

IN BRIEF

Gr Noida polluters fined ₹97 lakh

Noida: The Greater Noida Authority imposed penalties worth ₹97 lakh, including ₹45 lakh on nine real estate developers, for violating anti-air pollution norms in the region, officials said on Tuesday. The Authority said it has also launched helpline numbers and a WhatsApp number that residents can use to inform it or make complaints about pollution-related incidents. The fines were issued on Monday during an inspection by Greater Noida Authority CEO Narendra Bhooshan, his deputy Deep Chandra and officials of the Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board, they said. "A penalty of Rs 5 lakh each was levied on GLD Infrastructure, Amrapali Smart City, AIMS Golf Town, PKS Buildtech, Gulshan Homes, Ajnara Realtech, JKG Constructions, Rudra Buildtech Infra and Ratan Buildtech for not adhering to guidelines of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) and causing air pollution," the authority said in a statement. "A L Software which has been allotted land for IT and IT services was slapped a penalty of ₹50 lakh after it was found that construction work was being carried out at its site in violation of rules, there was no anti-smog gun and sprinkling of water on loose soil," it added. — PTI

DTC, NBCC ink MoUs to build bus depots

New Delhi: Public transporter DTC and construction major NBCC have inked MoUs to build multi-level bus depots in Delhi's Hari Nagar and Vasant Vihar, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal announced on Tuesday, saying the move will allow more space for parking buses at a reduced cost. In a meeting chaired by Transport minister Kailash Gahlot, the Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) Board had on Friday decided to engage National Building Construction Corporation (NBCC) for development of prime land parcels. "DTC and NBCC have signed MoUs today to build multi-level bus depots at Hari Nagar and Vasant Vihar, first such depots in the country, wid (with) all modern facilities. More buses cud (could) now be parked in limited available space. 'Parking cost per bus' will be much lower," Kejriwal said in a tweet. The NBCC will take up the redevelopment of Vasant Vihar and Hari Nagar depots and residential colonies of DTC in Shadipur and Hari Nagar, Transport department had said after Friday's meeting. The DTC has 36 depots, 18 terminals, two workshops and three residential colonies at various prime locations in the city. The development plan including commercialisation of the depots and terminals is being explored in order to improve the financial health of the corporation and increase the parking space. — PTI

'Immune India Offer' launched by Zandu

New Delhi: Zandu, the century old Ayurvedic brand, launched "Immune India Offer". In a bid to support India's fight against the pandemic of Covid-19, Zandu aims to address the need to boost immunity and safe hygiene practice of every Indian during these difficult times. To make immunity and hygiene affordable to every Indian, Zandu launches this unique offer at a never-before special price point for Zandu Chyavanprash and providing free Zandu Ayurvedic Sanitizer with it. Mr. Harsha Vardhan Agarwal, Director, Emami Ltd said, "We are in unprecedented difficult times as the country along with the rest of the world keeps fighting the onslaught of the Covid-19 pandemic. During this time, two things have become very important for all of us - Immunity & Hygiene. Consumption of Chyavanprash to build immunity has been recommended by the Central Ministry of Ayush, Government of India. We thus thought to leverage Zandu's 100 years of Ayurvedic wisdom to its best use by reaching out to as many people as possible. With a price off of ₹100 for Zandu Chyavanprash 900g pack clubbed with a free Zandu Ayurvedic Sanitizer under the offer."

■ Students, locals block road ■ Stringent punishment to guilty: Khattar**2 held for woman's brutal murder****BHASKAR HARI SHARMA**
NEW DELHI, OCT. 27

The Haryana police on Tuesday arrested two men for allegedly killing a 21-year-old woman outside her college in Ballabhgarh, a murder which triggered protests with students and local residents blocking the road to Sohna.

The police said that main accused Tausif, hailing from Sohna in Gurgaon, and his accomplice Rehan, who is from Nuh, have been arrested. The two men were produced before a court in Faridabad district and sent to two-day police remand.

"A special investigation team (SIT) has been formed to ensure a quick probe into the case," said Haryana home minister Anil Vij. Haryana chief minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Tuesday assured that strict action will be taken against the accused who shot dead the 21-year-old student. The mortal remains of the woman were handed over to her family in Faridabad on Tuesday.

Nikita, a student of B.Com final year, had stepped out of her college after appearing for an exam on Monday afternoon when the incident took place, ACP (Ballabhgarh) Jaiveer Singh Rathhi had earlier said.

The accused, who arrived at the spot in a car, had tried to pull the woman inside in a bid to abduct her. When she resisted, the key accused shot her, the police had said.

She was taken to a hospital, but she succumbed



(Clockwise from above) 21-year-old woman student Nikita Tomar being shot dead outside her college in Faridabad on Monday. Father of the victim speaks to the media after attending her funeral on Tuesday. Two accused in the murder of Tomar were arrested on Tuesday.

— PTI, AFP



to her injuries, the ACP had said.

The woman's father alleged that Tausif had been harassing her for the last two years and pressing her for marriage, which she refused.

He also claimed that Tausif was trying to convert Nikita.

"He should be given capital punishment and our

family should be given security," the woman's father said.

During investigation, it emerged that the main accused had been the victim's classmate earlier, the police said.

The entire sequence of the crime was captured by someone on a mobile phone, the footage of which went viral in the



social media.

In the video, Tausif, along with his accomplice, can be seen arriving outside the college and parking a white car on the road.

Nikita can be seen walking on the road accompa-

nied by one of her friends. The accused suddenly took out a pistol and shot her behind her ear from a

close range, leaving her in a pool of blood at the spot.

Before a few passersby — who noticed the crime taking place — could react, the two accused escaped from the spot in their car.

The incident triggered protests with students and local residents blocking the Sohna-Ballabhgarh Road for several hours on Tuesday.

Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Singh Surjewala slammed the Khattar government over the law and order situation in the state. "During the past two years, there has been a 45 per cent increase in crime against women in Haryana. In gangrape incidents, Haryana is at the top," he claimed.

"The chief minister should feel ashamed. The BJP-JJP should feel ashamed. Can our daughters not reach their homes safely after appearing in examinations?" he asked. He appealed to the Khattar government to take stringent action against the criminals.

"Otherwise, newspapers will be filled with such news each day. This government does not have any moral right to stay in power for another day," the Congress leader said.

Meanwhile, Union minister of state and Faridabad MP K.P. Gurjar and Haryana's transport minister Mool Chand Sharma, who is BJP MLA from Ballabhgarh, told reporters that the accused will be dealt as per law.

Mr Sharma also visited the civil hospital in Faridabad where the post-mortem of the victim was conducted.

Corruption in civic bodies: Kejriwal, BJP trade charges**AGE CORRESPONDENT**
NEW DELHI, OCT. 27

Delhi BJP chief Adesh Gupta on Tuesday sought to know what the AAP government did with its budget of ₹60,000 crore, even as chief minister Arvind Kejriwal alleged "mismanagement and corruption" in the municipal corporations, wondering what happened to the funds provided to them.

"The Delhi government has a budget of ₹60,000 crore and Kejriwal should give an account of how much money was spent on what in the interest of Delhiites," Mr Gupta told reporters here.

"Has the Delhi government built a new college, school, road, or highway in the last six years?" he asked.

Earlier in the day, speaking at a government event, Mr Kejriwal hit out at the three BJP-ruled municipal corporations in the national capital, saying they cannot run with such "mismanagement and blatant corruption" and pointed out that the civic bodies were unable to pay salaries to their employees, including doctors.

"Since our government was formed in 2015, we have paid two-three times more funds than what the previous governments had paid when they were in power. Where did that money go?" the chief minister asked.

Mr Gupta urged Mr Kejriwal not to do politics over the issue of salaries, including those of doctors, nurses, paramedical staff, health workers, sweepers, and mosquito breeding checkers, who served

■ **CM ARVIND** Kejriwal hit out at the three BJP-ruled municipal corporations saying they cannot run with such 'mismanagement and blatant corruption' and pointed out that the civic bodies were unable to pay salaries to their employees, including doctors.

■ **The Delhi government** has a budget of ₹60,000 crore and Kejriwal should give an account of how much money was spent on what," Delhi BJP president Adesh Gupta told reporters

Delhiites without caring for their lives amid the coronavirus pandemic.

"By harassing the MCDs, the Delhi government is also troubling those poor and needy people who depend on the schools, hospitals and other departments run by the civic bodies," he said.

The BJP leader claimed that the Delhi government has to give ₹13,500 crore to the municipal corporations as dues of the third and fourth Delhi Finance Commission recommendations.

He also charged the AAP government with not giving the grant-in-aid amount to the corporations.

The Delhi Municipal Corporation Act states it is "mandatory" for the city government to provide financial assistance to the civic bodies if they are in a weak financial condition, but the current dispensation is running away from its responsibilities, Mr Gupta said.

■ Mayor says salaries due 'cleared', docs say 'not credited' to bank account**Hindu Rao docs go on indefinite strike**

New Delhi, Oct. 27: Patients of North Corporation-run hospitals faced hardship as its senior doctors went on an indefinite strike on Tuesday, a day after they had gone on casual leave en masse over their pending salaries.

Maruti Sinha, general secretary of the Municipal Corporation Doctors' Association (MCDA), said that a meeting was held in the morning in the campus of the Hindu Rao Hospital where North Delhi Mayor Jai Prakash, heads of the Indian Medical

Association and the Delhi Medical Association, and the MCDA president were present.

In the afternoon, the mayor held a press conference with his counterpart from the east and south corporations, and later in a statement claimed that the "NDMC (North Delhi Municipal Corporation) today cleared the due salaries of doctors up to September; of safai karamcharis and domestic breeding checkers up to August this year, and of nurses up to July, and of health workers upto June".

Sinha said, "Salaries have not been credited, so our indefinite strike is still on".

The MCDA, an association of senior permanent doctors of civic hospitals, was established in 1974, and has about 1,200 members. It also includes doctors from hospitals run by the other two municipal corporations — East Delhi Municipal Corporation and South Delhi Municipal Corporation.

Residents doctors of the Hindu Rao Hospital have been agitating over their pending salaries since the last week of September

and by turns, five of their colleagues have been sitting on a relay hunger strike for the past few days. "Our salaries have not been credited, so our strike is also on. And, RDA-MCDA has not taken any decision on it yet," said Abhimanyu Sardana, president of the Resident Doctors' Association (RDA) of Hindu Rao Hospital.

Other hospitals under the North Corporation include the Kasturba Hospital, Rajen Babu Tuberculosis Hospital, Mrs Girdhari Lal Maternity Hospital. — PTI



Doctors of Hindu Rao Hospital during a protest over non-payment of their outstanding salaries, in New Delhi on Tuesday.

— PTI

3 members of Neeraj Bawana gang arrested

New Delhi, Oct. 27: Three alleged members of the Neeraj Bawana gang were apprehended by the Special Cell of Delhi Police early Tuesday morning after exchange of fire between the two sides in Karala area here, officials said.

The accused have been identified as Manish Dabas (27), a resident of Ladpur Village, Deepak alias Katia (26), a resident of Sultanpur Dabas, and Prince Panchal (23), a resident of Burari, they said.

Dabas and Deepak received bullet injuries in the incident, a senior police officer said.

— PTI

Namaste gang kingpin arrested

New Delhi, Oct. 27: The Delhi Police on Tuesday claimed to have arrested the kingpin of the Namaste gang which used to greet people with folded hands before robbing them. Chand Mohammad (35), a resident of Faridabad in Haryana, targeted senior citizens, police said. He had committed more than 100 such crimes in Delhi and its neighbouring areas since 2017, they said. The accused would greet his victims with folded hands and seek their blessings by touching their feet. He would then ask them to give him their jewellery on some pretext and flee from there, police said.

— PTI

Marginal improvement in Delhi's air quality

New Delhi, Oct. 27: Pollution levels reduced marginally in the national capital on Tuesday morning but the air quality was still recorded in the "very poor" category.

A senior scientist at the India Meteorological Department said the air quality index (AQI) is likely to improve with the wind speed picking up.

Calm winds and low temperatures trap pollutants close to the ground while favourable wind speed helps in their dispersion.

The city recorded an AQI of 335 at 10.00 am on Tuesday. The 24-hour average AQI was 353 on

Monday. It was 349 on Sunday, 345 on Saturday, and 366 on Friday.

According to the ministry of earth sciences' air quality monitor, SAFAR, the wind direction and speed were favourable for the transport of pollutants from farm fires in Punjab, Haryana, and neighbouring regions.

It, however, said an improvement in local wind speed will counter the effect. The share of stubble burning in Delhi's PM2.5 concentration was 16 per cent on Monday. It was 19 per cent on Sunday and 9 per cent on Saturday. NASA's satellite imagery

► **ACCORDING TO** the ministry of earth sciences' air quality monitor, SAFAR, the wind direction and speed were favourable for the transport of pollutants from farm fires in Punjab, Haryana, and neighbouring regions

also showed a very dense cluster of fires in Punjab, Haryana, and the nearby regions.

According to the Punjab Pollution Control Board, the state has recorded 14,461 incidents of stubble burning between

September 21 and October 25 as compared to 9,796 during the corresponding period last year.

Haryana has recorded around 4,284 incidents of stubble burning this season so far.

