwalla is set to be elected unopposed as Athletics Federation of India (AFI) president for his third term while former long jumper Anju Bobby George will be made senior vice-president in the national governing body's polls on October 31. Sumariwalla and Anju were the only candidates who filed their nomination papers for their respective posts till the deadline of 4 pm on Wednesday. Returning officer Vijayalakshmy K. Gupta issued the list of nominated candidates after the deadline.

The deadline for withdrawal of nominations is 6 pm on Friday. For Anju, the lone Indian to win a medal in the World Championships (a bronze in 2003), it will be her highest post in the AFI executive committee. She was in the executive committee of last term by virtue of being a member of the Athletes' Commission. The AFI constitution mandates at least one woman among five vice-presidents, five joint secretaries and eight executive committee members. — PTI

## Three U-19 Bangla players Covid +ve

**Dhaka:** Three Bangladesh U-19 national team cricketers have tested positive for the novel Coronavirus, while 15 others are symptomatic. In a report published in Dhaka-based *The Business Standard*, Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) game development manager AEM Kawser was quoted as saying that all the players were part of the training camp being held at the Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protisthan (BKSP) as a part of Junior Asia Cup preparations, a tournament which now stands cancelled. "According to our protocol, we have to isolate everyone who has come into contact with symptomatic persons," Kawser said. The BCB has shut down the camp. — PTI

## Covid-recovered F1 racer returns

**Silverstone, England:** Formula One driver Lance Stroll said he intends to race at the Portuguese Grand Prix this week after finishing a period of self-isolation following a positive test for the Coronavirus. Stroll, who drives for Racing Point, pulled out of the Eifel Grand Prix at the Nrburgring a day before the October 11 race because he felt unwell and said Wednesday he later tested positive for Covid-19. In a post on Instagram, Stroll said he spent 10 days at home in self-isolation with mild symptoms and returned a negative test on Monday. "I feel in great shape," the Canadian driver wrote, "and I can't wait to be back with the team and to race in Portugal." Stroll, who was replaced by Nico Hlkenberg at the Eifel GP, is in ninth place in the drivers' standings on 57 points. — AP

## Coco in second round at Ostrava

**Prague:** American teenage sensation Coco Gauff beat Czech doubles specialist Katerina Siniakova in straight sets to clinch a second-round spot at the Ostrava Open WTA tournament on Tuesday. Gauff squandered her first three match points but the Czech hit the net on the fourth to bow out. — AP

## Live on TV

## CRICKET

**IPL:** Rajasthan Royals vs Sunrisers Hyderabad from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

## FOOTBALL

**Europa League:** Young Boys vs Roma from 10.25 pm on Sony Six; Rapid Wien vs Arsenal from 10.25 pm on Sony Ten 2; Leicester vs Zorya Luhansk from 12.30 am (Friday) on Sony Ten 3; Celtic vs AC Milan from 12.30 am (Friday) on Sony Ten 1; Tottenham Hotspur vs LASK from 12.30 am (Friday) on Sony Ten 2; Hoffenheim vs Crvena Zvezda from 12.30 am (Friday) on Sony Six

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# SUPER SIRAJ SHOW

## Seamer wrecks KKR as RCB win big

**Abu Dhabi, Oct. 21:** Pacer Mohammed Siraj took three wickets upfront as RCB hammered KKR by eight wickets in an IPL match, here on Wednesday.

Skipper Eoin Morgan's knock of 30 was the best batting effort in KKR innings. Devdutt Padikkal top scored for RCB in their chase with his 17-ball 25. Mohammed Siraj and Yuzvendra Chahal wreaked havoc in a stunning display of swing and spin bowling as Kolkata Knight Riders could just manage a paltry 84 for eight.

The masterstroke from skipper Virat Kohli to include Siraj in place of spinner Shahbaz Nadeem worked as Siraj (4-2-8-3) ran through the KKR top order to trigger a stunning batting collapse and became the first bowler in the history of IPL to bowl two maiden overs while Chahal (2/15) stymied their revival hopes.

