

SHORT TAKES

JAGAN, NAIDU
GREET BIDEN AND
KAMALADC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 8

Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy and leader of opposition N. Chandrababu Naidu wished winners of the US elections. Mr Reddy congratulated Kamala Harris for her winning the US Elections 2020 to become the first woman Vice-President in the history of United States.

Taking to Twitter Mr Jagan said, “Democrats or Republicans, politics apart, we are happy and proud to have Kamala Harris, someone of Indian origin as the Vice-President of America. Congratulations and best wishes. May God bless you and guide you,” he tweeted.

Telugu Desam National president and leader of Opposition Chandrababu Naidu on Sunday extended his greetings to US President-elect Joe Biden and Vice-President-elect Kamala Harris on their victory in the elections.

RAILWAYS ISSUES
ADVISORY TO
FESTIVALDC CORRESPONDENT
VISAKHAPATNAM, NOV. 8

The Waltair Division of East Coast Railway has sent an advisory to the passengers travelling by trains during this festive season. The Division is operating special trains during the festival season and also running Covid-19 special trains for the convenience of the public. With the increase of train services, safety measures also enhanced at all the railway stations over the Division, a release said on Sunday.

The Division took several measures to combat the pandemic which include controlled entry and exit to stations, thermal screening, strict observation of the use of masks and social distancing, advising all the passengers to report to the station in advance and allowing only confirmed ticket holders into the station to board trains.

It is also advised to all the passengers boarding at Visakhapatnam railway station with confirmed tickets to board train at platform No. 8 side (Gnanapuram) and exit from platform No. 1 side for easy crowd management and observation of Covid-19 protocol.

400-KG STALE
MEAT DESTROYED
IN VIJAYAWADADC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 8

Vijayawada Municipal Commission officials destroyed 400 kg stale meat seized from two mutton shops at Vijayawada on Sunday. The VMC and veterinary officials team made surprise checks on a few mutton shops at Gollapalem Gattu near Sai Baba temple and found that stale meat weighing about 400 kgs was stored in two different shops owned by one Sai and Sambasiva Rao.

The meat was stored in unhygienic condition and worms were seen in the rotten meat as the freezer was not working properly.

'INCULCATE
JOGGING HABIT
IN CHILDREN'DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 8

The parents told to inculcate the habit of running and jogging early morning to their children to make them physically fit and healthy. The 5k run, 10k run and 21k run conducted by Vijayawada Runners evoked good response from the youth and children in Vijayawada on Sunday. Krishna district collector A. Md. Imtiaz flagged off the run at the camp office.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr Imtiaz said marathon run is a very good for the health and pointed out that physical exercise and running help people stay fit and active. He said the parents have to inculcate the habit of running and jogging early morning to their children to make them physically fit and healthy.

Vijayawada runners founder Mani Deepak said the organisation is conducting a running event in Vijayawada the last four days. He said the running helps reduce blood pressure levels and will increase the immunity levels.

Ignoring Covid rule, people
crowd at AP beach resorts

Beach road from Coast Battery to Bhimili saw vehicular movement

K.M.P. PATNAIK | DC
VISAKHAPATNAM, NOV. 8

Ignoring the Covid-19 safety protocols, thousands of people thronged various beaches in Visakhapatnam city and the Sunday markets. The crowds were more atop picturesque Kailasagiri hill resort and its foothill Tenneti Park where people had a glimpse of the Bangladesh vessel that ran aground the sea.

However, the Indira Gandhi Zoological Park, Kambalakonda eco-tourism park, INS Kursura Museum and TU 142 were not yet opened for the public. Otherwise, the crowds would have been more, VMRDA officials said.

There were people, including tourists from outside, were seen at the Rushikonda beach, where water sports resumed, RK Beach, Bhimili, Yarada and Borra Caves. However, there were no significant visitors to Araku Valley this Sunday.

The entire 30km beach road from Coast Battery to Bhimili saw constant vehicular movement. Many were seen at Erramatti Dibbalu and



Youngsters take a selfie with the Lord Shiva Parvathi statues during their visit to Kailasagiri Hill Park in Visakhapatnam on Sunday. Most of the tourist spots seen packed with the public as they enjoy their weekend.

— K. MURALIKRISHNA

Thotlakonda on the way. Tourist officials said due to sudden fall in the temperature people came out

of their homes. The crowds will swell with the beginning of Kartika Masam, the following day

of Diwali festival which is being celebrated next Saturday. There was a congregation of people at

Fishing Harbour market, Rythu Bazaar and meat and fish vending shops during the morning hours.

Medical staff crunch hampers Anantapur GGH

NAGABHUSHANAM
HOSKOTE | DC
ANANTAPUR, NOV. 8

Lack of adequate staff, including the absence of heads, has badly hampered services in the Government General Hospital and the recently established super specialty hospital.

The general hospital has been without a regular superintendent even during the Covid-19 crisis. In a belated move, the medical and health department posted a senior doctor from Kurnool medical col-

lege as superintendent three days back. However, in a bizarre twist, the official received transfer orders to Kadapa medical college even before he took charge here.

With the local doctors expressing unwillingness to act as in-charge superintendent, the general hospital faces staff crunch at various levels. The general hospital gets more than 2,000 patients at OP ward every day while patients from the district and surrounding Karnataka depend on it for emergency medical facilities.

● The general hospital authorities had sent proposals seeking filing up of 179 professors and assistant professors posts apart from 280 nursing and non-technical staff.

● Anantapur general hospital is flooded with patients

It may be noted that Anantapur general hospital is flooded with patients and unable to provide quality medical aid forcing the critical patients to rush to Bengaluru.

Meanwhile, the super specialty hospital was sanctioned at Guntur as part of post-bifurcation projects to Andhra Pradesh. It was to cater to those in the coastal areas while the Anantapur hospital was to meet the medical needs of Rayalaseema region.

Upgrading of the Government Medical College was taken up under 'Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY)' under phase-III. The super specialty hospital was designed to accommodate

eight special wings-cardiology, neurology, nephrology, medical gastroenterology and surgical gastroenterology.

Sources said the general hospital authorities had sent proposals seeking filing up of 179 professors and assistant professors posts apart from 280 nursing and non-technical staff.

CPI State secretary K. Ramakrishna demanded the government to concentrate on filling all vacancies to ensure quality medical facilities to the people of Rayalaseema.

Covid positive cases
falling down in APDC CORRESPONDENT
ANANTAPUR, NOV. 8

Even as teachers and students, along with other suspected and contacted cases, are being tested for Covid-19, several cases were reportedly falling in Rayalaseema region as against outbreak of epidemic at the initial stage. A big number of cases reported in all parts of Rayalaseema region during the initial stage.

On Saturday, about 61 new positive cases were reported in Anantapur district with 1,034 active cases. About 8,259 samples were collected from different parts of the district.

Official records revealed a total of 65,469 with Covid-19 and 63,862 patients recovered after being treated at hospitals, quarantine centres and home isolation.

A total of 473 Covid-19 patients died, and two patients died on Saturday in the district. Experts observed tests were being conducted at all parts of the district along with priority for all teachers and students of 9th, 10th and other higher studies after schools and colleges opened. The quarantine centres at Sri Krishnadevaraya University and other educational institutions were closed in the view of less number of positive from all parts of the district.

Kurnool district has been reported with very less number of cases for the past few days though Kurnool had witnessed horrific conditions during the initial stage of the Covid-19 outbreak. Only 37 positive cases were reported in Kurnool district on Saturday along with 300 active cases.

Probe will be completed
in three days, says DIG

FROM PAGE 1

In the video, the family said they had nothing to do with alleged theft of ₹70,000 from an autorickshaw and missing jewellery from a gold shop. DIG Venkatarami Reddy said investigations in this regard will be completed within the next three days.

Jagan Mohan Reddy had ordered a thorough probe into the matter. Following the suicide, there had been widespread resentment within the minority community in Nandyal. Representations had been made to home minister Sucharitha and DGP Gowtham Sawang on the issue.

Following this, the home minister constituted a three-member committee with IG Sankara Brata Bagchi, Guntur additional SP Arif Hafiz and Allagadda DSP Pothuraju to inquire into the inci-

dent.

Deputy Chief Minister Amzath Basha is expected to visit Nandyal on Monday. TD MLA N. MD. Farooq has demanded a thorough probe into the incident and action against the “real culprits”.

Salam Nyaya Porata Committee, formed after the suicide of Abdus Salam and his family, alleged that crime branch constable Gangadhar was behind the suicide and his services must be terminated. Demanding a judicial probe, the committee said it will be holding a dharna on Monday protesting against the highhandedness of police.

AP Muslim Personal Law Board president Altaf Raza, said, “People belonging to the minority community are thanking the CM for intervening in the way he did and sending top IPS officers to probe the

matter in a manner that was never seen before. He has instilled confidence in the minority community by being there for us, just like his father was there for us.”

Syed Sami Hussainy, president, Hindustan United Muslims, thanked the CM in an open letter the organisation released earlier on Sunday. He said, “We thank the CM for not only intervening and deploying top officers but also ensuring that the accused are arrested and not limiting the action to a mere suspension. I'd like to tell our minority brothers that the CM is with you and there's nothing that one needs to fear in this state.” The police personnel were booked under IPC 323 (causing hurt), 324 (using dangerous weapons or means) & 306 (abetment to suicide) read with Section 34.

AG refuses to
relook at Jagan
contempt case

New Delhi: Attorney General K.K. Venugopal has refused to reconsider his November 2 decision declining consent to BJP leader and lawyer Ashwini Upadhyay to initiate contempt proceedings against the Andhra Pradesh chief minister and his principal adviser for making allegations against judges.

The topmost law officer, in his reply to Upadhyay's letter seeking reconsideration of the decision, reiterated his stand saying that the issue of contempt was between Chief Justice of India (CJI) S.A. Bobde and Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy and his principal adviser Ajeya Kallam.

Mr Venugopal on Saturday also said in the response that the lawyer was not precluded from raising this issue on his own before apex court judges or during the hearing of a PIL filed by him only seeking the lifetime ban on convicted lawmakers.

Mr Upadhyay, on November 5, had urged Mr Venugopal to have a relook on the decision and said, “I humbly request you to peruse these points (particularly the fact that the question of contempt is not pending anywhere else) and kindly reconsider the granting of consent to my request.

“This is an issue of great importance at a time when our judiciary continues to be besieged by attacks, and a strong stand needs to be taken by those of us who are a part of the institution,” he said.

In the November 7 reply, Mr Venugopal referred to his earlier response and said, “The very crux of the alleged contempt lies in the contents of the letter written by Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy to the Chief Justice of India, and thus open to the the Supreme Court to take up the matter of contempt suo motu as provided by the

Contempt of Courts Act, and the rules made thereunder.”

“Given that the CJI is seized of the matter, it would not be appropriate for me to grant consent and preclude the determination of the Chief Justice of India on the matter. As you are no doubt aware, contempt is a matter between court and contemnor, and no person as of right can insist upon the initiation of contempt proceedings,” he said.

Mr Venugopal said his decision does not preclude Upadhyay from bringing these facts to the notice of the judges of the Supreme Court with a prayer for initiation of suo motu action.

“You may exercise this right by way of information placed on the administrative side or by bringing it to the attention of the court during the hearing of ...where you are already a petitioner in person,” Mr Venugopal said in his letter.

Taking the consent of the law officer is a condition precedent for initiating criminal contempt against a person.

In an unprecedented move, the chief minister, on October 6, had written to the CJI alleging that the Andhra Pradesh High Court was being used to “destabilise and topple my democratically elected government”.

Mr Upadhyay then sought consent of the Attorney General for initiating the contempt against the CM and his adviser.

Mr Venugopal, on November 2, termed as “prima facie contumacious” the conduct of Mr Reddy and Mr Kallam for making allegations against the judiciary, but had declined consent to Mr Upadhyay to initiate contempt against them on the grounds that CJI Bobde was seized of the matter.

The plea for relook has also been declined. —PTI

NHRC orders
action in 8 weeksMD ILYAS | DC
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 8

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has directed the Chief Secretary and DGP to take necessary actions in eight weeks in the Amaravati handcuffing incident.

It may be noted that on November 24, the police handcuffed seven farmers while shifting them to the district jail in Guntur from Narasaraopet sub-jail.

AP Civil Liberties Association state president Muppalla Subba Rao lodged a complaint with NHRC objecting to the handcuffing and NHRC issued orders in its response.

Subba Rao said that the arrested farmers were demanding that Amaravati be the solo capital of the state but the

● It may be noted that on November 24, the police handcuffed seven farmers while shifting them to the district jail in Guntur from Narasaraopet sub-jail.

● Police had violated laws by handcuffing

police arrested them and further registered cases under SC, ST Atrocity (Prevention) Act.

He said that the police had violated laws by handcuffing as this was a severe violation of human rights. He said that APCLA filed a petition in NHRC about the humiliation meted out to farmers.