The Central government's air quality early warning system for Delhi said Delhi's air quality is likely to remain "very poor" till October 31.

Severe air pollution in Delhi is a year round problem, which can be attributed to unfavourable meteorological conditions, farm fires in neighbouring regions, and local sources of pollution.

The Centre had, on Monday, told the Supreme Court that it will bring a legislation to curb air pollution in Delhi-NCR.

According to an analysis by the Council on Energy, Environment, and Water, a Delhi-based think tank, transportation contributes the most (18 to 39 per cent) to Delhi's air pollution.

Road dust is the second largest source of air pollution in the city (18 to 38 per cent), followed by industries (2 to 29 per cent), thermal power plants (3 to 11 per cent), and construction (8 per cent).

— PTI

Jamia student denied bail in N-E Delhi riots case**AGE CORRESPONDENT**
NEW DELHI, OCT. 27

A Delhi court has dismissed the bail plea of Jamia Millia Islamia student Asif Iqbal Tanha, arrested under the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, in connection with a case related to larger conspiracy in north-east Delhi riots in February, saying he allegedly played an active role in the entire conspiracy.

Additional Sessions Judge Amitabh Rawat said there were reasonable grounds for believing that the allegations against Tanha were prima facie true. Tanha was arrested in the case for allegedly being part of a "premeditated conspiracy" in the riots.

"...I deem it fit to state in unequivocal terms that there is freedom to protest available to all the citizens of the country but that is subject to reasonable restrictions," the judge said in his order passed on October 26. "There is also, no manner of doubt, that every citizen can hold an opinion about any legislation which they construe as unfair in their understanding. The freedom and right to protest against any law is available to all citizens," he said.

The order added however that "vociferous agitation in the guise of Citizenship Amendment Bill" coupled with other activities of violence would show it was meant to cause or intended to cause disaffection against India.

4,853 Covid-19 cases: Biggest one-day spike in Delhi so far**AGE CORRESPONDENT**
NEW DELHI, OCT. 27

Delhi recorded as many as 4,853 fresh coronavirus cases in the last 24 hours. This is the biggest single-day spike in Covid-19 cases in the national capital.

With this, the tally of coronavirus cases has touched over 3.64 lakh on Tuesday, while the death toll stands at to 6,356. Forty-four fatalities have been recorded in the last 24 hours, according to the latest bulletin issued by the Delhi health department.

According to a health bulletin issued by the Delhi government, 57,210 COVID-19 tests were conducted in the last 24 hours.

The case tally stands at 3,64,341 in the national capital, including 3,30,112 patients who have either been discharged, or have migrated or recovered.

The number of active cases is 27,873, of which 16,415 are in home isolation.



Porters outside the New Delhi Railway Station flout social distancing norms on Tuesday. — PTI

SHORT TAKES

TV actress stabbed by man in Andheri

Mumbai: A man stabbed a television actress in Andheri over her discontinuing talking with him. The accused stopped the actress, Tanvi Malhotra, and after confronting her, stabbed her and fled from the spot. The actress is undergoing treatment and told police that she turned down his marriage proposal. The attack took place at around 9 pm on Monday when Tanvi was returning home from a cafe. The accused, identified as Yogesh Mahipal Singh, who is being looked for, officials said. The victim told the police that she met Singh a year ago and had been trying to woo her but she had been turning down his proposal. "The accused is being looked for and multiple teams have been formed. There are witnesses to the incident," said a police officer. The accused was miffed after not getting a conducive response from Malhotra over discontinuing communication with him. This led to an altercation between them soon after which he pulled out a knife and stabbed her in the abdomen and slashed her hands and fled.

No casualties in Naxals' encounter

Bhubaneswar: An exchange of fire took place between security forces and Maoists near Odisha-Andhra Pradesh border on Monday night. No casualties were reported in the gunbattle. According to reports, the security forces, acting on a tip-off about the movement of Maoists at Jumadanga in Malkangiri, carried out an operation. The extremists opened fire at the security forces, following which the latter retaliated. On Monday, acting on a tip-off, the security forces had carried out an operation at five villages in Malkangiri district and recovered huge quantity of arms and explosives buried under the earth by the Maoists.

Farm bodies call for road blockade Nov 5

Chandigarh: Various farmers' outfits protesting against the new farm laws of the Centre on Tuesday announced a nationwide road blockade on November 5. At a meet held in New Delhi, it was decided that there shall be a complete coordination of various farmers' outfits "to spearhead the fight against three anti-farmer, anti-people farm laws and the Centre's proposed Electricity (Amendment) Bill 2020". Major farmer federations with over 500 constituent organisations, including the entire working group and state chapter representatives of the All India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee (AIKSCC) and the federations led by farmer leaders Balbir Singh Rajewal of BKU (Rajewal) and Haryana BKU chief Gurnam Singh, met at Delhi, where various decisions were taken, according to a statement issued by the AIKSCC. — PTI

Dalit teen raped by youth in UP village

Bhadohi, UP: A 14-year-old Dalit girl was allegedly raped in a village in Chauri area, the police said on Tuesday. The incident took place on October 19 when a girl had gone to the field to attend nature's call and a 20-year-old man raped her, they said. The FIR in the matter was registered on Tuesday by the victim's father. The police is looking to arrest the accused who is absconding. An investigation is on in the matter. — PTI

Govt amends law, anyone can buy property in J&K

■ **Continued from Page 1** including setting up of educational or health care facilities. People's Conference chairman and former minister Sajad Gani Lone who is the spokesman of PAGD said the MHA order was a "huge betrayal" and a "massive assault" on the rights of the people of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh besides being "grossly unconstitutional". On Monday evening, the MHA repealed twelve out of J&K's 26 land laws and adopted changes or substitutes

with the rest. The amendments in the Jammu and Kashmir Development Act allow the buying of land by anyone as words such as domicile or Permanent Resident Certificate (PRC) holders do not find any mention. The ministry of home affairs said that the new order will be called the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Adaptation of Central Laws) Third Order, 2020, and that it comes into force with immediate effect.

India 'challenged by reckless aggression on northern borders', Rajnath tells US

'India-US military ties progressing well'

PAWAN BALI
NEW DELHI, OCT. 27

With the country involved in a six month military stand-off with China, defence minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday told US that India is "challenged by reckless aggression on our northern borders". "In the area of defense, we are challenged by reckless aggression on our northern borders," Mr Singh said in his opening remarks during the 2+2 Dialogue with the US, as per the transcript released by the US state department.

Mr Singh, external affairs minister S. Jaishankar, US secretary of state Michael Pompeo and

defense secretary Mark T. Esper held the dialogue. India and US on Tuesday signed the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA), which takes the military cooperation between the two countries to the next level.

BECA will allow sharing of military grade geo-spatial data in real time to India by US which will help Indian military to launch precise missiles and drone strikes. The signing of the agreement is also a strategic signal to China. As per the experts, BECA will also allow India to buy armed drones from US which will be fed with the data. The current conflict between Armenia and

In that process, we reaffirmed our commitment to peace, stability and prosperity of all countries in this region. We also agreed that upholding the rules based international order...

— **Rajnath Singh, DefMin**

Azerbaijan has underlined the importance of armed drones during a war. Later on during a joint press conference, Mr Singh said that India and

the US military-to-military cooperation is progressing well.

Mr Singh said that signing of BECA by India and US is a significant achievement.

He said during the meeting both sides shared assessment of the security situation across the Indo Pacific. "In that process, we reaffirmed our commitment to peace, stability and prosperity of all countries in this region. We also agreed that upholding the rules based international order, respecting the rule of law and freedom of navigation in the international seas and upholding the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all states are essential,"

said Mr Singh. He said India and the US defence cooperation is intended to further these objectives. Mr Singh said that both sides welcomed Australia joining the forthcoming trilateral (India, US, and Japan) naval exercise Malabar.

"During the meeting today, we have had comprehensive discussions on key aspects of our bilateral and multilateral cooperation. We considered the major challenges we face," said the Indian defence minister.

He said that liaison officer's at each other's establishments could be leveraged to enhance our information sharing architecture.

Amid 2+2 talks, China hits out at Pompeo

Beijing, Oct. 27: China on Tuesday urged US secretary of state Mike Pompeo to stop sowing discord between Beijing and countries in the region, undermining the regional peace and stability, amidst his visit to India for a high-level dialogue aimed at further ramping up their overall defence and security ties, and boost strategic cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.

Mr Pompeo arrived in India on Monday along with defence secretary Mark T. Esper for the third edition of the US-India 2+2 Dialogue with their counterparts, exter-

nal affairs minister S. Jaishankar and defence minister Rajnath Singh.

After his India visit, Mr Pompeo is due to visit Sri Lanka and the Maldives. Asked about Mr Pompeo's visit to India and other South Asian countries during which the top US diplomat's focus would be on China's threats, Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin said that Mr Pompeo's attacks and accusations against China are nothing new. "These are groundless accusations which reflect that he is clinging to the Cold War mentality." — PTI



A family plucks saffron flowers from a field at Pampore in Pulwama district of south Kashmir on Tuesday. Farmers in the Valley are concerned at the falling yield of the saffron crop year after year with the changing climatic conditions responsible for a 50 to 60 percent decrease in the yield from the last several years. — PTI

SC notice to TDP over land for office

PARMOD KUMAR
NEW DELHI, OCT. 27

The Supreme Court on Tuesday issued notice to the Andhra Pradesh government and Telugu Desham Party on a plea challenging the allotment of land in Amravati for the construction of TDP office.

The plea has been filed by YSR Congress Party legislator in the state Assembly Alla Ramakrishna Reddy, challenging the order issued by the earlier government of CM Chandrababu Naidu allotting land for the TDP office. Mr Ramakrishna Reddy is member of state Assembly from the Mangalagiri constituency.

A top court bench of Justices Rohinton Fali Nariman, Navin Sinha and Vineet Saran issued notice as lawyer Prashant Bhushan told the court

■ **THE PLEA** has been filed by a YSR Congress Party legislator challenging the order issued by the earlier govt of CM Chandrababu Naidu allotting land for the TDP office in Amravati

that land has been allotted in an area having a water body and the same is not permitted. The said land was allotted by a June 22, 2017, government order.

Mr Bhushan was assisted in the matter by advocate Aruna Gupta.

The petition by Mr Reddy will come up for further hearing on November 23.

The legislator has approached the top court against July 23, 2020, state high court order declining his PIL challenging the government order allotting land for the TDP office in Amravati.

YUSUF JAMEEL
SRINAGAR, OCT. 27

Parts of the Kashmir Valley were shut Tuesday on the anniversary of the Indian troops' arrival in Srinagar. However, the BJP and like-minded parties and groups celebrated the occasion by organising "jubilation" and "victory" rallies, mainly in Jammu region.

Though no formal call for a strike had been issued by any group, posters on behalf of Hurriyat Conference and known and obscure separatist outfits had appeared in different parts of the Valley a day ago asking people to observe October 27 as a "black day". This prompted the authorities to step up security across the Valley, particularly in central Srinagar.

The first batch of infantry troops from the Sikh Regiment's first bat-

On Infantry Day, Army urges J&K youth to shun weapons

AGE CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR, OCT. 27

On Infantry Day, the Army renewed its appeal to the Kashmir youth to shun guns and pursue education and various career opportunities available in the Union Territory and rest of the country.

Lt. Gen. B.S. Raju, the commander of Srinagar-based 15 Corps (also known as Chinara Corps), said, "The situation has improved considerably in Kashmir. The young ones here should seize it and focus

on studies. Others should work hard and pursue better career opportunities and not choose the wrong path."

He also said that the local youth who pick up arms and shoot video to circulate these through social media were not terrorists.

Appealing them to shun the path of violence, he said they can still come back and rejoin their families as peaceful citizens.

The Army celebrated 73rd Infantry Day at various locations across Jammu and Kashmir.

talion was airlifted to Srinagar on October 27, 1947, a day after Maharaja

Hari Singh signed the "Instrument of Accession". The accession was

Pilot hits out at BJP, spares 'buddy' Scindia

AGE CORRESPONDENT
BHOPAL, OCT. 27

Congress leader Sachin Pilot on Tuesday attacked the BJP, but chose to spare his "buddy" and BJP MP Jyotiraditya Scindia while campaigning for the Grand Old Party in Gwalior-Chambal, considered the latter's stronghold.

Mr Pilot who began his 2-day-campaign for Congress in Gwalior-Chambal region at Shivpur, slammed BJP for pulling down the 15-month-old Kamal Nath government by engineering defections in Congress Legislature Party, but he made no mention of Mr Scindia.

Earlier on Tuesday morning, Mr Singh openly warned cops if found helping the ruling BJP in the ensuing Assembly byelections in the state.

"We know how to deal with such policemen whether we will be in power or out of power after the polls", he told reporters.

Partial strike observed in Valley

BJP organises 'victory' rallies in Jammu region to mark troops' arrival anniv

supported by Kashmir's legendary leader Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah.

However, Pakistan and Kashmiri separatists say that India forcibly occupied J&K on the pretext of the Maharaja's seeking its military assistance to push back the Pakistani tribal raiders. The separatists also, like some historians, allege that sending in troops by New Delhi had been planned days before they actually arrived at the Srinagar airport on October 27, 1947.