It is KKR's second-lowest total after their 67 all-out against MI in 2008.

Playing without Windies star players Sunil Narine and Andre Russell, KKR struggled to get going after electing to bat and it was all over for them after skipper Eoin Morgan was dismissed by Washington Sundar for 30.

Siraj began with a double wicket maiden over in which he dismissed opener Rahul Tripathi (1) and Nitish Rana (0) off successive deliveries. — PTI



Mohammed Siraj (right) of Royal Challengers Bangalore celebrates taking the wicket of Tom Banton of Kolkata Knight Riders during their IPL match at Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi on Wednesday. — BCCI

## SCORECARD

**Kolkata Knight Riders:** S. Gill c Morris b N. Saini 1, R. Tripathi c de Villiers b M. Siraj 1, N. Rana b M Siraj 0, T. Banton c de Villiers b M. Siraj 10, D. Karthik lbw b Y. Chahal 4, E. Morgan c Gurkeerat b Sundar 30, P Cummins c Padikkal b Y. Chahal 4, K. Yadav run out 12, L. Ferguson not out 19. **Extras:** (LB-2, WD-1) 3. **Total (for 8 wickets in 20 overs) 84.**  
**FoW:** 1-3, 2-3, 3-3, 4-14, 5-32, 6-40, 7-57, 8-84.  
**Bowling:** C Morris 4-1-16-1, M Siraj 4-2-8-3, N Saini 3-0-23-1, I. Udana 1-0-6-0, Yuzvendra Chahal 4-0-15-2, Washington Sundar 4-1-14-1.

**Royal Challengers Bangalore:** D. Padikkal run out 25, A. Finch c Karthik b Lockie Ferguson 16, Gurkeerat Singh not out 21, Virat Kohli not out 18. **Extras:** (LB-2, W-3) 5. **Total (for 2 wickets in 13.3 overs) 85.**  
**FoW:** 1-46, 2-46.  
**Bowling:** Pat Cummins 3-0-18-0, M. Prasidh Krishna 2-3-0-20-0, Varun Chakravarthy 4-0-28-0, Lockie Ferguson 4-0-17-1

## IPL POINTS TABLE

Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
Delhi Capitals	10	7	3	0	14	+0.774
Royal Challengers Bangalore	10	7	3	0	14	+0.182
Mumbai Indians	9	6	3	0	12	+1.201
Kolkata Knight Riders	10	5	5	0	10	-0.828
Kings XI Punjab	10	4	6	0	8	-0.177
Rajasthan Royals	10	4	6	0	8	-0.591
Sunrisers Hyderabad	9	3	6	0	6	+0.008
Chennai Super Kings	10	3	7	0	6	-0.463

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

## Must-win game for SRH & RR

**Dubai, Oct. 21:** The inexperienced young guns of both RR and SRH would like to put their hands up in testing times when both teams square off in a must-win IPL game on Thursday. Whether it is Priyam Garg, Abdul Samad of Sunrisers or Kartik Tyagi, Riyan Parag of the Royals, the youngsters from both sides will be feeling the pressure of doing something out of the box in case their illustrious seniors fail in that pursuit.

SRH are currently tottering at the second last place in the eight-team table with just six points from nine game while Royals are a notch ahead with eight points after their comprehensive win over CSK in the previous game.

While SRH can't afford to slip up even one bit with five games remaining, RR would be hoping to continue the winning momentum. — PTI

## NUMBERS GAME

## HEAD TO HEAD

**OVERALL:**  
● Matches: 12  
● Rajasthan: 6  
● Hyderabad: 6

## MEETING IN 2019

● Sunrisers Hyderabad beat Rajasthan Royals by 5 wickets at Hyderabad  
● Rajasthan Royals beat Sunrisers Hyderabad by 7 wickets at Jaipur

## MEETING IN 2020

● Rajasthan Royals beat Sunrisers Hyderabad by 5 wickets at Dubai

## FOR THE RECORD

● David Warner who scored 331 runs at an average of 41.37 in nine innings of as many matches, is the highest run-getter for Sunrisers Hyderabad in this IPL.  
● Steven Smith who hit 99 sixes in 178 innings of 202 matches, needs just one six to complete a century of sixes in Twenty-20 cricket.