Subba Rao said that NHRC issued directions to chief secretary and APDGP to take action in the handcuffing incident within eight weeks.

DAILY | RITUAL TTD told to adopt Dubai airport model for providing darshan to elders

Reviving sevas at Tirumala up to Centre

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, NOV. 8

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) executive officer (EO) K. S. Jawahar Reddy has made it clear that revival of arjitha sevas for devotees and other privileged darshans at Lord Venkateswara Temple in Tirumala will entirely depend on guidelines to be issued by Union ministry of home affairs.

Answering calls from pilgrims during his maiden “Dial-Your-EO” programme at Annamaiah Bhavan in Tirumala on Sunday, Jawahar Reddy said

“Unlock 6.0 guidelines are still awaited from the Union government. As a result, no decision has yet

been taken as of now to revive arjitha sevas and provide darshan to senior citizens, physically challenged, infants and children.

A few callers told the EO that kalyana mandapams located on Tirumala need proper maintenance. Jawahar Reddy immediately instructed officials concerned to sort out the matter.

Another caller Ramachandra Rao from Hyderabad suggested to EO that TTD adopt the Dubai Airport Model for providing darshan to senior citizens without making them wait for hours together for darshan. Jawahar Reddy said officers will examine the possibility of implementing the same in Tirumala.

Sunil Babu from Visakhapatnam said earlier, the timings of blood donation at Aswini Hospital in Tirumala used to be from 6 am to 6 pm. Now, the timings have been reduced to between 9 am and 12 pm.

The EO said this could be due to existing Covid norms. However, he assured that the matter will be discussed and a decision taken on the issue.

Dora Babu from Vedurukuppam requested EO to reopen the TTD-run Shraavanam School, which is meant for deaf and dumb children.

It has remained closed since the past five months and the differently-abled children are facing serious problems.



Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams

Jawahar Reddy said, “We have already commenced online classes for students

of other institutes. Since this is a special school, we will take a decision soon.”

OTHER STORIES

YOUTH THRASHED FOR RAPE BID ON MINOR GIRL

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, NOV. 8

An unknown person was severely thrashed by locals at Tirumala Nagar under Alipiri police station limits here on Sunday after he allegedly tried to rape a minor girl, police said.

According to the Police, the parents had gone out leaving their 8-year-old daughter alone in the house on Sunday afternoon. Finding the front door open, an unknown person, who is aged about 30 years, barged into the house and took the girl into the bathroom, where he tried to molest the girl.

Hearing the girl scream, her neighbours caught hold of the man and dragged him out of the house. Further, they severely thrashed him after tying him to an electric pole. On being informed, police rushed to the spot and took the man into custody.

Alipiri CI B. Devendra Kumar said, based on the complaint lodged by the victim's parents, Alipiri police have registered a case against the unknown person under POC SO Act and the girl, who sustained injuries during the incident, was taken to a hospital for treatment.

Though police are yet to confirm the identity of the accused, he was seen claiming his name as Muneer Basha, an auto-driver and a native of Tirupati, in the video that was shot when the girl's neighbours thrashing the youngster.

WOMAN COP KILLED IN FRONT OF HER CHILDREN

DC CORRESPONDENT
VISAKHAPATNAM, NOV. 8

The woman constable Ch. Durga Bhavani working at the Nakkapalle police station was strangled to death by her husband Simhadri in front of their two children on Friday night. Simhadri surrendered to the village revenue officer on Sunday and was later brought to the police station for questioning. Circle inspector K. Vijay Kumar said that Simhadri confessed to his crime, stating he suspected her fidelity.

Durga Bhavani, working as a receptionist at the police station, came home at about 9 pm. Simhadri entered into an argument and wanted to check her mobile phone for social media and call logs. When she refused to part with her mobile phone, Simhadri became furious and strangled her with a nylon rope which he had already hidden in his pocket. Later, he tied the nylon rope to the ceiling fan to create a suicide scene. He warned his 12-year-old daughter and eight-year-old son, who saw his father strangling their mother, not to reveal the incident to the police or the family members. Around 1.30 am, he went to ASI Santosh Kumar, his immediate neighbour in the police quarters and informed him that his wife hanged herself.

ILLICIT LIQUOR FOUND IN MANGROVES

DC CORRESPONDENT
KAKINADA, NOV. 8

The Special Enforcement Bureau officials and Forest Department officials conducted raids on Coringa Mangrove Forests and Bhyravapalem and found 17 Bhattis with iron drums at a single location and 73 full drums containing 14,600 liters of wash and 40 empty drums and total worth of. The officials said that it is a record in finding such a huge quantity of illicit liquor material. The SEB Circle Inspector D.S.S.V. Prasad said that the joggery juice was destroyed.

19-YEAR-OLD DIES AS TANKER HIT HIS BIKE

DC CORRESPONDENT
KAKINADA, NOV. 8

A 19-year-old P. Ravindra of Gopavaram village in Uppalaguptam Mandal died in a road accident on Sunday afternoon. According to Uppalaguptam police, while Ravindra was going on a bike, a speeding oil tanker which was overtaking his bike, hit him. The youth fell under the front wheel of the oil tanker. When he was rushed to a private hospital at Amalapuram, the doctors declared him brought dead.

Central team to assess extent of crop damage

Groundnut was cultivated in more than 7 lakh hectares in Seema

HOSKOTE
NAGABHUSHANAM | DC
ANANTAPUR, NOV. 8

Untimely and incessant rains have led to massive failure of groundnut crop, causing heavy loss to farmers of Rayalaseema region, particularly those in Anantapur district. This is the second consecutive year that farmers have suffered a massive loss. Kurnool, Chittoor and Kadapa districts have also suffered, though not as much as Anantapur.

An inter-ministerial central team will inspect damaged crops in various parts of Anantapur district on Monday. The team is scheduled to visit Ragulapadu, Vajrakarur in Vajrakaruru mandal and Gulipalyam, Nakkaladoddi and Patha Kothacheruvu in Guntakal mandal.

The team will also interact with farmers and report the situation with district officials.

Groundnut was cultivated over than seven lakh hectares in the Rayalaseema region. But continuous rains when the crop was in its peak growth



Sweet oranges being loaded into a truck in Kadapa on Sunday. After a long wait the prices of oranges have increased making the farmers happy. — DC

have caused a massive damage. Agriculture department has assessed that 2.10 lakh metric tonnes of crop has been lost, corresponding with a monetary loss of ₹1,107 crore.

Official reports reveal that 33 per cent of groundnut crop over 5 lakh hectares has been damaged due to rains between July and September.

Manjunath Gowda from Amidalagondi in Madakasira mandal

lamented that the crop has been badly damaged with the nut being of poor quality. "We are unable to use the groundnut seed even for own cooking purposes," he said.

Seasoned farmers say climate-based insurance of crops is not suitable for Anantapur district. Normally, crop insurance is applicable only when monsoon fails, but not if excessive rainfall damages the crop.

"Had the groundnut crop survived, farmers could have performed the marriages of their daughters. Now, they will have to wait for another season", farmers' association leader Dhanapuram Venkatrami Reddy observed.

Former minister Kalava Srinivasulu demanded that the government help farmers overcome their suffering, as they have lost their crop for the second successive season.

CHEJERLA FOR PROBE INTO MISUSE OF NREGS FUNDS

DC CORRESPONDENT
NELLORE, NOV. 8

Alleging large scale misuse of the funds of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), TD general secretary Ch. Venkateswara Reddy demanded a probe into the works related to the development of layouts under the scheme to allot house sites to the poor.

Speaking to the media in Kovur on Sunday, he said that the Centre had released ₹269 crore to the state under MGNREGS to develop 2,091 layouts in 3,574 acres for the distribution of house sites to the poor.

He alleged that the ruling party leaders are taking the government for a ride by jacking up the price of the lands identified for allocation of house sites to the poor. Mr Reddy alleged demanding a comprehensive inquiry into the misuse of funds.

AVINASH P.
SUBRAMANYAM | DC
TIRUPATI, NOV. 8

Panchayat raj minister Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy on Sunday led the padayatra in Sadum mandal of Chittoor district to mark the third anniversary of the Praja Sankalpa Yatra taken out by CM Jagan Mohan Reddy before the general elections in 2019.

Before commencing the rally, the minister paid floral tributes to former CM late Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy's statue at the Sadum bus stand amid thousands of his followers.

CM to launch Phase II works of Somasila project today

DC CORRESPONDENT
NELLORE, NOV. 8

Arrangements are in full swing to set foundation stone to commence the works of the most sought after Somasila High-Level Lift Canal Phase II at Krishnapuram in Marripadu mandal on Monday.

Chief Minister would lay the foundation stone for the ₹648 crore estimated scheme in virtual mode and industries and IT Mekapati Goutham Reddy and water resources minister Dr Anilkumar Yadav will be present at the project site.

The first phase of the project commenced in November 2014 at an estimated cost of ₹840.92 crore to complete the works by the end of 2017.

However, the progress was at a snail's pace because of issues of the acquisition of land belonging to forests and dotted lands.

After coming to power, Mr Goutham Reddy paid special attention to speed up the land acquisition,

● **THE FIRST** phase of the project commenced in November 2014 at an estimated cost of ₹840.92 crore to complete the works by the end of 2017.

and completion of the first phase works apart from launching the second phase.

According to Mr Goutham Reddy, Somasila High-Level Lift Canal named after Anam Sanjeeva Reddy was devised to address irrigation needs for 90,000 acres in the upland areas besides quenching the thirst of people in 58 revenue villages, majority of them affected by fluoride, in Atmakur and Udayagiri constituencies.

The works executed under the phase I of the scheme include the Lift Canal from Somasila Reservoir up to balancing reservoir No IV besides construction of pump houses, electromechani-

cal, hydro-mechanical, pressure mains, gravity canals, balancing reservoirs and sumps.

The first phase was designed to create IP (Irrigation Potential) to 43,200 acres under four balancing reservoirs in Anantasaगराम, Marripadu, Duttalur and Atmakur mandals in SPSR Nellore district.

The works in the first phase of the project are completed to the extent of 70 per cent and the second phase is being launched now to speed up the completion.

Mr Goutham Reddy said, "construction of two balancing reservoirs, Gravity canal, one Pumping station including the construction of the pump house, electromechanical, hydro-mechanical and pressure mains are proposed under Phase II.

It was proposed to create irrigation potential for 46,453 acres ayacut in Duttalur, Vinjamuru, Udayagiri and Marripadu Mandals in SPSR Nellore District under the second phase, Mr Reddy added.

Vishnuvardhan lambasts Left parties

DC CORRESPONDENT
NELLORE, NOV. 8

BJP state general secretary S. Vishnuvardhan Reddy has condemned the statements of CPM and CPI leaders against BJP party and Prime Minister Narendra Modi while alleging that the Left parties are talking in favour of TD chief Chandrababu Naidu.

Speaking to the media at the residence of MLC Vakati Narayana Reddy at Nellore on Sunday, he said the leaders of the Communist parties became old and the outfits became regional parties by following the orders of either Jagan or Chandrababu Naidu.

"Both Narayana of CPI and Rahavulu of CPM have grown old and they don't know what they are talking," Mr Vishnuvardhan Reddy alleged.

Stressing that the Left parties are forging alliances with other parties even for panchayat polls, he questioned the rationale behind their statements against national parties such as BJP.

He alleged that the state government has attempt-

● **THE BJP LEADER** said the leaders of the Communist parties became old and the outfits became regional parties by following the orders of either Jagan or Chandrababu Naidu.

ed to secure loans by pledging the properties of TTD but backtracked after BJP opposed the move.

"Jagan Mohan Reddy appears to be ready to dispose of Andhra Pradesh if anyone is ready to buy," Mr Vishnuvardhan Reddy observed while rebuking the government for its inability to attract investments to the state during the last 17 months.

He said the incomes of MLA's and Ministers of the ruling party increased although there was a dip in the revenue of the state. He demanded the state election commissioner to cancel the old notification and issue a fresh notification to hold the panchayat elections.

PAPPURI RAMACHARYULU REMEMBERED

DC CORRESPONDENT
ANANTAPUR, NOV. 8

Rayalaseema Samskruthika Vedika demanded the noted freedom fighter Pappuri Ramacharyulu who was a writer, social reformer and editor initiated for Sri Bhag Pact to get justice for Rayalaseema region.

Vedika celebrated the 125th birth anniversary celebrations of Pappuri Ramacharyulu on Sunday. Ramacharyulu was born on November 8, 1896, and worked as an editor for Pinaki and Sadhana magazines and also served imprisonment during the freedom movement. He had also worked as municipal chairman of Anantapur between 1947-195 and district library chairman in 1952-55 and also MLA from Dharmavaram in 1955. He was also a member of district official Gazetteer.

The Vedika offered floral tributes at the Pappuri statue and released posters demanding the government should implement Sri Bhag Pact.