In quite contrast to the "black day" call from known and obscure political and militant outfit through their posters and leaflets, the BJP and like-minded groups celebrated the day by organising 'jubilation' and 'victory' meetings and rallies, mainly in Jammu region, asserting the J&K's accession with Union of India is "complete and final".

Against target of 139L water connections, only 71L has been achieved Regular flooding of cities hits Smart City Mission

ANIMESH SINGH
NEW DELHI, OCT. 27

As modern cities like Bengaluru and Hyderabad faced large scale flooding due to heavy rainfall in the past couple of weeks while many more, including New Delhi, continue to get flooded annually, it prominently exposed not only the poor sewage systems of these international recognised I-T hubs, but has also put a big question mark over the utility of the Centre's ambitious Smart City Mission and

Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) projects.

The Smart City project ironically promises cities "which will provide decent quality of life as well as clean and sustainable environment for driving economic growth". The Centre has shortlisted 100 cities to be upgraded as "smart" under this project. The AMRUT project is aimed at providing robust sewage system to each urban household as well as tap water connection, and

SPECIAL REPORT

in fact includes sewerage, septage management and storm water drainage as its focus areas. Both projects were launched by PM Narendra Modi in 2015.

In a nutshell, vision-wise both the projects were meant to compliment each other i.e. by providing smart cities with sound and robust sewage systems which are a basic necessity for a quality life.

The Modi-led government counts both Smart

City Mission and AMRUT as among its major initiatives since it first came to power in May 2014.

However, by its own admission, the Union housing and urban affairs ministry, which is the nodal ministry of both the projects, has said that it maintains no data on loss of human life and financial losses incurred by people due to flooding of urban areas, as urban planning is a state subject and maintenance of sewerage and storm water drainage systems falls

under the purview of urban local bodies.

Incidentally, urban local bodies are among the major stakeholders in the Smart City Mission project along with states and the Centre.

The AMRUT scheme has woefully fallen short in achieving its target of providing water and sewerage connections.

According to latest official data under AMRUT, against the target of 139 lakh water connections, the achievement has been 71 lakh connections only.

SEARCH FOR MISSING GIRL



Divy Kumari

In this regard a FIR No. 439/2013 Dt. 06.10.2013 U/s 363 IPC has been registered at PS Sangam Vihar, New Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing girl but no clue has come to light so far. Any person having any information or clue about this missing girl may kindly inform to the following.

E-mail: c/c@cbi.gov.in
Fax: 011-23011334
Ph.: 011-23014046
011-23015218
DP/275/SD/2020

S.H.O.,
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SHORT TAKES

SOUMITRA ON VENTILATOR AGAIN, CRITICAL

RAJIB CHOWDHURI
KOLKATA, OCT. 27

Legendary Bengali actor Soumitra Chatterjee, who recovered from Covid-19, has been put on ventilator again after his condition worsened on Monday afternoon following a brief improvement in his health condition a week ago. His condition is "critical."

This is the second time the 85-year-old thespian is being treated on ventilator since he has been admitted to Belle Vue Clinic in south Kolkata on October 6, a day after he tested Covid-19 positive.

On Tuesday afternoon Dr Arindam Kar, a member of the medical board of doctors, said, "Mr Chatterjee is on ventilator. Saturation is more than 95 with the basic support of 40 per cent oxygen. His condition is definitely critical as of now."

A drop in platelet count alongwith gastrointestinal bleeding and decrease in oxygen level had forced the medical board of doctors to put the Dadasaheb Phalke awardee on endotracheal intubation, a medical procedure in which a tube is placed into the windpipe through the mouth or nose, at 3 pm on Monday.

In the evening the doctors, for the first time in last three weeks, found kidney problem in him also. Dr Kar added, "His bleeding has stopped. No fresh bleeding happened. Urine output is acceptable after fluid resuscitation. But the urea creatinine is climbing up. Our nephrologist is looking into if he would require some sort of support in the form of renal replacement therapy."

16-YR-OLD FROM J'KHAND GOES MISSING IN PURI

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO
BHUBANESWAR, OCT. 27

A 16-year-old teenager who came to Puri on a tourism trip was on Tuesday morning swept away while taking a bath here in the sea.

The boy, a +2 student, was identified as Ganesh Binay from Jharkhand.

According to eyewitnesses, Ganesh was swept away by the strong currents of the sea while he was bathing in the designated bathing zone of the beach — the area earmarked between Digabarini Khunti and Chaitan Chhak.

Till the last reports came in, life guards and rescuers had launched a search operation in the sea.

The incident comes a few weeks after the iconic beach was accorded the prestigious 'Blue Flag Beach' tag by C o p e n h a g e n - b a s e d Foundation for Environmental Education, based on 33 parameters.

According to experts, safe bathing is one of the parameters for the honour and the incident has now put a question mark over the safety standards at the Golden beach.

SENA PRAISES RSS' HINDUTVA, CRITICISES BJP

BHAGWAN PARAB
MUMBAI, OCT. 27

The Shiv Sena has continued to praise the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), but attacked its political wing the BJP over the Hindutva issue. The political contractors of Hindutva should learn from RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat about the actual Hindutva is, the party said.

Commenting on the RSS chief's speech made during the Dusshera rally at Nagpur, the Sena said that he clarified the definition of Hindutva.

"Mr Bhagwat made it clear that Hindutva is the essence of country's identity. The RSS' Hindutva is all inclusive and he has given a befitting reply to those who feel that Hindutva is their monopoly and anyone not with the BJP is not Hindu," it said in the party mouthpiece *Saamana* on Tuesday. In his Dussehra rally speech, Shiv Sena chief and Maharashtra CM Uddhav Thackeray had lauded Mr Bhagwat, who had said Sangh's concept of Hindu Rashtra is not political.

The party took a dig at the BJP saying those who are seeking reopening of temples should take Hindutva lessons from the RSS chief. "Mr Bhagwat would never demand reopening of temples during coronavirus pandemic as his approach is scientific."



Security personnel on their way to a polling booth on the eve of first phase of Bihar Assembly Elections in Gaya district on Tuesday.

— PTI

■ **Sushil Kumar Modi asks LJP supporters to vote for BJP-JD(U) coalition**

1st phase of Bihar elections today, 71 seats go to polls

NAYEAR AZAD
with agency inputs
PATNA, OCT. 27

Ahead of the Assembly elections, Bihar Deputy CM Sushil Kumar Modi has appealed to LJP supporters to vote for JD(U)-BJP coalition and ensure the victory of NDA in the state.

In a tweet ahead of the first phase of voting which is to be held on October 28, he said, "Vote to LJP will ensure the return of jungle raj in Bihar. I appeal to all LJP supporters to ensure the victory of NDA by voting for JD(U)-BJP coalition during the elections. Prime Minister also wishes the same".

Sushil Kumar Modi's tweet is being seen as a reaction against Chirag Paswan who has been targeting Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, alleging major scam in "Saat Nischay" (seven resolves) scheme. Recently while addressing his rallies Chirag had created a flutter in the state politics by saying that, if voted to power, he will get it probed and send to jail all those found guilty including the Chief Minister.

After facing regular attacks, the JD(U) has also reacted strongly and urged Chirag to maintain some "dignity" during his speeches.

Calling him "jamoora" senior JD(U) leader Sanjay Jha said that "Chirag Paswan's political career will flop like his films. Look where his co-

star Kangana Ranaut has reached and also Sushant Singh Rajput who had no backing in the film industry made his mark in Bollywood within a short span of time. He should also disclose who had sponsored his film".

Earlier during one of his rallies, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar in a veiled attack on Paswan had said that "some people are acting on the command of their advisors".

In response to JD(U) leader calling him "jamoora" Chirag on Tuesday said that "term used for me is an insult to Prime Minister Narendra Modi as I have only been following him".

Chirag who broke away from the NDA citing ideological differences with Chief Minister Nitish Kumar is contesting 143 out of 243 seats in Bihar. On many seats, he has fielded candidates against the JD(U). In the first phase of polls, 42 LJP candidates are in the fray against the JD(U) and NDA partner Hindustani Awam Morcha.

As many as 71 constituencies spread across 16 districts in Bihar will vote on October 28. The second and third phase of polling will take place on November 3 and 7. Results will be declared on November 10.

More than two crore voters in Bihar will decide the fate of 1,066 candidates on Wednesday across 71 assembly segments in the first phase of elections.

Guidelines have been issued by the Election

● **MORE THAN TWO crore voters in Bihar will decide the fate of 1,066 candidates on Wednesday across 71 assembly segments .**

● **OF THE 2.14 crore voters who will exercise their franchise, 1.01 crore are women and 599 belong to the third gender, according to data provided by the Election Commission.**

Commission for safe conduct of the electoral exercise, which takes place in the midst of the raging Covid-19 pandemic.

These include lowering the cap on the maximum number of voters for a polling booth from 1,600 to 1,000, staggering of polling hours and postal ballot facility for those aged above 80, or those afflicted with or suspected to be carrying the contagion.

Besides, sanitisation of electronic voting machines, wearing of masks and other protective gear by polling personnel and availability of thermal scanner, hand sanitiser, soap and water will be ensured.

Of the 2.14 crore voters who will exercise their franchise, 1.01 crore are women and 599 belong to the third gender, according to data provided by the Election Commission.

The candidates include 952 men and 114 women, the maximum number (27) being in the fray at Gaya Town and the minimum (5) at Katoria in Banka district. Among the major

political parties, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's JD(U) is contesting in 35 of the 71 seats, followed by its ally BJP (29), while the opposition RJD has fielded its candidates in 42 and its coalition partner Congress is in the fray in 20 assembly segments.

Lok Janshakti Party, headed by Chirag Paswan, is in the fray in 41 seats, which include all the 35 contested by the JD(U), in keeping with the call given by the young party president, who recently pulled out of the NDA in the state, to "dislodge" the chief minister from power. Prominent candidates include Shreyasi Singh, the Commonwealth Games gold medallist shooter who is making her debut at the age of 27 as the BJP candidate from Jamui. Chirag Paswan, who represents Jamui Lok Sabha and insists that he remains loyal to the BJP under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has assured full support of his party to the young debutant.

Shreyasi Singh is pitted against Vijay Prakash Yadav of the RJD, the sitting MLA whose elder brother Jaiprakash Narayan Yadav is a former Union minister and a close aide of party supremo Lalu Prasad.

Notably, the former Union minister's 28-year-old daughter Divya Prakash is also making her debut in the adjoining Tarapur constituency as the candidate of her father's party.

Six members of the state

cabinet Prem Kumar (Gaya Town), Vijay Kumar Sinha (Lakhisarai), Ram Narayan Mandal (Banka), Krishnanandan Prasad Verma (Jehanabad), Jaikumar Singh (Dinara) and Santosh Kumar Nirala (Rajpur) are in the fray in the first phase.

Of the six, Verma, Singh and Nirala belong to the JD(U), while the remaining are from the BJP. The JD(U) ministers seek to win their seats contending with the LJP factor.

Moreover, Verma, who has held key portfolios like education and social welfare, faces the additional challenge of wrestling an RJD bastion for his party, having been asked to shift base from Ghosi where the JD(U) has fielded Rahul Kumar.

Kumar's father Jagdish Sharma, disqualified upon conviction in the fodder scam, had formerly represented the Ghosi assembly seat as well as the Jehanabad Lok Sabha constituency.

The reserved Imamganj seat in Gaya district, which falls under Aurangabad Lok Sabha constituency, will see a proverbial clash of titans. Former chief minister and Hindustani Awam Morcha president Jitan Ram Manjhi, who is the NDA candidate, is the sitting MLA.

His bid to retain the seat is challenged by his predecessor Uday Narayan Chaudhary who had been associated with the JD(U) till a few years ago but is now in the fray as the RJD nominee.

Will nullify govt's 'anti-farmer' laws, says Tejashwi

New Delhi/Patna, Oct. 27: Confident of the 'Mahagathbandhan' getting two-thirds majority in the Bihar polls, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav on Tuesday said providing jobs to unemployed youth would be top priority for him and his government will also bring a legislation in the first assembly session to nullify the "anti-farmer" laws brought by the Centre.

Yadav, who is the Mahagathbandhan's chief ministerial face, said he is running an issue-based campaign in the assembly polls which was resonating with the masses and come November 10, the day of the counting of votes, "Bihar will witness a new dawn".

In an interview with PTI, Yadav said for the first time in history a promise has been made to the youth of Bihar that 10 lakh jobs will be provided with the "first stroke of the pen in the very first cabinet meeting", if voted to power.

Asked how many seats he is expecting to win, the former Bihar deputy chief minister said, "I am no astrologer but the public reception during canvassing gives me confidence that we have the blessings of the great people of Bihar and they have decided to entrust us with a huge responsibility."

I am no astrologer but the public reception during canvassing gives me confidence that we have the blessings of the great people of Bihar...

— **Tejashwi Yadav,**
RJD leader



Yadav expressed confidence that the Mahagathbandhan will get a "thumping two-thirds majority".

"I can confidently tell you that deposits will be forfeited of NDA candidates in maximum constituencies. Come 10th November, Bihar will witness a new dawn," he asserted.

Talking about his major promises and poll plank, he said that if voted to power, providing jobs to unemployed youth would be his topmost priority.