— S. PERVEZ QAISER

## DHAWAN ON A HIGH AFTER TWO CENTURIES

**Dubai, Oct. 21:** In rampaging form, Delhi Capitals opener Shikhar Dawan says he is running faster, feeling fresher and has no fear of being dismissed this IPL season. Dhawan has scored two consecutive IPL hundreds, the first to achieve the feat, and slammed two fifties as well, making it a season to remember for him so far.

"I have been playing for 13 years, and this is the first (back-to-back hundreds). So, really happy," said Dhawan after the unbeaten 106 off 61 balls, albeit in a lost cause against Kings XI Punjab on Tuesday.

"I keep my mindset quite positive. Just look to score runs, and not think pitch is doing this or that. I play with courage. I am not afraid to get out," he added dissecting his approach to batting. — PTI

## Bravo out of IPL with groin injury

**Dubai, Oct. 21:** Chennai Super Kings all-rounder Dwayne Bravo has been ruled out of the ongoing IPL with a groin injury, dealing a massive blow to the already struggling side which has very slim chances of advancing to the playoffs.

The 37-year-old Bravo, an integral part of the CSK team for years now, couldn't bowl the final over against Delhi Capitals in a match in Sharjah on October 17.

Skipper MS Dhoni was forced to bowl Ravindra Jadeja, who conceded three sixes.

"Dwayne Bravo is ruled out of the IPL due to a groin injury," CSK CEO Kashi Viswanathan said.

Bravo played six games and scored only seven runs in two innings. However, he got six wickets in as many



Dwayne Bravo

games with an economy rate of 8.57.

CSK's campaign has already been derailed after seven losses from 10 games. They are currently currently lying at the bottom of the league table. CSK were already hamstrung by absence of senior players Suresh Raina and Harbhajan Singh, both of whom pulled out citing personal reasons. — PTI

## Holder sad with no BLM in IPL

**Dubai, Oct. 21:** West Indies captain Jason Holder has expressed his disappointment over none of the IPL teams taking a knee in solidarity with the "Black Lives Matter" movement, which, he feels, has gone unnoticed in the world's most glamorous cricket league.

Holder, who is member of Sunrisers Hyderabad in the IPL, made the statement while receiving the prestigious Peter Smith Award on behalf of the West Indies cricket team in a virtual ceremony organised by the Cricket Writers' Club.

The Peter Smith Award is an annual honour which recognises outstanding contribution to the presentation of cricket to the public.

"To be honest, I haven't had one conversation up here around it (BLM). Sometimes it seems it has gone unnoticed, which is a sad thing," Holder said in his address posted on Cricket West Indies website.

"Cricket West Indies has done an excellent job in continuing awareness of it. The women had a series in England where they wore the Black Lives



Jason Holder

Matter logo and continued to push the movement as well," he added.

Taking a knee as a gesture of support to BLM started in the West Indies' Test series in England this summer. It followed the global furore over African American George Floyd's death at the hands of a white police officer in Minneapolis.

But it was later discontinued for the subsequent tours of Pakistan and Australia.

"...it's a long debate, a long hard challenge, a long road. We as people need to continue to come together...and genuinely find ways to fix the inequalities in the world," Holder further added. — PTI

## ITALIAN GIANT IN INDIAN KARTING

## NK Racing joins hands with CRG

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
CHENNAI, OCT. 21

NK Racing Academy, the driver development programme of India's first Formula 1 driver Narain Karthikeyan, has joined hands with Italian karting giant CRG to promote grassroots motorsport in the country.

As part of the arrangement, NK Racing Academy will become the official factory team of CRG in India.

Based in Lonato del Garda, CRG is the world's leading manufacturer of racing karts and was the kart of choice of F1 stars including six-time world champion Lewis Hamilton, Max Verstappen and many more in their formative years.