Peddireddy leads yatra in Sadum

Addressing the gathering, Mr Peddireddy said that the padayatra of YSR Congress chief Jagan is a historical epic, where lakhs of people joined the leader in his 3,648 km of Praja Sankalpa Yatra.

"Mr Jagan embarked his Praja Sankalpa Yatra from the YSR Ghat at Idupulapaya three years ago on 6 November 2017. During his 14-month padayatra, the Chief Minister witnessed the struggles of the public and drew inspiration from it and developed the manifesto with welfare schemes, which he believed like the Bible,

Quran and Bhagavad Gita," he asserted.

He said, the state government had fulfilled 90 per cent of its poll promises despite going through a critical financial crisis and Covid-19 pandemic and this achievement will remain forever in the history of AP, where lakhs of people are celebrating it in a big way across the state today.

"In just 17 months after assuming power, almost 90 per cent of the promises made in the manifesto were fulfilled. This proves Jagan's determination and his commitment towards the welfare of the

downtrodden," he added.

Reiterating that many states in the country are now looking at the development of AP, he claimed that some states have been following the volunteer system – one of the brainchild programmes of CM.

Meanwhile, the three-day padayatra started from Gongivariapalle under Sadum mandal concluded in Kalluru. YSRC leaders distributed face masks and sanitisers during the yatra to the public. Ekiri Corporation chairman T. Murali, former ZP chairman P. Sudheer Reddy and others were present.

YSRC KAKINADA PRESIDENT PASSES AWAY

DC CORRESPONDENT
KAKINADA, NOV. 8.

The YSRC Kakinada City president Ragireddy Venkata Jayaram Kumar, popularly known as Frooty Kumar, in Kakinada market circles, breathed his last in a private hospital in Visakhapatnam, in the early hours of Sunday. He is survived by his wife R. Chandrakala Deepthi and two sons. Kumar was suffering from respiratory problems and was getting treatment in the hospital. Though it was said that he recovered, but recently, his condition worsened. He started his political career with TD and was elected as the Kakinada Municipal corporator.

CITU calls to make strike on Nov. 26 hit

NAGESWARA RAO
BALLEDA | DC
KADAPA, NOV. 8

CITU state general secretary M.A. Gafoor has called for a successful strike on November 26. He spoke to reporters on Sunday at the CITU office in Kadapa. He said it was time to unite the 50 unorganised, public, and private labour federations in the country. He said 40 crore workers and employees were going on the road in protest of the Central government's policies. He said that workers' rights had been eroded by the revocation of 29 workers' rights in four labour courts.

Mr Gafoor said the removal of executive power from the old laws had weakened every-

thing. He criticised the Central government for allocating ₹20 lakh crore to industrialists under the Atmanirbhar Bharat package. He said 150 trains were tied to private companies. He also said that a similar power distribution could be made, which would lead to Discoms going bankrupt. Covid-19 prevention measures have been criticised as not being proper. He criticised countries like the United States and China for handing out millions of dollars and Yuan respectively to their citizens, compared to five kg of rice and one kg of red gram in our country. He said there was no response to the proposal to give ₹7500 per family per month.

PANDEMIC | STATUS

No district reported more than 400 new infections, 5 districts reported less 100 new cases

Corona recovery rate increases to 96.66 per cent

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 8

The dropping of Coronavirus positive cases continued with the registration of 227 new positive cases on Sunday in AP against an earlier average of 10,000 cases per day.

No district reported more than 400 new infections and five districts reported less than 100 infections.

The total positive cases reached 8,42,967 on Sunday in which 8,14,773 were total recoveries, 21,403 were total active cases and 6,791 were total Corona deaths. The recovery rate continues to increase with more new recoveries. It was 96.66 per cent as a

total of 8,14,773 patients recovered in the state.

The overall positivity rate of the 86.56 lakh samples tested so far slightly came down to 9.74 per cent and that of the 76,663 samples tested in the past day was 2.92 per cent.

The West Godavari district was on top in single day highest Corona cases of 379 on Sunday and registration of a huge number of Corona cases continuing in the duo Godavari districts. Further 2,256 patients were discharged after the cure in the past 24 hours.

A total of 12 Corona deaths registered on Sunday. The highest number of 3 deaths registered in Krishna district in the

past 24 hours, followed by two deaths each in Chittoor and Visakhapatnam districts, one each in East Godavari, Guntur, Nellore, Srikakulam and West Godavari districts.

East Godavari registered a total of 1,18,589 cases and top among all districts and West Godavari in the second place with reaching 8,88,676 total positive cases. As many as 76,663 Corona tests conducted in the past 24-hours in which 2237 were diagnosed as Covid-19 positive. AP tested a total of 86,63,975 samples for Corona till date and is in top place in Covid-19 tests.

The single day highest number of 379 Corona pos-

itive cases was registered in West Godavari district in the past 24-hours increasing the total to 88676 in which 2236 were active cases.

The second single day highest number of 364 Corona positive cases was registered in Guntur district in the past 24-hours increasing the total to 69596 in which 2803 were active cases.

The third single day highest number of Corona positive cases of 329 registered in Chittoor district in the past 24-hours increasing the total to 80766 in which 1995 were active cases.

The Krishna district is in fourth place with registering 277 new positive cases

in the past 24 hours increasing total positive cases to 41804 in which 3,370 were active cases.

188 new Corona positive cases registered in East Godavari district in the past 24 hours increasing total positive cases to 118589 in which 4415 were active cases.

117 new Corona positive cases registered in Srikakulam district in the past 24 hours increasing total positive cases to 44681 in which 853 were active cases.

109 new Corona positive cases registered in Anantapur district in the past 24 hours increasing total positive cases to 65578 in which 975 were active cases.

KADAPA RIMS STAFF MOST AFFECTED

From Page 1

About 25 postgraduate medicos, 30 house surgeons, 25 nurses, 15 doctors, 30 supporting staff, and 20 sanitation staff on duty at Kadapa RIMS Hospitals had been affected by the virus.

However, they all recovered.

About 10 private doctors working at Fatima Institute of Medical Sciences have similarly recovered.

Hospital support staff, who succumbed to Coronavirus in Kadapa district, include Dadini Eshwarayya, 58, a health

educator with the medical and health department.

He died at Kurnool hospital while undergoing treatment. A few other non-medical staff also succumbed.

But Dr Nandakumar was the first government doctor to die of Covid-19.

District Covid Hospital in-charge Dr Sureswar Reddy, speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*, said he is pained at losing Dr Nandakumar, his erstwhile student. He requested all doctors to take great care when providing medical assistance to Covid patients.

SHORT TAKES

BOY STUCK INSIDE BOREWELL FOR 90 HOURS DIES

DC CORRESPONDENT
BHOPAL, NOV. 8

A five-year-old boy, who fell into a 200-feet deep borewell in Madhya Pradesh's Niwari district four days back, could not be saved even after a 90-hour-long rescue operation, officials said on Sunday.

Prallhad Kushwaha who fell into the borewell while playing in his family's farmland in Saitpura village of Niwari district on Wednesday was retrieved around 3 am on Sunday, he was rushed to a local hospital where doctors declared him dead.

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan in a tweet expressed sadness over the boy's death and announced a financial assistance of ₹5 lakh for his family.

NCB ARRESTS NADIADWALA'S WIFE OVER DRUGS

DC CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI, NOV. 8

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) on Sunday arrested the wife of movie producer Firoz Nadiadwala after they allegedly found 10 gram cannabis from their Juhu residence following searches there. The officials said this arrest was made after four peddlers, nabbed earlier, revealed the sale of narcotics substance to her.

Shabana Saeed, wife of Nadiadwala, was arrested following a search carried out by the Mumbai NCB officials at their residence at Gulmohar Crossroad in the JVPD Scheme.

"The cannabis was procured by her from earlier arrested accused Wahid Abdul Kadir Sheikh alias Sultan. Shabana Saeed was issued notice and after recording her statement she was placed under arrest," said an NCB officer.

ARNAB SHIFTED TO TALOJA JAIL FOR USING PHONE

SAURABH JOSHI | DC
MUMBAI, NOV. 8

The Raigad police shifted Arnab Goswami, editor-in-chief of *Republic TV*, to Talaja prison on Sunday, after his arrest on November 4 in connection with suicide of architect Anvay Naik and his mother Kumu in 2018 over alleged unpaid dues of ₹83 lakh.

The police said that Goswami was put up at a Covid-19 centre, a school, where he was found to be using a mobile phone. The police said that the transfer was made after Goswami was found to be active on social media via a phone that did not belong to him.

The officials also confirmed that Goswami's phone was seized when he was arrested and hence they did not suspect him to possess one.

The Alibaug police are trying secure custody of Goswami to question him in the case; the journalist has been remanded to judicial custody. "The probe in the case against Goswami, Feroz Shaikh and Nitish Sarda is underway," said a police officer.

INDORE OFFICIALS RAZE 'COMPUTER BABA' ASHRAM

DC CORRESPONDENT
BHOPAL, NOV. 8

The local administration in Indore on Sunday demolished the ashram of Namdeo Das alias Computer Baba, the self-styled religious leader who enjoyed patronage from both the BJP and Congress in Madhya Pradesh at various points of time, while freeing a large patch of land of 'encroachment'.

The Indore district administration said 46 acres allotted to the Jamburdi Hapsi panchayat in 2000 for development of a cow shelter was encroached by Computer Baba. Sources said a rifle and an air gun were recovered from the ashram during the demolition drive.

The ashram was built in a two-acre plot land in the 'encroached' patch. Namdeo along with six of his associates were taken into preventive custody by police.

Local sub-divisional magistrate Sashwat Sharma said the administration has issued a notice to remove the encroachment but had received no response.

The district administration announced plans to build a temple and a modern cow shelter on the land.

Light in the darkness



Visually impaired workers make candles for Diwali in New Delhi on Sunday. The festival which falls on November 14 this year, will see more demand for lights as many states have banned firecrackers.

— PTI

Modi looks forward to working closely with Biden, hails Harris

India might have to step up its focus on human rights, CAA issues

SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI | DC
NEW DELHI, NOV. 8

Getting ready to work with the Democrat-led administration in Washington that will assume office in January next year, India on Sunday congratulated President-elect Joe Biden who defeated President Donald Trump in the US Presidential polls. New Delhi also congratulated Vice President-elect Kamala Harris.

President Ram Nath Kovind and Prime Minister Narendra Modi posted congratulatory messages on Twitter to Biden and Harris shortly after midnight on Sunday after the Democrat challengers were declared winners.

Modi said he looked forward to strengthening Indo-US ties by "working closely together once again" with Biden who was US Vice-President in the Barack Obama administration when Modi had become Prime Minister in 2014. Modi also hailed the success of Kamala Harris — who is partly of Indian origin — as "pathbreaking", and a matter of "immense pride for all Indian-Americans".

It may be recalled that India had on Friday said the Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership between both nations has "very strong bipartisan support" in the US, thereby hinting that bilateral ties would continue to grow stronger. At his weekly media briefing two days ago, MEA spokesper-

son Anurag Srivastava had also said that Indo-US bilateral ties "rest on strong foundations" and that this "encompasses cooperation in every possible sphere" ranging from strategic ties to the defence sector, trade and investment as well as people to people ties.

India may well have to deal with an increased focus on human rights from Washington during the tenure of Biden and Harris on the Kashmir issue and the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). However, bilateral ties are expected to remain strong especially in the defence and strategic sectors.

Biden's stand on China in the Indo-Pacific region and on Pakistan in the context of both cross-border terrorism and the Afghan situation will also be watched closely by New Delhi as it will have major implications for India.

In a statement on Sunday morning, the Prime Minister's Office said, "Prime Minister Narendra Modi has congratulated Joe Biden on winning the US Presidential election," adding also that the PM "has congratulated US Vice President-elect Kamala Harris."

Modi tweeted, "Heartiest congratulations Kamala Harris! Your success is pathbreaking, and a matter of immense pride not just for your 'chittis' (aunts in Tamil), but also for all Indian-Americans. I am confident that the vibrant India-US ties will get even stronger with your support and leadership." Harris' mother was from Tamil Nadu.

President Kovind said in his Twitter message: "My sincere felicitations to Joseph R. Biden on his election as President of the United States of America and @KamalaHarris, as Vice President. I wish @JoeBiden a successful tenure and look forward to working with him to further strengthen India-US relations."

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Indian troops at LAC stock up to sustain for 1 year

VIKRAM SHARMA | DC
HYDERABAD, NOV. 8

With the beginning of the harsh winter, Indian troops deployed along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh are stocked up to sustain for a year. From provisions, arms and ammunition, warm clothing to medical supplies, among other essentials, they have double what is required.

With snowfall being reported in the upper reaches over the last few days, soldiers of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) of China are mostly huddled in and there is hardly any activity visible on their side.

Top sources told *Deccan Chronicle* that the Indian troops have been "all stocked up" to keep them going for a year, if not more. Once the winter gets harsher towards December, when Ladakh witnesses heavy snowfall, all supply routes will be hit.