"Ours would be a responsible government which will have a responsive administration. Employment, health, education and industries are the sectors which have been neglected in 15 years of (Chief Minister) Nitish Kumar's rule. We will revive and transform these sectors," the 30-year-old leader said.

— PTI

'NDA to win 3/4 majority, Nitish will be CM again'

Patna, Oct. 27: Union minister Prakash Javadekar on Tuesday exuded confidence that the NDA will win the Bihar Assembly polls with three-fourth majority and Nitish Kumar will helm the government for the fourth term.

Mr Javadekar, who is Union minister for information and broadcasting, said the NDA will win in Bihar as all its four constituents — the BJP, JD(U), Hindustani Awam Morcha (HAM) and Vikassheel Insaan Party (VIP) — are a formidable force in the state.

He said the ruling coalition will return to power in the state due to the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the national level and chief minister Nitish Kumar at the state level.

"NDAs win will become evident from the first phase of voting on Wednesday," the senior BJP leader claimed.

Asked to comment on LJP chief Chirag Paswan's assertion that



Mr Kumar will be sent to jail on charge of corruption if his party comes to power in the state, Mr Javadekar said "Everyone has the opportunity to contest and campaign in elections. But, it will not have any impact (on people) irrespective of who is saying what."

The LJP, which has quit the NDA in Bihar, is bent on dislodging Mr Kumar from power.

The BJP has not only executed the promises it made but has also given account of its work to the people, he said, adding it is their faith and trust which has brought the party to its present height.

Recounting former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's statement that only 15 paise of a rupee spent by the government on development reach the poor, Mr Javadekar said that the scenario has changed totally under the NDA.

— PTI

Clash in Munger leaves one dead

NAYEAR AZAD
PATNA, OCT. 27

One person was killed and many injured after a clash broke out in Bihar's Munger during the immersion of Goddess Durga Monday night.

The police blamed anti-social elements for the incident.

However sources from Munger said that crowd went berserk after police asked them to speed up the immersion process.

Sources said that the administration had asked the Puja committees to conduct the immersion within the deadline due to restrictions imposed in view of the assembly elections.

Clarifying its stand on the incident, the police said that during the Durga Puja immersion procession, a group from the crowd started pelting stones which led many policemen injured. Later a person was also killed when someone from the crowd fired.

"Around 20 policemen were injured after a group started pelting stones. Later on, someone from the crowd fired which led to the killing of a person. The situation has been brought under control and the matter is being investigated", Munger SP Lipli Singh said.

The deceased was identified as Anurag Kumar.

Reports suggest that the policemen injured during the stone-pelting include SHO of the local police station.

The incident has sparked anger in Bihar a day ahead of the first phase of polls. Targeting Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and the Munger police over the incident, LJP Chief Chirag Paswan said that "incident shows Talibani rule in Bihar".

He also demanded "FIR against the police under section 302 and compensation of ₹50 lakh for the family members of the person who died in the incident".

5 WB YOUTH DROWN AS BOAT CAPSIZES

PRANMOY BRAHMACHARI
BERHAMPORE, OCT. 27

Five youths including three family members drowned after two overcrowded boats, carrying a Durga idol for immersion, capsized in a large waterbody on Bijoya Dashami in Murshidabad of West Bengal. The tragedy took place at Dumnidaha lake in Beldanga.

On Monday evening the members of Hazra family placed the idol on a bamboo structure in between two parallel country boats to give few rounds in the lake before immersion in the water as per rituals.

One of the family members, Pritam Banerjee, also an eyewitness, said, "Around 50 persons boarded the two boats. Most of them were dancing. While loud music filled the air, one of the two boats suddenly tilted and capsized with its passengers and the idol in the lake."

India records over 36K fresh Covid cases, lowest since July

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, OCT. 27

A steady decline in fresh cases of coronavirus continued in India as the number of new detections fell to 36,470 on Tuesday. This is the lowest single-day tally in the last three months — it was 34,888 on July 18.

The daily fatalities too continue to reduce as in the last 24 hours 488 new deaths were recorded.

India has so far recorded 79.46 lakh total cases of and 1.19 lakh deaths. There is a decline in cumulative positivity rate too, which is 7.61 per cent now. "Declining numbers give us the confidence that the virus is under control," said NITI Aayog member health Dr V.K. Paul. A drastic fall in fresh cases was noted in Maharashtra (3,645), which has been the epicentre of the Covid-19 pandemic in India.

Andhra Pradesh (1,901), Karnataka (3,130), Tamil

Nadu (2,708) and Telangana (837) too saw a marked decline in new detections. However, Kerala (4,287) and West Bengal (4,121) and Delhi (2,832) are the states that are still logging high numbers of new cases. The Central government is going to hold a meeting with these three states to re-strategise the Covid-19 fight.

The number of active cases has declined to 6.25 lakh and now comprise merely 7.88 per cent of the total cases.

"The slide in active cases is supplemented by an exponential rise in the recoveries. The total recovered cases have crossed 72 lakhs. This has widened the gap between active cases and recovered cases and stands at 65.75 lakh now," union health ministry officials said.

As many as 63,842 patients have recovered and discharged in the last 24 hours taking the national Recovery Rate to

90.62 per cent. Maharashtra is leading with more than 9,000 single day recoveries followed by Karnataka with more than 8,000 recoveries. Meanwhile, the Union Home Ministry has said the current guidelines allowing various activities like opening of cinemas, theatres and multiplexes with up to 50 per cent of their seating capacity will continue to be applicable till November 30 in areas outside the containment zones.

Earlier, the guidelines for reopening activities issued on September 30 were to be in force till October 31. The Centre has given the flexibility to the states with regard to reopening of schools and colleges in a graded manner.

Athawale tests positive, hospitalised Union minister Ramdas Athawale, whose 'go corona, go' chant became a national sensation, on

Tuesday tested coronavirus positive, an official said. The Republican Party of India (A) leader has been admitted to a private hospital in south Mumbai, he said.

In February, a video of Athawale, with a Chinese diplomat and Buddhist monks chanting "Go corona, go corona" at a prayer meeting went viral.

The video was reportedly shot at the Gateway of India on February 20 during a prayer session to stop the spread of coronavirus in China.

Athawale (60) is a member of the Rajya Sabha and minister of state for social justice in the Narendra Modi-led ministry. The minister is also a diabetic, an aide said.

Athawale on Monday attended an event to induct actress Payal Ghosh into party. The actor-turned-politician said that she will be taking a Covid-19 test after Athawale contracted the virus.

THE ASIAN AGE

28 OCTOBER 2020

Bihar polls may have a wider impact on nation

No Assembly election in Bihar can be said to be imbued with deeper political meaning, especially considering the sharp political cleavage which is on view in our national politics, than the three-stage poll for which the first votes are to be cast today. Also, in no other election in recent memory in the state are the challengers being billed to be in with a chance.

This was considered quite inconceivable only a few weeks ago. It was widely believed that opponents of the NDA government of JD(U)-BJP helmed by chief minister Nitish Kumar, try as hard as they might, had no one to project who could even remotely match the CM in leadership qualities.

Governance failures — even on matters as grave as the ruling coalition's abject failure in dealing with the corona crisis, the return home of lakhs of migrant workers from cities, and the grim economic reality that was self-evident — would be quite simply be forgotten and washed away, it was thought. This derived from the faith showed in analysis that assumed that caste equations were rigid and immutable in Bihar and would favour the incumbents. An important readily accepted factor was that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had the capacity to weave magic at election time, surmounting regional aspects.

It was widely assumed that the people had no agency and would be putty in the hands of the incumbents, succumbing with ease to the grand scheme of the electoral battle laid down by the ruling alliance. This was the fundamental consideration that appeared to lead to the decision that the Assembly election will be held when it became due.

The existence of the pandemic and the floods that hit many parts of Bihar were assigned no weight by decision-makers in fixing the election calendar, sweeping aside the objections advanced by the entire opposition. The Opposition camp seemed weak in every way. It appeared to lack cohesion, leadership and financial resources. This was the reason, it is widely believed, that pleas to defer the polls by a few months were dismissed out of hand.

Many of the assumptions made about the electoral landscape today appear less well grounded than before. The surging crowds that greet the campaign of the Mahagathbandhan — the platform of the RJD-Congress-Left parties, the ruling alliance's challengers — and in contrast the disarray in the ruling NDA's electoral effort is now presenting an altogether new aspect of the line-up Bihar that few had thought possible.

The split in the NDA is out in the open. Chirag Paswan's LJP attacking JD(U) is widely thought to be a game plan in which BJP's decision-makers were complicit, loud denials notwithstanding. In the last stage of the campaign, BJP posters carry only the PM's image, not the CM's.

The message is going out that BJP may aim to have its own CM in Bihar for the first time, dumping Mr Kumar. Mahagathbandhan CM candidate Tejashwi Yadav's focus on the promise of mass employment, and making no references to identity politics whatsoever, is enjoying a growing reception at the mass level.

The Amy factor in America

The Trump years have been ugly, so this may not raise eyebrows. But in confirming 48-year-old Amy Coney Barrett to the bench, after having previously declared that Presidents in their last year in office should not be able to nominate a new Justice to the United States Supreme Court, the Republican-controlled Senate has effectively reversed its own "Mitch McConnell rule" of 2016.

Yet had the "rule" not been in place, it would still have been highly presumptuous on the part of the outgoing President, who is supposed to be functioning largely in a care-taking role, to have actually chosen someone to fill the vacancy in the Supreme Court bench. In so doing, Donald Trump has, in fact, exposed his own fears of not making it to office a second time. The purpose of this last-minute nomination is clearly to rig all future decisions of the judiciary in favour of the Republican Party. It is what is referred to in common parlance as "packing the court". It goes against the spirit of democratic values.

Will Ms Barrett undo the feminist legacy of Ruth Bader Ginsburg whose seat she now occupies? For sure, her demurrals on critical issues during her recently concluded confirmation hearings have triggered misgivings. The long-term academic and appeals court judge is known to be a great follower of "superprecedents". Ms Barrett once clerked for Antonin Scalia and, as far as personal views go, is pronouncedly conservative.

In 2006, Ms Barrett signed a newsletter criticising the 1973 landmark *Roe v Wade* judgment (it was no "superprecedent" by her definition). An appeal against stipulations for the purchase of abortion pills enforced during the coronavirus pandemic, along with 17 other restrictions, is expected to be among the first hearings to come up before the court. Ms Barrett also holds a narrow view of the commerce clause of the US Congress and embraces the non-delegation doctrine. These will prove to be challenges in the way of working out tough laws with the help of federal agencies to combat climate change. Democrats also have reason to fear that Ms Barrett's presence will impact the future of Obamacare, which the Trump Administration diluted through neglect and waivers.

Expanding the Supreme Court bench upwards of its current strength of nine judges may be a way out of this crisis but is not the ideal solution.

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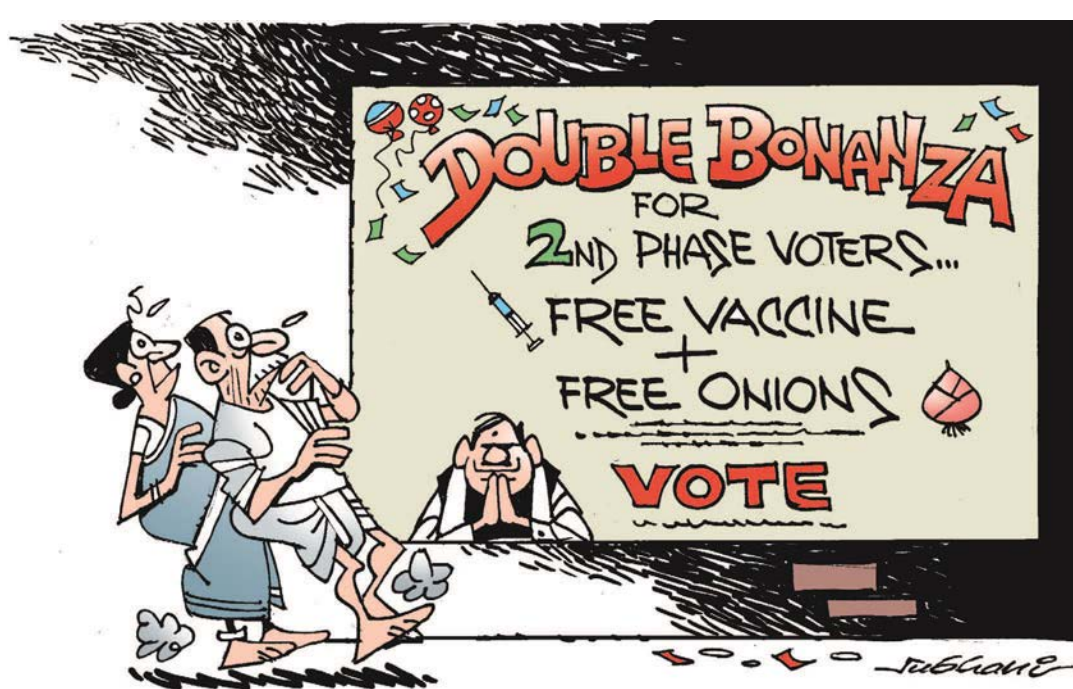
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Subhani



Biden or Trump: Who's win is better for India?