NK Racing Academy will participate in the national karting championship with two drivers, Divy Nandan from Delhi and David Ryan from Chennai. They will use the state-of-the-art CRG KT2 chassis.

The academy has launched a training programme for budding drivers in both the junior and senior class of karting, with the aim of finding local talent at a young age and steering their careers forward.

Narain Karthikeyan said budding Indian drivers would benefit from this tie-up. "This is a great opportunity for us to be in a partnership with a brand like CRG and help the drivers in karting with the best equipment and training. I feel I can contribute a lot with the experience I have gained over the years and hopefully many young drivers benefit from this partnership," he said.

Giancarlo Tinini, founder and chairman of CRG SpA, said the collaboration will go beyond go-kart racing. "It is our aim to successfully help generate the next big motorsport



Narain Karthikeyan

talent from India. Our collaboration will go beyond go-kart racing and we look forward to extending our activities into the Indian market," he added.

Each driver will be chosen through a rigorous, multi-level selection process, which will take into account their skills, driving technique, mental ability and fitness level.

The young drivers will receive extensive support and guidance from Narain, who will personally assess the performance of each driver and help them improve their craft.

"They will also be able to take advantage of CRG's class-leading karts and spare parts, all of which will be made available directly to them via the academy. The academy uses state-of-the-art championship winning chassis and top of the line data logging systems with over a dozen sensors in the kart which will help the drivers monitor their driving techniques digitally and improve throughout the year," Narain said.

The quickest drivers from the academy will get the opportunity to graduate to CRG's factory team in Italy, allowing them to pit themselves against the best Europe has to offer.

## Rash rocks PSG, Barca win

**Paris, Oct. 21:** Marcus Rashford once again sank Paris Saint-Germain after netting the decisive goal in a 2-1 Champions League win in the French capital on Tuesday, while Barcelona sent a message with a thumping 5-1 victory over Ferencvaros.

Rashford, who scored the winning spot-kick when United knocked PSG out in 2019, drilled home a low shot three minutes from the end which won a thrilling Group H contest at a near-empty Parc des Princes.

United had taken the lead in the 23rd minute when Bruno Fernandes slotted home from the spot at the second attempt, but Anthony Martial inexplicably headed Neymar's corner into his own net 10 minutes after the break.

The win sets United up nicely for next week's home clash with RB Leipzig, who are top of the group after beating Istanbul Basaksehir 2-0 in Germany.

Meanwhile, Ronald Koeman got his first

THE RESULTS			
<b>Barcelona</b> (Lionel Messi 27-pen, Anshu Fati 42, Coutinho 52, Pedri 82, Dembele 89)	5	<b>Juventus</b> (Morata 46, 84)	2
<b>Ferencvaros</b> (Kharatin 70-pen)	1	<b>Dynamo Kiev</b>	0
<b>Manchester United</b> (Bruno Fernandes 23-pen, Rashford 87)	2	<b>Lazio</b> (Ciro Immobile 6, Hitz 23-og, Akpa Akpro 76)	3
<b>Paris Saint Germain</b> (Martial 55-og)	1	<b>Borussia Dortmund</b> (Erling Braut Haaland 71)	1
<b>Chelsea</b>	0	<b>RB Leipzig</b> (Angelino 16, 20)	2
<b>Sevilla</b>	0	<b>Istanbul Basaksehir</b>	0

Champions League campaign as Barcelona coach off to a winning start with a confident win over Ferencvaros that gives them control of Group G, top but level on three points with Juventus. Messi won and converted the penalty

to give the Catalans a 27th-minute lead and the match was as good as done when Ansu Fati clipped home Frenkie de Jong's sumptuous pass just before the break. Coutinho, Pedri and Dembele also scored for Barcelona. — AFP



Marcus Rashford (left) of Manchester United is poised to score a goal against PSG during their UEFA Champions League first-leg match at the Parc des Princes stadium in Paris on Tuesday. Manchester United won 2-1. — AFP