On the hilltops and ridgelines at more than 15,000 feet, the temperatures plummet to -25° Celsius and even lower while the windchill factor makes the situation worse, even leading to deaths.

"The ration, medical supplies, arms and ammunition and winter clothing have been provided two-three times more than what had been requested for. So much so that we have exhausted the space to stock up. It is only after a year that we may require anything, if at all," sources said.

Besides purchasing about 11,000 sets of extreme cold weather clothing from the US, lakhs of sets have been

procured from multiple suppliers to ensure each soldier has more than one set. The use of special clothing began with the arrival of the snow. In winters, frostbites, chilblains, blood clots, lung infection and even memory loss is a regular affair and keeping this in mind medical supplies too have been doubled.

With unpredictable weather throwing a major challenge, large quantities of kerosene, canned food, repair equipment for uninterrupted communication, vehicles among other logistics have been supplied to the strategic locations. Supplies have been divided among all the Army posts, which, in the event of getting cut off due to the harsh weather, can sustain themselves.

High altitude warfare is nothing new for the Indian Army who have battled the elements at Siachen glacier, Ladakh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand and several points along the Line of Control with Pakistan. Across the Pangong Tso and Chushul, most of the hilltops and ridges are located at an altitude of over 15,000 feet.

Unlike China, officers in the Indian Army are compulsorily posted at high altitudes for five to six years which gives them all the exposure they need to work in harsh weather.

India, China to exercise restraint along frontlines

PAWAN BALI | DC
NEW DELHI, NOV. 8

India and China during the eighth round of Corps Commander-level talks on November 6, agreed to ensure that their frontline troops will exercise restraint and avoid misunderstandings and miscalculation, said a joint statement issued on Sunday. This even as a news agency report said that India and China were likely to disengage from some of the friction points in the next few days and they have been discussing the modalities for doing so in a phased manner.

The report said that the discussions between the two sides include pulling back tanks and armoured vehicles, and some development in this regard is likely to take place in the next few days. There was no clarity on the flash points from which Chinese and Indian troops will disengage.

Earlier, first in June and then in July, India and China had agreed to mutually move back from Galwan Valley, Gogra Post, Hot Springs and Pangong Tso. However, it was only in Galwan Valley that troops had moved back to some extent. In Pangong Tso the Chinese army had refused to move back from

the ridgelines of Finger 4 and whole of Finger 5 which it had illegally occupied in May. In Gogra Post and Hot Springs there was no clarity on Chinese disengagement. In Depsang Plains, Chinese troops have been preventing the Indian Army from patrolling.

China had been pushing India to vacate strategic heights which the Indian Army had occupied on the south bank of the Pangong Tso in a surprise action in August. The PLA had even made attempts to occupy these heights which were foiled by the Indian Army. India had maintained that it will discuss disengagement from friction points in Eastern Ladakh and not just the south bank of the Pangong Tso.

The statement issued by India and China on Sunday said that during the meeting both sides agreed to earnestly implement the important consensus reached by the leaders of the two countries. Both sides also agreed to have another round of meeting soon.

"The two sides had a candid, in-depth and constructive exchange of views on disengagement along the Line of Actual Control in the Western Sector of India-China border areas," said the joint statement.

WILDLIFE | PROTECTION Move to save endangered species under consideration

Purple frog to be Kerala's state amphibian

Kochi, Nov. 8: The purple frog, one of the rarest frog species endemic to the Western Ghats, would soon be declared as Kerala's official amphibian.

A senior forest officer said a proposal for declaring the purple frog, also known as pignose frog, as state's amphibian, is in the active consideration of the state government.

"The proposal is in the active consideration of the government and soon it will be declared as the state's amphibian,"

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) & Chief Wildlife Warden Surendrakumar said.

The matter will be discussed in the next meeting of the state wildlife board.

Official sources said the move to declare it as the state's amphibian as it was mostly endemic to Kerala region of Western Ghats.

According to Delhi University professor S.D. Biju, who discovered the frog a few years ago in the Idukki district, said it is not only a rare frog species



Pignose frog

but is also one of the unique amphibians.

Biju said the purple frog, which remains underground most of the year, is found mostly in the Kerala part of the Western Ghats.

The frog was found in one forest area of Tamil Nadu

also, Biju said. The purple frog, scientifically called "Nasikabatrachus sahyadrensis" is listed as endangered in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species as its "Extent of Occurrence is less than 5,000 km, all individuals are in fewer than five locations, and there is continuing decline in the extent and quality of its habitat in the Cardamom Hills."

According to WWF, the leading organisation in wildlife conservation and endangered species, purple

frog has been acknowledged by bio-geographers all over the world as one of the rarest kinds and a "once in a century find."

It said the purple frog has a bloated body with short stout limbs and is dark purple to greyish in colour. "Reaching to about 7 centimetres, it has a small head in comparison to the body length, and an unusually pointed snout. Its short and muscular forelimbs with hard palms help it to burrow underground."

— PTI

IN BRIEF

DOGS SET FOR WHITE HOUSE COMEBACK

Washington, Nov. 8: Joe Biden promises to bring many things back to America now that he's in and President Donald Trump's out. Unity, accountability, compassion -- and a dog in the White House.

Not just one, but two German shepherds, one a rescue.

One is Champ, who has been with the Bidens since 2008. The other is Major, who the Bidens fostered and then adopted in 2018.

Canines sniffing around the lawns of the presidential mansion are a long-standing staple in America.

Barack Obama muzzled playfully with one Bo, a black Portuguese water dog. George W. Bush had a Scottish terrier, Barney. Bill Clinton? A chocolate Labrador retriever called Buddy.

Enter Trump, a famously finicky germophobe, and the first president in over a century to not have a dog.

"How would I look walking a dog on the White House lawn," Trump asked, with a grimace, in a video included in a Biden campaign ad.

Now, make way for team Biden's canine crew.

Biden officials say Major will become the first rescue dog to live in the White House.

"Choose your humans wisely," says the Biden ad about presidential pooches.

TRUMP FAIR GAME FOR SM RULES

San Francisco, Nov. 8: When US President Donald Trump departs the White House, he also leaves behind any immunity he might have from social media rules. Efforts by Twitter and Facebook to balance letting political leaders speak to the people unfettered with enforcing rules about hateful and misleading posts have afforded Trump leeway not given to regular users.

But any special treatment that Trump has enjoyed ends with his presidency.

"Twitter's approach to world leaders, candidates and public officials is based on the principle that people should be able to choose to see what their leaders are saying with clear context," a spokesman for Trump's go-to messaging platform said.

The winner: Biden vows virus action on 'day one'.

Ethiopia vows to replace Tigray government

"This policy framework applies to current world leaders and candidates for office, and not private citizens when they no longer hold these positions." So, Trump posts masked by warnings or amended with labels could qualify to be deleted instead. "I assume that the argument around not completely removing content from world leaders is because what they say is important for us to know," said Casey Fiesler, a professor at the University of Colorado, Boulder.

BUBBLY MOOD: RUSH FOR CHAMPAGNE

Washington, Nov. 8: Joe Biden's election as US president on Saturday sparked a scramble for champagne in the capital Washington and some stores were already close to running out of stock in the Democratic stronghold. It seemed many were ready to toast an end to a tumultuous four years under President Donald Trump.

Calvert and Woodley, known for its selection of wines from around the world, sold up to 75 percent more bottles than a usual Saturday.

Store salesman Mark, who did not provide his last name, said hundreds of bottles had been sold. "People want to celebrate," he said.

His colleague Janis said "I bought 20 for myself." Dressed in a Biden-Harris t-shirt and with a Biden-Harris sign in her hand, Juanita was one of the many customers in search of the bubbly.

"I'm so happy. It's an amazing day for democracy," she said while choosing a bottle.

At Magruder's, a wine shop in the residential district of Chevy Chase in business since 1845, the shelves were emptied quickly and employees had to fetch reserve cases of champagne. "People buy two or three bottles. It's very unusual," said a cashier.

"People are so happy today." And they were obviously not concerned with the price. Bottles of champagne typically sell for around \$40 dollars (33 euros) to start.



US President-elect Joe Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris deliver remarks in Wilmington, Delaware, on Saturday, after being declared the winners of the presidential election. — AFP

After poll win, Biden pledges to unite US

Prez-elect seeks an end to the 'grim era of demonisation'

Washington, Nov. 8: Pledging to be the president of all Americans, Joe Biden has sought an immediate end to the "grim era of demonisation" in the deeply-polarised nation, as he and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris celebrated their historic triumph over Donald Trump in a bitter and closely-fought presidential election.

Biden has also said that America is a "beacon for the globe" and that efforts must be made to "restore the soul" of the country.

"Tonight the whole world is watching America, and I believe that at our best, America is a beacon for the globe. We will lead not only by the example of our power, but by the power of our example," Biden said while addressing the nation for the first time as president-elect.

"I pledge to be a president who seeks not to divide, but to unify; who doesn't see red states and blue states, only sees the United States," Biden, 77, said in his victory speech before a drive-in audience in his hometown, Wilmington, Delaware on Saturday night, nearly ending the uncertainty over the out-

Joe recites deceased son's favourite hymn

Washington, Nov. 8: US President-elect Joe Biden concluded his victory speech by reciting his deceased son Beau's favourite popular Catholic hymn "On Eagles' Wings", hoping that the carol will give comfort to many Americans grieving the loss of their loved ones due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Biden, 77, who is a practising Catholic, said the hymn has inspired him through the final days of his election campaign. He would be the second Catholic to hold the office of the President after John F Kennedy in 1960. The Democrat leader lost Beau, an Iraq war veteran

come of Tuesday's election. Biden, who has succeeded in his third bid to the White House, thanked his supporters, saying he had earned votes from the "broadest and most diverse coalition in American history." "I am humbled by

who had served as Delaware's attorney general, in 2015 to a brain tumour at the age of 46.

Biden defeated Donald Trump in a bitter and closely-fought presidential election. He gave his victory speech before a drive-in audience in his hometown, Wilmington, Delaware on Saturday. On Eagles' Wings "captures the faith that sustains me and which I believe sustains America, and a hope, and I hope it can provide some comfort and solace to the 230,000 Americans who have lost a loved one due to this terrible virus this year," said Biden. — PTI

the trust and confidence you've placed in me," who will be the oldest US president when he would be sworn-in on January 20, 2021, said amid applause and cheers from the audience. "The people of this nation have spoken, they've

delivered us a clear victory, a convincing victory, a victory for 'We the People'," he said, referring to more than 74 million voters who backed him. Biden ran twice unsuccessfully for president - in 1988 and 2008. Noting that he ran as a proud Democrat, Biden said that he will now be an American president. "I will work as hard for those who didn't vote for me - as those who did. Biden criticised Trump without naming him in his nearly 15-minute address, saying that he wanted to end "this grim era of demonisation in America here and now."

"Let this grim era of demonisation in America begin to end - here and now. The refusal of Democrats and Republicans to cooperate with one another is not due to some mysterious force beyond our control," he said. Trump has so far refused to concede the election that attracted a record number of Americans to cast their votes amidst the Covid-19 pandemic. He has announced filing multiple lawsuits against the election results in key battleground states like Pennsylvania. — PTI

Indo-American Murthy expected to co-chair Biden's Covid task force

Washington, Nov. 8: Indian-American physician Dr Vivek Murthy is expected to co-chair the coronavirus task force which President-elect Joe Biden is going to announce on Monday. Murthy, 43, who originally hails from Karnataka, was appointed America's 19th Surgeon General by then president Barack Obama in 2014.

Born in the UK, he was the youngest ever to hold the office at the age of 37. He was later asked to step down by the Trump administration. Biden, in his victory speech in Wilmin-

gton, Delaware on Saturday night, said: "On Monday, I will name a group of leading scientists and experts as Transition Advisors to help take the Biden-Harris Covid plan and convert it into an action blueprint that starts on January 20th, 2021."

The President-elect, however, did not announce who would lead that task force. The Washington Post said that the task force would be co-chaired by Dr Murthy, the former Surgeon General, and David Kessler, a former Food and Drug Administration

commissioner. "The task force... could begin meeting within days," the daily said. In his victory speech, Biden said that the plan will be built on a bedrock of science. "It will be constructed out of compassion, empathy and concern. I will spare no effort — or commitment — to turn this pandemic around," he said.

During the campaign period, Murthy emerged as one of the top advisors of Biden on public health and Coronavirus issues. Many believe that he might end up being the

Health Secretary in the Biden administration.

In May, the Biden campaign appointed congresswoman Pramila Jayapal and Murthy as co-chairs to the Healthcare Task Force. At a fund raiser organised in September which was addressed by Biden, Murthy had said that Biden is the kind of guy he would like to invite home for dinner. "Joe Biden is the kind of guy I would love to bring home to have dinner with my mom and dad," Murthy had said in his opening remarks. — PTI

5 lakh Indians likely to receive US citizenship

Washington, Nov. 8: US President-elect Joe Biden will work towards providing a roadmap to American citizenship for nearly 11 million undocumented immigrants, including over 500,000 from India, and will also establish a minimum admission number of 95,000 refugees annually.