Sunanda K. Datta-Ray
Reflections

When Joe Biden warned India in 2000 not to take advantage of the Afghan crisis because, as he put it, the whole world, not just the United States, was looking at the Kashmir problem, Jaswant Singh, then India's external affairs minister, promptly cancelled his appointment with the Democratic senator. The snub did not however prevent Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and President George W. Bush signing a defence cooperation agreement and one American visitor following another to New Delhi to flesh out the bones of the multi-faceted cooperation.

The episode is worth remembering for several reasons as India — like the rest of the world — awaits the outcome of America's 2020 presidential contest. The 2000 election was marked by bitter partisan squabbling followed by a flawed victory. Mr Biden, the Delaware Democrat and chairman of the powerful Senate foreign relations committee, was an established friend of India's. Eight months into the new administration, he had written to Mr Bush asking him to remove the sanctions on India that President Bill Clinton had imposed after the Pokharan-2 nuclear tests, but adding that there should be no easing up for Pakistan.

Only one factor modifies this persuasive argument: the world's biggest democracy whose founding fathers — Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru — were inspired by lofty beliefs cannot ever ignore the consequences of its actions. Whether or not the Arabs reciprocate, no self-respecting Indian

government can ignore the impact of its policy on Palestine's future.

Mature handling of foreign policy demands a certain balancing of objective moral judgment and national interest.

The absence of this judicious mix prompts sellout allegations, as in some South American republics or Asian client states of the US like Syngman Rhee's South Korea or the Philippines under Ferdinand Marcos. That is not how Indians see their national future. Few Indians have any wish to live up to Sitarang Yechury's jibe about being the new Pakistan.

It's a different matter that Indian Americans, the second-largest immigrant group in the United States, mostly support Democratic candidates, although support for Mr Trump has reportedly grown in recent years. A YouGov poll found that 72 per cent of registered Indian American voters support Mr Biden. By comparison, 77 per cent voted for Hillary Clinton in 2016 and 84 per cent for Barack Obama in 2012. The poll also claims that the number of Trump-supporting Indian Americans has grown to 22 per cent, from 16 per cent in 2016.

The motivation of these people is not, however, the motivation of Indians in India. The latter are far less moved, for instance, by racism in the US, the damage done to American democratic institutions or the consequences of Mr Trump's eccentricities on climate change, Iran or the Covid-19 pandemic than US citizens, regardless of ethnic origin. Mr Trump's unsubstantiated allegation that as vice-president, Mr Biden, his son

and his brothers were "like a vacuum cleaner" getting rich, makes little difference to us. Indian Indians must look at next month's election only in terms of what matters to India.

Mr Biden's win in both Houses of Congress will mean "potentially more favourable US trade policies" for India, predicts UBS Global Research, boosting investors' sentiment and pushing up markets. A Biden victory may also replace the Fed's current chair Jerome Powell with someone more dovish in 2022. If Mr Trump wins, they assume that an unorthodox chairman could be nominated who might even look at negative rates, which would be of tremendous help to Indian markets, resulting in the continued inflow of cheap capital into Indian stock as well as debt markets.

What the financial analyses overlook is the Democratic commitment to human rights, religious freedom and minority opportunities which successive Indian governments have found irksome. While these are not traditional Republican concerns, Mr Trump's harsh rhetoric on immigration probably explains his campaign's recent "Indian Voices for Trump", a coalition of Indian Americans in government and the private sector led by Donald Trump Jr. to "honour the comprehensive global strategic partnership with India" and "build on our US-India partnership".

The younger Mr Trump toured India some years ago on a mission to promote Trump Towers, strengthening the belief that the President puts his money where his mouth is. By that token alone, a Trump victory cannot be to India's disadvantage. A businessman like the US President never ignores the profit motive.

Mr Biden's win in both Houses of Congress will mean 'potentially more favourable US trade policies' for India, predicts UBS Global Research

The writer is a senior journalist, columnist and author

LETTERS

POOR CHOICES

If the T-20 side is a pushover, India's ODI side lacks depth in batting. Shikhar Dhawan is shaky and gets thick edges to get out early in the innings. Skipper Virat Kohli was scratchy throughout the New Zealand tour with the bat. Rahul, Shreyas, Pandey and Pandya all showed promise only to get out in their 20s and 30s. Gill and Agarwal are not experienced enough. Prithvi Shaw, who showed early promise was left in the lurch. Kuldeep Yadav is a passenger in the side as the selectors are going to pick only Jadeja. Our memories are fresh of how they were mastered in the World Cup semifinal against New Zealand.

M.R. Jayanthi
Mumbai

POLITICAL DRAMA

VCK LEADER THOL Thirumavalavan has only quoted verbatim what is stated about women in Manusmriti and shockingly the BJP has twisted his statement to make it appear as if he has denigrated women. The party is only trying to get political mileage out of it. When DMK president Stalin tried to intercede, he, too, was branded anti-women. It is ironical that actor Khushbu whose bold stance on premarital sex was once denounced by the same elements is now on the side of these hypocrites and tricksters.

Tharcus S. Fernando
Chennai

DARK HORSE

THE SELECTION COMMITTEE has done well to reward mystery spinner Varun Chakravarty with a place in the T20 squad for the tour Down Under. The spin doctor has had a wonderful IPL season coming good with the leather and even registering its first five-wicket haul. Opener K.L. Rahul who is in the form of his life has not only earned back his Test spot but elevated as vice-captain. Here's hoping that Kohli and company keep India's flag flying high.

N.J. Ravi Chandar
Bengaluru

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

Ashwani Kumar



Ensuring dignity for all, respect for the law, still a key challenge

As India joined the world in celebrating human dignity on Global Dignity Day earlier this month (Oct. 21), regrettably, over seven decades after Independence, we face a legitimate interrogation about our faltering record in the advancement of a defining national aspiration. India stands at number 94 out of 107 countries evaluated on the Global Hunger Index, with over 140 million undernourished children. Unabated cases of rape, encounter deaths, custodial torture, abuse of elders and children, loss of human rights and loss of dignity of the marginalised multitude, the suborning of fundamental freedoms by a muscular State and a fraying democracy mock the constitutional promise of fraternity, with individual dignity as its principal constituent. Even though the Supreme Court, as our Constitution's designated guardian, has declared that the right to life under Article 21, without dignity, is like "a sound that is not heard", a continuing loss of dignity is a painful reality.

Recent events of far-reaching importance involving the executive and judiciary have raised concerns about the institutional role and failure in advancing the Constitution's promise of digni-

ty. An unprecedented letter by the Andhra Pradesh chief minister to the Chief Justice of India, in which he complained about interference by a senior Supreme Court judge in the administration of justice by certain Andhra Pradesh high court judges, has compromised the institutional integrity and dignity of the higher judiciary. Making public his letter, on a sensitive subject under the Chief Justice's consideration, the state's chief executive hasn't done justice to his office either. While judges must defend their dignity and vindicate their oath of office, the chief minister also cannot escape the burden of constitutional discipline and the high standards of rectitude expected of him.

Whether a criminal contempt action against the CM can alone redeem the prestige and dignity of the higher judiciary is debatable. Judging from the public response to the contempt proceedings in Prashant Bhusan's case, only an unanswerable case of criminal contempt founded on clear mala fide by the CM would invest the punitive judicial remedy with credibility and a moral appeal. A credible resolution of a complex situation will indeed test the wisdom of the wise and the inter-institutional capacity to advance constitu-

tional justice. A restrained and sparing use adds to the legitimacy of the contempt jurisdiction, and till recently this was the court's preferred approach. This is because the authority and dignity of the higher judiciary as custodian of the constitutional principle rests not on the "coercive power of the judges but the deference and respect which is paid to them and their acts". Judicial dignity is clearly anchored in its moral rightness rather than a colonial heritage of enforced dignity in a republic of free men. The courts' majesty lies in the objectivity, consistency and intellectual integrity of their judgments, which must remain open to public scrutiny and fair comment. Judicial dignity, in the final analysis, is a function of the community's responsive chord to its pronouncements based upon a shared sense of justice. Judicial excess or abdication are both fatal to judicial prestige.

Unchecked media trials, especially on the electronic and social media, that repeatedly transgress constitutional boundaries with a devastating infringement of the right to privacy and reputation, mocks the promise of fair trials and judicial due process under Article 21. Despite several binding interdicts by the highest court against parallel media

trials at various stages, adversely impacting the course of justice, the brazen illegality continues unrestrained under the gaze of the highest court. The Sushant Singh Rajput and Kangana Ranaut episodes are jarring illustrations. Instances of such trials are still fresh in public memory, like Aarushi Talwar (2017), Nambi Nayaram (2018), 2G spectrum (2018) and P. Chidambaram (2019), as well as the ongoing Sunanda Pushkar and Tarun Tejpal cases, to name only a few. Relentless violation of the constitutional guarantee of a fair trial have left unanswered questions about the abuse of freedom of expression and the impossibility of a just recompense for loss of reputation and dignity of the accused. The profound and poetic pronouncements by the Supreme Court espousing human dignity as the foremost constitutional principle remains no more than a pious declaration of constitutional intent.

Questions about the Court's vacillation and seeming incapacity to enforce its judgments, without which the declaration of law is meaningless, have diminished judicial prestige. A seemingly resigned acceptance by the highest court of the routine and audacious

negation of the legal principles of proportionality, neutralisation, necessity and postponement of publication enunciated by it in relation to media coverage of cases under trial is inexplicable. The highest court needs no reminder of its own law that "the right to declare law carries with it the obligation of enforcing obedience to it". It is hoped that in the several petitions pending before the superior courts on the issue of media trials, an effective framework for enforcement of the law declared by the Court will be established.

Despite a robust dignitarian Constitution whose custody is entrusted to the joint endeavours of the three branches of government, the recent record of our liberal democracy suggests an institutional deficit in the advancement of constitutional goals. But we need not give in to despair as we know our dignity, like destiny, lies within ourselves. The failure of our representatives and democratic institutions to secure it cannot deter us from pursuing the dignitarian agenda as a purpose in perpetuity.

The writer is a former Union law minister. The views expressed here are personal.

IN BRIEF

2 hurt as vessels collide near port

Athens: Two crew members of a Greek minesweeper were slightly hurt Tuesday after it collided with a Portuguese container ship off Piraeus, the port next to Athens, the navy said. There were 27 sailors on board the naval vessel, who were rescued by coastguard patrol boats. The two injured were taken to hospital for treatment. The minesweeper suffered serious damage to the stern and was towed back to the naval base on the nearby island of Salamina, the merchant navy ministry said. Piraeus port authorities opened an inquiry into the incident and confined to port the container ship Maerck Launceston, which flies a Portuguese flag.

Afghan attack kills three

Kabul: At least three people were killed Tuesday when Taliban militants launched a co-ordinated attack against a police base in eastern Khost province, Afghan officials said. Habib Shah Ansari, provincial health director in Khost said that so far three bodies and around 30 wounded, both military and civilian, were brought to hospital. The attack in Khost comes as the Afghan government continues to fight Taliban militants even as peace talks in Qatar between the two sides take place for the first time. Interior Ministry spokesman Tariq Aran said that earlier Tuesday morning a vehicle full of explosives detonated near a base belonging to a police special force. He added that so far at least four attackers were killed and Afghan forces are fighting two others who are still resisting with forces. Aran said that a gun battle is underway between the attackers and the Afghan forces, which may increase casualties. The violence comes amid an uptick of attacks. Afghanistan claimed Sunday it killed a top al-Qaida propagandist on an FBI most-wanted list during an operation in the country's east.

Russia strikes kill 78 rebels in Syria

Beirut: Air strikes by Damascus regime ally Russia killed 78 Turkey-backed rebels in northwestern Syria on Monday, a monitor said, in the bloodiest surge in violence since a truce almost eight months ago. More than 90 others were wounded when Russian warplanes targeted a training camp of the Faylaq al-Sham faction in the Jabal Duwayli area in Idlib province, said the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. In early March, a truce brokered between Moscow and Ankara stemmed a Russia-backed regime military offensive on the country's last major rebel stronghold in Idlib. That onslaught from December had killed more than 500 civilians and displaced almost a million people from their homes in one of the worst humanitarian crises of the nine-year civil war. Observatory head Rami Abdel Rahman described Monday's strikes near the Turkish border as the "deadliest since the ceasefire came into force". He also said they were the bloodiest Russian air raids against rebels in a single day since Moscow's military intervention in Syria in 2015.

\$2.4 BN U.S. ARMS SALE TO TAIWAN

Taipei, Oct. 27: Taiwan said Tuesday that proposed US sales of missiles and other arms systems will boost the island's ability to credibly defend itself, amid rising threats from China. The comments from defence ministry spokesperson Shih Shun-wen came a day after China said it would exact unspecified retaliation against companies that make the weapons systems, including Lockheed Martin Corp., Raytheon Technologies Corp. and Boeing Co.'s defence division, the lead contractor on a \$2.37 billion sale of Harpoon missile systems to Taiwan. Facing a potential Chinese foe with overwhelming superiority in missiles, soldiers, ships and planes, Taiwan has struggle to assure its own people and key ally the US that it is capable of and willing to see to its own defence.