As a largely immigrant community, but in some cases with American roots reaching back generations, Indian-Americans know firsthand the strength and resilience that immigrants bring to the United States of America, according to a policy document issued by the Biden campaign.

"He (Biden) will immediately begin working with Congress to pass legislative immigration reform that modernises our system, with a priority on keeping families together by providing a roadmap to citizenship for nearly 11 million undocumented immigrants — including more than 500,000 from India," it said.

The Biden administration will support family-based immigration and

● **PRESIDENT-ELECT JOE Biden will continue strengthening India-US relationship, think-tanks and prominent Indian-American experts have said. "A Biden administration will be mostly positive for India," said Rick Rossow from the Centre for Strategic and International Studies think tank.**

preserve family unification as a core principle of the US' immigration system, which includes reducing the family visa backlog, it said.

"And, he will increase the number of refugees we welcome into this country by setting the annual global refugee admissions target to 125,000 and seek to raise it over time commensurate with our responsibility, our values, and the unprecedented global need. He will also work with Congress to establish a minimum admissions number of 95,000 refugees annually," the policy document said. — PTI

BIDEN PLANS TO INCREASE H-1B VISA LIMIT

Washington, Nov. 8: US President-elect Joe Biden plans to increase the number of high-skilled visas, including the H-1B, and eliminate the limit on employment-based visas by country, both of which are expected to benefit tens of thousands of Indian professionals impacted by some immigration policies of the outgoing Trump administration. With Kamala Harris as his deputy, Biden is expected to reverse the move of the outgoing Trump administration to revoke work permits to the spouses of H-1B visas, which had adversely impacted a large number of Indian families in the United States.

All these are part of a comprehensive immigration reform that the Biden administration plans to work on, either in one go or in separate pieces. — PTI

You assured new day for US: Harris to Americans

Ancestral village celebrates her win

G. SRINIVASAN | DC
THANJAVUR, NOV 8

It was pujas and celebrations at Thulasendrapuram, ancestral village of Kamala Harris, Indian origin vice-president elect of the US, near Mannargudi on Sunday, as news about her victory and president elect, Joe Biden, reached out to the people of the world.

People started gathering at the Dharma Sashta temple in the village on Sunday morning itself. Contributions from Kamala Harris' family continue for the temple and her name is mentioned in an epigraph there. While people burst crackers and distributed sweets, food minister R. Kamaraj, Tiruvarur MLA and district secretary of DMK,

AUNT: FEEL VERY HAPPY OVER KAMALA WIN

Chennai, Nov. 8: City-based maternal aunt of US Vice President-elect Kamala Harris Dr Sarala Gopalan, is elated over her niece's feat and now hopes to attend her swearing-in ceremony. "How do you think I should feel about her victory? I feel very happy," a proud Gopalan, a senior consultant at the Voluntary Health Services here, said. — PTI

Poondi Kalaivanan, performed pujas, offered worship at the temple and distributed sweets to people.

woman in this office, she would not be the last. "We are so grateful to Joe and Jill for welcoming our

family into theirs on this incredible journey," she said. — PTI



Women of Thulasendrapuram near Mannargudi draw rangolis congratulating Kamala Harris for winning the US election on Sunday. — DC

POLL | RESULT

Son-in-law Kushner approached a defiant Prez about conceding the election to rival Biden

Don becomes 11th sitting US president to lose re-election

Washington, Nov. 8: President Donald Trump's reelection defeat has made him the 11th sitting president in US history to lose the White House in a general election campaign.

Ten of those were outright reelection bids. Gerald Ford, who ascended to the presidency following Richard Nixon's resignation, also lost his campaign to remain president in 1976. The last president to lose a reelection bid was George H.W. Bush in 1992. Grover Cleveland lost his reelection campaign in 1888 but won back the White House four years later by defeating sitting President Benjamin Harrison. He is the only president to have served

two nonconsecutive terms, CNN reported.

This list does not include sitting presidents who did not receive their party's nomination for the next general election, it said. Democratic Party's nominee Joe Biden defeated Trump, a Republican in the November 3 presidential election after the former US vice president secured 279 electoral college votes, three more than the required 270 votes.

Jared Kushner, Donald Trump's son-in-law and senior adviser, has approached a defiant President about conceding the closely-fought election to his Democratic rival Joe Biden, according to media reports on Sunday.

The move comes following Trump's assertion in a statement from his campaign — after major US media outlets projected that President-elect Biden will become the 46th president of the United States — that Biden is "rushing to falsely pose as the winner" and that the race is "far from over."

Joe Biden-Kamala Harris deputy campaign manager Kate Bedingfield said that there has been no communication between Biden and Trump, or between any representatives from either campaign, since the race was called on Saturday after the 77-year-old former US vice president crossed the 270 electoral college votes



Donald Trump

required to win the race for the White House.

Kushner has approached the President about conceding the election, CNN quoted two unidentified sources as saying. Kushner has told others that he has urged the president to

accept the outcome of the race — even if Trump won't come to terms with how it was reached, the Associated Press also reported on Sunday. Two sources told Fox News that Trump would concede and execute a peaceful transfer of power if his campaign's legal challenges fall short of changing the projected outcome. A lack of concession by Trump would not prevent Biden from assuming the presidency on January 20, 2021.

"Donald Trump does not get to decide the winner of elections," Symone Sanders, a Biden campaign senior adviser, told reporters in Wilmington, Delaware, on Saturday. "The people decide, voters in the coun-

try decide, as we have long said, and voters have made their choice very clear," Voice of America quoted Sanders as saying. But Trump appeared to be defiant, even after all major US media outlets projected Biden as the winner.

"I will not rest until the American People have the honest vote count they deserve and that Democracy demands," Trump said in the statement, which states that the campaign's legal battle will begin on Monday.

The Trump campaign has filed suits in several battleground states where Biden led by a razor-thin margin, including Nevada, Pennsylvania, and Georgia. — PTI

JERUSALEM MUNICIPALITY OFFERS DON JOB

Jerusalem, Nov. 8: With Donald Trump on his way out of the White House, Jerusalem Municipality has urged him "not to worry" as it may have a number of open positions that he could be eligible to apply for. "For the attention of the follower Donald J. Trump - you don't need to worry! Our new Jerusalem job board is updated with worthwhile offerings every day, and will make Jeruz great again," it's Facebook page said. — PTI

DECCAN Chronicle

9 NOVEMBER 2020

Biden offers US healing touch, world is relieved

The contrast couldn't have been starker. The statesmanlike address by Joseph R. Biden hours after his clear victory in America's presidential elections late Saturday night, soon after he won in Pennsylvania and got a majority in the Electoral College, signalled that the ugliness and friction of the Donald Trump years would soon be over, and the United States would once again try to be a "beacon for the globe" and "lead by the power of our example". Urging an immediate end to the "grim era of demonisation in America", President-elect Biden said it was a "time to heal" and reached out to all, including those who voted for Mr Trump, and vowed that he would be their President too. Mr Biden will have to work particularly hard, as in the four years since Mr Trump came to power and encouraged the rise of divisiveness and hate-filled politics, opponents were perceived as enemies, not rivals. The conduct of the White House's occupant isn't helping: even 24 hours after defeat, he is refusing to concede, which some close advisers, even his son-in-law, have advised him to do, and is still talking of legal challenges in several states and trying to seek the Supreme Court's help in a desperate bid to cling on. More worryingly, he is inciting his supporters to hold protests, with reports of clashes between them and Mr Biden's supporters. Once wonders how long it will take him to accept reality.

Mr Biden will have to work particularly hard, as in the four years since Mr Trump came to power and encouraged the rise of divisiveness and hate-filled politics, opponents were perceived as enemies, not rivals

The spontaneous celebrations across America since Saturday night, with scenes of jubilation in cities like New York, Chicago and Los Angeles, show a nation that has received deliverance from four years of darkness, with rising hope that better days lie ahead. Saying he wanted to "restore the soul of America", Mr Biden pledged to get down to work right away, in a bid to get the Covid-19 pandemic (where the US tops the world, and Mr Trump had largely ignored) under control from Day 1. He said he will name a transition team with top scientists Monday to work out a strategy in this regard.

History has been made with the election of Kamala Devi Harris, the first woman, the first black and the first person of Indian origin to reach the second-highest office in America. "While I may be the first woman in this office, I won't be the last," she said, saluting generations of women who fought for equality and paying tribute to her mother Shyamala Gopalan, who came to the US as a 19-year-old to study; and hailed Mr Biden as a "healer, a uniter and a tested and steady hand". The outpouring of joy in her maternal grandfather's ancestral Tamil Nadu village knew no bounds and indicated her continuing links with her Indian roots.

Mr Biden said he wants to make America "respected around the world", and the sigh of relief in major capitals was palpable. In his message of congratulations to the President-elect, Prime Minister Narendra Modi noted how he had been a strong supporter of close India-US ties, and hoped to build on that, and in a separate message to Ms Harris hailed her pathbreaking success. Mr Biden had, in fact, pushed stronger India-US ties even before becoming vice-president in 2009, having played a key role as Senate majority leader in clearing the India-US civil nuclear deal a year earlier. New Delhi will now have to build on that.

Health before festivity

The daily Covid-19 caseload is inching up after reporting a steady decline weeks ago, and now hovers around 45,000, with Delhi taking the stop slot, followed by Maharashtra and Kerala. Maharashtra has been reporting big numbers from the beginning but the cases of Delhi and Kerala, states that have both successfully reined in the pandemic in the past, call for careful study. One common factor was the failure of the people and the governments in ensuring that the Covid protocols were strictly followed during festivals.

It is a fact that governments and experts had warned of a spike in the numbers during and after the festival seasons, but there was little follow-up. People in most states are now getting ready for another major festival, Diwali. Bursting crackers is a community celebration in many parts of the country on Diwali. Anticipating their potential to become super-spreader events, and considering the impact the air pollution it causes can have on the Covid-19 patients with impaired lungs as well as others, some state governments, including Delhi, Odisha and Rajasthan, have banned the sale of crackers for this season. The Karnataka government has changed tack and now requested people to go in for "green crackers".

Many state governments, however, have not even given the idea a thought. The governments at the Centre and the states must realise that it is their duty to take pre-emptive measures to protect public health. Two Constitution-backed fundamental rights, the freedom of speech and expression and the right to practise and profess religion, come with reasonable restrictions and public health is one among them. In other words, it is incumbent upon governments to put public health ahead of these two rights. The Union government, which in the beginning micro-managed the Covid fight, must take the lead and advise the state governments to restrict festivities and save lives. Health concerns brook no excuses.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

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Subhani



The new Cold War



Manish Tewari

State of the Union

In the dying days of the Second World War as the Allied Expeditionary Force under the command of General Dwight D. Eisenhower closed in on Germany from the West, the Soviet Red Army under the leadership of marshals Georgy Zhukov and Ivan Konev did so from the East and they set the stage for the next conflict — namely who would dominate Europe post the end of that war. The ideological contest that ensued between democratic liberalism and Soviet communism would consume Europe for the next four-and-a-half decades till the Berlin Wall finally fell on the 9th of November, 1989.

In those momentous days following the end of the bloodiest conflict of the 20th century, Winston Churchill, the wartime Prime Minister of Great Britain, prophesied at Fulton falls in the United States on March the 5th, 1946, "From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the continent. Behind that line lie all the capitals of the ancient states of central and eastern Europe. Warsaw, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest and Sofia, all these famous cities and the populations around them lie in what I must call the Soviet sphere, and all are subject in one form or another, not only to Soviet influence but to a very high and, in many cases, increasing measure of control from Moscow..." This was perhaps the first detailed quantification of the Cold War.

The term "cold war" however, was first used only 13 months later on April 16, 1947, by Bernard Baruch, a multimillionaire financier and adviser to US Presidents from Woodrow Wilson to

Harry S. Truman at the South Carolina House of Representatives. "Let us not be deceived," Baruch said. "We are today in the midst of a Cold War. Our enemies are to be found abroad and at home. Let us never forget this."

The term soon caught the fancy of the world after it was given a fresh lease of life by the legendary columnist Walter Lippmann in his *New York Herald Tribune* piece in September 1947. Soon thereafter, this proxy war was fought for 40 five years across distant theatres of the world ranging from Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Cuba, countries of South and Latin America, Africa and finally Afghanistan.

The Western Allies nevertheless secured the pre-eminent battlefield of Europe by creating the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) on April 4, 1949. At its core lay Article 5 that stated: "The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all..." The Soviets followed it up with their own collective security architecture called the Warsaw Pact on May 14, 1955. These opposing compacts kept the "peace cold" underpinned by the nuclear doctrine of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD).