The sides split amid a civil war in 1949 and China considers Taiwan its own territory to be brought under its control by force if necessary. The purchase of these weapons will enhance Taiwan's credible combat capabilities.

Don pick Barrett sworn in as SC justice

Republican-controlled Senate confirms her nomination, handing Prez a win a week before election

SC: No Wisconsin mail-in voting deadline extension

Washington, Oct. 27: Conservative jurist Amy Coney Barrett was sworn in as a justice of the US Supreme Court, an hour after the Republican-controlled Senate confirmed her controversial nomination, handing President Donald Trump a major victory just a week before the election. The deeply-divided Senate confirmed the nomination of Barrett as the 115th Supreme Court Judge by 52-48 votes on Monday, pushing the top court in a more conservative direction for generations to come.

Barrett, a 48-year-old religious conservative, was administered the official constitutional oath by Justice Clarence Thomas on the South Lawn of the White House alongside President Trump. "I stand here tonight, truly honoured and humbled," she said shortly after she took the constitutional oath. "This is a momentous day for America, for the United States Constitution and for the fair and impartial rule of law," said Trump in his remarks on the occasion. "She is one of our nation's most brilliant legal scholars, and she will make an outstanding justice on the highest court in our land," he said about

Washington, Oct. 27: A divided Supreme Court said Monday that mail-in ballots in Wisconsin could be counted only if they are received by Election Day. Democrats in the state had asked the court to allow the counting of ballots that arrive up to six days after Election Day if they were postmarked by November 3. The ruling was 5-3, coming just before the Senate voted to add Judge Amy Coney Barrett to the Supreme Court. Justice Elena Kagan, joined by her liberal colleagues, Justices Sonia Sotomayor and Stephen Breyer, dissented from the court's order. Last week, the court had

upheld a ruling by a state court in Pennsylvania extending the mail-in ballot deadline there.

Early voting began in Wisconsin last week, and the court's decision could impact the tally in a key battleground. Wisconsin was one of three Rust Belt states that gave President Donald Trump the White House in 2016, and he and Democratic nominee Joe Biden have made the state a frequent campaign stop.

Like other states, Wisconsin has seen a major influx of absentee ballots returned: As of October 19, Wisconsin voters had returned more than 863,000 absentee ballots, according to data from the state Ele-

ctions Commission.

Monday's order is the latest sign that the justices do not want federal courts to change voting rules too close to the election.

Unlike the Pennsylvania order last week, the Wisconsin order Monday concerned a ruling from a lower federal court, not a state court, and Chief Justice John Roberts said that made a difference.

A federal district court in Wisconsin had sided with the Democrats to allow mail-in ballots to be received up to six days after Election Day, but an appeals court blocked that order and the Supreme Court upheld the block.

— Agencies

his nominee.

Out of nine Supreme Court Justices, Trump, so far, has nominated three of them. In the US a Supreme Court justice is appointed for life and does not have a retirement age. Barrett is likely to serve on the court

for decades and will give conservatives a 6-3 majority on the Supreme Court, a shift in its makeup that could have dramatic implications for a range of issues that could come before it, including the future of the Affordable Care Act

and any potential disputes regarding the 2020 election. "It is highly fitting that Justice Barrett fills the seat of a true pioneer for women: Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Tonight, Justice Barrett becomes not only the fifth woman to



Security officials examine the site of a blast at a religious school in Peshawar on Tuesday. At least four students were killed and dozens more wounded when a bomb exploded during a class at their religious school. — AFP

Bomb blast in Pak religious seminary kills 8, injures 120

Peshawar, Oct. 27: A powerful blast ripped through a religious seminary in northwest Pakistan's Peshawar city on Tuesday, killing at least eight people, mostly students, and wounding over 120 others, senior police officials said.

The blast occurred around 8:30 am at a local mosque, which also serves as a religious school in Dir Colony in interior Peshawar, while students were reading the Quran, Peshawar police chief Muhammad Ali Khan told reporters.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister's Advisor on Information Kamran Bangash and Spokesman of the LRH Hospital Asim Khan confirmed that eight persons have died and 124 others injured in the blast.

"Those who spread terror will never succeed in their mission," Bangash said, adding that the incident would be fully probed and the perpetrators will be brought to book. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the blast in the city, bordering war-torn Afghanistan.

A bag filled with explosive materials was kept close to wall of the seminary by some unknown person which went off, superintendent of police in Peshawar city Waqar Azeem said. He said the bag is believed to have had an IED device that went off.

An official from the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) said 4 to 5 kilogramme explosives were used in the blast. Most of the students who died and were injured in the blast

were aged between 7 and 11 years, the official said, adding that many of them were from Afghanistan.

Prime Minister Imran Khan condemned the deadly blast and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured. "Deeply saddened by terrorist attack on madrassah in Peshawar. My condolences go to the victims families & prayers for early recovery of the injured. I want to assure my nation we will ensure the terrorists responsible for this cowardly barbaric attack are brought to justice asap," he tweeted.

There was a general threat alert in the Peshawar district, said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police chief Sanaullah Abbasi, who also confirmed the death toll.

According to police, around 40-50 students were

present inside the seminary when the bomb went off. The seminary's administration said around 1,100 students study at the institution.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Mehmod Khan condemned the attack on children. He has convened a meeting to take stock of the security situation in the province.

The area has been cordoned off and police teams are collecting evidence. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Health Minister Taimur Saleem Jhagra visited the site of the blast. Speaking to reporters, he said that the focus was on providing the injured the best possible treatment to increase their chances of recovery. Vice President Maryam Nawaz termed it a "heart-rending" incident. — PTI

Trump leads Biden by 5 points in Texas

Houston, Oct. 27: US President Donald Trump is ahead of his rival and Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden by more than five points among the likely voters in the state of Texas, according to a poll conducted to understand the popularity of the two leaders.

The poll released on Monday by the Hobby School for Public Affairs at the University of Houston found that 50 per cent of the voters said they already have or will vote for President Trump while 44.7 per cent said they have or will vote for Biden. "The poll conducted between October 13 and October 20 found 50 per cent of the voters saying they already have or will vote for Trump, while 44.7 per cent said they have or will vote for Biden," said the poll outcome released after taking the opinions of over 1,000 registered voters.

Trump, a Republican is being challenged by Biden in the November 3 US presidential election. "Record

turnout in early voting clearly shows the state's Democrats are energised, but at least at the top of the ticket, that enthusiasm appears unlikely to overcome the Republican advantage among men, Anglos and older voters," said Renée Cross, senior director of the Hobby School.

"In fact, we found the Republican candidate leading by wider margins in statewide races farther down the ballot," Cross added. There are more than 257 million people in the US who are 18 or older, and nearly 240 million citizens are eligible to vote this year, according to the American daily *USA Today*. More than 58.7 million Americans have voted in the 2020 presidential election so far, surpassing all early ballots cast in the 2016 polls, but an unprecedented number of mail-in ballots has given rise to the possibility that the result could be delayed as counting of votes may stretch beyond November 3. — PTI

Oxford: Vaccine's strong immunity in all adult groups

London, Oct. 27: One of the frontrunners in the race for a vaccine against Covid-19 has been found to produce a strong immune response in all adult groups, Oxford University said on Tuesday in reference to the ongoing clinical trials of its vaccine candidate with British pharma giant AstraZeneca. While the results from these early trials are yet to be officially released, Professor Andrew Pollard from the university discussed the promising findings at a research conference recently.

The ChAdOx1 nCov-2019 vaccine, called AZD1222 by AstraZeneca, is currently undergoing worldwide trials with some reports raising hopes for a rollout within months. The latest findings, submitted for a peer-reviewed journal to be considered for publication in the coming weeks, will further boost these hopes.

"Professor Pollard discussed the early findings of the Phase II safety and immunogenicity trial of the ChAdOx1 nCov-2019 Oxford Coronavirus vac-

STUDY: COVID-19 ANTIBODIES ARE FALLING RAPIDLY

London, Oct. 27: The hope for long-term immunity from Covid-19 was thrown into doubt on Tuesday as a large UK study concluded that protective antibodies in people fall "quite rapidly" after a Coronavirus infection. Imperial College London's research, which tested more than 365,000 people in England, found that antibody response to the Coronavirus that causes Covid-19 wanes over time. — PTI

cine at a research conference," an Oxford University statement said. "These early results covering trial volunteers from the UK in the 56-69 and 70+ age groups have been submitted to a peer-review journal, and we hope to see their publication in the coming weeks. — PTI

India: Don't back terrorist forces

United Nations, Oct. 27: India has called on all concerned parties to completely stop supporting terrorist forces, like the ISIL, while urging all stakeholders in the Middle East to work constructively for peace, stability and development. India underscored that it has invested considerably in the peace and stability of the region by deploying its personnel as part of UN peacekeeping forces, through humanitarian assistance, development cooperation, capacity building, and will continue contributing towards peace-building in the Middle East. "India calls on concerned parties to completely stop support to terrorist forces, like ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant) and others. India also urges all parties in the region to work constructively and in good faith to promote peace, stability and development for the benefit of all people in the Middle East," India said in a written statement on Monday on the Security Council's open debate on 'The Situation in the Middle East'.

India said the truce between Israel and the Hamas has eased the humanitarian situation in Gaza

and expressed hope that the temporary truce is converted into a permanent ceasefire, which can save precious human lives on both sides and create a conducive environment for talks.

"It is an unfortunate reality that the interlinked and mutually reinforcing challenges faced by the people of the Middle East have not yet been resolved. Political instability, long-festering conflicts, sectarian divides, issue of refugees and terrorism continue to plague the region. The Covid-pandemic has only exacerbated the threats posed by these challenges," India said.

The statement made India's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador T.S. Tirumurti, will go as part of the official record of the Council. India said it appreciates the agreement between Fatah and Hamas for holding Parliamentary and Presidential elections and also elections for the Palestinian National Council, which will help fulfill the democratic aspirations of the Palestinian people. India also welcomed the agreements for normalisation of relations between Israel and the UAE and Bahrain. — PTI

FLASH | FLOOD Hurricane Delta ravaged the Yucatan region earlier this month

Zeta winds pound Mexico, head for US

Mexico City, Oct. 27: Heavy winds pounded Mexico's Caribbean coast overnight, with Hurricane Zeta set to cause havoc on the Yucatan Peninsula on Tuesday before moving towards the US Gulf Coast, the US National Hurricane Center (NHC) said.

Coming only weeks after Hurricane Delta ravaged the Yucatan region earlier this month, Zeta was expected to disrupt oil installations and barrel towards southern US states on Wednesday.

Zeta lashed the eastern

TYPHOON: VIETNAM CANCELS FLIGHTS, CLOSES SCHOOLS

Hanoi, Oct. 27: Vietnam was rushing to ensure more than half a million people were out of harm's way on Tuesday, ahead of the arrival of a powerful typhoon set to dump more heavy rain on a central region devastated by weeks of intense weather.

Hundreds of flights were cancelled and schools closed in affected areas as Typhoon Molave approached over the South China Sea, packing wind speed of up to 165 kilometres (103 miles) per hour and expected to make landfall early on Wednesday.

conditions and a dangerous storm surge were expected to persist in the area, NHC said.

Molave will be the fourth storm to hit the Southeast Asian country this month that has seen 130 people killed in floods and landslides. Military was helping the elderly on to buses and directing boats to come ashore.

— Reuters

"Heavy rainfall is expected across the Yucatan Peninsula, the Cayman Islands, and western Cuba thro-

ugh Tuesday, which could lead to flash flooding in urban areas," NHC warned. A hurricane watch is in effect from Morgan City Louisiana to the Mississippi Alabama border, NHC said. Zeta is expected to affect oil production in the Gulf Coast.

Oil producer BP BPL on Monday said it has begun to shut in production at its Gulf of Mexico platforms and assets ahead of Zeta's arrival, after starting a staff evacuation on Sunday.

— Reuters

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	40522.10	0.94
Nifty 50	11889.40	1.03
S&P 500*	3,404.01	0.09
Dollar (₹)	73.71	0.20
Pound Sterling (₹)	95.88	0.26
Euro (₹)	87.00	0.31
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	50,853.77	0.15
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	41.24	0.78
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.846	0.012
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.788	-0.015

* As of 9:30 PM IST

Kinetic Green launches electric cargo three-wheeler

Pune-based Kinetic Green, the electric three-wheeler manufacturer, on Tuesday launched a high-performance electric cargo three-wheeler, the Kinetic Safar Jumbo. The company says the Safar Jumbo is a distinct Electric Vehicle, which is designed ground up at Kinetic's DSIR recognised Electric Vehicle Research and Development lab, packed with advanced technological features and boasts of 100 per cent indigenous parts.

Reconsider names for Lakshmi Vilas Bank MD, CEO: RBI



The Reserve Bank of India has asked Lakshmi Vilas Bank (LVB), which is in the midst of a merger process with Clix group, to reconsider the names proposed for the post of new MD & CEO, a senior official said on Tuesday. In September, shareholders of the cash-strapped private sector lender had voted out seven board members, including MD & CEO S Sundar, at the annual general meeting. Subsequently, RBI appointed a three-member Committee of Directors (CoD) comprising independent directors Meeta Mahan, Shakti Sinha and Satish Kumar Kalra.

Spinny to launch Spinny 360 for inside view of cars

Spinny, a full-stack used car platform, is gearing up to launch Spinny 360, a detailed, inside-out 360° view of each of its cars. Spinny360 allows the buyers to view the interior and exterior of each vehicle in the inventory online exactly as it is, giving them a clear idea about its condition and helping them make an informed decision.

FreshToHome raises \$121 m in Series C funding

FreshToHome, the online retailer of fish and meat products, has raised \$121 million in Series C funding led by Investment Corporation of Dubai (ICD), Investcorp, Ascent Capital, US Government's development finance institution DFC, the Allana Group and other investors. Iron Pillar, the lead investor from Series B participated in this round with an investment of \$19 million.

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Future Retail sees liquidation if Reliance deal fails

New Delhi, Oct. 27: Future Retail Ltd (FRL) will go into liquidation if its deal to sell assets to Reliance Industries fails, the group told a Singapore arbitrator while arguing against Amazon Inc's bid to scupper the deal, a legal order seen by Reuters showed. Amazon on Sunday won an injunction from a Singapore arbitrator to halt FRL's deal to sell

assets to Reliance. Amazon alleged FRL had breached certain contract provisions it entered into last year in a separate deal with the U.S. firm. The dispute centres around FRL's decision in August to sell its retail, wholesale, logistics and some other businesses to Reliance for \$3.38 billion, including debt. Amazon argues that a

2019 deal it had with a Future unit had clauses saying the Indian group couldn't sell its retail assets to anyone on a "restricted persons" list including any firms from Reliance chief Mukesh Ambani's group. The deal specified any disputes would be arbitrated under Singapore International Arbitration Centre rules. Both companies reacted

to the arbitrator's decision by saying they want to complete the deal "without any delay", setting the stage for a showdown between Reliance and Amazon. An order by the arbitrator reveals how Jeff Bezos-led Amazon argued that Future breached agreements which barred it from selling retail assets to entities including

Reliance. It also shows the level of concern at Future if the deal breaks. Future's retail unit will need to pack up if the transaction with Reliance doesn't go through, hitting the livelihoods of thousands of employees and workers at its vendor firms, the Indian group argued before the arbitrator, according to the order which is not public.

"If the disputed transaction falls through, FRL will go into liquidation. That will mean that the livelihoods of more than 29,000 employees of FRL will be lost," the Indian group's representatives told the arbitrator V.K. Rajah. COVID-19 pandemic has hit many Indian businesses, and the FRL-Reliance deal was aimed at protecting the interests of all

stakeholders through a large infusion of funds and the acquisition of liabilities, Future argued. But Rajah ruled that "economic hardship alone is not a legal ground for disregarding legal obligations". Amazon, FRL and Reliance didn't respond to a request for comment.

— Reuters

Growth begins to pick up, yet fiscal 2021 to remain wasted

FC BUREAU NEW DELHI, OCT. 27

With certain positive economic indicators, suggesting several green shoots that have started emerging, the Narendra Modi-led government is hopeful that the GDP growth may be in either negative zone or near zero in the current fiscal. However, it further said that the growth would continue to remain in the negative category for the full year. Speaking at the India Energy Forum of CERAWeek, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, on Tuesday, said, "There were visible signs of revival in the economy but the GDP growth may be in negative zone or near zero in the current fiscal. For the full year, the growth will continue to remain in the negative category."

This is the first statement that has been received from the finance minister talking about a proper number for the full

APPAREL SALES DOWN BY 45-55%

SANGEETHA G. CHENNAI, OCT. 27

Sales of apparel retailers were 45 to 55 per cent down in the September quarter. But October has seen a recovery to 75 per cent of last year levels. Apparel retail is far weaker than other sectors with September quarter average revenues down 45-55 per cent, according to a report by Motilal Oswal Financial Services. ICRA too finds that domestic retail sales were estimated to be at 40-50 per cent of last year's levels in the September quarter. However, the segment is

witnessing month-on-month recovery and in October sales were around 75 per cent of the year ago month. Neighborhood stores are performing better than high street stores and both are seeing better sales than the stores in malls. Record rains in some areas have disrupted supply chains and customer demand. Customers are down-trading and purchasing low value products as most are staying at home. Hence, value retailers like Zudio and Max among others are performing well. Further,

categories like footwear and athleisure have been selling much better. Men are purchasing more than women and kids as they are going out for work-related purposes. As per the Festive Shopping Index, more than half of the responding customers are looking forward to buy apparels and fashion during the festivals. However, there have been closures of stores that were unprofitable or which saw limited rental reduction. Malls have a higher proportion of store closures compared to stores in high streets.

year. In line with the government, the Reserve Bank of India Governor recently also stated how the full year's growth has showed signs of revival. The finance minister further said that there was a very firm lockdown

imposed beginning March 25 as the government put lives before livelihood. This is primarily because of a huge 23.9 per cent contraction in the economy in the first quarter of current fiscal (April-June). "The lockdown also gave

time to do preparatory work to deal with the pandemic. But now, macroeconomic indicators have shown signs of revival," she said, adding that festive season will further spur the Indian economy in the next quarters.

Paytm lets people park small money in ETFs



RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, OCT. 27

Paytm's online financial services platform Paytm Money has announced an Exchange Traded Funds (ETF) investment facility to enable investors to invest in these funds. Paytm Money is a stock broking & mutual fund distribution platform of Paytm.

ETFs are passive funds that are listed on NSE /BSE and traded like regular equity shares.

"In India, there are 69 different kinds of ETFs available across the index, gold, equity and debt categories with top-performing ETFs such as Aditya Birla Sun Life Gold ETF, Nippon India Nv20 ETF, LIC G-Sec Long Term among others," according to Paytm.

"ETF is an essential part of an investor's portfolio and all Indians must invest in it. Therefore, the company has made it convenient for new investors by facilitating investments for as low as ₹16 in Equity, ₹44 in Gold and ₹120 for NIFTY," Paytm said.

"The platform's interactive interface helps to track the price changes in the preferred ETFs along with the flexibility to set a price alert. It also updates the live prices of an ETF and empowers investors to place a sell order during the open market hours and receive the money directly in their bank account."

Experienced investors can even execute intra day trades in ETF and the simple stop loss/target price orders allow users to automate their risk management. The investor also gets the flexibility to invest via both the Paytm, it said.

FDI inflows dropped 33% to \$17b: UN body

SANGEETHA G. CHENNAI, OCT. 27

While the government had claimed that the country received \$35 billion Foreign Direct Investment in the first five months of the fiscal, United Conference of Trade and Development finds that India has received only \$17 billion in the first half of the calendar year.

As per UNCTAD's Global Investment Trends Monitor, FDI inflow into India dropped 33 per cent to \$17 billion in the first half of 2020 or between January and June this year, with the country struggling to contain Covid-19.

India being the largest recipient of FDI in South Asia, the contraction also pulled down the total inflow into the region by 31 per cent to \$20 billion.

However, investment growth in India's digital economy continued, especially through cross-border merger and acquisition sales, which doubled in value. Deals included the acquisition of stake in Jio Platforms by

● AS PER UNCTAD's Global Investment Trends Monitor, FDI inflow into India dropped 33 per cent to \$17 billion in the first half of 2020.

● ACCORDING to the government, it was the highest ever FDI for the first five months of a financial year.

● DEVELOPED ECONOMIES saw the biggest fall of 75 per cent, to an estimated \$98 billion.

Jaadhu, owned by Facebook, for \$5.6 billion. Several cross-border deals in infrastructure and energy also propped up M&A values in India, including the acquisition of Tower Infrastructure Trust and fuel business of Reliance Industries, found UNCTAD.

A few days back, the government had released data on FDI inflow. For the first five months of the fiscal or between April and August this

year, the country had received FDI of \$35.73 billion. According to the government, it was the highest ever FDI for the first five months of a financial year. The inflow in the first five months of this year was 13 per cent higher than \$31.60 billion invested in the same period last year.

Of this, FDI equity inflow accounted for \$27.10 billion. It was also the highest ever for the first five months of a financial year and 16 per cent more compared to \$23.35 billion in the first five months of 2019-20.

As per UNCTAD's report, global FDI flows fell 49 per cent in the first half of 2020 compared to the same period of 2019.

Developed economies saw the biggest fall of 75 per cent, to an estimated \$98 billion. Meanwhile, developing economies witnessed 16 per cent decrease in FDI flows mainly due to resilient investment in China. Flows decreased by just 12 per cent in Asia and developing countries in Asia accounted for half of the global FDI.

Harley's exit paves way for another US bike co



MICHAEL GONSALVES PUNE, OCT. 27

With the exit of American bike maker Harley-Davidson from India, it has opened up an opportunity of sorts for another iconic American motorcycle manufacturer Indian Motorcycle.

The company has announced its 2021 model line-up which includes all variants of the Scout, Chief, Chieftain, FTR

1200, Challenger, Roadmaster and Springfield for the Indian market.

Although the company has not given a concrete timeline for the launch of these motorcycles, it would start retailing the B56 compliant models before December.

"We are excited to bring the new and improved lineup of Indian Motorcycle in India," Lalit Sharma, Country

Manager at Polaris India, said.

"Our 2021 line-up will incorporate several new additions and upgraded features which will definitely add the charm and get the attraction of the riders," he said.

Indian Motorcycle also said that it will open up the order books for the new model line-up shortly, which means one could expect bookings to begin during Diwali.

HIRING | POLICY

46 per cent of employers are keener to increase their apprentice pool

Firms look at hiring apprentice to offset staff shortage

New Delhi, Oct. 27: An increasing number of employers are looking at apprenticeship to offset the workforce scarcity that they have been facing following the coronavirus-induced reverse migration, says a report.

According to Team-Lease's Apprenticeship Outlook Report, 46 per cent of employers are keener to increase their apprentice pool in the period July to December 2020. The net apprenticeship outlook for this half year stands at 33 per cent.

The report contains insights on employer sentiment in relation to apprentice hiring for the period July 2020 to December 2020. Analysis is based on the historical data of apprentice hiring and findings from a survey of 600 employers across 18 sectors and 14 cities.

"One of the primary drivers for this positive momentum is



that more employers, about 32 per cent, have been looking at apprenticeship to offset the workforce scarcity that they have been facing due to reverse

migration that has happened because of Covid-19," the report said.

Additionally, about 25 per cent companies have also been hir-

ing apprentices to meet the increased demand for products and services due to the pandemic, it added.

"Despite the predicament that the current pandemic has brought, the overall sentiment amongst companies to hire apprentices has been very positive. While in the initial months of the lockdown, we witnessed a dip, the hiring intent has bounced back quite aggressively, especially since June/July," said Sumit Kumar, Vice President - NETAP, TeamLease Skill University.

Kumar further said that more employers are continuing to accept apprenticeship as a solution to create a skilled productive workforce. Nearly 78 per cent employers find their apprentices to be productive.

"... the current pandemic has made many realise the potential

of investing in apprentices and building a talent pool, especially local talent to mitigate workforce scarcity in such situations. Close to 24 per cent organisations have increased their apprentice hiring during the pandemic," Kumar added.

The top sectors where apprentices will be in demand are healthcare & pharmaceuticals (42 per cent), manufacturing & engineering (40 per cent), retail (38 per cent) and ecommerce (38 per cent).

The report analysed the gender parity in hiring apprentices. Around 34 per cent of the companies interviewed have expressed a gender neutral approach and openness to include even the LGBTQ+ community as well; 43 per cent companies prefer male candidates and 23 per cent prefer females.

— PTI

SHORT TAKES

Fifa prez Infantino positive for Covid

Lausanne: Fifa president Gianni Infantino has contracted coronavirus, the world's governing body announced on Tuesday. The 50-year-old has mild symptoms and will remain in isolation for a further 10 days. "All people who came into contact with the Fifa President during the last few days have been informed accordingly and they are being requested to take the necessary steps," the body said. "Fifa sincerely wishes President Infantino a speedy recovery," it added. Infantino's last public appearances was at Fifa's Compliance Summit which ended on October 16 when all attendees were present via video. Cases, hospitalisations and deaths from Covid-19 in the body's base, Switzerland, have doubled from one week to the next throughout October. — AFP

India call feels surreal: Varun

Sharjah: "It feels surreal," said the architect-turned-mystery spinner Varun Chakravathy after he got a maiden India call-up for the T20 series in Australia following his exploits for Kolkata Knight Riders in the ongoing IPL.

The 29-year-old, who only started taking his spin bowling seriously in 2018, said he was not expecting to be picked in the national team. He has played only 12 T20s and featured in a lone First-Class game. "After the match got over I got to know (of my selection into the Indian team). I keep using the same word again and again, it feels surreal," he told BCCI.tv after the game against Kings XI Punjab on Monday night.

"My basic goal was to play in the team regularly and perform and contribute to their wins. Hopefully I'll be able to do the same for India." — PTI

De Villiers set to miss Big Bash

Dubai: The versatile AB de Villiers has decided to skip the Big Bash League (BBL) this year due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the upcoming birth of his third child but is open to return in future due to "unfinished business" at Brisbane Heat.