The Warsaw Pact was formally dissolved on July 1, 1991, and the

The Cold War with China will encompass all dimensions — economic, military, cyber, space, cultural and civilisational. It would be the defining conflict of the next three decades.

A still-born quad — consisting of the US, Japan, Australia and India — has been resurrected in Asia. However, it is still amorphous even in its latest avatar.

Soviet Union disappeared into the sands of time on December 26, 1991, taking with it the erstwhile communist states of East Europe. Just as the Allies were celebrating the end of history as characterized by Francis Fukuyama earlier in the February of 1989 a new power was emerging on the horizon — China. For, nature abhors a vacuum.

In 1979, China started transforming its governing model from Mao Tse Tung's communism to Deng Xiaoping's totalitarian capitalism and in a span of three decades emerged as a player on the global stage with great power aspirations. However, it was only after Xi Jinping ascended to office in November 2012 that China started baring its fangs. At the centre of the strategy for global dominance lay the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) formally kicked off by President Xi on September 7, 2013, at Astana the capital of Kazakhstan. In its earlier avatar it was called the One Belt One Road (OBOR) enterprise.

However it was only seven years later after financing 2,951 projects valued at \$3.87 trillion involving 2,630 companies across 138 countries encompassing the wider silk road region that China unveiled its mailed fist in April 2020 taking full advantage of the virus warfare it has unleashed through the inaccurately labeled Covid-19 pandemic. It deserved to be called the China Virus.

It created three inflection points, first on the April 18 in the South China Sea by announcing two administrative districts — the Xisha district, covering the Paracel Islands and Macclesfield Bank, and

the Nansha district, covering the Sparty Islands, both of which are also claimed by Vietnam. It simultaneously transgressed at various places across the Line of Actual Control that separates India from China, especially in Eastern Ladakh around the same time, and moved on the political sovereignty of Hong Kong with a new security law in the May of 2020.

It is now only a matter of time that China would translate its new-found economic alliances into pro-forma military pacts across different continents subterfuged and packaged as arrangements for protecting Chinese investments overseas. In South and North Asia it already has two nuclear-armed allies, Pakistan and North Korea. Both have heavy Chinese investments. In Pakistan it is in the form of the 70 billion USD China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, despite window dressing in the wake of North Korea's nuclear tests, is virtually sustained and nourished by the Chinese.

The Cold War with China will encompass all dimensions — economic, military, cyber, space, cultural and civilisational. It would be the defining conflict of the next three decades of the 21st century as China attempts to resurrect the grandeur of the Middle Kingdom by 2047 to avenge its century of humiliation. The global response so far has been feeble. A still-born quad — consisting of the US, Japan, Australia and India — has been resurrected in Asia. However, it is still amorphous even in its latest avatar. Nations that believe that democracy, liberalism and a rules-based global order is the way people and nations should continue to live must wake up and smell the coffee. The dragon is upon us.

The author is a lawyer, Member of Parliament and former Union information and broadcast minister. The views expressed are personal. Twitter handle @manishtewari.

LETTERS

BIHAR EXIT POLLS

The NDA, if the exit polls vindicate, suffers because of the anti-incumbency and poor handling of pandemic after 'guest workers' returned. If the Mahagathbandhan gains upper hand, it would mean that the people have voted for the good old Jungle raj. The Congress is a rotten organisation and a spent force that should not be allowed to associate with any political activity. A hung Assembly means horse trading and history repeating itself.

Govardhana Myneedu
Vijayawada

LOVE JIHAD LAWS

With many states planning to bring a tough law against 'love jihad', many secular minded people are questioning the intention behind this. Many liberals believe it will deal a blow to a particular community and lead to a perception based divide in society that is turning vicious as days pass on. I feel India's diversity and secularism are still strong on the ground.

Ratnaraj Jain
Rajahmundry

CANDID OBSERVATION

Aakar Patel's candid observations (*Amid new dawn in the US, India may have to work differently, DC, Nov. 8*), needs serious attention by the powers that be at the Centre. Needless to mention that all sane Indians could not appreciate Modi's intervention in US politics.

K. Nehru Patnaik
Visakhapatnam

50 YEARS AGO IN

DECCAN Chronicle

Did CIA overthrow Ayub?

NEW DELHI, Nov. 8 Former President Ayub Khan of Pakistan has for the first time come with a categorical statement that the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of the United States had planned his ouster.

The former president made this disclosure in a talk with two top-most leaders of the convention Muslim League (Ayub group). The two leaders, Malik Sher Bahadur and Ali Asghar Shah, are reported to have told the Urdu weekly *Chattan* that General Ayub claimed that CIA was most unhappy over his progressive policies.

Jamaican father and a Finnish mother who has been in the Labour Left for a long while. Saklatwala was the third Parsi MP following Dadabhai Naoroji and Mancherji Bhownagari in the 1890s. Like them he was actively interested in fighting for Indian Independence.

It is a sign of how far we have come that two books on Saklatwala and Rishi Sunak can be out at the same time.

And I am happy to say that Marina Wheeler's book on her family will also be out soon. And because it contains information on the Partition, she had been in touch with us for material on Sargodha from the Partition Museum. Marina is, of course, the Prime Minister's former wife, and is also related to the late author Khushwant Singh. She has kindly invited me for the virtual launch. Looking forward to it!

Kishwar Desai is an award winning author. Her book 'The Longest Kiss: The Life and Times of Devika Rani will be published next month.

Kishwar Desai
London Diary



The only advantage of having Donald Trump in situ across the pond was that he made Boris Johnson look like a genius. But now that Trump has gone, Boris remains the only blonde leader who is raising temperatures, even at the outset of winter. Not sure if that is something the British want, while many struggle with yet another lockdown, waiting for the vaccine to miraculously arrive on Santa's sleigh.

For some of us (such as writers like me) who have working from home for years now, the lockdown has actually been a boon — and my latest book on Devika Rani, completed during this period, will soon be in bookshops and virtual stores. But for those whom going to office was an essential part of the job, this has been an extremely difficult year. So one hopes that we will not end it on a note of despair.

The second lockdown, in fact, has evoked greater anger among the public and much less support for the government, alas. There is a division even within Boris's own backbenchers. Travel is banned;

pubs and restaurants are shut. We know the rules but we like them less and less. Even the Queen rushed back to Windsor from her Scottish home last Wednesday so she could spend the lockdown near London. Of course, her convoy of cars got stuck in a traffic jam but then help was at hand and her party escaped by driving on the wrong side of the road.

Halloween, the American festival with pumpkins and children in scary makeup going from door to door asking for "trick or treat" comes on the same day as Guy Fawkes Night in England. In the past, the "Guy" effigy was usually burnt in a large bonfire. Many local municipalities organised large public bonfires in open parks where families could gather to watch the effigies go up in smoke. But then, in politically correct England the burning has been banned. And of course, all gatherings are off the calendar.

And so, one thought, at least Halloween would provide a bit of fun for the kids. "Lockdown" Halloween turned out to be a muted affair: there were a few crackers but no children

wandering from door to door.

Strange isn't it that so many of these harvest festivals have lights and firecrackers associated with them? Though fewer are being celebrated with fire and fervour, and soon these may become part of history.

Diwali is being celebrated at a distance as well. Now of course, PIOs (People of Indian Origin) are valuable voters. So the leaders of the major political parties were part of a digital Global Diwali Festival lasting from Friday to Sunday, organised by the energetic Manoj Ladwa. The Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, also made a speech in which he managed to get Rama, Sita and Ravana into his message (without for once making any mistakes) along with a mention of *samosa* and *gulabjamun* and then connected it all with a conquest over Covid. Now we are waiting for Kamala Harris to do the same.

It was bound to happen. Rishi Sunak became the Chancellor of the Exchequer just days before we became aware of the

Locked down yet again, UK knows the rules but likes them less and less



quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	41,893.06	1.34
Nifty 50	12,263.55	1.18
S&P 500*	3,509.44	-0.03
Dollar (₹)	74.19	0.27
Pound Sterling (₹)	97.54	-0.71
Euro (₹)	87.86	0.00
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	51,717▲791	1.52
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	39.52	-1.41
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.871	0.013
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.827	0.049

* As of Friday/Saturday

FPIs invest over ₹6,500 in equities in five sessions

Foreign portfolio investors (FPI) have put in a net Rs 8,381 crore into Indian markets in first five trading sessions of November. As per depositories data, FPIs invested a net Rs 6,564 crore into equities and Rs 1,817 in the debt segment, taking the total net inflow to Rs 8,381 crore during November 2-6. In October, overseas investors were net buyers with Rs 22,033 crore investment in Indian markets.

IOB seeks about ₹1,000 cr capital support from govt



Indian Overseas Bank has sought a capital support of about Rs 1,000 crore from the Centre to create a buffer for any exigency. IOB, which has posted profit for the last three consecutive quarters, expects to continue the trend in the remaining part of the current fiscal year. "We expect the trend to continue and book profit quarter after quarter aided by prospects of better recovery," managing director P. P. Sengupta said.

IOC director Singh to head Petronet LNG



Indian Oil Corp director-pipelines Akshay Kumar Singh will be the new managing director and chief executive of the country's biggest gas importer, Petronet LNG Ltd. Singh replaces Prabhat Singh who completed his five-year term on September 13.

IMFL sales down 9% in Q2; H1 sales dip 29%

The liquor industry has reported a decline of 8.98 per cent in Indian-made foreign liquor (IMFL) sales at 78 million cases in Q2 against 85.7 million cases (9 litres each) in the year-ago quarter, the Confederation of Indian Alcoholic Beverage Companies. But sales increased from the June quarter, which had a de-growth of 48.9 per cent. For April-September, sales volume was down 29.06 per cent at 122 million cases.



■ Risk-reward less attractive after recent rise in stocks Economy holds key to new Samvat fortunes

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, NOV. 8

The equity market has had a historical journey in Samvat 2076, as it marked a year of huge volatility, unpredictability, pessimism, divergence and optimism. All in all after a turbulent past year, investors can look forward to a relatively sedate but selectively rewarding year, said brokerages in their outlook for Samvat 2077 which is dawning on this Diwali on November 14, according to the Gujarati Vikram Samvat calendar followed by Dalal Street.

The Nifty-50 touched an all-time high of 12,431 in January 2020 and then hit a three-year low of 7,511 in March'20 as the Covid-19 pandemic gripped the whole world, threatening the global economy.

However, the recovery has been quite sharp as Sensex and Nifty-50 are once again back to close to their all-time-high mark.

The pandemic has accelerated the shift towards a digital economy. In Samvat 2076 the leadership shifted from banking to the technology sector.

USA's Nasdaq Composite Index went up 33 per cent while the Dow Jones Industrial Average Index has remained flat. When other economies went for massive fiscal stimulus India went tight-fisted, which impacted India's GDP in the June quarter.

Now, when most European nations are going in for fresh lock-



Brokerages Diwali Pick

HDFC Securities (Large-cap) Bharti Airtel, Cadila Healthcare, ICICI Bank, Infosys, United Spirits. (Mid-cap) Alembic Pharma, Credit Access Grameen, Gujarat Gas, Mphasis, Radico Khaitan

Kotak Securities Axis Bank, Bajaj Auto, Larsen & Toubro, Ambuja Cements, ITC, Bajaj Finserv, SBI Life Insurance, Infosys, Hindustan Zinc, Bharti Airtel

Motilal Oswal Bharti Airtel, SBI, Hero Motocorp, Infosys, UltratechCement, ICICI Bank, Crompton Consumer, Dabur India, PI Industries, Divis Laboratories

downs, the Indian economy is recovering fast and returning to normalcy. India has a chance to come out stronger and report healthy growth in CY21/Samvat 2077, provided it doesn't see a big second wave of Covid cases.

"We think markets could face some profit taking after the final results of the US Presidential elections sink in. This period also coincides with calendar year-end when tax selling by investors happen. This corrective period could last a few months... In the second half of 2021, we may witness some sustained rise in the indices," said HDFC Securities.

"The overall structure of the market remains positive. At 18 times FY22 earnings, Nifty-50 valuations is also not very expensive as it is trading closer to its long-period averages. With

the economic activity recovering fast, more earnings upgrade cannot be ruled out," said Motilal Oswal Financial Services.

"Further strong global markets can keep the liquidity abundant in the system, thus providing support to the overall market. However, intermittent corrections cannot be ruled out as there is a risk of a second wave of Covid-19 and thus sustenance of economic recovery holds the key," Motilal Oswal added.

"From a next 12-months perspective, we are positive on IT, healthcare, rural-agri, telecom, consumer along with select financials. We believe another round of fiscal stimulus could help elevate sentiment further," Motilal Oswal said.

"As we advance towards getting the vaccine (by

middle of next year) and the economy gets back to normalcy, we can expect the economy-driven sectors to outperform the defensives in Samvat 2077. Banks, NBFCs, automobiles, oil & gas, telecom, utilities, capital goods, cement and metals could come into focus in Samvat 2077," said Rasmus Oza, head of fundamental research, Kotak Securities.

"The potential upside in most of these sectors based on one-year price targets ranges between 20 and 39 per cent (vs single digit potential upside in Nifty-50). Since most of the economy-driven sectors are prone to market correction one should have an accumulation strategy in them rather than investing at one go," Oza said.

The risk-reward balance is less attractive after the recent recovery in stock prices. The earnings yield of Nifty-50 works to 4.5 per cent which is way below the 10-year government securities yield of 5.9 per cent. However, the very low global bond yields are supporting flows into risky assets like equities that are keeping valuations at elevated levels, Kotak Securities said.

According to HDFC Securities, "Key worrying points remain—asset quality at lenders, stress in MSMEs, fiscal deficit, inflation, job creation etc. However, a bull market never requires all worrying points to be eliminated."

Divide between larger & smaller MFIs deepen in Covid times

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, NOV. 8

Covid-19 has deepened the divide between large micro-finance institutions (MFIs) and smaller ones. While large MFIs are likely to see growth in their assets in FY21, smaller ones might witness a contraction in their portfolios, finds Icrs.

The funding constraints faced by small MFIs over the last one-and-a-half years were accentuated by the Covid-19-led disruptions and the situation will continue near-term.

Based on data from 25 MFIs, Icrs found that MFIs raised Rs 11,200 crore in H1 FY21, largely from Nabard, Sidbi and bank TLTRO funding. Fund flow to the sector, however, remained skewed towards large MFIs, which have higher asset under management (AUM) than Rs 1,500 crore. Most large entities have been able to raise a higher proportion of funds in relation to their AUMs than the small MFIs with AUMs lesser than Rs 1,500 crore.



Hence, large MFIs have been able to improve their liquidity profiles. Large MFIs were carrying relatively higher on-book liquidity aided by the better availability of funding and relatively higher collection efficiency.

On the other hand, with relatively lower balance sheet liquidity and thin operating profitability, given the already high operational expenditure, the ability of small MFIs to absorb the expected rise in credit costs is lower. Icrs expects that the credit costs of MFIs will increase to 6-7 per cent till FY22 from 1.5 per cent in FY20 due to the moratorium.

"This makes the smaller MFIs more vulnerable than the large ones, as the latter enjoy strong balance sheet liquidity, better oper-

ating profitability and healthy financial flexibility. So the small MFIs could witness a contraction in their AUMs and report losses in FY21.

This could result in pressure on their credit ratings, especially the entities with high leverage and weak liquidity. But large MFIs are expected to witness some growth in their AUM in FY21.

Overall, there has been a significant decline in the quantum of equity raised in H1 FY21 by MFIs. They have raised just Rs 320 crore compared to Rs 3,600 crore in FY20. In H2 FY21 too, equity infusion in the industry is expected to remain limited and is likely to flow to large and well-established entities.

MSMEs claim over 50% recovery; services drag

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, NOV. 8

Driven by manufacturing enterprises, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) have returned to more than 50 per cent of their pre-Covid level of operations. But the entrepreneurs are still unsure about the sustainability of demand beyond the festive season.

According to the Federation of Indian MSMEs (Fisme), the manufacturing sector has picked up quite well and operations are running close to 80 per cent of the pre-Covid level. "Some of the sectors like pharma have fully recovered," Anil Bharadwaj, secretary general of Fisme, said, adding that the rest of the sectors are mostly operating at 80 per cent of the pre-lock-down levels.

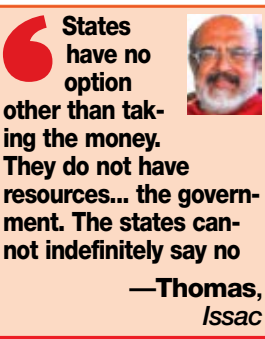
Rajive Chawla, chairman of IamSMEofIndia, said, "Manufacturing MSMEs have been witnessing a month-on-month growth in the last four months. Initially, organising working capital was a major challenge. Now those issues have

Kerala too may accept GST compensation option

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, NOV. 8

Kerala will have one more round of discussions with some of the states that have been opposing the Centre's stance in the GST compensation issue, before accepting the borrowing option. However, it will continue to question the legality of the Union government taking a decision outside the GST Council.

"States have no option other than taking the money. They do not have resources... the government. The states cannot indefinitely say no —Thomas, Issac



over, we will talk to them and take coordinated action," he said.

Nevertheless, the state will continue to raise the issues pertaining to the GST compensation decisions taken by the Centre. It feels that the decision taken outside the GST Council is illegal. He said decisions have to be taken and ratified at the GST Council. "Further, as there was a dispute, there should be a dispute

redressal mechanism," he said.

In August, the Centre had given all states two options of borrowing either Rs 97,000 crore or Rs 2.35 lakh crore to meet the GST compensation shortfall. The borrowing limit of the first option was later increased to Rs 1.1 lakh crore. Last month, 21 states and two union territories had gone with the first option. As some of the opposition-ruled states have been protesting, the Centre has agreed to borrow the money and give it to the states, ending the impasse with the states.

A few days back, among the opposing states, Rajasthan and Puducherry too accepted the first option. The Centre has released a total of Rs 12,000 crore for the states and union territories which have accepted the option.

Bigbasket's customer data stolen?

PRASOON SRIVASTAVA NEW DELHI, NOV 8

Grocery e-commerce platform Bigbasket has faced a potential data breach which could have leaked details of its around 2 crore users, says cyber intelligence firm Cyble.

Bigbasket has filed a police complaint with the Cyber Crime Cell in Bengaluru and is verifying claims made by cyber experts.

Cyble said a hacker has put data belonging to

Bigbasket on sale for around Rs 30 lakh.

"In the course of our routine dark web monitoring, the research team at Cyble found the database of Big Basket for sale in a cyber crime market, being sold for over \$40,000. The leak contains a database portion; with the table name 'member_member'. The size of the SQL file is about 15 GB, containing close to 20 million user data," Cyble said in its blog.

It added the data put on sale includes names, email

IDs, password hashes, contact numbers, addresses, date of birth, location, and IP addresses of login among many others.

While Cyble has mentioned "passwords", Bigbasket uses a one-time password sent via SMS which keeps changing.

"The only customer data that we maintain are email IDs, phone numbers, order details, and addresses so these are the details that could potentially have been accessed," Bigbasket said.

—PTI

India Inc looks forward to stronger Indo-US ties



New Delhi, Nov. 8: India Inc on Sunday hailed the victory of Joe Biden in the US Presidential election, while hoping for enhanced ties and cooperation between India and the United States.

Congratulating president-elect Biden and vice president-elect Kamala Harris, CII president Uday Kotak said, "with rising trade and investment ties between the two countries, the health of our economies are inextricably linked and we must work together during this critical time to reinvigorate the bilateral economic agenda—facilitating economic growth, enhancing job creation, supporting small business and enabling cooperation in investment-related movement of professionals."

Assocham secretary general Deepak Sood said, "under the Biden-Harris leadership, the Indo-US economic ties would go from strength to strength, getting deeper into areas of advanced scientific research and development, business to business cooperation in strategic areas."

PHDCCI president Sanjay Aggarwal said, "We strongly believe that India-US partnership will be the defining relationship of the 21st century."

Nasscom welcomed Joe Biden's win and said the Indian IT industry looks forward to working with the new administration in pivoting technology, skills and digital transformation for the US.

Nasscom said its member companies have an important history in the US. "... they work with over three-quarters of the Fortune 500 companies in the US, providing them vital technology services and helping them innovate, compete, and grow."

—PTI

SHIFTING | ROADS The share of SUVs in domestic market doubles to 30% in the last five years Tata Motors aims for widest portfolio of SUVs

New Delhi, Nov. 8: Tata Motors aims to have the widest portfolio of sports utility vehicles (SUVs) in the domestic market, a move aimed at helping the company muster greater market share in the passenger vehicle segment, according to a top company official.

The auto major, which currently sells models like Nexon and Harrier in the SUV segment, is also looking to overhaul its entire sales, after-sales and service verticals to enhance the overall buying experience for customers.

"The move to shift to SUVs is very clear. There is a shift happening towards the SUV segment not only in India but globally also. In 2015 the share of SUVs in the domestic market used to be only 15 per cent but this year it is around 30 per cent," Tata Motors passenger

vehicles business unit president Shailesh Chandra told PTI. It is therefore imperative that whosoever has greater share of SUVs in the portfolio will have a greater pie, share of the market, he added.

"So we have taken note of that sometime back and accordingly targeted to have the widest SUV portfolio," Chandra said.

Both Nexon and Harrier were doing great in the market in terms of sales numbers, he noted.

"Harrier has seen a significant jump from what we were doing last year on the back of the new automatic version we have come out with. Nexon did its highest ever sales last month and I hope it continues to do well," Chandra said.

The company is now gearing up to roll out two new models in the portfolio.

Royal Enfield to roll out new bike every quarter

New Delhi, Nov. 8: Mid-sized motorcycle maker Royal Enfield plans to launch at least 28 new models in the next seven years, with one new bike to be introduced every quarter, as it seeks to strengthen its position both in domestic and international markets, according to a top company official.

The company is also planning to set up an assembly unit in Thailand in the next 6-12 months followed by Brazil in the near future.

"Going forward two additional models are going to come—Gravitas and Hornbill (code-names). Gravitas will be a seven-seater SUV while Hornbill will

"We have now got a product plan for the next five to seven years. We are looking at launching a new model almost every quarter and I am not even talking variants and colour options kind of stuff...28 models at least (in the next seven years) that's the bare minimum," Royal Enfield CEO Vinod K. Dasari told PTI. He further said, "All these (new models) will play in the mid segment — 250cc to 750 cc. That's our focus area." —PTI

be a sub compact SUV so we will have four SUVs in our portfolio which would be the widest portfolio," Chandra said. Hornbill with a very aggres-

sive position at one end and Gravitas at the other end, the company with four products would be well poised to tap the growing trend towards SUVs, he noted.

The company plans to launch the Gravitas during the last quarter of this fiscal. It is yet to fix a date for the Hornbill introduction.

Chandra said the company is focusing a lot on improving the sales and after-sales experience for its customers.

"For us it is one of the key areas on our agenda to transform. A whole bit of work has started with focus on how we can enhance the whole experience. The employees are being imparted soft skills apart from technical training," he noted. The company is also focusing on the issues with its dealer partners. —PTI

SHORT TAKES

Holding new MCC Foundation patron

London: West Indies pace legend Michael Holding has been appointed patron of the MCC Foundation.

The MCC Foundation is the charitable arm of the Marylebone Cricket Club, custodians of the game's laws, and was created with the aim of enhancing lives through cricket. The 66-year-old Holding is a passionate advocate for equality in cricket and the wider community. Throughout a professional career that spanned 15 years, Holding carved out a reputation as one of the best fast bowlers of all time. Since retirement, he has worked as a commentator on Sky Sports' cricket coverage and, more recently, has earned praise as a powerful and eloquent advocate for racial equality "both in the game and further afield".

Holding said he was "thrilled" by the opportunity to join the MCC Foundation. "I am thrilled to support the MCC Foundation and its work to make cricket a game that champions respect and equality for all." — *PTI*

Pak thump Zim to clinch T20 series

Rawalpindi, Pakistan: Pakistan proved too strong for Zimbabwe as they won the second Twenty20 international by eight wickets in Rawalpindi on Sunday, taking an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series. Riding on half centuries from skipper Babar Azam (51) and 20-year-old Haider Ali (66 not out), Pakistan made short work of a modest 135-run target, achieving victory with 29 balls to spare. Zimbabwe, who were sent in to bat, never recovered from early strikes by paceman Haris Rauf (3-31) and spinner Usman Qadir (3-23) as they were restricted to 134-7 in 20 overs. Haider, playing only his third international match, cracked three sixes and six boundaries in a 43-ball knock and was declared man of the match. — *AFP*

Brief scores: Zimbabwe 134/7 (Burl 32 not out, Qadir 3/23, Rauf 3/31) lost to Pakistan 137/2 (Haider Ali 66 not out, Babar Azam 51.)

Ex Pak skipper Sarfaraz fined

Karachi: Former Pakistan skipper Sarfaraz Ahmed has been penalised 35 per cent of his match fee for using "inappropriate language" during a Quaid-e-Azam Trophy match. The 33-year-old stumper, who is leading the Sindh First XI, admitted to the level 1 offence relating to use of inappropriate language during his side's match on Saturday.

"Sarfaraz repeatedly made inappropriate comments against an umpiring decision during the day's play," the Pakistan Cricket Board said in media release.

"He was reported by on-field umpires Faisal Afridi and Saqib Khan for the violation of article 2.21 of the PCB Code of Conduct for Players and Player support Personnel."