The two factors prompted the former South African skipper to pull out of the T20 league. The 36-year-old is currently playing in the IPL in the UAE. "We are expecting our latest child very soon and with a young, growing family, and the uncertainty around travel and conditions due to Covid-19, we reluctantly decided it wasn't going to be this season," de Villiers said in a statement. "The Heat were great to us last season and I am very open to returning to the club in future." — PTI

Biggies pull out of Lanka league

Colombo: The inaugural Lankan Premier League (LPL) have been dealt a severe blow with five overseas players, including Faf du Plessis, Andre Russell and David Miller, pulling out of the T20 tournament less than a week after they were drafted into various franchises. While South African trio of Miller, du Plessis and Dawid Malan are unavailable because of the limited-overs series against England, West Indian Russell has pulled out due to a knee injury. — PTI

Live on TV

CRICKET

IPL: Mumbai Indians vs Royal Challengers Bangalore from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

FOOTBALL

Champions League: Krasnodar vs Chelsea from 11.25 pm on Sony Ten 2; Istanbul Basaksehir vs Paris Saint Germain from 11.25 pm on Sony Six; Sevilla vs Rennes from 1.30 am (Thursday) on Sony Ten 3; Dortmund vs Zenit from 1.30 am (Thursday) on Sony Six; Juventus vs Barcelona from 1.30 am (Thursday) on Sony Ten 2; Manchester United vs Leipzig from 1.30 am (Thursday) on Sony Ten 1

WWE NXT

Bouts from 5.30 am (Thursday) on Sony Ten 1

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SHAKTIMAN SAHA!

Wriddhiman scores 45-ball 87 as Sunrisers stay in play-off race

SCORECARD

Sunrisers Hyderabad: D. Warner c Patel b Ashwin 66, W. Saha c Iyer b Nortje 87, M. Pandey (not out) 44, K. Williamson (not out) 11. Extras (lb-7, wd-4) 11. **Total (for 2 wkts, in 20 overs) 219.** FoW: 1-107, 2-170. **Bowling:** A. Nortje 4-0-37-1, K. Rabada 4-0-54-0, R. Ashwin 3-0-35-1, A. Patel 4-0-36-0, T. Deshpande 3-0-35-0, M. Stoinis 2-0-15-0.

Delhi Capitals: A. Rahane lbw b Rashid Khan 26, S. Dhawan c Warner b Sandeep Sharma 0, M. Stoinis c Warner b Nadeem 5, S. Hetmyer b Rashid Khan 16, R. Pant c sub (S.P. Goswami) b Sandeep Sharma 36, S. Iyer c Williamson b Shankar 7, A. Patel c sub (PK Garg) b Rashid Khan 1, K. Rabada b Natarajan 3, R. Ashwin c Abdul Samad b Holder 7, T. Deshpande (not out) 20, A. Nortje c sub (PK Garg) b Natarajan 1. Extras (lb-4, w-5) 9. **Total (in 19 overs) 151.** FoW: 1-1, 2-14, 3-54, 4-55, 5-78, 6-83, 7-103, 8-103, 9-125, 10-131. **Bowling:** Sandeep Sharma 4-0-27-2, S. Nadeem 1-0-8-1, J. Holder 4-0-46-1, Rashid Khan 4-0-7-3, T. Natarajan 4-0-26-1, V. Shankar 1.5-0-11-1, D. Warner 0.1-0-2-0.

Jason Holder, collecting 22 runs in the sixth over as Delhi reached 54 for two at the end of the Powerplay overs.

However, Rashid dealt Delhi with twin blows, getting rid of both Rahane and Hetmyer in the seventh over. Skipper Shreyas Iyer (7) was next to depart as wickets continued to tumble at regular intervals. — PTI

IPL POINTS TABLE

Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
Mumbai Indians	11	7	4	0	14	+1.252
Royal Challengers Bangalore	11	7	4	0	14	+0.092
Delhi Capitals	12	7	5	0	14	+0.030
Kings XI Punjab	12	6	6	0	12	-0.049
Kolkata Knight Riders	12	6	6	0	12	-0.479
Sunrisers Hyderabad	12	5	7	0	10	+0.396
Rajasthan Royals	12	5	7	0	10	-0.505
Chennai Super Kings	12	4	8	0	6	-0.602

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



Wriddhiman Saha of Sunrisers Hyderabad in action during his 87 against Delhi Capitals in an IPL match in Dubai on Tuesday. Hyderabad won by 88 runs. — BCCI

Rohit doubtful as MI run into RCB

Abu Dhabi, Oct. 27: Rohit Sharma is likely to miss his third game in a row when Mumbai Indians face Royal Challengers Bangalore here on Wednesday with both teams aiming to secure their spot in the IPL playoffs.

While Mumbai are sitting on top of the table despite their eight-wicket hammering by Rajasthan Royals with 14 points, Virat Kohli-led RCB too remain on 14 following their loss to Chennai Super Kings on Sunday.

A win for either side on Wednesday should be enough to take it to the play-offs.

Rohit's fitness has become a subject of unwanted attention ahead of the game. Having missed the last two games due to a hamstring injury, Mumbai Indians skipper returned to the nets on Monday, a day when he was not named in the India squad for the Australia series.

There is still no conclusive update on his fitness from either Mumbai Indians or the BCCI.

In Rohit's absence, Mumbai would persist with both Saurabh Tiwary and Ishan Kishan, who has



Rohit Sharma

played some scintillating knocks.

Quinton De Kock (374 runs) had a rare failure against Rajasthan and he would be keen to make an impact. Kishan (298 runs) and Suryakumar Yadav (283 runs) are among the leading run-scorers who can go on the offensive against any attack.

For RCB, Kohli (415 runs) would like to continue his splendid run in the tournament. Australian Aaron Finch (236 runs), young Devdutt Padikkal (343 runs) and AB de Villiers (324 runs) need to be more consistent and support their skipper.

De Villiers has shown time and again, why he is regarded as one of the best T20 batsmen by turning the clock back on few occasions. — PTI

NUMBERS GAME

HEAD TO HEAD

OVERALL: ● Matches: 26 ● Hyderabad: 16 ● Delhi: 9 ● Tied: 1 (Royal Challengers Bangalore beat Mumbai Indian in Super over after match ended in a tie)

MEETING IN 2019

- Mumbai Indians beat Royal Challengers Bangalore by 6 runs in Bangalore.
- Mumbai Indians beat Royal Challengers Bangalore by 5 wickets in Mumbai.

MEETING IN 2020

- Royal Challengers beat Mumbai Indian in Super over after match ended in a tie at Dubai.

FOR THE RECORD

- Virat Kohli, who has smashed 296 sixes in 277 innings of 292 matches, needs four sixes to become fourth Indian and 24th batsman overall to complete a triple century of sixes in Twenty-20 cricket.
- Hardik Pandya scored an unbeaten 60 off 21 balls with seven sixes and two fours in the previous match against Rajasthan Royals in Abu Dhabi.

— S. PERVEZ QAISAR

Mandeep mental skill impresses KL

SINGH RECALLS LATE FATHER'S WISH AFTER UNBEATEN FIFTY

Sharjah, Oct. 27: Mandeep Singh scored a match-winning 66 two days after losing his father, and Kings XI Punjab skipper K.L. Rahul feels the mental toughness shown by the opener has rubbed off on the entire squad.

Mandeep made an unbeaten 66 against Kolkata Knight Riders on Monday to help KXIP record five wins in a row.

The opening batsman, playing in the absence of injured Mayank Agarwal, lost his father last week and attended his funeral via a video call.

"It's so hard when you are away from your family. With the bubble, you don't have the close ones. The kind of toughness he (Mandeep) has shown has rubbed off on other boys as well.

"The way he played today, it makes everyone emotional. He's gone through a rough time, just to put his hand up, be

there and finish the game for the team would make him proud and make his father proud," Rahul said at the post-match presentation ceremony.

With wrist-spinners Murugan Ashwin and Ravi Bishnoi bowling well in tandem, Rahul

said the credit for that goes to head coach Anil Kumble. "When you have Anil Kumble as the coach, it's not surprising that we are playing with two leg-spinners. It's something that he had in his mind even before the IPL started.

"He always kept telling me that towards the second half or at some point that two leg-spinners is always an aggressive option," he said.

KXIP have won all their games since Chris Gayle returned to the side after sitting out in the first half of the tournament.

"It was a very hard decision not to play him (Chris) because he was batting really well. This is the hungriest I have ever seen him in the last 7-8 years that I have played with him. He is running his ones and twos, so that's refreshing.

"He's always positive, always pushing the youngsters." — PTI

MANDEEP GOES GAGA OVER GAYLE

Sharjah, Oct. 27: Kings XI Punjab opener Mandeep Singh was in awe of Chris Gayle's power-hitting against Kolkata Knight Riders, and described the Jamaican as the "greatest T20 player" of the game.

Casing 150 on Monday night, Gayle, who was overlooked and was also ill in the first phase of the IPL, showed why he is called the 'Universe Boss' during his innings of 51 off 29 balls.

Gayle's and Mandeep shared 100 runs in 10.1 overs to help KXIP jump to the fourth spot by registering their fifth win on the trot. "Chris (Gayle) makes the game so easy and I told him that you should never retire. I've never seen him struggle, and he's probably the greatest T20 player ever," Mandeep said. — PTI

Gavaskar curious about Rohit's injury

Dubai, Oct. 27: Former India skipper Sunil Gavaskar has called for more transparency on the status of limited-overs vice-captain Rohit Sharma's hamstring injury after he was seen practising at the Mumbai Indians' nets within hours of being left out of the squad for an upcoming tour of Australia.

The BCCI did not throw much light on Rohit's fitness and just stated that it is monitoring his progress while announcing the three teams for the Australia tour on Monday. On the same day, Rohit was seen practicing at the Mumbai Indians nets.

"We are talking about the Test matches, which are a month and a half way. What actually is the problem with him will help everybody," he added. The tour of Australia comprises three T20 Internationals, as many ODIs and four Tests. The series is scheduled to start on November 27. — PTI



Sunil Gavaskar

kind of injury it is," Gavaskar told IPL broadcaster Star Sports after the game between Kings XI Punjab and Kolkata Knight Riders on Monday.

"I think a little bit of transparency, a little bit of openness about what actually is the problem with him will help everybody," he added.

The tour of Australia comprises three T20 Internationals, as many ODIs and four Tests. The series is scheduled to start on November 27. — PTI

Roma level 3 times in Milan stalemate

Milan, Oct. 27: Zlatan Ibrahimovic scored twice but AC Milan dropped their first points of the Serie A season as Roma came from behind to draw 3-3 at the San Siro on Monday.

In a game played in an empty stadium after the imposition of a coronavirus curfew, Milan were without goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma and young Norwegian striker Jens Petter Hauge, who the club announced earlier on Monday had tested positive for Covid-19.

Veteran Romanian goalkeeper Ciprian Tatarusanu, who joined Milan in September, made his debut in place of Donnarumma, and was twice caught on his line from corners and also spilled a shot in the build up to Roma's second-half penalty.

Ibrahimovic struck after

just two minutes, running onto a diagonal pass behind the defence from Rafael Leao and poking the ball past goalkeeper Antonio Mirante.

Milan's problems at corners were not entirely the fault of Tatarusanu. Edin Dzeko was unmarked in front of goal when he headed his team's first equaliser after 13 minutes.

Milan started the second half as they had the first. Portuguese winger Leao outpaced his fullback and laid the ball back to Belgian Alexis Saelemaekers who guided a shot in from 10 yards.

French midfielder Jordan Veretout levelled from the penalty spot after 70 minutes. Ibrahimovic completed his third double in three league appearances with a penalty after 78 minutes, but had an unwitting assist as Roma levelled for a third time. — AFP

Son, Kane to the rescue for Spurs

Burnley, Oct. 27: Son Heung-min pounced to steal a 1-0 win for lacklustre Tottenham on Monday, linking up with Harry Kane yet again as Jose Mourinho's side climbed to fifth in the Premier League table.

All of the traditional "big six" clubs have dropped unlikely points in the early weeks of the season and Spurs looked set to leave Turf Moor frustrated.

But South Korea forward Son scored his eighth league goal of the season in the 76th minute, heading in from close range after a headed pass from Kane.

Spurs now have 11 points from six games, just two points behind leaders Everton after their third win of the season.

Mourinho hailed his attacking stars, who have now combined for 29 English Premier League goals — only Didier



Tottenham's Son Heung-min (on ground) scores against Burnley their English Premier League match at Turf Moor Stadium in Burnley on Monday. — AP

Drogba and Frank Lampard have managed more, with 36.

"It is an understanding that comes from Mauricio (Pochettino's) time," said

Mourinho. "I don't want all the credit myself, let's share with Mauricio.

"They play together for a long time, probably a different way because Harry



is not always a nine now. "What pleases me more about them both is that they are two top players but close friends, no jealousy, they both play for

THE RESULTS

Brighton (Livermore 40-og)	1
West Brom (Grant 83)	1
Burnley Tottenham (Son 76)	0 1

the team."

RELIEF

The hard-earned three points will be a huge relief to Mourinho, whose side looked like world beaters earlier this month when they hammered Manchester United 6-1 before blowing a 3-0 lead against West Ham.

Tottenham's attacking momentum vanished at Turf Moor, where they struggled to make an impression against Sean Dyche's side, who remain in the relegation zone, without a win this season. — AFP