In a separate incident, Central Punjab batsman Usman Salahuddin was also fined 20 per cent of his match fee for a level 1 offence. — *PTI*

Ram settles for runner-up finish

Eckental, Germany: Indian tennis player Ramkumar Ramanathan yet again settled for a runner-up finish on the Challenger circuit, losing the final of the Eckental event to American Sebastian Korda on Sunday. Celebrating his 26th birthday, Ram lost the summit clash 4-6, 4-6 to his seventh seed rival, ranked 135, in one hour and 23 minutes. It is now the fifth time that Ramkumar has not won a final on the Challenger circuit. His previous runner-up finishes came at Tallahassee (April 2017), Winnetka (July 2017), Pune (November 2017) and Taipei (April 2018). Nevertheless, it was Ramkumar's best performance of the 2020 season for which he earned Euro 7200 as prize money and 60 points that will push him to 185 from 206 in the ATP singles ranking charts. — *PTI*

Live on TV

CRICKET

IPL Women's T20 Challenge Final: Trailblazers vs Supernovas from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

WWE

Raw: Bouts from 6.30 am (Tuesday) on Sony Ten 1, HD

DELHI ECLIPSE SUN

All-round Capitals beat Hyderabad to book maiden final spot

SCORECARD

Delhi Capitals: M. Stoinis b Rashid 38, S. Dhawan lbw Sharma 78, S. Iyer c Pandey b Holder 21, S. Hetmyer (not out) 42, R. Pant (not out) 2. Extras (b-1, lb-2, w-3, nb-2) 8. **Total (for 3 wkts, in 20 overs) 189.** **FoW:** 1-86, 2-126, 3-178. **Bowling:** Sharma 4-0-30-1, Holder 4-0-50-1, Nadeem 4-0-48-0, Khan 4-0-26-1, Natarajan 4-0-32-0. **Sunrisers Hyderabad:** P.K. Garg b Stoinis 17, D. Warner b Rabada 2, M. Pandey c Nortje b Stoinis 21, K. Williamson c Rabada b

Stoinis 67, J. Holder c Dubey b Patel 11, Abdul Samad c sub (KMA Paul) b Rabada 33, Rashid Khan c Patel b Rabada 11, S. Goswami c Stoinis b Rabada 0, S. Nadeem (not out) 2, Sandeep Sharma (not out) 2. Extras (lb-1, w-5) 6. **Total (for 8 wkts, in 20 over) 172.** **FoW:** 1-12, 2-43, 3-44, 4-90, 5-147, 6-167, 7-167, 8-168. **Bowling:** R. Ashwin 3-0-33-0, K. Rabada 4-0-29-4, A. Nortje 4-0-36-0, M. Stoinis 3-0-26-3, A. Patel 4-0-33-1, P. Dubey 2-0-14-0.

Stoinis (3/26) shone with the ball for the winners.

It turned out to be a good decision to bat first as Dhawan and Stoinis (38) got the team off to a flying start with their 86-run stand.

Skipper Shreyas Iyer (21) could not do much but

Shimron Hetmyer, who was brought in for Sunday's match, chipped in with an unbeaten 42-run knock.

Dhawan, in his well-paced innings, hit six fours and two sixes. He added 52 runs for the third wicket with Hetmyer

before being dismissed by seamer Sandeep Sharma (1/30).

SRH's sloppy fielding also helped Delhi Capitals as they dropped Stoinis early in the innings and gave them a few free runs. SRH also dropped Dhawan towards the end, though it

did not cost them much.

Yet again, Afghanistan spinner Rashid Khan (4-0-26-1) was the most effective bowler though T Natarajan bowled well in slog overs.

Stoinis was asked to open the innings by the Delhi Capitals. After being dropped by Jason Holder off Sandeep at short mid-on, the Australian punished the SRH bowlers with a flurry of boundaries.

Stoinis, on three at that time, was nicely set up by Sandeep but the opportunity was not taken.

It was Holder, who was then taken to task by Stoinis, who creamed off 18 runs from the West Indian's over with three fours and a six. — *PTI*



Delhi Capitals players celebrate the wicket of Manish Pandey of Sunrisers Hyderabad during their IPL Qualifier 2 match at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi on Sunday. Capitals won by 17 runs.

— BCCI

SAHA HAS HAMSTRING TEAR, ALL EYES ON BCCI

Abu Dhabi, Nov. 8: Senior wicketkeeper-batsman Wriddhiman Saha's saga of picking up injuries continued as he has been diagnosed with a hamstring tear which is sure to raise questions about his availability for the upcoming tour of Australia. It will now depend on what call BCCI mandarins take considering that physio Nitin Patel's medical reports have of late come under scanner due to divergent views of the IPL franchises.

Saha had stretched his groin while batting against Delhi Capitals in the second

leg of the IPL but then played against Mumbai Indians in the 14th and final round game where he must have picked up a tear while fighting the earlier niggle.

"Wriddhiman Saha has a hamstring tear," SRH skipper David Warner confirmed the nature of injury. However, the degree of the tear is still not clear.

It is understood that if Saha has a grade 1 tear, which normally takes four weeks of rest and rehabilitation, then he would be boarding the flight to Australia with the first Test starting on December 17. — *PTI*

Pollard credits his bond with Pandya brothers for success

Abu Dhabi, Nov. 8: West Indian swashbuckler Kieron Pollard says his relationship with the Pandya brothers — Hardik and Krunal — transcends the cultural boundaries, and explosive batting is just one of the many similarities they share.

Defending champions MI have made it to their sixth IPL final and the trio played a significant role in their campaign.

"As I always say there is Hardik Pandya and then there is the smarter Pandya (Krunal). For us the relationship that we have off the field, transcends onto the cricket field," Pollard, who has played over 150 games for MI, said in a video shared on their



Kieron Pollard

Twitter handle.

"We share some of the same sort of sentiments, the kind of people that we are in terms of just wanting to help, and just enjoying the moment and being thankful and grateful for whatever opportunities that is presented to us."

According to Pollard, being confident and back-

ing himself are the similar qualities he shares with Hardik. Both are known for their six-hitting prowess.

"They (Pandya brothers) are more open and loud, but they are not like that just off the field, when they go on to the cricket field, the flair that they show, Hardik especially, that aspect of it, he goes out, backs himself, he is confident. So these are some of the things that we share in common," said Pollard.

Pollard praised Hardik, who has scored 278 runs and plundered 25 sixes this season, for his confidence.

"The way that they are, they are like good people. And you will find it very difficult not to like these individuals." — *PTI*

WOMEN'S T20 | CHALLENGE

Harmanpreet & Co target third crown

Sharjah, Nov. 8: The momentum is with defending champions Supernovas as they eye a third straight Women's T20 Challenge title, with a determined Trailblazers standing in their way in the final here on Monday.

In the winners-take-all T20 final, the Harmanpreet Kaur-led side will have momentum behind them, having beaten Smriti Mandhana and company in the last round-robin game on Saturday.

Supernovas, champions in 2018 and 2019, just about managed to ward off their rivals in a last-over thriller.

The two-run win enabled the Supernovas to enter the final, while knocking the Mithali-Raj led Velocity out of the competition. For the defending champions, opener Chamari Atapattu (111 runs) has been in brilliant form. The Sri Lankan veteran is the top scorer for Supernovas this season. Against the Trailblazers, she played an aggressive innings (67 off 48-balls) to notch up the first fifty of the tournament.

Skipper Harmanpreet, who had scored two half-centuries including in the final last year, has been dismissed for 31 in both the matches and the big-hitting Indian T20 captain

● **In the winners-take-all T20 final, Harmanpreet Kaur-led Supernovas will have the momentum behind them, having beaten Smriti Mandhana's Trailblazers in the last round-robin game on Saturday.**

will look to get back to her destructive best in the final.

They will be up against Trailblazers, who started their campaign on a sensational note. Their bowlers, led by England's Sophie Ecclestone and veteran Jhulan Goswami, bundled out the Velocity for a paltry 47. However, they were unable to dish out a similar display on Saturday.

Skipper Mandhana, who has scored 39 runs in two games, has had an underwhelming tournament and will be keen on coming good with the bat.

Opener Deandra Dottin has also been among runs but will be keen to notch up a big one. Deepti Sharma (43 not out) and Harleen Deol (27 off 15 balls) almost led the Trailblazers to victory and the two will look to build on their performance. — *PTI*

Deepti worked on her game after lockdown

Sharjah, Nov. 8: Indian women's team all-rounder Deepti Sharma has said she has worked on her game after the coronavirus-forced lockdown and is executing her plans in the ongoing Women's T20 Challenge here.

Representing Trailblazers, Sharma scored an unbeaten 43 in their match against Supernovas on Saturday, but could not help her team to victory.

"After the lockdown I worked a lot on lofted shots and inside-out shots and I was able to apply it here," she said at the post-match press conference.

"Obviously, the wicket is a bit different to Indian wickets. They are slow and

low but I don't think it should matter much. You just have to watch the ball and hit the ball," she added.

Sharma said the Trailblazers would work hard and rectify the mistakes when the two sides meet in Monday's final.

"Small mistakes... In fielding, bowling. We will work in our practice session and will look to rectify the mistakes we made today, in the next game. Overall we did well. Winning or losing is part of the game," she said.

She said 146 was a good score to chase as the ball was coming on to the bat even though some of them kept low. — *PTI*



Deepti Sharma of Trailblazers plays a shot en route to her unbeaten 43 against Supernovas during their Women's T20 Challenge match in Sharjah on Saturday. — *BCCI*

Pedro matches Italy legend Riva's 52-yr Cagliari record

Milan, Nov. 8: Cagliari's Joao Pedro scored for the fifth consecutive Serie A match to equal a 52-year-old club record set by Italy legend Gigi Riva in a 2-0 victory over 10-man Sampdoria on Saturday, as French forward M'Bala Nzola's brace gave Spezia breathing space at the bottom of the table.

Former European champion and World Cup runner-up Riva, who led Cagliari to their only Italian title in 1970, was the last player in the club to score five in the first seven league matches back in 1968.

Riva, Italy's all-time top scorer with 35 goals

in 42 games and also Cagliari's with 164 goals in 315 league games, celebrated his 76th birthday on Saturday.

"I changed the system to favour Joao," said Cagliari coach Eusebio Di Francesco.

"I wanted to wish a happy birthday to the great Gigi Riva, a symbol for Cagliari."

Sampdoria had to play over half the match a man down after Tommaso Augello was sent off for bringing down Nahitan Nandez five minutes before the break.

Brazilian Pedro opened the scoring two minutes into the second half when he won and scored

a penalty kick after colliding with Lorenzo Tonelli.

LEWANDOWSKI SCORES AS BAYERN LEAD TABLE

Robert Lewandowski scored as Bayern Munich went top of the table on Saturday with a 3-2 win at Borussia Dortmund.

After Marco Reus put Dortmund ahead, David Alaba blasted home a free-kick to make it 1-1 at half-time behind closed doors at Signal Iduna Park. Lewandowski gave Bayern the lead with a superb header early in the second half before Leroy Sane grabbed the visitors' third. — *AFP*

Atleti go top, Messi rescues Barca

Madrid, Nov. 8: Atletico Madrid jumped to the top of La Liga on Saturday with a 4-0 thrashing of Cadiz after Lionel Messi came on at half-time to rescue Barcelona against Real Betis.

Atletico claimed first place, ahead of Real Sociedad on goal difference, with the excellent Joao Felix scoring twice in another impressive victory for Diego Simeone's side.

Luis Suarez and Marcos Llorente were also on target as Atletico made it five wins and two draws from their opening seven games and underlined their status as genuine title contenders. They have scored 17 goals and conceded just two in that time.

After the international break, Atleti play at home to Barcelona, when Suarez and Antoine Griezmann will be up against their former clubs.

But while Suarez has enjoyed a superb start for Atletico, scoring five goals already, Griezmann contin-



Barcelona's Lionel Messi (second from right) is challenged by Real Betis players during their La Liga match at Camp Nou in Barcelona on Saturday. — *AP*

ues to struggle in the shadow of Messi at Camp Nou.

Messi had been rested by Ronald Koeman but was thrown on with the game in the balance after Griezmann missed a penalty, before Betis' Antonio Sanabria cancelled out

off for a handball on the line.

DI MARIA BRACE IN RENNES STROLL

Angel Di Maria scored twice as Paris Saint-Germain made short work of Rennes despite a raft of absences in a 3-0 win that enables the champions to hold onto their lead at the top of Ligue 1.

Di Maria struck in each half, with Moise Kean scoring the other, to move PSG up to 24 points, five ahead of second-placed Lille.

Rennes stay third on 18 points — but can be overtaken by Nice should they beat Monaco on Sunday — while Montpellier are a further point back in sixth after their 2-0 win at Bordeaux.

PSG's win was their eighth in a row in the French top flight and came as under-fire coach Thomas Tuchel battles with an injury crisis that has left him without the likes of Neymar, Kylian Mbappe and Marco Verratti. — *AFP*